

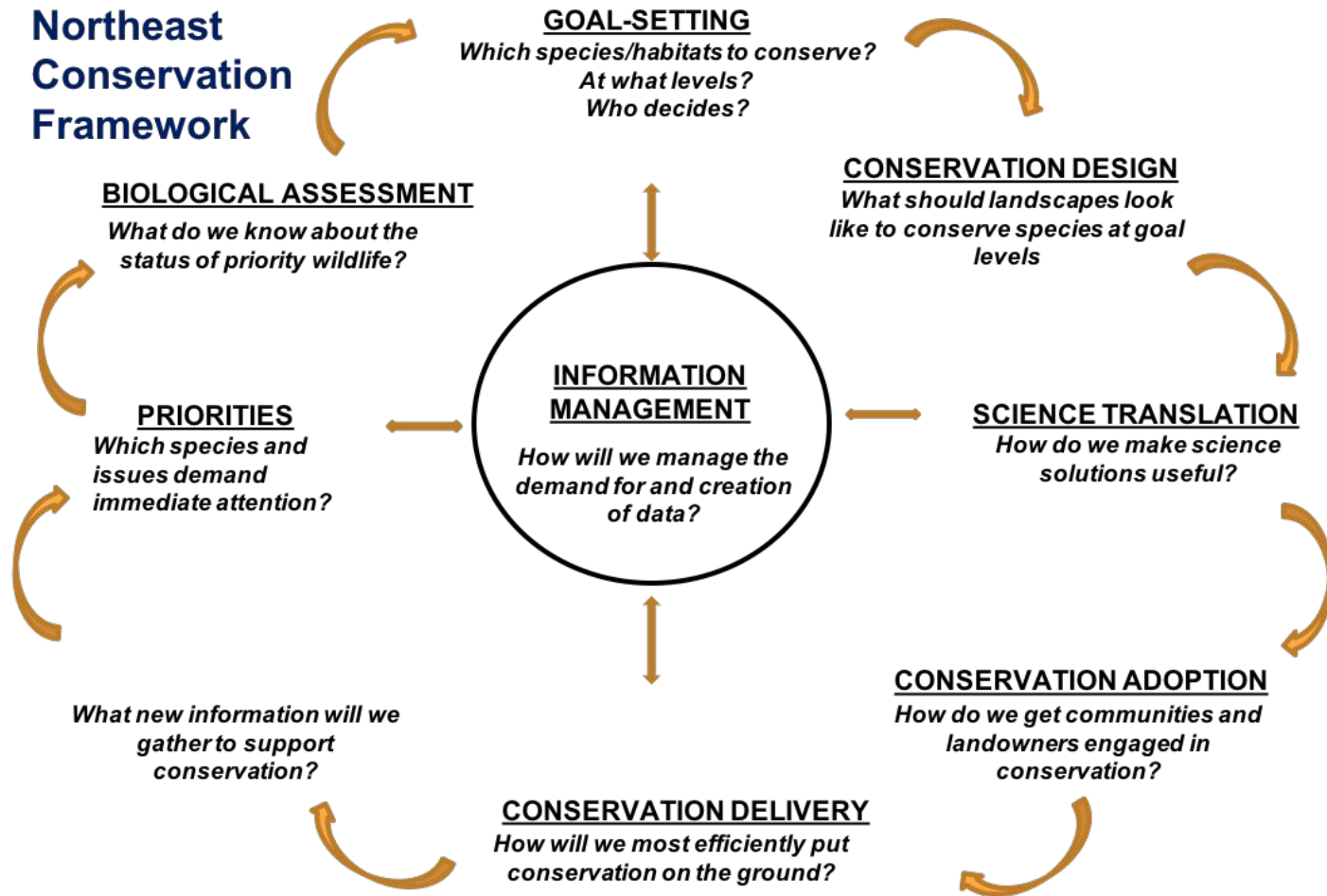
# **A Conservation Design for the Northeast** ***Northeast Regional Conservation*** ***Opportunity Areas Version 1.0***

## **RCOA Update**

**October 24, 2016**



# Northeast Conservation Framework



# What we did

A team of partners from **13 states, the NALCC, USFWS, NGOs**, and universities worked together to **align priorities** and map opportunities for unified conservation action across the Northeast region.

# Vision

A **connected** network of **resilient** and **ecologically intact** habitats that will support **biodiversity** under changing conditions...

# What it means

The project mapped a landscape pattern and created a **suite of resources** that partners can **use voluntarily** to help **identify opportunities for conserving key habitats** and the species that depend on them.

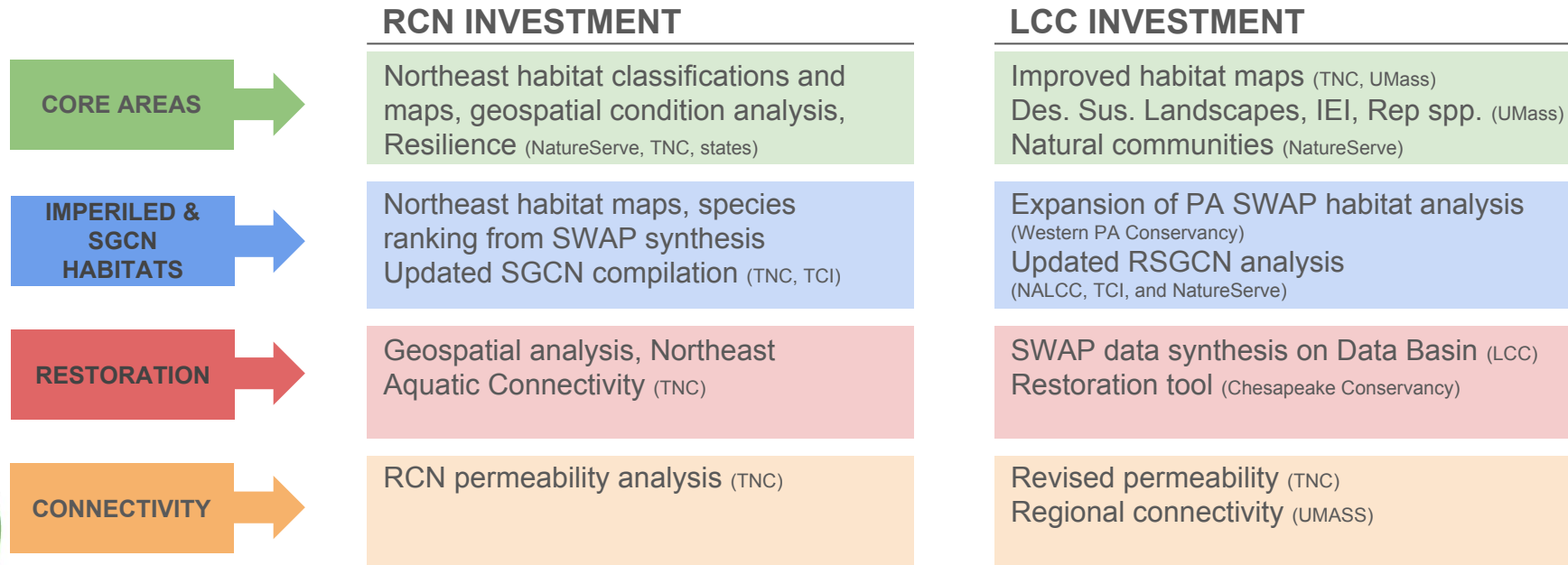
# What it means

**New tools for aligning priorities can help partners to:**

- **“all pull in the same direction”**
- **base actions on science**
- **implement efficiently and with precision**

