

Summary of RCOA Alternatives

State Fish and Wildlife Diversity Agencies are working together to establish Regional Conservation Opportunity Areas (RCOAs). RCOAs are spatially delineated places within the Northeast Region where actions to support or enhance populations of Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need (RSGCN) and/or their habitats are likely to be most effective. This process requires the development of a methodology to document and map conservation opportunity areas across the northeast region to achieve fundamental objectives.

The North Atlantic LCC hosted the Northeast Regional Conservation Opportunity Workshop at the Northeast Regional Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from March 16 to 18, 2015. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss how Regional Conservation Opportunity Areas should be developed to inform state wildlife action plans, review and agree upon fundamental objectives, identify and assess conservation opportunity objective template alternatives, and identify a refined set of alternatives for consideration by the Northeast Fish and Wildlife Diversity Technical Committee (NEFWBTC). Below is the refined list of alternatives and the percent of participants who support each alternative.

Refined Alternatives	Percent Support and History of Changes
Core Landscapes	
1.A.1 Terrestrial and Wetland Index of Ecological Integrity (IEI)	25% (keep)
1.A.2 Terrestrial Resilience	25% (keep)
1.A.3 Combined Terrestrial Integrity and Resilience	100% (keep)
1.A.4 Aquatic Index of Ecological Integrity (IEI)	83% (keep)
1.A.5 Freshwater (Aquatic) Resilience	100% (keep)
1.B.1 Road-bound blocks	58% (keep)
1.C.1 HUC 14 watersheds	33% (keep)
RSGCN and Habitats	
2.A.1 Systems Index and RSGCN screening and prioritization	Merged: (2.A.1) RSGCN "TSS" screening and prioritization (2.A.2) Systems index raster

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2.A.3 Systems and Communities Screen	58% (keep)
2.B.1 Riparian Index Raster	75% (keep)
2.B.2 Stream Reach Screen	67% (keep)
2.B.3 Lake & Pond Screen	75% (keep)
2.C.1 Wetland Complex Screen	83% (keep)
2.D.1 RSGCN models	67% (keep)
2.D.2 Representative Species models	75% (keep)
Restoration	
3.A.1 Optimal sites for early successional habitat creation	75% (keep)
3.A.2 Threatened ecological systems (including wetlands)	Merged: (3.A.2) Threatened ecological systems (3.C.3) Threatened wetlands
3.B.1 Watershed and riparian restoration	100% (keep)
3.C.1 Agricultural lands restored to forest/wetland	Merged: (3.C.1) Agricultural lands resorted to wetland (3.C.2) Agricultural lands restored to forest
3.D.1 In stream aquatic connectivity	Merged and relocated: (4.C.1) Fish passage: Critical local linkages (4.C.2) Aquatic connectivity
Connectivity	
4.A.1 Similarity (UMass)	75% (keep)
4.A.2 Permeability (TNC)	100% (keep)
4.B.1 Regional connectivity (UMass)	92% (keep)
4.D.1 Marsh migration protection and/or management	92% (keep)