



United States Department of Agriculture

Multi-State Priority Areas in the Northeast and Midwest



Forest
Service

Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry

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Acknowledgments

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Multi-State Priority Areas in the Northeast and Midwest

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Landscape Scale Conservation in the Northeast and Midwest

Background

Landscape scale conservation occurs when multiple landowners pursue common conservation goals, across large blocks of land, to ensure ecosystems are healthy. Conservation on a landscape scale requires both coordination and a commitment across all land ownership types—private, State, and Federal. All three branches of the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, are working together and collaborating with partners towards shared landscape conservation goals. The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry of the Forest Service (Northeastern Area) is well positioned and authorized to facilitate such efforts.

The Northeastern Area's landscape conservation efforts support the advancement of multi-State priorities included in [State Forest Action Plans](#) (National Association of State Foresters 2010). U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack's "all-lands" policy and the regional position paper, "[Landscape Scale Conservation in the Northeast and Midwest](#)" (USDA Forest Service; Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters 2014) also guide our activities. The position paper, developed jointly by the Northeastern Area, Eastern Region of the National Forest System, and Northern Research Station, along with the State Foresters, describes the basis for collaboration among the signatories.

Ultimately, landscape scale conservation allows the Northeastern Area to make the most effective use of resources and program authorities to meet regional conservation goals. This project is intended to enhance Northeastern Area efforts to coordinate assistance and accomplish these goals on a regional scale, in the 20 States of the Northeast and Midwest, as well as the District of Columbia. These efforts contribute strongly to Objective A, Strategy 1, in the "[Northeastern Area's Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2013–2018](#)" (Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry 2013, p. 8):

"A. Contribute to conservation of important forest landscapes across the urban to rural continuum."

"1. Encourage new and support existing landscape-scale partnerships, particularly in multistate priority areas identified in the State Forest Action Plans, to leverage resources and more efficiently achieve results across larger geographic regions."

Project Overview

State forestry agencies identified “multi-State priorities” in their State Forest Action Plans; a summary of these areas and issues was compiled. Updates from annual State accomplishment reporting and interviews with State forest planners were also obtained. All of this information was used to develop comprehensive documents that outline each of the **multi-State priority areas** and **multi-State priority issues** (DeSenze 2016a), and these documents were provided to partners.

Also, research identified **landscape scale conservation initiatives led by the U.S. Forest Service and other Federal agencies** (e.g., Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior) (DeSenze 2016b). Information about such efforts (purpose, scale, contacts, and existing partnerships) was used to create a comprehensive inventory of these initiatives. The Northeastern Area and the Eastern Region of the U.S. Forest Service, using existing geospatial data and the landscape scale conservation inventory, are developing comprehensive maps of priority areas in the region. The inventory and maps are meant to show how each initiative relates to multi-State priorities.

State forest planners met in June 2013 at the annual Forest Resources Planning Committee meeting of the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters (NAASF), where the documents described above, including the information that follows, were presented. Short workshops facilitated by Northeastern Area staff allowed State forest planners to connect their most important multi-State priorities to existing landscape scale conservation initiatives for enhanced planning and collaborative project proposals.

The Northeastern Area will use these tools, along with the outcomes of the Forest Resource Planning workshops, to identify how to advance specific multi-State efforts, especially where resources can be leveraged for the greatest return on investment and achieve goals of the Northeastern Area. NAASF and State forestry agencies can also use these tools to identify projects to submit for the Northeastern Area’s Landscape Scale Restoration competitive grants and other funding opportunities, in addition to being a valuable tool for regular reviews and updates to State Forest Action Plans.

How to Use This Document

The multi-State priority areas in this document were named in 2010 State Forest Action Plans and interviews with State forest planners that were completed as a part of this project. Other areas, as noted, may also include information gathered through online research or provided by U.S. Forest Service staff.

- Areas are presented, roughly, in geographic order from East to West.
- You can navigate to the entry for a particular area from one of two places: table of contents or the index by State located at the end of the document.
- The entry for each area includes a description of the area and a list of States that make up the area.
 - ◊ State names in plain text are States whose Forest Action Plan named the area as a multi-State priority, or the State forest planner reported it is a multi-State priority, or both.
 - ◊ States named in parentheses () are States geographically included in the multi-State priority area, but that did not name the area as a multi-State priority in their Forest Action Plan, or their State forest planner reported it is no longer a multi-State priority.
 - ◊ States whose names are followed by an asterisk (*) are not served by the Northeastern Area.
- Additional information related to a multi-State priority area includes America's Great Outdoors Priorities and Urban Waters Federal Partnerships, even if only a portion of the designated land or water is in the area. When an area contains only a portion of an America's Great Outdoors priority land or water, it is marked with a dagger (†).
- "Existing Partnerships" and "Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects," are also included where appropriate and available.
- Please feel free to provide comments, additional information, broken hyperlinks discovered in this document, and any other suggestions to the Northeastern Area contact listed below.

