

Laura A. Paul

Research Agricultural Economist

Durham, North Carolina

lauraannepaul.com

Professional Summary

Applied economist with experience conducting policy-relevant research related to rural economies, climate adaptation, conservation policy, and environmental change. Expertise in econometrics, geospatial analysis, experimental economics, and integrating complex datasets to support evidence-based decision making. Experienced collaborating across interdisciplinary teams and communicating findings to both technical and policy audiences.

Core Skills

- Applied microeconomics and econometrics
 - Geospatial and spatial data analysis
 - Experimental and behavioral economics
 - Policy analysis and program evaluation
 - Statistical programming and data management
 - Research design and survey methods
 - Interdisciplinary collaboration
 - Technical and policy communication
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Professional Experience

USDA Economic Research Service (ERS)

Research Agricultural Economist

Durham, NC | 2022–Present

- Conduct policy-relevant economic research on rural communities, conservation, climate adaptation, and environmental change.
- Lead work modernizing the Natural Amenities Scale, integrating climate, landform, and geographic data into a county-level research dataset.
- Analyze large multi-source datasets using econometric and spatial methods.
- Contribute to ERS publications and interdisciplinary research projects related to conservation practice adoption and persistence.
- Design and analyze behavioral and experimental research related to agricultural and environmental policy.
- Communicate findings through reports, presentations, publications, and collaborations with USDA and external researchers.

University of Delaware

Postdoctoral Researcher

Newark, DE | 2019–2022

- Conducted applied economic research on conservation policy, climate adaptation, risk, and sustainability.
- Designed and implemented laboratory and field economic experiments.
- Managed complex datasets and applied econometric and statistical methods to policy-relevant questions.
- Collaborated with researchers across universities and USDA agencies.
- Organized and led an interdisciplinary research seminar series.

University of California, Davis

Ph.D. Researcher

Davis, CA | 2013–2019

- Conducted research on household resilience, drought adaptation, agricultural risk, and development economics.
- Designed and implemented field experiments and survey research in Tanzania and Burkina Faso.
- Analyzed experimental and survey data using econometric methods.
- Published peer-reviewed research on climate risk, technology adoption, and rural livelihoods.

Education

University of California, Davis- Ph.D. and M.S., Agricultural and Resource Economics, 2019

Duke University- M.A., Economics, 2013

Kenyon College- A.B., Economics, 2011

Selected Publications

Paul, L.A., C. McGranaghan, P. Dineva, A.R. Siders, L.H. Palm-Forster, and K.D. Messer. 2024. “Addressing Coordination Problems in Residential Buyouts: Experimental Evidence for Managed Retreat in the Face of Climate Change-Related Threats.” *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*.

Ferraro, P.J., M. Bowman, H.E. Correia, J. Gao, K.R. Larson, K.D. Messer, L.A. Paul, B. Pratt, and L.S. Prokopy. 2025. “Beyond Adoption: The Persistence of Conservation and Climate-Smart Agricultural Practices in the United States.” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Wallander, S., L.A. Paul, R. Iovanna, P.J. Ferraro, and K.D. Messer. 2023. “Informational Nudges in Conservation Auctions: A Field Experiment with U.S. Farmers.” *Food Policy*.

Boucher, S.R., M.R. Carter, J.E. Flatnes, T.J. Lybbert, J.G. Malacarne, P. Marenja, and L.A. Paul. 2024. “Bundling Genetic and Financial Technologies for More Resilient and Productive Small-Scale Farmers in Africa.” *The Economic Journal*.