



# Overview: Climate finance consultants

August 2020

**Gordian Knot Strategies**  
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# Enduring Arches

February 2021

## Building Conservation Finance Projects for Impact

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Lessons from an assessment of USDA  
Conservation Innovation Grants

The Conservation  
Finance Network



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- Climate finance structuring
- Carbon pricing & policy
- Carbon portfolio design
- Conservation finance evaluation

*"In addition to the obvious expertise in building a financially sustainable impact program, the thing I enjoy most about working with the GKS team is the opportunity for constant learning and growth—all offered with the utmost respect and patience to every individual at every level of our organization."*

Christine Cadigan, American Forest Foundation

# Core competencies

- Go-to-market strategy design
- Impact investment vehicles
- Strategic advisory & planning



*"What you've done particularly well is to help us craft ideas ahead of when they'll be needed. Understanding the needs of potential investors/clients before they do is valuable."*  
Mike Smith, RenewWest



**Sean Penrith – CEO**  
Sean has been engaged in the environmental and carbon space for over two decades. He built both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations around the globe that enabled him to develop his acumen for strategy development, company building, sustainability, ESG, triple-bottom-line risk management, climate change, environmental policy, conservation finance, impact investing, and environmental markets.

# Team



**Jacoba Gundle – Project Manager**  
Jacoba has almost 10 years of experience in operations, project management, and office administration. Before joining Gordian Knot Strategies in 2018 in the role of project manager, she worked for The Climate Trust as the operations manager, handling everything from organizational logistics to managing the carbon credit registry.



**Daniel Pike – Principal**  
Daniel has managed projects advising GKS clients on climate mitigation strategy in general and natural climate solutions in particular. Daniel has over a decade of consulting and operational experience in clean energy, sustainable agriculture, and sustainability, and was formerly a Case Team Leader at The Bridgespan Group.





# Affiliations



- Strategic Advisor, Planetary CARE
- Member, PNW Blue Carbon Feasibility Assessment
- Steering Committee Member, Ecosystem Services Market Consortium
- Member, Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition
- Member, Coalition for Private investment in Conservation
- Member, Oregon Governor's Energy Efficiency Work Group
- Working Group Member, UN FAO Soil Organic Carbon
- Contributor to Offsets Subcommittee, Western Climate Initiative
- Advisor, MIT Climate CoLab Network
- Member, Catalyzing Smart Finance (World Bank/UNEP)
- Steering committee member, Conservation Finance Network
- Member, Advisory Council for Climate Impact Score
- Steering committee member, Climate Allies Network
- Member, GreenBiz Intelligence Panel
- Work Group member, Agriculture, Forests, Rural & Tribes Oregon SB1070
- Member, Verra Agricultural Land Management (ALM) Working Group



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- NGOs – Conservation finance evaluations & opportunity assessments
  - Multi-national corporations – Impact investment portfolio design
  - TIMOs – ESG disclosure and reporting
  - Start-ups – Climate finance campaign
  - High net worth individuals – Carbon footprinting
  - Foundations – Go-to-market development & financial structuring

# Clients



# Evaluation: Illustrative approach

## Overall objectives:

- Identify the scale and suite of outcomes achieved, across design, implementation, and trajectory
- Identify critical elements needed to successfully implement conservation finance projects, from design to market adoption with positive investment returns for all stakeholders
- Confirm/inform theory of change and use of measurement and monitoring to inform decision-making going forward



### Context and Goal Setting

Orientate and onboard the team

Surface key pain points and Qs to address

Define what success looks like for this project

Align on the workplan, roles, and timeline

### Framework Design

Develop a preliminary framework for building the assessment:

- Design intent
- Knowledge base
- Leadership
- Policy support
- Shared identify and objectives
- Standards of practice
- Key Performance Indicators

### Program Review

Evaluate current program objectives, processes, and grants in relation to stated objectives and the preliminary framework, via:

- Review of grant programming and process
- Assessment of individual grant projects
- 360 degree feedback

### Engagement & Ideation

Facilitated Zoom workshop with program team and other select stakeholders, to share approaches for measuring success and strengthening the program's future impact

