



## Diana K. Portner

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### Summary

A Mediator and Program Manager at Meridian Institute with experience in natural resource management and planning; facilitation of local and regional stakeholder meetings and federal advisory committees; and strategy development, consensus building, and problem-solving processes. Expertise in watershed and land management, ecological restoration, freshwater resources, land use, climate change, and the socioeconomic dimensions of natural resource management. Experience working with governments, civil society, the private and nonprofit sectors, and researchers at the local, regional, and national levels. More than five years of on-the-ground experience in land management and ecological restoration of wetlands, prairies, and forest landscapes. Holds an M.S. in Natural Resources and Environment from the University of Michigan and a B.A. from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in Psychology with a certificate in Environmental Studies.

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### Meridian Experience

#### Meridian Institute

2013–Present

Meridian Institute designs and facilitates collaborative processes that help diverse parties identify critical issues, build relationships and trust, construct innovative solutions, and implement durable decisions. These collaborative processes address challenges at the local, state, national, and international levels, and involve leaders from government agencies, industry, nongovernmental organizations, and international institutions. Meridian also assists organizations in conducting strategy development and planning.

#### Mediator and Program Manager

Manages and facilitates policy dialogues, negotiations, and strategy development projects involving teams of facilitators. Conducts convening assessments, designs collaborative processes, plans and facilitates meetings, helps participants develop consensus documents, and conducts implementation activities. Selected highlights are summarized below:

- Facilitates trainings for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool (CREAT). Workshops involve water and wastewater utility operators, consultants, and state and federal agency representatives exploring adaptation strategies to enhance the resilience of water and wastewater utilities to extreme weather events and long-term climate change impacts.

- Member of the Meridian team that provided strategic guidance and support for the Climate Strategies Accelerator, a new initiative of the David & Lucile Packard Foundation, Oak Foundation, and Good Energies Foundation focused on creating breakthrough climate mitigation strategies. Meridian planned and executed a convening that brought together climate leaders from around the world, to advance progress on climate mitigation approaches. Provided management of day-to-day project activities and support for planning and execution of events and meetings.
- Member of the Meridian team that facilitated the Tongass Advisory Committee, a federally chartered advisory committee charged with providing advice to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and Chief of the U.S. Forest Service regarding a young growth timber harvest transition strategy for the Tongass National Forest. Assisted with process design, agenda development, work group facilitation, and development of press releases, meeting documentation, and reports. In December 2015, the committee finalized consensus recommendations, to be included in a Forest Plan Amendment. Provides ongoing facilitation and coordination support for implementation of Committee recommendations.
- Assisted with a strategic review and planning process for the Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA). Provided process design, documentation, survey design and analysis, and development of strategic planning documents, including a vision, mission, goals, objectives, metrics, and business operations plan. The TIA finalized its strategic plan in December 2015.
- Provided convening and process design services for the creation of a federal advisory subcommittee under the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT) for a pre-rulemaking effort related to Clean Water Act Section 404(g) "Assumable Waters." Assisted the EPA in conducting a series of conversations with potential subcommittee members and interested stakeholders. Provided process advice to the EPA and developed initial drafts of the subcommittee charter and operating procedures.
- Provided planning, facilitation, and documentation support for Charting New Waters, an effort by The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread aimed at catalyzing the transformation of U.S. water infrastructure. Developed convening reports and assisted with facilitation for a meeting on urban water infrastructure nationally, and specifically in relation to New Jersey's aging infrastructure. Assisted with event planning and report writing for the Charting New Waters capstone event, which served as the culmination of a six-year examination of U.S. freshwater challenges.
- Facilitated topical working groups, committees, and public meetings as part of the Meridian team facilitating stakeholder engagement for the Flathead National Forest Plan Revision. In this project, Meridian engaged interested stakeholders around key planning issues such as fisheries and wildlife habitat, wilderness designation, recreation, fire and fuels management, and threatened and endangered species.
- Please see <http://merid.org/Staff/dportner> for a full list of projects.

## Previous Experience

### Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council

Petoskey, Michigan 2012–2013

*Stakeholder Engagement Coordinator and Researcher*

Designed a stakeholder-vetted watershed management plan to be implemented by Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. Assessed current and future water conditions through field samples and geospatial modeling. Conducted and analyzed interviews and surveys of community members, residents, and business owners to solicit input for plan development. Facilitated town hall meetings with residents, business owners, and local elected officials to share plan updates and solicit additional feedback. Managed participant outreach through education materials, print media, and interviews with local press. Coordinated and completed administrative tasks for a multi-disciplinary project team, including scheduling, meeting preparation, and drafting and circulating meeting minutes.

### University of Michigan, School of Natural Resources and Environment

Ann Arbor, Michigan 2012

*Graduate Student Instructor*

Facilitated discussion and coordinated course preparation and individual meetings for 50 undergraduates from multiple disciplines. Course content included environmental design, and cognitive, behavioral, and environmental psychology.

### Bitterroot Conservation Partnership

Hamilton, Montana 2012

*Partnership Coordinator and Research Intern*

Conducted a stakeholder assessment and issue analysis/prioritization, and developed recommendations for partnership development. Detailed a vision and organizational structure for the partnership, including objectives, communications plan, and draft Memorandum of Understanding. Planned and facilitated a meeting of 18 stakeholders, resulting in a draft mission and action plan.

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## Education

### University of Michigan

M.S., Natural Resources and Environment

Honors: Wyss Scholars Program for Conservation in the American West; U.S. Forest Service Chief's Scholars Program Finalist; University of Michigan Maize Behavior Award; Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum William D. Drake Prize

2013

### University of Wisconsin–Madison

B.A., Psychology

Certificate, Environmental Studies

2009