

# Connecticut River Watershed

## *Landscape Conservation Design Pilot – FAQs*



Lamar Gore/USFWS

In the Connecticut River watershed and across the nation, large connected natural areas provide habitat for fish, wildlife and plants and provide jobs, food, clean water, storm protection, recreation and many other natural benefits that support people and communities. To ensure a sustainable future for these resources in the face of climate change, urban growth and other land-use changes and pressures, scientists and conservationists must work together to strategically conserve these large landscapes.

**The Connecticut River Watershed Landscape Conservation Design Pilot Project** is a collaborative effort to plan and design such a landscape. Using the best available science and information, participating partners will develop tools and strategies for conserving a connected network of lands and waters to sustain natural resources and communities within the watershed. Here are some key questions and answers that provide more details:

### What are the pilot objectives?

Key objectives for the pilot project include:

- Agreeing on common conservation goals and objectives for the Connecticut River watershed that are informed by watershed and regional priorities (while recognizing social, economic and recreational contributions to future iterations of landscape conservation designs);
- Delivering information, maps, and tools that show landscape conservation design options for prioritizing conservation actions in the Connecticut River watershed at scales and in formats needed

- by partners to guide conservation decisions and inform planning; and
- Documenting the process followed, and including lessons-learned, that can be applied to landscape conservation design work in other landscapes across the Northeast.

### Who is involved?

Facilitated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and supported by the North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC), the pilot is led by a Core Team of conservation partners composed of federal and state agencies and private organizations working at various scales in the Connecticut River watershed. FWS will coordinate with partner agencies and organizations and request participation through the North Atlantic LCC, Friends of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge and other partnerships.

### What are the initial conservation goals agreed to by the Core Team?

The core team agreed to these two initial broad goals:

- The Connecticut River watershed sustains a diverse suite of intact, connected, and resilient ecosystems that provide important ecological functions and services that benefit society, such as clean water, flood protection, and lands for farming, forestry, and recreation.
- The Connecticut River watershed sustains healthy and diverse populations of fish, wildlife, and plant species for the continuing benefit and enjoyment of the public.



Bill Thompson/USFWS

*Wood thrush*

### Why the Connecticut River watershed?

This geography was selected for the pilot project because of the strength of the existing partnerships in the watershed and because the multi-species modeling tools and foundational habitat data layers are more complete and available here than anywhere else in the region at this point in time.

What are the pilot deliverables?

Pilot deliverables will include information, maps and tools that show landscape conservation design options for prioritizing conservation actions needed in the Connecticut River watershed and a process paper describing lessons learned that can be applied to landscape conservation design in other landscapes across the Northeast.

### How can I get more information?

Contact Nancy McGarigal, USFWS, at 413/253 8562 or visit the pilot project website shown below.



Visit the pilot website at:

<http://northatlanticlcc.org/groups/connecticut-river-watershed-pilot>