**Summary of Science Delivery Project Progress and Training**

Since April, contracts were completed for all four approved FY13/14 science delivery projects with Chesapeake Conservancy, Highstead Foundation, Open Space Institute and Wildlife Conservation Society. Work by these organizations was initiated with participation in technical training conducted by North Atlantic LCC staff at the Regional Office on June 10th and 11th to provide delivery and dissemination of regionally-consistent spatial data layers as well as analysis tools. The participants came prepared to think about the ways in which they could use various regional datasets developed by the Northeast Regional Conservation Needs (RCN) program and the LCC projects in their research. As a result, the training session expanded upon the predominantly technical scope of prior training sessions held by the North Atlantic LCC staff and included ample conceptual discussion between participant organizations related to analysis methods, the importance of scale, and potential opportunities for overlapping efforts and impacts between their projects. Participants also received training on the North Atlantic LCC’s main website and Data Basin site for viewing and downloading of spatial data, and they provided the North Atlantic LCC with constructive feedback to enhance the interface and user-friendliness of each website. Additional spatial data trainings via webinar will be held to reinforce work done at the June training and provide new training on forthcoming data products and analysis tools as they are completed.

An important outcome of this initial training was the interaction and learning among the grantee organizations and the understanding that they are collectively part of a science delivery network.

**Project Abstracts**

**Chesapeake Conservancy** NALCC Funds Requested: **$100,000**

**Demonstration Project 2014-9: Envision the Susquehanna: Incorporating landscape science into large landscape conservation**

The Chesapeake Conservancy is requesting a $100,000 grant under the 2014 NALCC Priority Science Program to carry out a demonstration project as part of the community based, large landscape conservation effort, Envision the Susquehanna. With this funding, the Conservancy and its partners will complete a sophisticated engagement campaign to identify community needs and priorities related to conservation to create a common platform for decision making and conservation science throughout the Susquehanna watershed.

The Conservancy and its partners will use the landscape science products created through the NALCC, including the Terrestrial Habitat Map and Geospatial Condition Analysis, to identify and prioritize locations and methods that would best address the regional and local conservation needs identified by these communities. Using this information, the Conservancy will work with its local partners to develop efficient and effective on-the-ground conservation projects that will protect the Susquehanna’s irreplaceable ecological and cultural resources. As part of this initiative, the Conservancy will share and promote the NALCC landscape science products with its network of over 25 participating organizations and institutions.

Envision the Susquehanna is a collaborative effort of federal, state, local, academic, and non-profit organizations working throughout the Susquehanna watershed in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York. Led by the Chesapeake Conservancy, Envision the Susquehanna is working to improve the ecological and cultural integrity throughout the Susquehanna landscape and in so doing improve the quality of life for all citizens along the river.

**Open Space Institute (OSI)** NALCC Funds Requested: **$100,000**

**Science Delivery Project 2014-6: Catalyzing Land Trust Capacity for Data and Science Integration**

To promote the understanding and application of select NA LCC sponsored science for land conservation across the North Atlantic, including the Canadian Maritimes, the Open Space Institute will develop a set of guidance documents informed and distributed through strategic partnerships with the Land Trust Alliance, Highstead, and other select organizations that serve as resource ‘hubs’ for the land conservation community. Our project will last 22 months and focus datasets most relevant to informing climate resilience for land conservation: the terrestrial resilience science, geospatial condition analysis (U.S. only), permeability, and secured lands datasets. The guidance documents will follow a logical sequence, covering the background of the science, why it is relevant to land conservation, and guidance for conservation planning. Case studies documenting the application of these data will be developed.

We aim to ensure broad knowledge and accurate use of the new and important science coming out of the NA LCC and, ultimately, to increase the resilience of the protected land base in the Northern Atlantic region. This project builds on OSI’s extensive leadership in translating complex science for land conservation and will leverage skills, partnerships and knowledge established through OSI’s existing Resilient Landscape Initiative. To ensure the usefulness and relevance of the guidance documents, our partners will assist with collecting input from end users and then field testing the guides through their ongoing training programs for land trusts. They will then serve as the primary distribution agents, establishing a broad, umbrella network for linking land trusts to NALCC.

**Highstead Foundation** NALCC Funds Requested: **$20,000**

**Science delivery Project 2014-8: Science to Practice: A Science Delivery Program for Regional Conservation Partnerships in New England**

The purpose of this Project is to deliver, disseminate, and communicate LCC science products to help advance the knowledge base, strategic conservation planning, and on-the-ground conservation success of regional conservation partnerships (RCPs).

There are 39 RCPs in New England (and eastern New York) covering more than 60% of the landscape, working across town and even state boundaries to achieve conservation that is both locally grounded and regionally significant. Each RCP is composed of multiple land trusts, community leaders, agencies, and conservation groups. Highstead, in partnership with the GIS office of Harvard Forest, Harvard University, will provide the technical assistance necessary for these practitioners to understand the foundational LCC data sets and how to apply them to strategic conservation planning through: (1) RCP survey to determine science literacy, capacity, and application needs; (2) webinar on science-based conservation planning; (3) a three-workshop track on LCC data and application at Highstead’s annual RCP Network conference; and (4) three all-day workshops on LCC science and application across the region to optimize RCP attendance and help identify regional differences. The project will expand on a pilot program Highstead completed, funded through the Open Space Institute’s Resilient Landscapes Initiative, that helped the North Quabbin RCP craft a conservation plan utilizing the TNC resilience science. We will work with many partners to optimize widespread understanding of LCC science and application so that the RCP community can plays an increasingly meaningful role in conserving the ecological integrity and resilience of our regional landscape going forward.

**Wildlife Conservation Society** NALCC Funds Requested: **$99,965**

**Demonstration Project 2014- 12: Enhanced stewardship of priority habitats and species on private lands using NALCC science across four Northeastern states.**

The goal of the two-year project, led by the Wildlife Conservation Society, is to facilitate integration of regional science through local land-use decision-making to enhance stewardship of NALCC conservation priorities. In year 1, we will identify NALCC science data layers most relevant for state and regional conservation priorities and determine opportunities for integrating this information into state and regional planning. We will use this information, coupled with our own regional database of local land-use regulations for NY, VT, NH, and ME to identify and prioritize communities with the greatest potential to achieve conservation outcomes in locations of high conservation value on private lands through small science-based modifications to existing land-use planning tools. In year 2, we will demonstrate on-the-ground application of landscape conservation science by creating a custom NY gallery through the NALCC Conservation Planning Atlas on Databasin, and use it to develop town conservation profiles to advance the effectiveness of land-use planning in NY. Throughout the project, we will communicate our findings, resulting tools, and the process of science delivery for conservation outcomes to regional and state partners with a particular focus on partners of Staying Connected, Two Countries One Forest, and NALCC. As a result of this project, we will demonstrate how NALCC and partner science can be effectively translated and applied for the protection of SGCN and priority habitats. This demonstration project lays the groundwork for new or improved planning approaches for enhanced stewardship of public and private lands at multiple levels across the NALCC.