# Background

## Investing in landscape science and SWAP coordination since 2006



# Summary of Review Process

## **AUGUST 2016** - Launched Version 1.0 draft products for review

- **Developed website** to provide access to data and resources for reviewers
- **Developed review maps** on Data Basin
- **Led webinar series** to introduce users to components and facilitate review

## **SEPTEMBER 2016** - Gathering and responding to input

- **Collecting feedback** from test users in webinars and online comment forms
- **Providing briefings** to update partners and identify needs for training and outreach
- **Synthesizing input** to share with reviewers in online forum on 9/28



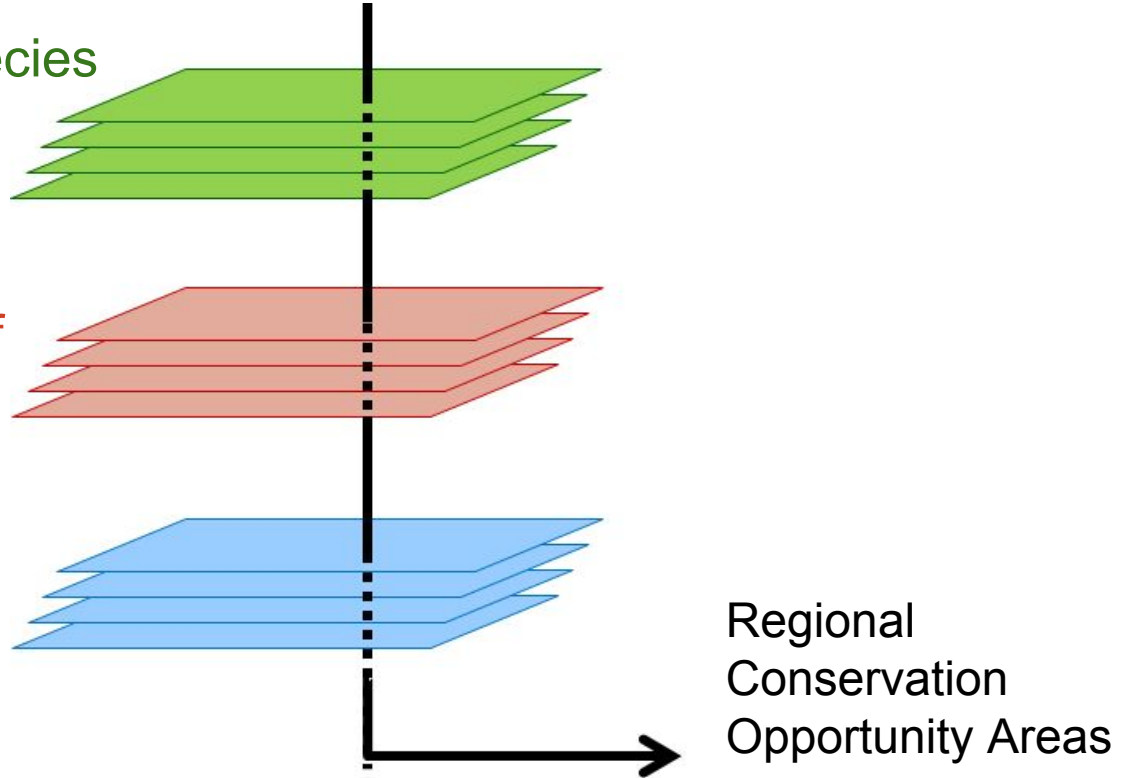
# Summary of Review Process

## Snapshot of participants in August webinar series

TOPIC	ATTENDEES	AGENCIES/ ORGS	STATES
Overview of Data Use & Application (Repeated 4 times)	60	25	MA, MD, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA
Terrestrial Core Networks	19	10	MA, ME, NH, NJ, PA, VA
Connectivity	19	8	ME, NH, NJ, VA
Restoration	17	8	MA, ME, NH, NJ, VA
Aquatic Core Networks	11	8	ME, NJ, VA
Important Habitats	19	8	NH, NJ, PA, RI, VA

# Design Builds Upon a Host of Datasets and Assessments

- Habitat for dozens of species of fish and wildlife
- Integrity and resilience of ecosystems
- Locations of rare natural communities

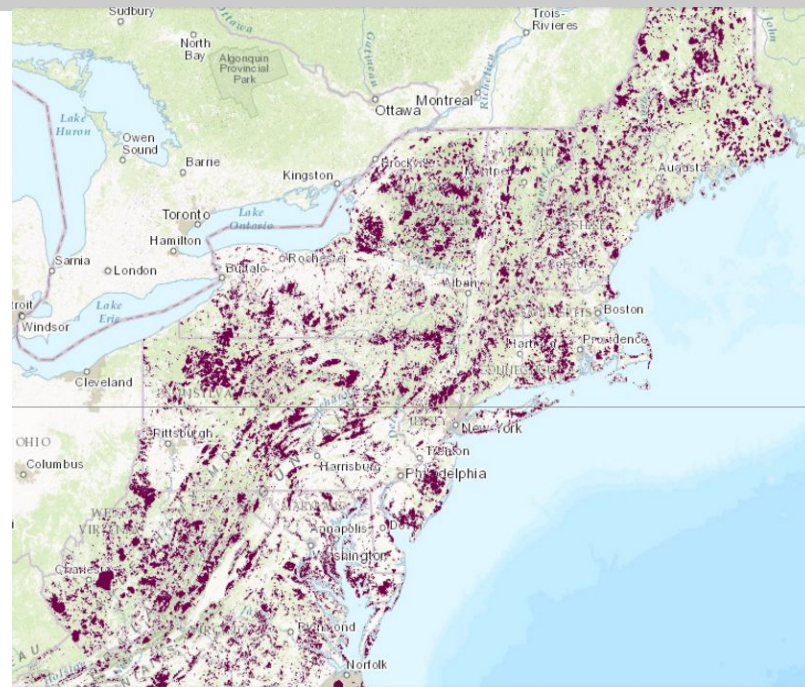


# Core habitat network

Based on terrestrial and aquatic habitats (Northeast Habitat Classification)

Mapped core areas show alignment of:

- **UMASS** Index of Ecological Integrity
- **TNC** Resiliency
- Representative species
- State Natural Communities

