

# North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative

## 2013 Annual Highlights

### About the North Atlantic LCC

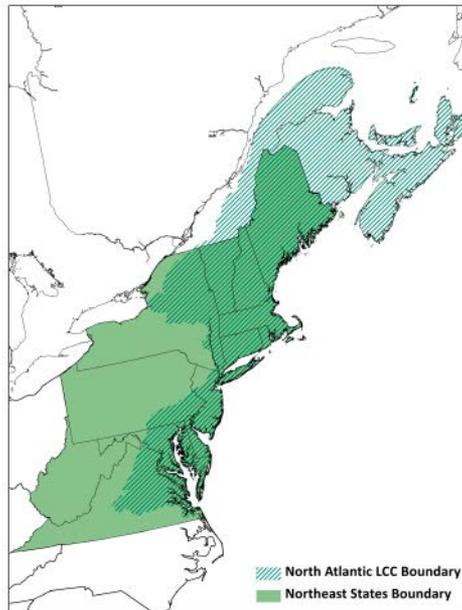
The North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) covers 13 states and 4 provinces in the northeastern U.S. and southeastern Canada. The LCC encompasses more than 129 million acres and 38,000 miles of shoreline with a diversity of terrestrial, aquatic, coastal and marine systems and a full spectrum of land use from urban to agricultural to wilderness. There is also a diversity of jurisdictions, partners and partnerships in the North Atlantic LCC area with a history of working together towards common goals.

The LCC provides a partnership in which the private, state, tribal and federal conservation community works together to address increasing land use pressures and widespread resource threats and uncertainties amplified by a rapidly changing climate. The partners and partnerships in the cooperative address these regional threats and uncertainties by agreeing on common goals for land, water, fish, wildlife, plant and cultural resources and jointly developing the scientific information and tools needed to prioritize and guide more effective conservation actions by partners toward those goals.

### Leveraging Partnerships

#### Coordination and Support for Hurricane Sandy Projects

The North Atlantic LCC is working with the Department of the Interior (DOI), its bureaus, and the broader conservation community to coordinate Hurricane Sandy resiliency science projects, identify science needs and help guide future restoration investments for marshes, beaches and streams.



#### Regional Context for State and Local Decisions

The North Atlantic LCC is providing broader context for state and local conservation decisions and actions supported through each Northeast state's State Wildlife Grants program by synthesizing regional conservation information on species and habitats for their State Wildlife Action Plan updates. The LCC worked with state agency partners to identify and prioritize regional conservation needs and priorities for more than 500 regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need and more than 150 habitat types. This regional information allows each state and their partners to work together across boundaries toward common regional conservation goals and to focus their conservation actions on the most important areas for sustaining species and habitats.

### Meeting Science Needs

#### Important Sites for Birds and Amphibians

The North Atlantic LCC is supporting two new projects to help partners prioritize key wildlife habitat. The first is a project to identify important migratory bird stopover sites for landbirds in the Northeast using weather radar. The second is a project to better understand where vernal pools are located across the Northeast to assist conservation of wildlife species that depend on them. These two projects will add to the foundational information on species and habitats assembled by the LCC to support conservation decisions.

#### Protecting Communities, Helping Fish and Wildlife

The North Atlantic LCC has leveraged its project funds with \$1.27 million in DOI Hurricane Sandy mitigation funds to coordinate and support a collaborative, region-wide effort to restore fish passage while reducing the resiliency of road stream crossings to future storms and floods.



*Brook trout*

## Planning, Design and Decision Support

### Designing Sustainable Landscapes

This ongoing LCC project is intended to assess the capability of current and potential future landscapes in the Northeast to provide integral ecosystems and suitable habitat for a suite of representative species, and provide guidance for strategic habitat conservation in the face of urban growth, changing climate, and other threats. The project has the following goals:

- Assess the current integrity of ecosystems and capability of habitats in the Northeast Region to support sustainable populations of wildlife;
- Predict the impacts of landscape-level changes (e.g., from urban growth, conservation programs, and climate change) on future ecological integrity and capability of these habitats to support wildlife populations;
- Target conservation programs to effectively and efficiently achieve objectives in conservation plans and evaluate progress under these plans; and
- Enhance coordination among partners during the planning, implementation and evaluation of habitat conservation.

## Information, Data and Tools

### Strategy and Priorities for Science Delivery

A consistent message from Northeast partners has been the need for increased emphasis on the delivery of science information and tools to partners in the scales and formats that they need. The North Atlantic LCC Science Delivery team includes more than 30 members each representing different delivery functions in federal agencies, state agencies, national NGOs, regional NGOs, tribes and watershed groups. The team identified priority needs for effectively delivering science, which the LCC is now implementing. These include:

- Development of a fully functional information management system;
- Increased capacity for translation of science into conservation tools, technical assistance, training, and targeted outreach;
- Grants to encourage partners/partnerships to use, test, or develop applications of data/tools; and
- Workshops with users to provide information and get feedback on the most effective way to integrate available information and to provide training on tools.

## Assessing, Inventory and Monitoring

### Assessing Species and Habitat Vulnerability

The North Atlantic LCC made two early investments in overall regional vulnerability assessments for species and habitats that are now complete. NatureServe and Heritage Program collaborators have developed a *Climate Change Vulnerability Index* to provide a rapid, scientifically defensible assessment of species' vulnerability to climate change. The North Atlantic LCC also supported the second phase of a regional project to study *Vulnerabilities to Climate Change of Northeast Fish and Wildlife Habitats*. This project built off a first phase of work funded by Northeast states through the Regional Conservation Needs program on the vulnerability to climate change of additional Northeastern habitat types resulting in three reports on regional vulnerabilities to terrestrial habitats, cold water fish habitat and coastal habitats. The project also resulted in the creation of a database of ongoing coastal climate change projects and tools, the Northeast Climate U.S. site:

<http://www.neclimateus.org/>.



*North Atlantic LCC Steering Committee*

#### For more information, contact

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#### To read the full North Atlantic LCC annual report, visit

<http://northatlanticlcc.org/the-cooperative/about-1/nalcc-annual-report-executive-summary/>



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