

North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Annual Report 2011

Executive Summary

In 2011, the North Atlantic LCC made significant progress in several areas including: vision, mission and goals; partnership development and operations; science needs assessments, workshops and plans; science project selection and implementation; and communications and information management.

Background

The North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) was formed late in the fall of 2009 as a conservation partnership consisting of federal agencies, states, tribes, universities and private organizations working collaboratively to develop scientific information and tools needed to prioritize and guide conservation actions in the North Atlantic Region from southeast Virginia north to Atlantic Canada. The North Atlantic LCC is part of a network of LCCs across the United States and adjacent areas of Canada and Mexico.



The North Atlantic LCC is a self-directed regional partnership. The Department of the Interior through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing project support and staff to facilitate this partnership.

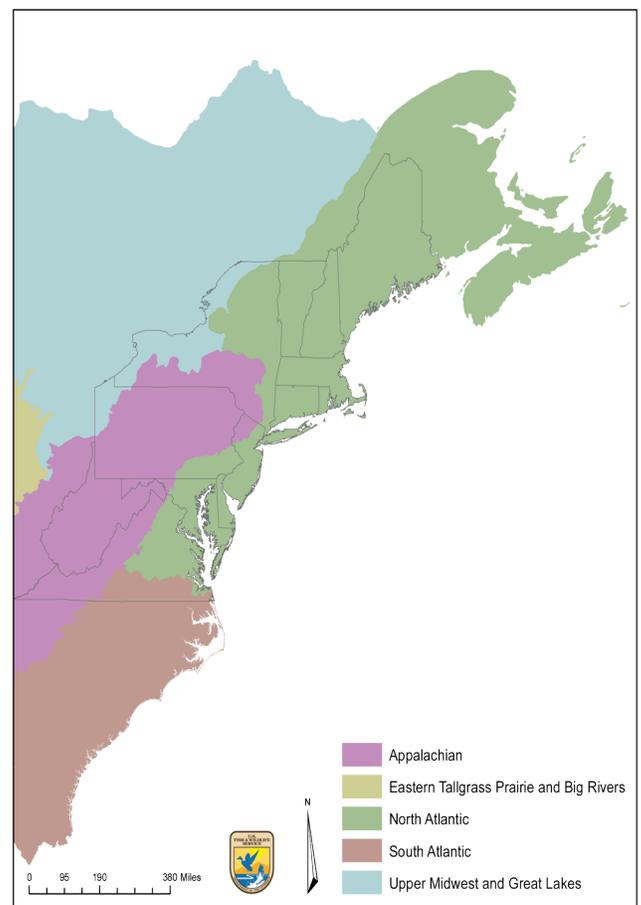
Vision

Landscapes that sustain our natural resources and cultural heritage maintained in a healthy state through active collaboration of conservation partners and partnerships in the North Atlantic region.

Mission Statement

The North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative 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.

LCCs in the Northeast



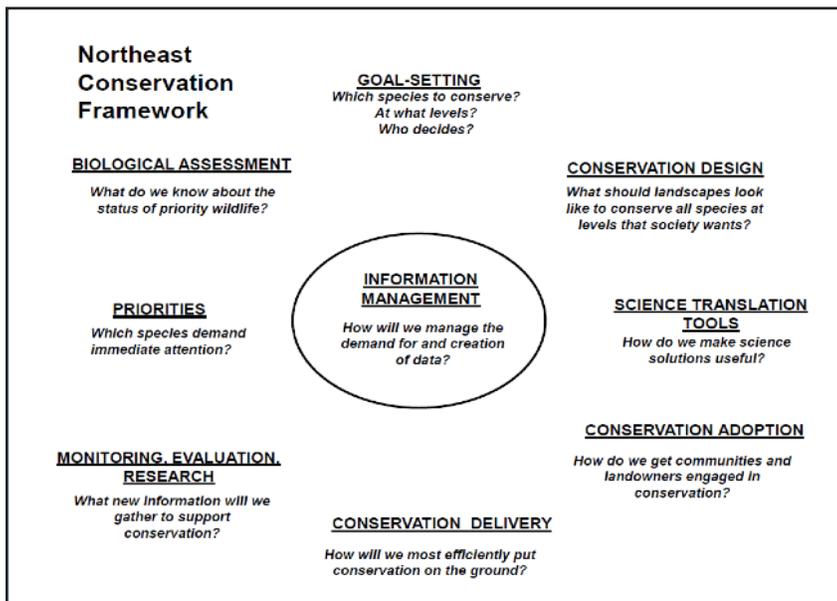
To read and download the entire annual report, please visit: http://www.northatlantic.cc.org/annual_report2011.

Building a Conservation Framework and Delivering a Science Strategy

Northeast Regional Conservation Framework Workshop 2011

The LCC worked with Northeast States to host the Northeast Regional Conservation Framework Workshop in Albany, New York in June, 2011 with 86 participants. The specific objectives of the workshop included: reviewing, synthesizing and increasing understanding in the Regional Conservation Needs (RCN) and initial LCC projects completed or underway; discussing challenges, needs, and opportunities for the RCN program and LCCs in the Northeast; exploring and discussing opportunities for collaborations to address common needs; and developing initial consensus on a common conservation framework, vision, and highest priorities going forward (see diagram below). A major outcome of the workshop was agreement on a vision of landscapes that sustain natural resources and human needs and the need for a regional framework to achieve that vision. Specifically, the group agreed that the elements in this common conservation framework, including multi-species landscape designs, are logical and necessary to inform decision making by the conservation community to achieve that vision.