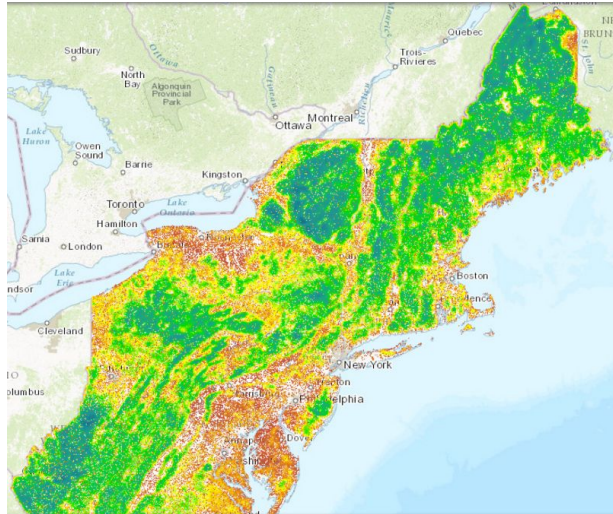


# Habitat for Representative Species

UMass Designing Sustainable Landscapes project + others



30 representative species of  
terrestrial and wetland wildlife



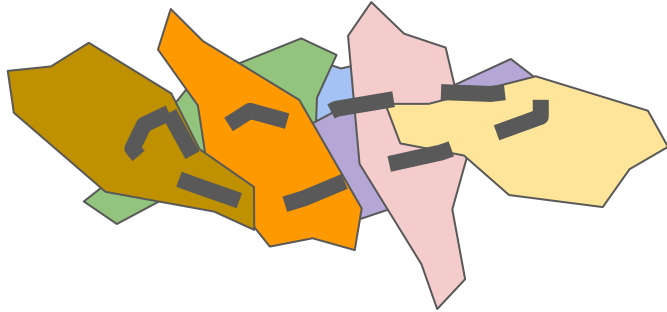
Brook trout and  
anadromous fish



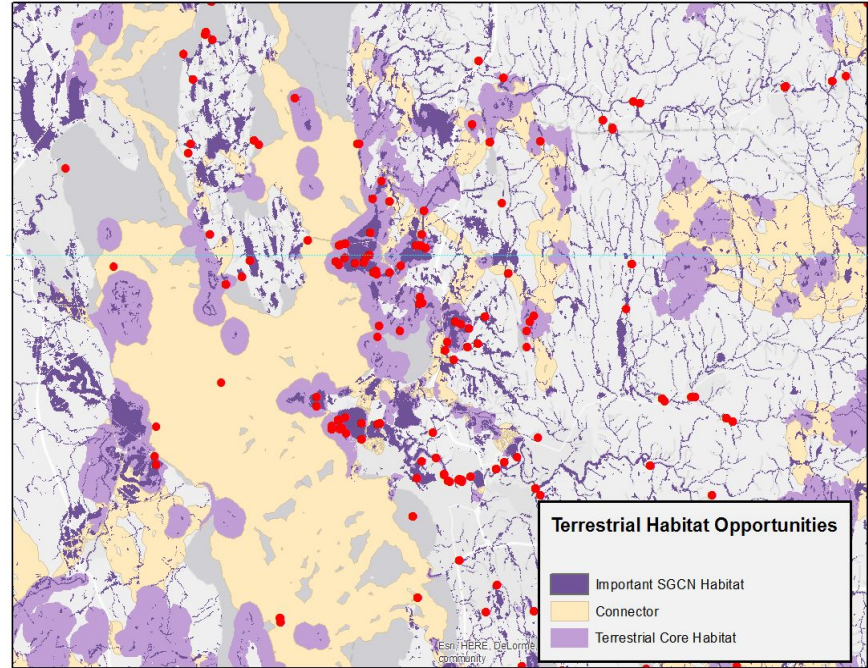
# Important habitats for SGCN

A clear pattern for biodiversity based on thousands of species

- It is most efficient to find maximum **alignment** of habitats



- Riparian habitats are critical for all plants and animals**

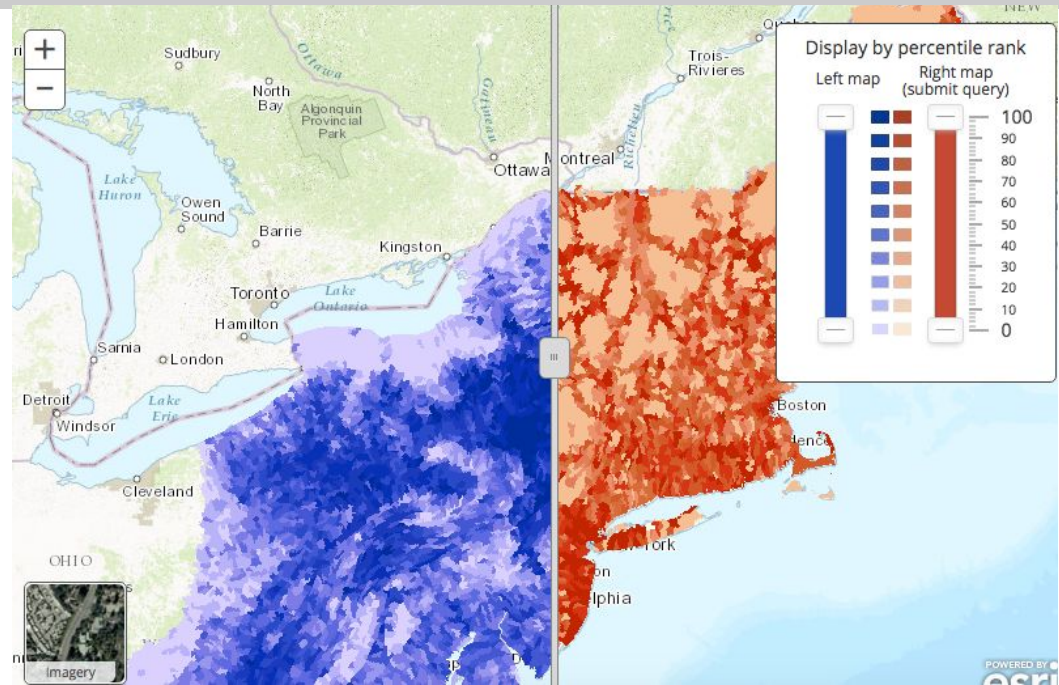




# Restoration Tool

Interactive tool for interactive conservation planning

- Allows managers to develop custom prioritization scenarios and download their own results



A large background image of a forest stream flowing over mossy rocks, surrounded by dense trees and foliage.[Home](#)[About](#)[Data & Tools](#)[News and Info](#)[Contact](#)

# Regional Conservation Opportunity Areas Version 1.0

One region, 13 states, thousands of opportunities to move conservation forward together

[LEARN MORE](#)[EXPLORE THE MAPS](#)



# Data & Tools

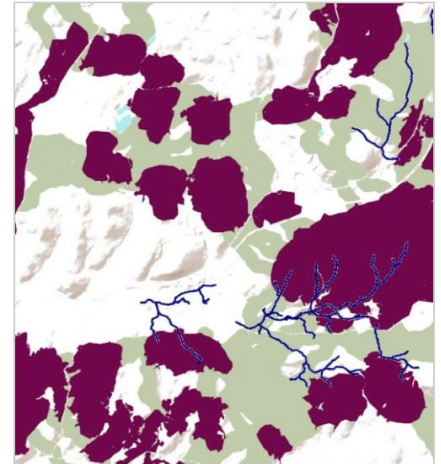
Regional Conservation Opportunity Areas Version 1.0 offers a suite of decision-support tools that are intended to complement information and expertise developed by state agencies, federal programs, and partner organizations. These resources provide regional context to help people working at any scale identify best opportunities for conserving intact terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, supporting habitat for species, restoring habitats, and connecting natural areas across the Northeast.

