Highlights from the North Atlantic LCC 2015 Annual Report

With more of the foundational science projects supported by the North Atlantic LCC coming to fruition in the form of applicable products, we redoubled our efforts in 2015 to put these tools in the hands of the people they were designed for, and to make sure they are serving their intended purposes. In this year's Annual Report, we highlight examples of how diverse partners are using LCC products to address a range of conservation priorities across the region.

About the North Atlantic LCC

Stretching from northern Virginia to Maritime Canada and southern Quebec, the North Atlantic LCC region encompasses one of the most diverse and populous areas in North America.

The LCC is building on a long history of conservation by partners and partnerships in this region in its effort to help establish common goals for protecting natural and cultural resources, and collaboratively develop scientific information and tools needed to achieve those goals in the face of threats and uncertainty.

Putting our science to work in 2015

Examples of how partners used North Atlantic LCC tools to drive progress in conservation priority areas in 2015:

Aquatic Connectivity

Why it matters: Hundreds of thousands of outdated, damaged, and poorly designed road-stream crossings fragment rivers and streams across the North Atlantic region, preventing aquatic species from moving up and downstream, and creating flooding threats to communities.

Action in 2015: Using ***North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative*** data and protocols, partners in the Taunton River watershed in Massachusetts identified priority road-stream crossings in the watershed based on the potential ecological benefits associated with upgrades, repairs, and replacements.

Coastal Resilience

Why it matters: The rate of sea-level rise for the North Atlantic region is greater than the global average, and the consequences are already manifesting along the coast. More intense coastal storms are predicted for the Atlantic with major potential impacts to coastal systems and communities.

Action in 2015: Maine Geological Survey (MGS) used products from the ***Synthesis of Tidal Inlet and Sandy Beach Habitat Inventories*** to assess the cumulative impact of shoreline armoring on larger sandy beach habitats in the state.

Landscape Conservation Design

Why it matters: To ensure a sustainable future for our communities and natural resources, we need to identify and protect resilient, intact, connected landscapes that are capable of supporting fish, wildlife, plants, people and ecological processes in the face of increasing threats from climate change and development.

Action in 2015: Highstead Foundation is using data from ***Connect the Connecticut landscape conservation design*** to help identify prospective parcels for a $10 million federal grant from the USDA Regional Conservation Partners Program (RCPP) to reduce agricultural runoff into Long Island Sound in part by protecting key riparian and headwater areas.

Regional Consistent Maps & Information Management

Why it matters: Ecological processes don't stop at borders, and neither will threats from climate change and development. In order to ensure that individual efforts to conserve wildlife and habitat have the greatest collective impact for conservation, partners working at local, state, and regional levels all need access to resources and information that provide big-picture context for decisions at multiple scales.

Action in 2015: New Hampshire used the ***Index of Ecological Integrity*** (IEI) to refine its approach for identifying resilient lands as part of a new habitat condition analysis for the mandatory 10-year update of its State Wildlife Action Plan.

Science Delivery

Why it matters: To benefit from the best available science, conservation practitioners need to be aware of the range of tools at their disposal, and to receive guidance on applying these resources to advance their own work. Likewise, for scientists to develop information that can help address today's conservation challenges, they need to be attuned to the needs of people in the field.

Action in 2015: As part of its project ***Enhanced Stewardship of Priority Habitats and Species on Private Lands***, Science-Delivery grantee Wildlife Conservation Society brought together practitioners in the field of land-use planning in the Northeast for a workshop on improving municipal land-use planning tools including information from the LCC to better support wildlife conservation on private lands. The results of the workshop will inform a forthcoming report designed to bridge the gap between regional conservation needs and local planning realities.

Read the complete North Atlantic LCC 2015 Annual Report online.

To learn more about the North Atlantic LCC

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