

Katherine Birnie – Bio

Katherine Birnie is Director of Markets for **Ecosystem Investment Partners** (EIP), a private equity fund manager that acquires and manages high priority conservation properties across the United States. EIP delivers competitive returns to its investors through the use of new, market based mechanisms that reward landowners for the restoration and protection of their natural resources (such as wetlands, streams, endangered species) as well as the sustainable use of more traditional resources (forestry, agriculture).

Katherine grew up in New Hampshire, where the rural landscape ignited her passion for saving land. As a Biology and Environmental Studies major cum laude at **Williams College**, she studied the ecological underpinnings of natural systems and the policy mechanisms for using science to protect those systems. While at Williams (1996-2000), Katherine worked with **The Nature Conservancy** in Western Massachusetts, the **Appalachian Mountain Club** in New Hampshire, and the **Tri-Valley Conservancy** in the Bay Area, and was awarded the school's Scheffey Environmental Leadership Award.

Upon graduating, Katherine joined **Peninsula Open Space Trust** in Menlo Park, California, where she spent five years on the land acquisition team. As a Project Manager (2004-2005), she negotiated \$10.95mm of complex real estate transactions on the San Francisco Peninsula, working with landowners, state and municipal agencies, and funders.

In 2007, Katherine earned an MBA from the **Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College**. There, she wrote a business plan for a Northern Forest investment fund, which would capitalize on the emerging markets for forest carbon and wetland mitigation banking. Following Tuck, Katherine joined **Maine Coast Heritage Trust** as Conservation Innovation Program Manager (2007-2009), where she managed a new initiative to develop and implement new project finance and partnership approaches to this highly successful land trust's work.