Regional Conservation Opportunity Areas Version 1.0 is a dynamic tool that will evolve over time based on updated information. Feedback on this product will be used to improve the next iteration, Version 2.0.

To review the maps, click the button below to visit the Regional Conservation Opportunity Areas Version 1.0 gallery on the North Atlantic LCC's Conservation Planning Atlas (Data Basin), a free mapping platform where you can access all the spatial data.

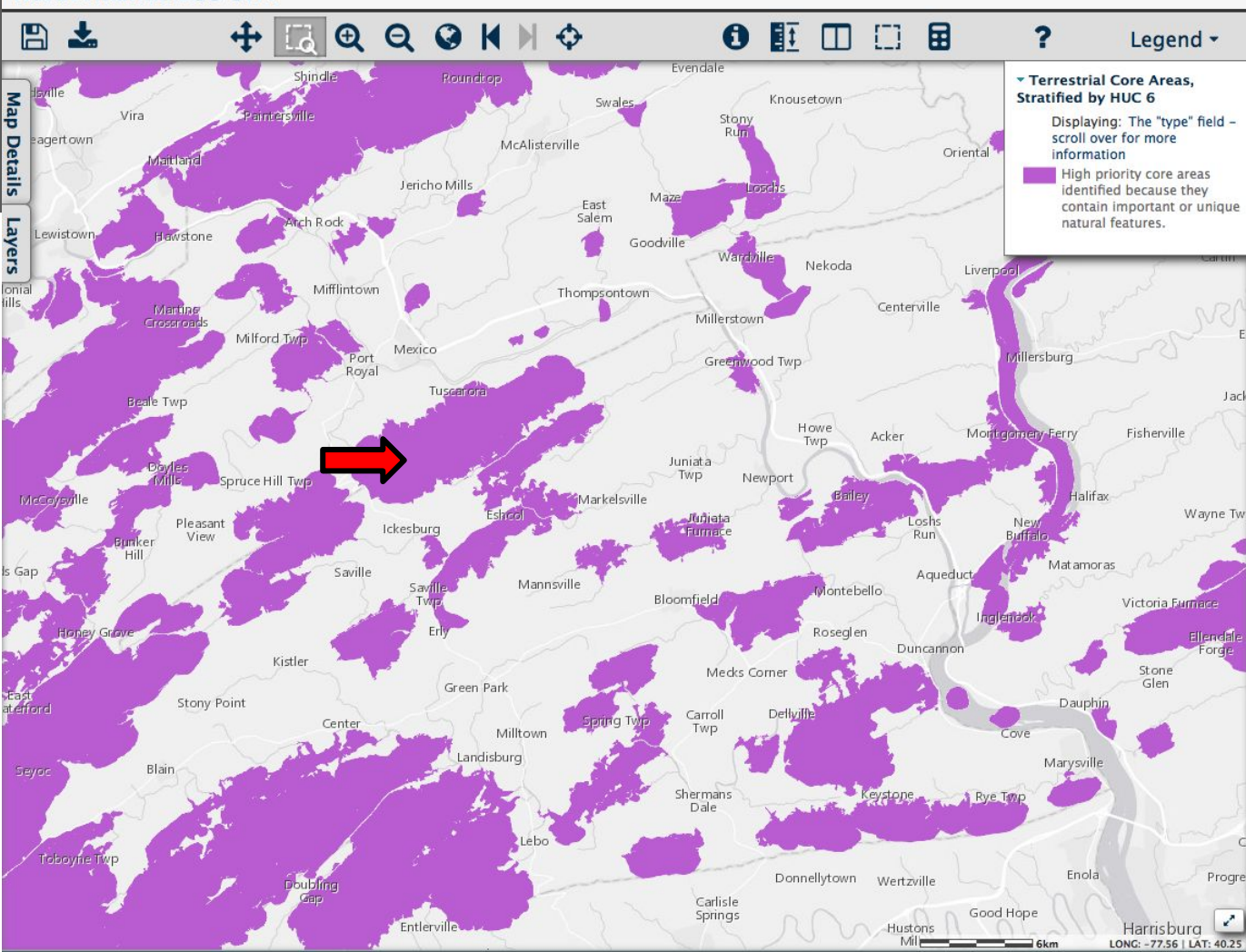


[Review the maps here](#)



[Access restoration tool](#)





