**Regional Actions by RCN Project**

**Northeastern terrestrial wildlife habitat classification**

Action: Adopt NE Terrestrial Habitat Classification System as the regional standard for defining non-aquatic wildlife habitats in the northeast. This will ensure consistency across jurisdictional boundaries with respect to conservation actions and state Wildlife Action Planning.

States: All

Species: Terrestrial Wildlife

Habitats: Terrestrial

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions: 3.1.1 – Database Development and Management

**Northeastern aquatic habitat classification**

Action: Adopt NE Aquatic Classification System as the regional standard for defining aquatic habitats in the northeast. This will ensure consistency across jurisdictional boundaries with respect to conservation actions and state Wildlife Action Plans.

States: All

Species: Aquatic Wildlife

Habitats: Aquatic

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions: 3.1.1 – Database Development and Management

**Regional monitoring and performance framework**

Action: Implement the Regional Monitoring and Performance Framework as the standard for NEAFWA states to measure the effectiveness of conservation activities and state Wildlife Action Plans.

States: All

Species: Regionally significant SGCN, Highly Migratory Species

Habitats: 1 – Forest and Woodlands, 2.C.5 – Freshwater Marsh, 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland, 6.B.2 – Cliff & Rock, 4.B.1 – Alpine, Other – Caves/Karst/Mines, Waterfalls

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions: 3.2.3 – Baseline Inventory (Fish and Wildlife Populations), 3.2.7 – Population Assessment (Fish and Wildlife Populations), 3.3.1 – Baseline Inventory (Habitat), 3.3.2 – Monitoring (Habitat)

**Regional Habitat Maps: NE Terrestrial Habitat Classification System (RCN 2007-01)**

Action: Adopt the Regional Habitat Maps as the baseline for documenting the distribution and abundance of wildlife habitat in the northeast region.

States: All

Species: Terrestrial Wildlife

Habitats: Terrestrial

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions: 3.1.1 – Database Development and Management

**Northeast Regional Aquatic Connectivity Assessment Project (RCN 2007-02)**

Action: Provide a portal to ensure that the Northeast Connectivity Assessment Tool (NCAT) and Northeast Aquatic Connectivity associated analysis tools (e.g. the Barrier Analysis Tool‐BAT) are available online.

States: All

Species: Aquatic Wildlife

Habitats: Aquatic

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions: 3.1.1 – Database Development and Management, 3.1.2 – Information Systems Operations and Maintenance

Action: Convene annual meetings of the Northeast Aquatic Connectivity Workgroup to review and discuss:

* Use of, and complications with the use of, the NCAT and associated products at the state, basin or multi‐state scales
* Updates that have been made to state or other relevant databases
* New decision support systems and assessment methodologies that have been developed in the region (e.g. future Chesapeake Connectivity Tool)
* Assess potential collaborations with federal and other multi‐state institutions, including those outside the Northeast region
* Recommendations for revision of the Northeast Aquatic Connectivity databases (e.g. new dam removals, impassable waterfall locations, anadromous fish habitat extent)
* Recommendations for revision NCAT methodology (e.g. default weights)
* Recommendations for addition to the Northeast Aquatic Connectivity databases (e.g. culvert assessment data, anadromous or resident habitat information, regional ecological databases)

States: All

Species: Aquatic Wildlife

Habitats: Aquatic

TRACS Level 1: 1 – Coordination and Administration

TRACS Actions: 1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support

**Development of Avian Indicators and Measures (RCN 2007-04)**

Action: Integrate monitoring into bird management and conservation decision-making processes and ensure that monitoring is aligned with management and conservation priorities.

States: All

Species: Birds

Habitats: All

TRACS Level 1: 9 - Planning

TRACS Actions: 9.3.1 – Species Management Planning, 9.3.2 – Listed Species Recovery Planning

Action: Broaden the scope of current monitoring for species that are most at risk and for which we have inadequate information to make effective management decisions.

States: All

Species: Birds

Habitats: All

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions: 3.2 - Research, survey or monitoring - fish and wildlife populations

Action: Coordinate monitoring programs among organizations and integrate them across spatial scales to solve conservation or management problems effectively.

States: All

Species: Birds

Habitats: All

TRACS Level 1: 1 – Coordination and Administration

TRACS Actions: 1.1 – Coordination and Administration

Action: Increase the value of monitoring information by improving survey design, field methods, and data analysis.

States: All

Species: Birds

Habitats: All

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions: 3.5.4 - Fish and wildlife research, survey and management techniques

Action: Maintain bird population monitoring data in modern data management systems. Recognizing legal, institutional, proprietary, and other constraints provide greater availability of raw data, associated metadata, and summary data for bird monitoring programs.