For more information, visit the workshop website: http://www.northeastatlanticlcc.org/rcn_workshop.html



North Atlantic LCC Science Needs Assessment

In 2011, in order to make informed decisions about priorities for additional science and technical projects and capacity, the North Atlantic LCC made a broad request for science needs to conservation programs, partners and partnerships in the North Atlantic LCC area. The LCC asked for science needs and projects that were landscape or regional in scope; were focused on informing management decisions and actions; and addressed major threats and uncertainties to sustaining natural or cultural resources. The LCC received 207 needs from partners that were synthesized and prioritized into a set of 17 common science needs.

North Atlantic LCC Conservation Science Strategic Plan

The staff and partners of the North Atlantic LCC completed a Conservation Science Strategic Plan to articulate a vision, common conservation framework, process and initial priorities for developing shared science capacity for the North Atlantic LCC. The Conservation Science Strategic Plan ties together the Mission and Vision Statement, the results of the Science Needs Assessment, and the results of the Northeast Conservation Framework Workshop.



James Weliver/USFWS



Ralph Tiner/USFWS



Ralph Tiner/USFWS

Funding Projects Consistent with the Conservation Framework and Science Strategy

In late 2010 and early 2011, North Atlantic LCC projects funded in fiscal year 2010 were initiated. These projects were all priorities of existing partnerships in the Northeast. The common theme of these projects is increasing understanding of how landscapes and habitats are changing due to both climate change and land use change and providing science and tools to make conservation decisions in light of these changes for terrestrial, aquatic, and coastal systems. For each of these projects, the LCC has developed science and management advisory teams and scheduled a webinar. A total of \$1,249,450 was allocated to these projects.

Fiscal year 2011 projects address the top priorities from the science needs assessment and strategic plan that were not already being addressed and additional high priorities identified at the Northeast Conservation Framework Workshop, including information management and conservation design. A total of \$935,331 was allocated to these projects.

Fiscal Year 2010

Evaluating the Vulnerabilities of Ecological Resources to Climate Change in the Northeast

Providing Science and Tools in Support of the North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative: Designing Sustainable Landscapes for Wildlife

North Atlantic LCC: Wildlife Habitat Models for Terrestrial Vertebrates

Forecasting Changes in Aquatic Systems and Resilience of Aquatic Populations

Forecast Effects of Sea Level Rise on Habitat of Piping Plovers & Identify Responsive Conservation Strategies

Fiscal Year 2011

Northeast Regional Species Vulnerability Assessment incorporating the NatureServe Climate Change Vulnerability Index (CCVI)

Species-habitat Modeling of Additional Representative Species for the Designing Sustainable Landscapes project

Assessing Priority Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Areas (PARCAs) and Vulnerability to Climate Change in the North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Fiscal Year 2011 cont.

Mapping the Distribution, Abundance and Risk Assessment of Marine Birds in the Northwest Atlantic: Phase 1

Completion of Terrestrial Habitat Map for Virginia & Maryland Piedmont and Coastal Plain to be Consistent with Rest of Region

Information Management Needs Assessment

Conservation Design: Compilation, Synthesis, Modification, Translation and Adoption of Existing Spatial Data and Tools

Permeable Landscapes for Species of Greatest Conservation Need and Representative Species

Application of the Coastal and Maine Ecological Classification and Standards (CMECS) to the Northeast

Communicating Science

In 2011, the LCC continued to build communications and information management capacity to communicate and translate science for resource managers. This capacity includes: a website, a webinar series, a variety of fact sheets, meetings with partners, and information management.



Marvin Moriarty/USFWS



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Partnership: The foundation of the North Atlantic LCC

The Partnership

The North Atlantic LCC is building on and integrating existing partners and partnerships in the Northeast. In 2011, the North Atlantic LCC agreed on and implemented initial governance structures and processes needed to achieve its mission including a steering committee and technical committees.



Steering Committee

The North Atlantic LCC Steering Committee includes 34 formal members including 14 agencies from northeast states and the District of Columbia, tribal representatives (initially through United South and Eastern Tribes), nine federal agencies, Canadian partners (initially through the Canadian Wildlife Service), and nine non-governmental organizations.

Technical Committee

The North Atlantic LCC Technical Committee includes a broad partnership of 25 scientists representing a diversity of taxonomic, ecosystem and jurisdictional perspectives. A number of standing and ad-hoc sub-teams have also been formed including terrestrial/wetland, aquatic and coastal/marine teams as well as a demonstration projects team. The technical committee provides science and technical recommendations to the steering committee.

Staff

In 2011, the North Atlantic LCC added two contract positions, a Science Coordinator to help deliver its overall conservation science work and a Conservation Design Specialist to work on conservation design, adoption and delivery. The National Park Service added a full-time Coastal Landscape Adaptation Specialist to work with coastal parks and the LCC on coastal issues. The LCC also started a series of short-term details with experts to address specific issues including invasive species, contaminants and aquatics.

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For more information, please visit the North Atlantic LCC website, <http://www.northatlanticlcc.org>.

Steering Committee Members