# What maps are available?

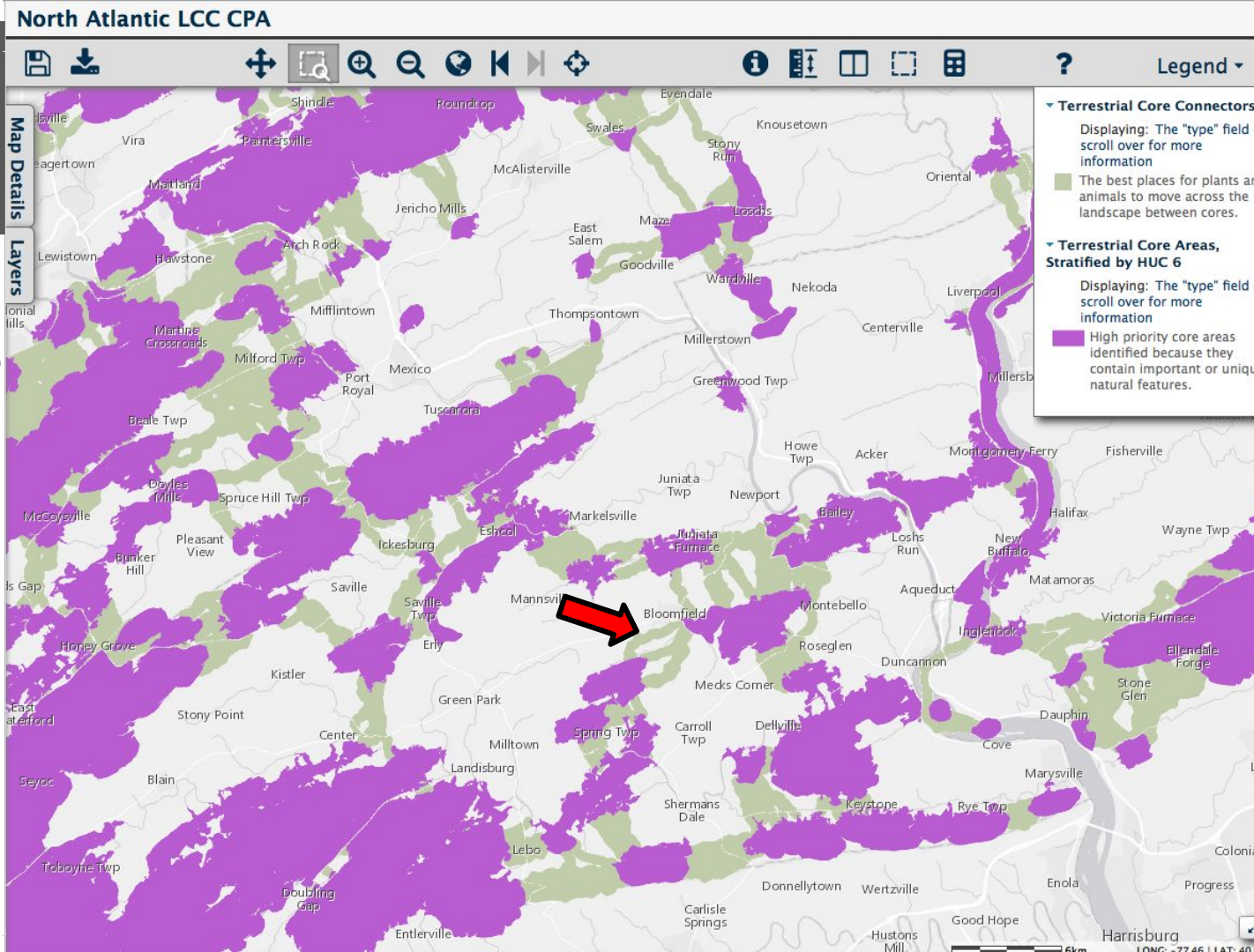
## Core Areas

- bear
- moose
- grouse
- woodcock

# What maps are available?

# Connectors

→ All species

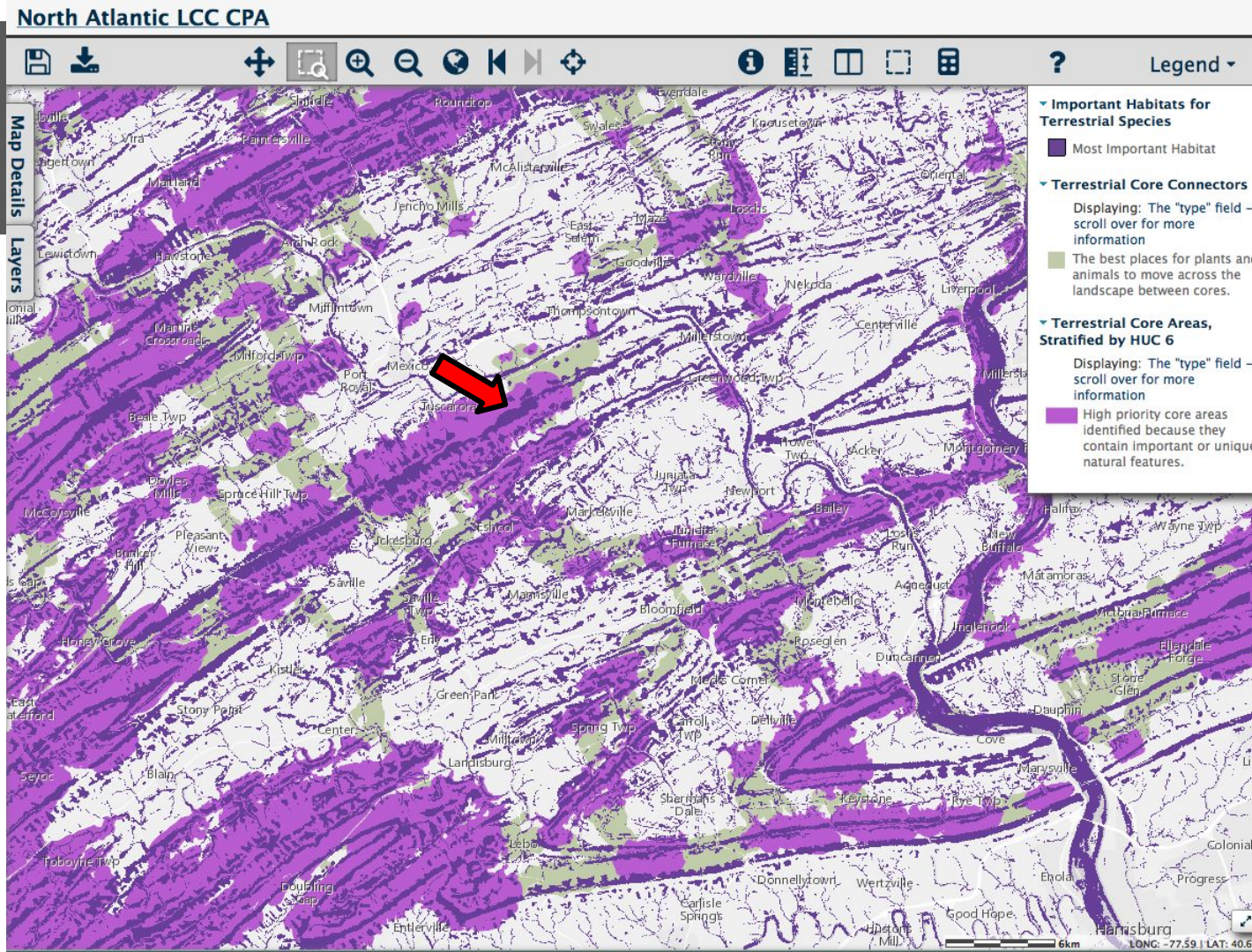




# What maps are available?

## Important Habitats

- All species
- riparian
  - SGCN

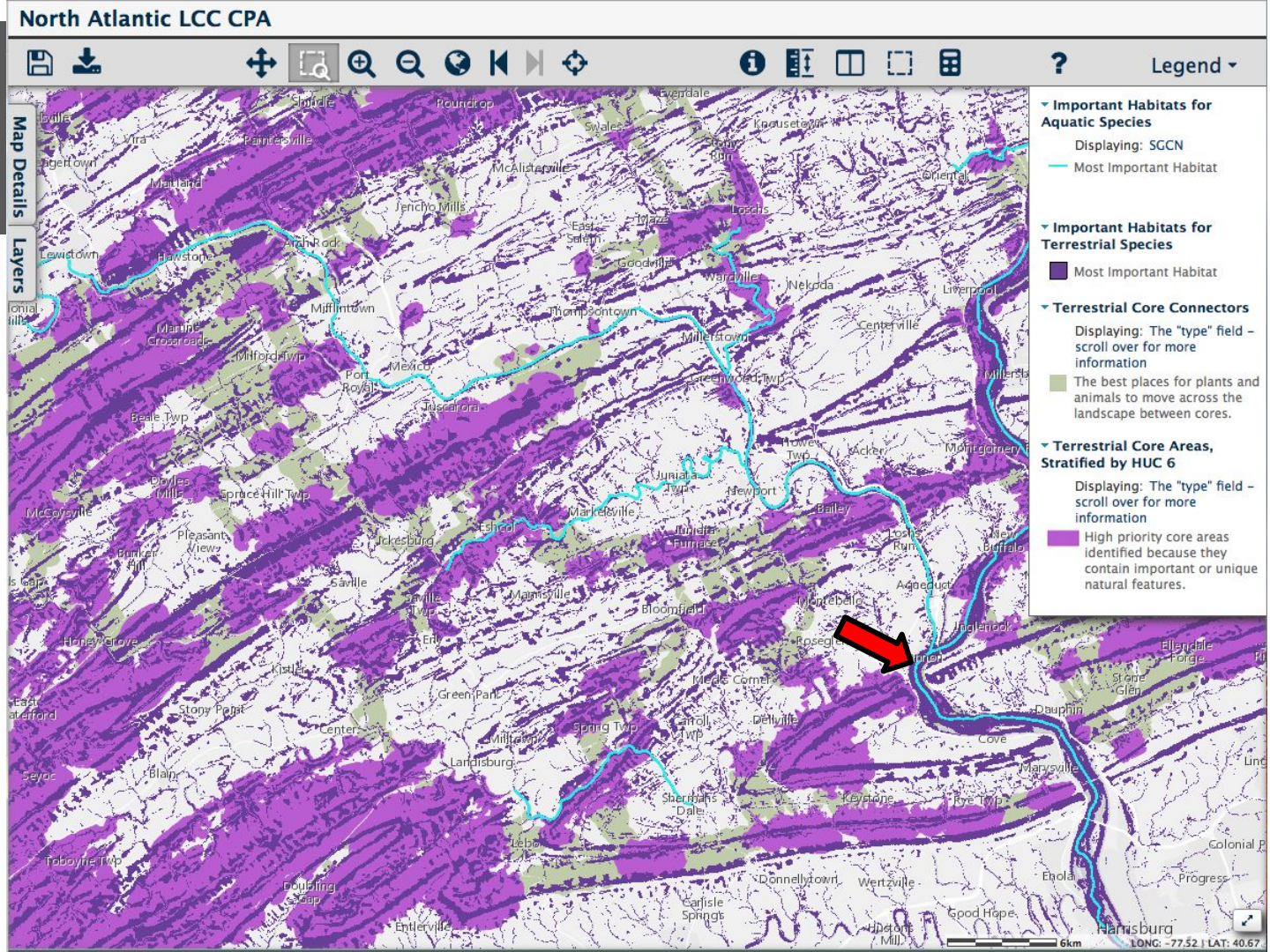




# What maps are available?

## Important Aquatic Features

→ SGCN

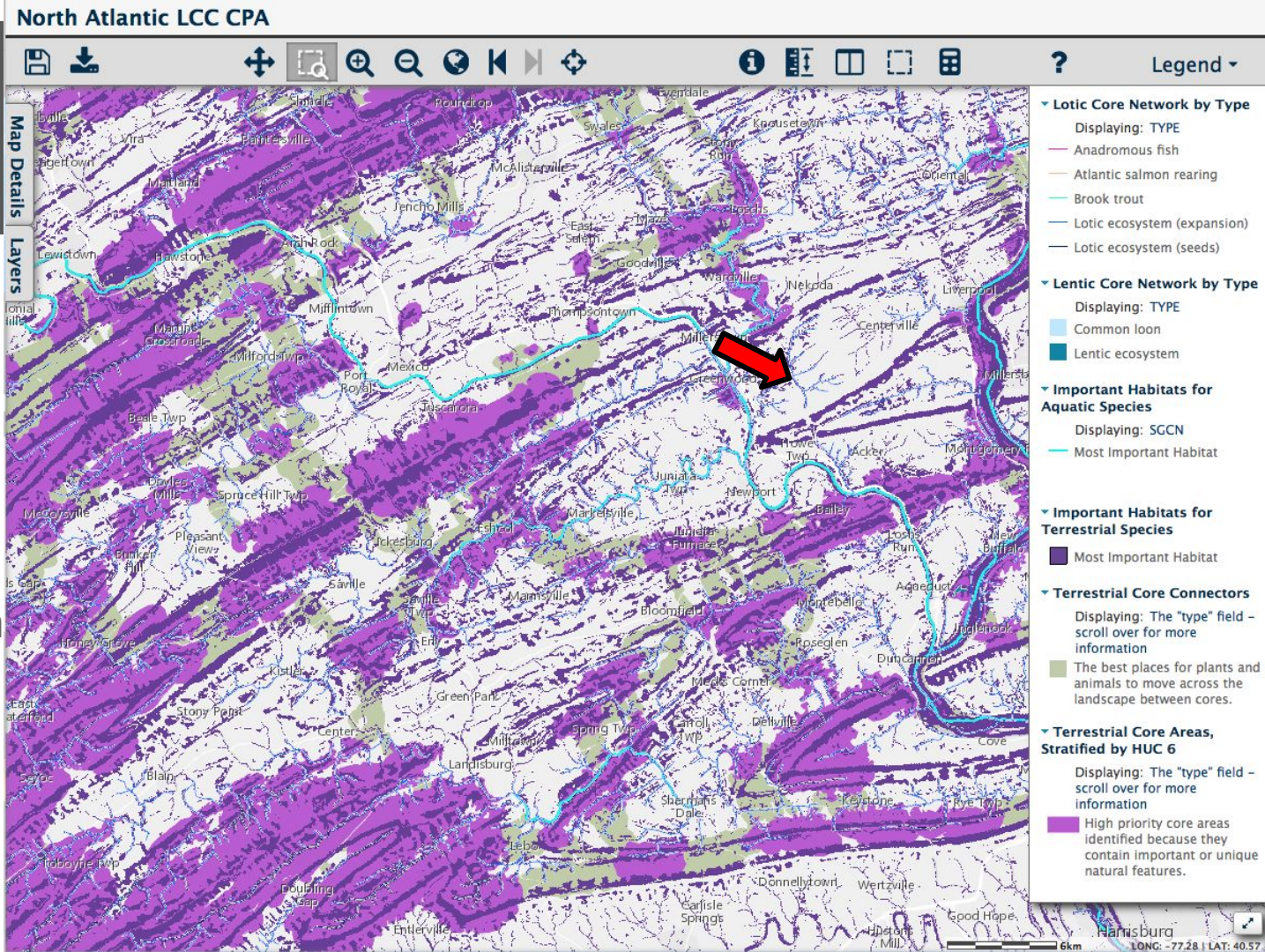




# What maps are available?

## Aquatic Networks

- anadromous fish
- Atlantic salmon
- brook trout



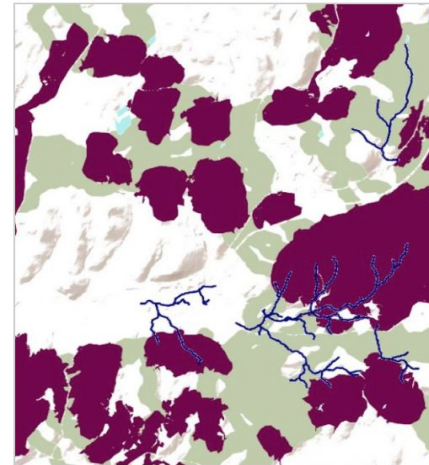


# Data & Tools

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[Review the maps here](#)

[Access restoration tool](#)



## Parameters

## Visualize

1

4 items selected

1

**x**

IEI of 3-6 foot migration

Species American black duck nonbreeding

✓

Species Brown-headed nuthatch

Species: Ricknell's thrush

## 1. Select a target species or habitat.



The screenshot displays the 'Restoration Tool' interface. On the left is a map of the Northeast United States, with a red outline indicating a selected area. A search bar at the top left contains the text 'Find address or place'. On the right is a sidebar with the following sections:

- Sandbox**
- Parameters**
- 1. Select planning unit and geography** (with a 'Visualize' button): A dropdown menu is set to 'Entire northeast'.
- 2. Select metrics**: A dropdown menu is set to 'Forest Loss'. Below it is a list of metrics with checkboxes:
  - ☐ species wood thrush
  - ☐ American woodcock abundance
  - HANSEN ET AL.**
  - ☐ Forest Cover
  - ☐ Forest Gain
  - ☒ Forest Loss
  - NRCS CONSERVATION PRACTICES (HUC12 ONLY)**
  - ☐ Aquatic Conservation Practices Total
  - ☐ Aquatic Conservation Practices 2000 and earlier

A large yellow starburst graphic is overlaid on the map, containing the text: 'New forest condition metrics identify and age early successional habitat.' A red arrow points from the 'Forest Loss' metric in the sidebar to the starburst.