States: All

Species: Birds

Habitats: All

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions: 3.1.1 – Database Development and Management

**Regional Biomass Initiative for Early-Successional SGCN (2007-07)**

Action: State fish and wildlife agencies should make a proactive and concerted effort to engage biomass industry entities by encouraging wildlife biologists to participate in active communications with their industry counterparts at early in the project planning process as possible.

States: All

Species: Early-successional and shrubland species

Habitats: 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland

TRACS Level 1: 11 – Technical Assistance

TRACS Actions: 11.1.1 – Review of Proposed Projects

**Conservation Strategy for the New England cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)**

Action: Established a framework for NEC recovery oversight, administration and coordination

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: New England cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)

Habitats: 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland

TRACS Level 1: 1 – Coordination and Administration, 3 – Data Collection and Analysis, 9 - Planning

TRACS Actions:

* Convene NEC Executive Committee (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)
* Convene NEC Technical Committee (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)
* Review Species Status (3.2.7 – Population Assessment)
* Review Performance (9.3.1 – Species Management Planning)
* Review Strategy Adaptations (9.3.1 – Species Management Planning)
* Coordinate Information and Adaptive Management Work Group (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)

Coordinate Research and Monitoring Work Group (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)

* Coordinate NEC Land Management Teams in Each State (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)
* Coordinate Population Management Work Group (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)
* Coordinate Outreach Work Group (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)
* Coordinate Land Protection Work Group (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)

Action: Establish the capacity to manage and share data among NEC recovery partners

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: New England cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)

Habitats: 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis, 8 – Outreach, 11 – Technical Assistance

TRACS Actions:

* Assess Data Management Needs (3.1.1 – Database Development and Management and Management)
* Develop and Integrate Data Management Tools (3.1.1 – Database Development and Management)
* Maintain and Manage Spatial Data (3.1.1 – Database Development and Management)
* Maintain and Manage Planning Data (3.1.1 – Database Development and Management)
* Maintain and Manage NEC Status Data (3.1.1 – Database Development and Management)
* Maintain and Manage Management Performance Data (3.1.1 – Database Development and Management)
* Acquire Necessary Data and Permissions (3.1.1 – Database Development and Management)
* Provide Technical Assistance to Managers (11.2.1 – Technical Assistance with individuals and groups involved in resource management decision making)
* Create and Share Status and Performance Reports (8.1 – Partner/stakeholder Engagement)
* Respond to Requests for Data (8.1 – Partner/stakeholder Engagement)

Action: Establish a comprehensive monitoring program for NEC throughout its range

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: New England cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)

Habitats: 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland

TRACS Level 1: 2 – Direct Management of Natural Resources, 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions:

* Quantify Extent of Habitat (3.3.1 – Baseline Inventory, Habitat)
* Measure Habitat Occupancy Rates (3.2.1 – Abundance Determination)
* Presence/Absence Distribution Surveys (3.2.3 – Baseline Inventory, Species)
* Measure Vegetation Response to Management (3.3.2 – Monitoring, Habitat)
* Monitor Disease and Parasitism (2.14 – Wildlife Disease Management)

Action: Establish the capacity to recruit land owners for voluntary management of NEC habitat on at least 7,000-15,000 acres.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: New England cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)

Habitats: 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland

TRACS Level 1: 1 – Administration and Coordination, 3 – Data Collection and Analysis, 9 - Planning

TRACS Actions:

* Convene NEC Land Management Team for Each State (1.2.1 – Incentives)
* Develop and Deliver Incentives (1.2.1 – Incentives)
* Hire a Recruitment Coordinator (1.2.1 – Incentives)
* Contact Landowners (1.2.1 – Incentives)
* Conduct Site Assessments (9.3.3 – Habitat Management Planning)
* Draft Applications, Preliminary Plans, and Cost Estimates (9.3.3 – Habitat Management Planning)
* Draft and Review Land Management Ranking and Eligibility Criteria (9.3.3 – Habitat Management Planning)
* Manage Parcel Information and Landowner Status (3.1.1 – Database Development and Management)
* Develop a Business Plan Incorporating Parcel Ranking and Reserve Design Principles (9.3.1 – Species Management Planning)

Action: Establish the capacity to augment and manage critically low NEC populations or create new ones.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: New England cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)

Habitats: 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland

TRACS Level 1: 2 – Direct Management of Natural Resources, 4 – Education, 10 - Species Reintroduction and Stocking

TRACS Actions:

