



Connect the Connecticut

A roadmap for conserving the
Connecticut River watershed

Key points



Collaborative

Connect the Connecticut is a **collaborative effort** to develop a **landscape conservation design** for the Connecticut River watershed - an innovative approach using the best available science to identify priority areas for conservation to ensure that important species, habitats, and natural processes will be sustained into the future.

With support from the North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative, partners in Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Massachusetts, representing more than 20 agencies and organizations worked together with the modeling team from the Designing Sustainable Landscapes Project at UMass Amherst to develop the design.



Accessible

More than just a map, the design is a **set of tools and information** that people at all levels and in all sectors can access and use to better understand the value of lands, waters, and wildlife resources, and to consider these values when making their own decisions.

The screenshot displays the 'North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative Conservation Planning Atlas' website. The header includes the organization's name, a search bar, and navigation tabs for 'Get Started', 'Browse', 'Create', and 'My Workspace'. Below the header, the page title is 'Connect the Connecticut', created by North Atlantic LCC, with a last modified date of Sep 15, 2015. The main content area is organized into three categories: 'Aquatic design products' (7 items), 'Base maps and ancillary data' (9 items), and 'Terrestrial design products' (1 folder and 13 items). The 'Terrestrial design products' section is expanded, showing ten individual dataset thumbnails. Each thumbnail consists of a small map with a color-coded overlay and a label below it. The datasets shown are: 'Local Conductance', 'Local Vulnerability of Conductance, CT River Watershed', 'Regional Vulnerability of Conductance, CT River Watershed', 'Probability of Development, CT River Watershed', 'Sea Level Rise, CT River Watershed', 'Regional Conductance, CT River Watershed', 'Climate Stress, CT River Watershed', 'Weighted Index of Ecological Integrity, CT River Watershed', 'Terrestrial road passage structure impacts, CT River Watershed', and 'Terrestrial Ecosystem-Based Core Area Selection Index, CT River ...'.

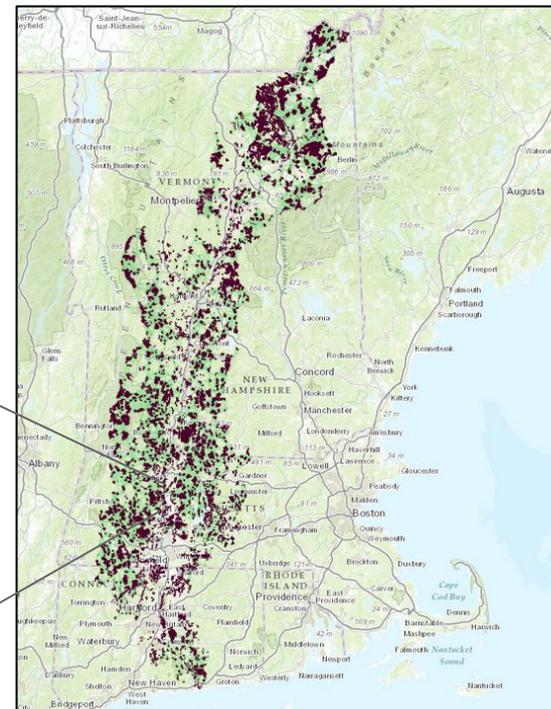
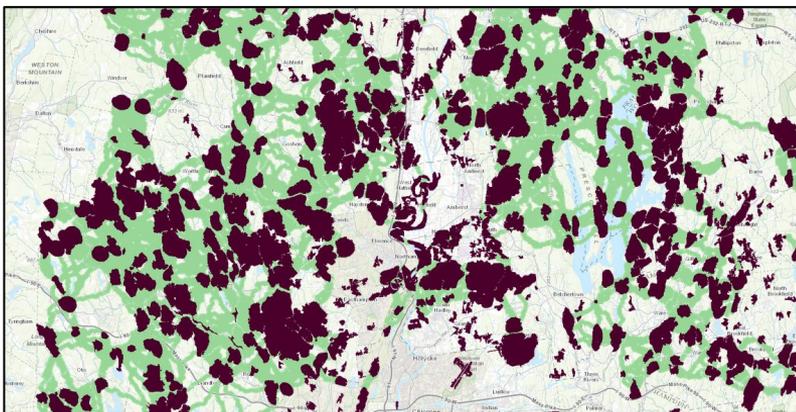
Nature & People

These lands and waters not only provide habitat for fish, wildlife, and plants, but they also **enhance local communities and economies** by supporting business, agriculture, clean air and water, recreation and human health.



Strategic

Outlining a network of “core areas,” or intact, connected, and resilient places within the watershed, the design serves as a **roadmap for conservation.**



Science-Based

The design factors in the locations of high-quality, resilient sites of **rare and common ecosystem** types throughout the watershed, from Long Island Sound to the peaks of the White Mountains.

It also considers **15 species** selected as representatives for others that rely on **important habitats** within the major types of natural systems found in the watershed. By focusing on high-quality habitat to sustain these representative species, the design addresses the needs of a range of fish and wildlife.



Complementary

The design complements local knowledge with data that provide state, regional, and national **context** for strategic decisions to **sustain key natural resources** in an era of accelerated climate change.

Example: To ensure common approaches for identifying conservation and management priorities on refuge lands, the design team and Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) team regularly shared information and resources. As a result, the two efforts provide consistent results and recommendations that together outline a roadmap for how partners can work collaboratively to conserve natural resources in the watershed for future generations.

Adaptable

The core team partners and their respective agencies and organizations are now testing the design as part of an **ongoing learning process**. Based on lessons learned, the design may be modified in the future.

Information and lessons learned from the landscape conservation design process and products are available and can be **applied in other geographies** throughout the Northeast, such as the Chesapeake Bay watershed.





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Learn more: www.connecttheconnecticut.org