2. Select important forest metrics for prioritizing work.



The screenshot displays the Restoration Tool interface. On the left is a map of the Northeastern United States and parts of Canada, with a search bar at the top left. A large yellow starburst is overlaid on the map with the text: "Relevant NRCS conservation practices are available for the whole region." On the right is a sidebar with a "Sandbox" header and a "Parameters" section. Under "Parameters", there are two main sections: "1. Select planning unit and geography" with a dropdown menu set to "Entire northeast" and a "Visualize" button; and "2. Select metrics" with a dropdown menu set to "2 items selected". Below this is a list of metrics with a search bar and a "Close this menu after selecting metric(s)" button. The list includes: "Land management Practices 2011-2020", "Land Management Practices After 2020", "Riparian Conservation Practices Total", "Riparian Conservation Practices 2000 and ealier", "Riparian Conservation Practices 2001-2010" (which is selected with a checkmark), "Riparian Conservation Practices 2011-2020", "Riparian Conservation Practices After 2020", "Wetland Conservation Practices Total", "Wetland Conservation Practices 2000 and ealier", and "Wetland Conservation Practices 2001-2010". A red arrow points from the bottom right of the screen to the selected metric.

Find address or place

NEW FOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

QUÉBEC

NEW BRUNSWICK

MAINE

NEW YORK

OHIO

INDIANA

MICHIGAN

KENTUCKY

TENNESSEE

GEORGIA

FLORIDA

Chesapeake Conservancy 2016 | Esri, HERE, DeLorme, FAO, ...

esri

Sandbox

Parameters

1. Select planning unit and geography Visualize

Entire northeast

2. Select metrics

2 items selected

Close this menu after selecting metric(s)

Deselect All

Land management Practices 2011-2020

Land Management Practices After 2020

Riparian Conservation Practices Total

Riparian Conservation Practices 2000 and ealier

Riparian Conservation Practices 2001-2010 ✓

Riparian Conservation Practices 2011-2020

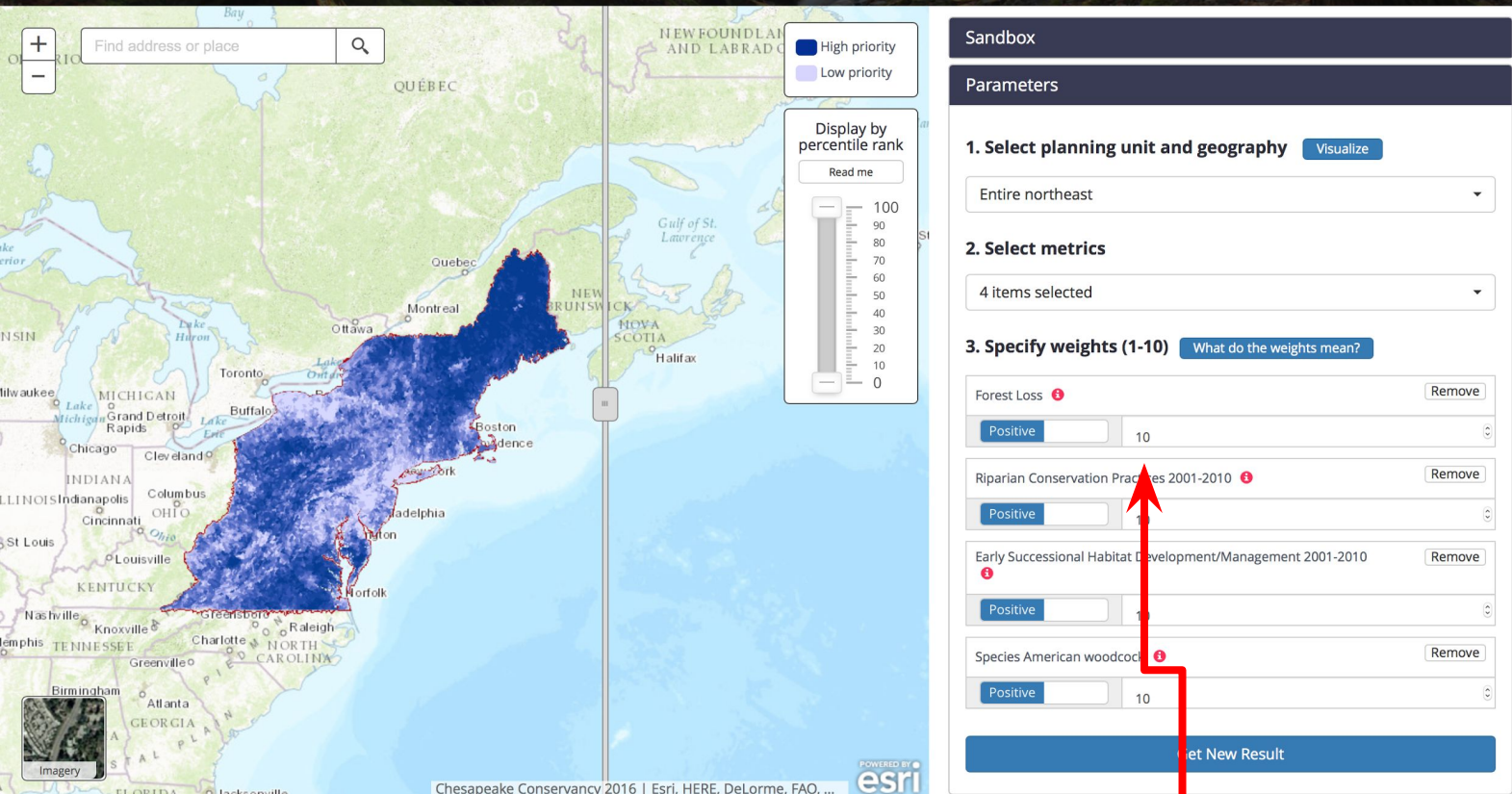
Riparian Conservation Practices After 2020