* Obtain NEC for Captive Breeding (10.1.1 – Propagation and Stocking)
* Conduct Zoo-Based Husbandry (10.1.1 – Propagation and Stocking)
* Evaluate Enclosure-Based Husbandry (10.1.1 – Propagation and Stocking)
* Manage Island Colony or Colonies (10.1.1 – Propagation and Stocking, 10.1.3 - Translocation
* Release NEC to Augment or Establish Populations (10.1.1 – Propagation and Stocking)
* Manage Eastern Cottontails (2.8 – Invasive Species Control)
* Manage Predators (2.13 – Wildlife Damage Management)
* Manage Disease (2.14 – Wildlife Disease Management)
* Manage hunting (4.1.2 – Hunter Education)
* Reduce Predation (2.13 – Wildlife Damage Management)

Action: Establish the capacity to create and manage 35,900 acres of habitat for NEC by 2020.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: New England cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)

Habitats: 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland

TRACS Level 1: 1- Coordination and Administration, 2 – Direct Management of Natural Resources, 3 – Data Collection and Analysis, 8 - Outreach

TRACS Actions:

* Create Demonstration Areas (2.1.1 – Habitat Conversion, 8.3 – Program/sub-program Outreach)
* Develop Site-Specific Management Plans (9.3.3 – Habitat Management Planning)
* Coordinate with National Wildlife Refuges (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)
* Coordinate with National Estuarine Research Reserves (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)
* Create Habitat on Private Land through Farm Bill Funding (2.1.1 – Habitat Conversion)
* Create Habitat on Private Lands Not Eligible for Farm Bill Funding(2.1.1 – Habitat Conversion)
* Create Habitat on Municipal Land (2.1.1 – Habitat Conversion)
* Create Habitat on State Land (2.1.1 – Habitat Conversion)
* Create Habitat on Federal Land (2.1.1 – Habitat Conversion)
* Manage Habitat Through Prescribed Burning (2.3.3 Prescribed Burning)
* Refine Best Management Practices for Making NEC Habitat (3.5.3 – Habitat Restoration Methods)
* Manage Contracts and Vendors (Program/project Administrative Support)
* Implement Restoration (Acres) on Tribal Lands (2.1.1 Habitat Conversion)

Action: Establish a research program to address gaps in information and key uncertainties

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: New England cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)

Habitats: 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions:

* Determine NEC Demography (3.2.2 – Age, Size and Sex Structure, 3.2.8 – Reproduction)
* Determine NEC Distribution and Abundance (3.2.1 – Abundance, 3.2.3 – Baseline Inventory)
* Study NEC/Eastern Cottontail Interaction (3.5.4 – Fish and Wildlife Research, Survey and Management Techniques)
* Investigate Habitat Ecology (3.5.4 – Fish and Wildlife Research, Survey and Management Techniques)
* Study NEC Taxonomy and Genetics (3.2.5 – Genetics)
* Test Management Assumptions (3.5.3 – Habitat Restoration Methods, 3.5.4 – Fish and Wildlife Research, Survey and Management Techniques)

Action: Establish an outreach and education program to keep partners and the public informed, to garner political support for NEC conservation and to minimize social barriers to creating NEC habitat.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: New England cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)

Habitats: 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland

TRACS Level 1: 8 – Outreach

TRACS Actions:

* Develop an Outreach Strategy (8.3 - Program/sub-program Outreach)
* Develop and Maintain a Website (8.3 - Program/sub-program Outreach)
* Develop Communications Products to Explain and Further NEC Conservation (8.3 - Program/sub-program Outreach)
* Direct Outreach Efforts to NEC Focus Areas (8.3 - Program/sub-program Outreach)
* Target Outreach to Key Audiences (8.3 - Program/sub-program Outreach)

Action: Establish partnerships and funding sources for land acquisition to benefit NEC management efforts.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: New England cottontail (*Sylvilagus transitionalis*)

Habitats: 2.C.1 – Grassland and Shrubland

TRACS Level 1: 6 - Land and Water Rights Acquisition and Protection

TRACS Actions:

* Expand National Wildlife Refuge Partnerships and Land Protection Efforts (6.1 – Land Acquisition)
* Develop Local and Regional Land Protection Partnerships (6.1 – Land Acquisition)
* Develop Projects (6.1 – Land Acquisition)
* Raise Funds (6.1 – Land Acquisition)
* Develop Land Protection Ranking Criteria (6.1 – Land Acquisition)

**Conservation of Blanding’s Turtle and Associated Wetland SGCN in the Northeast**

Action: Develop a conservation plan for Blanding’s turtle and associated SGCN in the Northeast, including identifying spatially explicit conservation priorities.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: Blanding’s Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)