### Recommendations

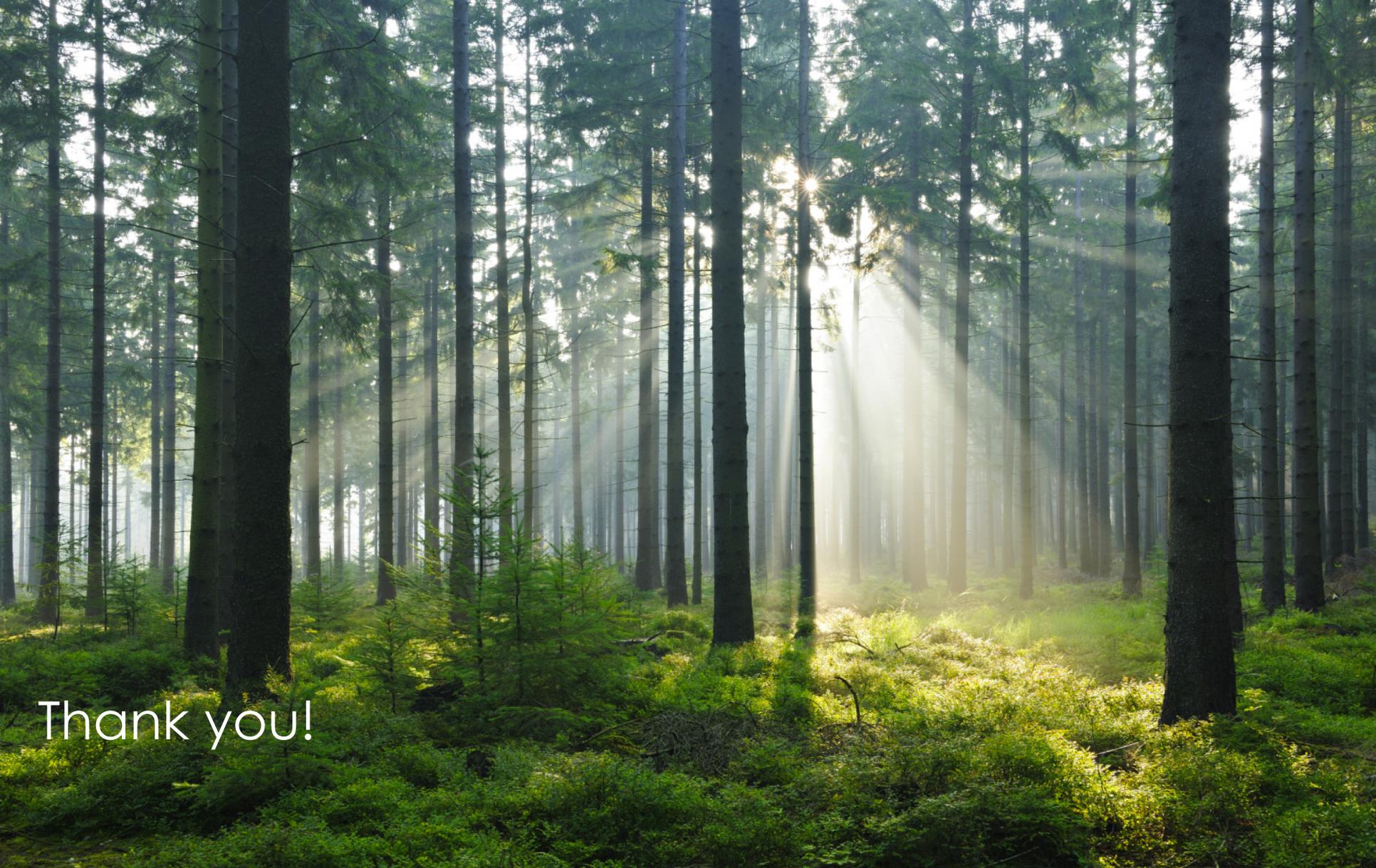
Propose potential process improvements, program design adjustments, and evaluation metrics

### Handover

Deliver final assessment report with recommendations

Equip the program team with tools for continued monitoring and evaluation





Thank you!

Sean Penrith  
[spenrith@gordianknotstrategies.com](mailto:spenrith@gordianknotstrategies.com)

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