Wetland Conservation Practices Total

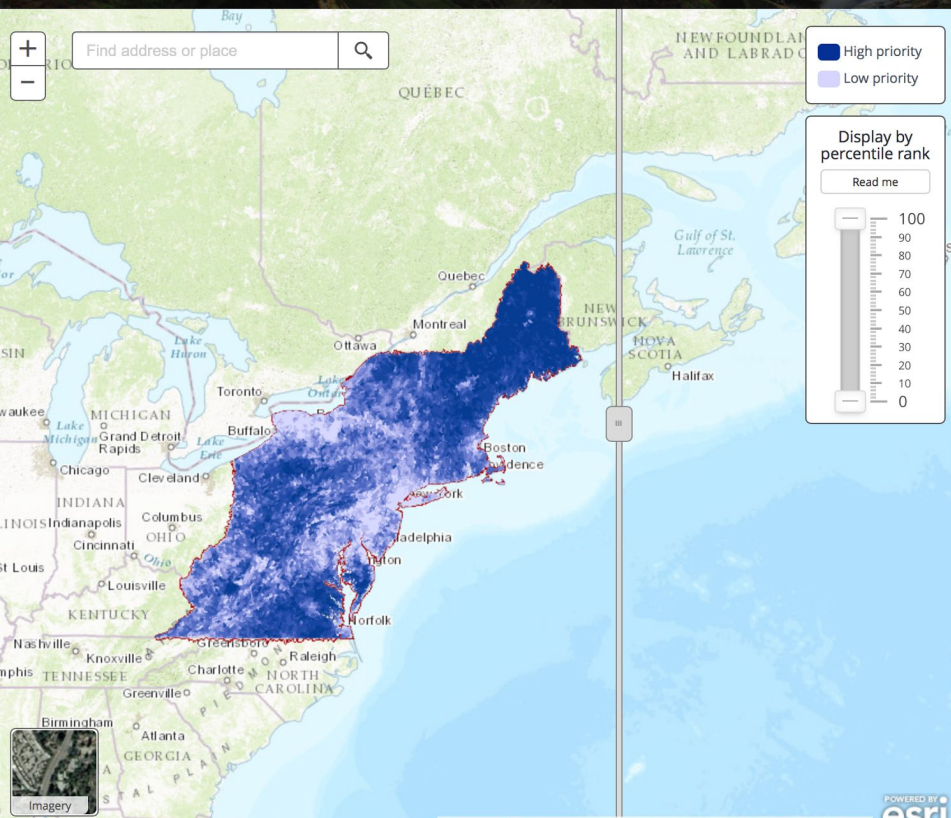
Wetland Conservation Practices 2000 and ealier

Wetland Conservation Practices 2001-2010

3. Select NRCS conservation practices to identify areas that might have willing landowners, or areas that need more effort.



4. Assign weights for the metrics and get a result.



Sandbox

Parameters

Models

Please create a model and select "Get Results".

Custom model 1

Forest Loss 10, Riparian Conservation Practices 2001-2010 10, Early

Successional Habitat Development/Management 2001-2010 10, Species

American woodcock 10

Display on left

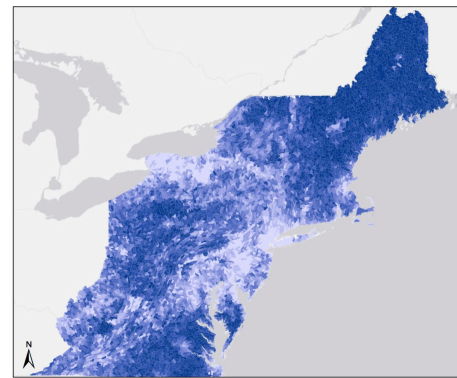
Display on right

Sheet (CSV)

PDF

Results

Northeast United States



Model parameters:

Forest Loss: 10  
Riparian Conservation Practices 2001-2010: 10  
Early Successional Habitat Development/Management 2001-2010: 10  
Species American woodcock: 10



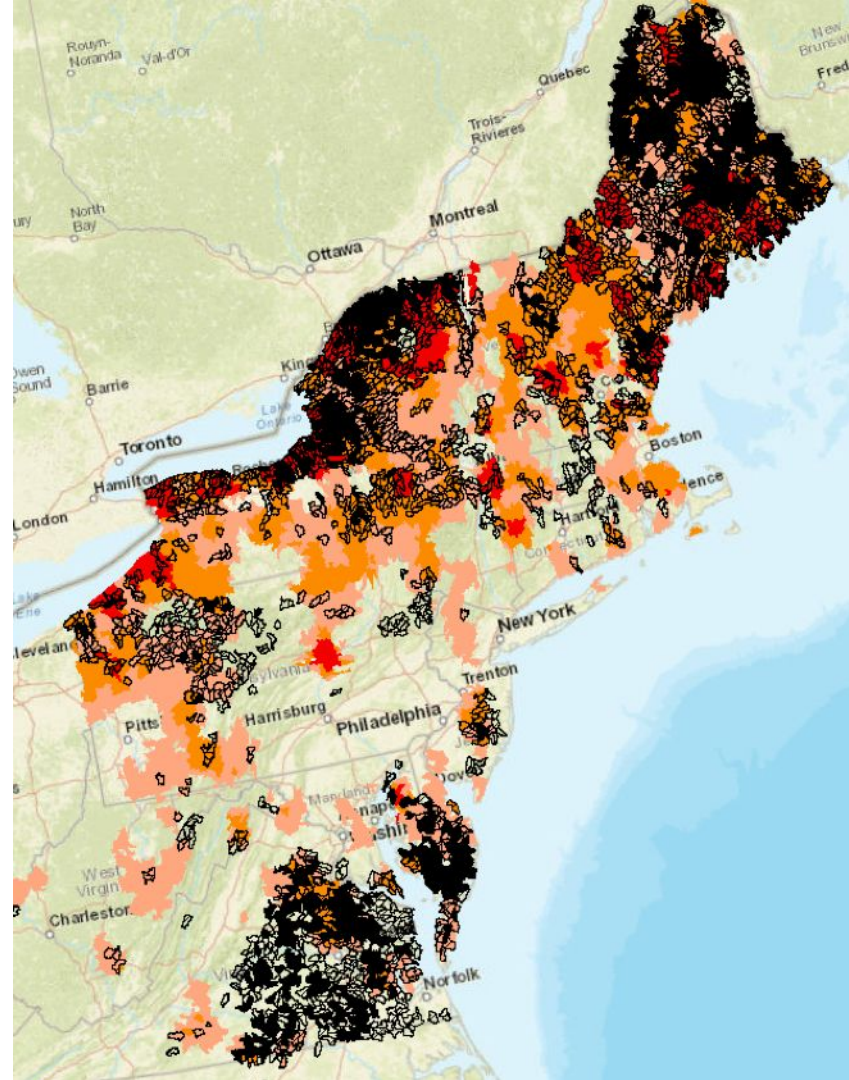
This prioritization map was produced with the  
Regional Conservation Opportunities Area (RCOA) Restoration Tool.

5. Download a map and report to your computer.



## Demonstration of potential results

- Solid black shows woodcock focus areas where NRCS has been highly active;
- Black outline shows woodcock focus areas where NRCS has been inactive;
- Red and orange is woodcock abundance (Throgmarten)



# Next Steps



# Outreach

- **Beginning in November, we will begin a broad outreach effort to inform the conservation community about RCOAs.**

# Version 2.0

- **During 2017, based on your input and expected data updates, we will begin Version 2.0.**

# Discussion





# Discussion Guide

1. How should we organize to address joint conservation priorities?
2. Where should we pool efforts to influence conservation priorities within the NALCC geography?
3. How could your agency use the new tools to achieve your conservation priorities?
4. What are the challenges facing your organization in terms of using the tools - technical, training needs, etc.?
5. How do you see your organization working collaboratively with other organizations to use the tools?

# Links

Website for RCOA Version 1.0:

<http://rcoa.cicapps.org>

Webinar series summary and archive:

<http://rcoa.cicapps.org/news-and-info/>