Habitats: 2.C.5 – Freshwater Marsh

TRACS Level 1: 9 - Planning

TRACS Actions:

* Identify Blanding’s turtle population units throughout the Northeast (9.3.2 – Listed Species Recovery Planning)
* Assign Quality Ranks to all known Blanding’s turtle populations within the Northeast (9.3.2 – Listed Species Recovery Planning)
* Identify Blanding’s turtle conservation priorities within Northeast (9.3.2 – Listed Species Recovery Planning)
* Develop spatially explicit parcel maps for Blanding’s turtle conservation priorities (9.3.2 – Listed Species Recovery Planning)
* Develop spatially explicit management plans at one to four high priority sites in each state and at least 15 overall (9.3.2 – Listed Species Recovery Planning)
* Compile information from Projects I-III into a Northeast Blanding’s Turtle Conservation Plan (9.3.2 – Listed Species Recovery Planning)

Action: Engage key partners, including state and federal transportation agencies, natural resources agencies, land trusts, municipalities, landowners, and other local stakeholders to implement priorities identified in spatially-explicit management plans.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: Blanding’s Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)

Habitats: 2.C.5 – Freshwater Marsh

TRACS Level 1: 8 - Outreach

TRACS Actions:

* Disseminate management plans and implementation priorities and engage key partners including transportation agencies, all local stakeholders, landowners, and partnering agencies (8.1 – Partner/stakeholder Engagement)
* Host at least one workshop in each state with key land conservation partners; present results, solicit feedback, and initiate next steps toward plan implementation (8.1 – Partner/stakeholder Engagement)

Action: Assess genetic relationships among Blanding’s turtle populations within the Northeast region.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: Blanding’s Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)

Habitats: 2.C.5 – Freshwater Marsh

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions:

* Assess the population genetic structure of Blanding’s turtle populations in the Northeast and incorporate findings into conservation planning and priority area management in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, and Pennsylvania (3.2.5 - Research, Survey or Monitoring – Fish and Wildlife Populations: Genetics)
* Examine isolated/outlier Blanding’s turtle populations in Pennsylvania and New York to determine origin (naturally occurring or introduced) (3.2.5 - Research, Survey or Monitoring – Fish and Wildlife Populations: Genetics)
* Compare the genetic structure of Blanding’s turtle populations within the Northeast region to those in the Midwest region and Canada to provide a spatially explicit assessment of the discrete population groups across the species’ range (3.2.5 - Research, Survey or Monitoring – Fish and Wildlife Populations: Genetics)

Action: Develop standardized monitoring protocols for Blanding’s turtle in the Northeast.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: Blanding’s Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)

Habitats: 2.C.5 – Freshwater Marsh

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis

TRACS Actions:

* Develop standardized monitoring protocols for rapid site assessments (3.5.4 – Fish and Wildlife Research, Survey and Management Techniques)
* Develop standardized monitoring protocols for long-term reference sites 3.5.4 – Fish and Wildlife Research, Survey and Management Techniques)

Action: Implement standardized monitoring protocols.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: Blanding’s Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)

Habitats: 2.C.5 – Freshwater Marsh

TRACS Level 1: 3 – Data Collection and Analysis, 9 - Planning

TRACS Actions:

* Select sites for rapid assessment and long-term reference monitoring (3.2.3 – Baseline Inventory)
* Implement rapid assessment protocols (3.2.3 – Baseline Inventory)
* Initiate the first year of long-term, reference site monitoring (3.2.3 – Baseline Inventory)
* Apply sampling results to validate conservation priorities established and inform management plans (9.3.2 – Listed Species Recovery Planning)

Action: Initiate on-the-ground implementation of priority actions to increase viability of Blanding’s turtle populations and associated SGCN.

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: Blanding’s Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)

Habitats: 2.C.5 – Freshwater Marsh

TRACS Level 1: 2 – Direct Management of Natural Resources, 8 – Outreach

TRACS Actions:

* Create and/or enhance nesting habitat for Blanding’s turtles and other SGCN in at least 1 site per state and at least 5 in the region (2.4.3 – Nesting Habitat Improvements)
* Implement a turtle X-ing sign program in each state & install signs in at least 5 areas (8.3 – Program/sub-program Outreach)

Action: Coordination and Administration

States: ME, NH, MA, CT, RI, NY

Species: Blanding’s Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)

Habitats: 2.C.5 – Freshwater Marsh

TRACS Level 1: 1 – Coordination and Administration

TRACS Actions:

* Coordinate and Administer the Initiative (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)
* Evaluate performance of grant objectives (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)
* Report actions accomplished through grant (1.1.2 – Program/project Administrative Support)