Contact: Regional Planner, Northeastern Area, 610-557-4139

References

- DeSenze, Philip A. 2016a. Multi-State priority issues in the Northeast and Midwest. NA-FR-03-16. Newtown Square, PA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry.
- DeSenze, Philip A. 2016b. Federally led landscape scale conservation initiatives in the Northeast and Midwest. NA-FR-01-16. Newtown Square, PA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry.
- National Association of State Foresters. [n.d.]. Northeast. Forest action plans: guidelines for forests. <http://www.stateforesters.org/region/northeast> (7 June 2016).
- Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry. 2013. Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2013-2018. Newtown Square, PA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 27 p. <http://na.fs.fed.us/pubs/detail.cfm?id=280> (20 September 2012).
- USDA Forest Service; Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters. 2014. Landscape scale conservation in the Northeast and Midwest. The Foundations of Collaboration for the USDA Forest Service: Eastern Region, Northeastern Area, Northern Research Station, and Forest Products Lab; and the Northeastern Area Association of State Foresters. 18 p. <http://na.fs.fed.us/ra/Updated%20LSC%20position%20paper%20FINAL%2015-14.pdf> (17 September 2014).

Priority Areas

[Northern Forest Lands](#)

The Northern Forest Lands region includes 26 million acres stretching from the Tug Hill Plateau in New York, through northeast Vermont, Coos County in New Hampshire, and into the Great North Woods of Maine. Conservation of the Northern Forest has been the subject of much discussion and multi-State cooperation over the last 20 years with the Northern Forest Lands Study and Northern Forest Land Council efforts and continues



through several initiatives led by the [Northern Forest Center](#) as well as the [New England Governors' Conference Commission](#) on Land Conservation. Additionally, these States have entered into a memorandum of understanding with the U.S. Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service to actively cooperate in the conservation and management of working forest landscapes in the area. Pilot projects are designed to demonstrate how partners can pool resources and coordinate their efforts in priority areas to protect them from conversion to other uses. The effort is currently engaging stakeholders in developing an implementation strategy. Issues needing attention include forest land conservation, economic development, and community infrastructure.

States: Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Vermont

Area contains portions† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Connecticut River Watershed National Blueway](#)† – New Hampshire, Vermont; Green Mountain National Forest, VT; White Mountain National Forest, NH
- [Great Lakes](#)† – New York
- [New England Forests and Waters](#)† – Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont; Green Mountain National Forest, VT; White Mountain National Forest, NH
- [Penobscot River Restoration Project](#)† – Maine

Signature Landscape (*pilot*)

- [Lake Champlain†](#) – New York, Vermont; Green Mountain National Forest, VT

Existing Partnerships

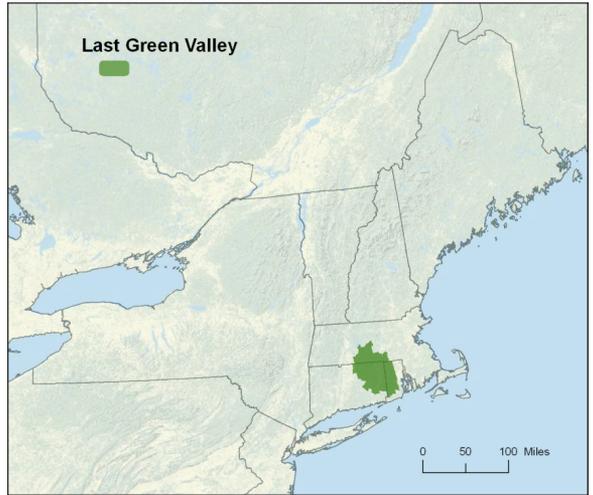
- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ New Hampshire Drinking Water Improvement – White Mountain National Forest
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#)
 - ◊ Communities surrounding White Mountain National Forest
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Vermont – Rock River
- [New England Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [New England Governors' Conference](#) – Keeping Forest as Forest Initiative
- [New England – New York Forestry Initiative](#)
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [North Country Regional Economic Development Council's](#) Working Group for Forests
- [Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel](#)
- [North East State Foresters Association](#) – Northern Forest Lands Council
- [Northern Border Regional Commission](#)
- [Northern Forest Center](#) – Sustainable Economy Initiative

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Reach out to public officials, forest industry, environmental groups, private forest landowners, and other interested members of the public in support of forest conservation.
- Address loss of productive forest land to other uses, and potential impacts in the Northern Forest.
- Address economic and ecological partnerships with Canada.
- Engage forest landowners in stewardship efforts by providing technical and financial assistance for improved forest management.
- Work to maintain and diversify the markets for wood products that support sustainable forest management.
- Promote third party certification to recognize sustainable forest management.
- Recommend policies that encourage sustainable practices.
- Work to acquire forest conservation easements to maintain working forests.

Southern New England Heritage Forest, [The Last Green Valley](#), and Quinebaug Highlands

Identified as part of the [New England and New York Forestry Initiative](#), this is a 1.4 million acre area that will receive focused land-use planning assistance with a variety of land conservation tools, to preserve the working heritage of the last remaining rural landscape in Southern New England. There is an active [MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership](#) serving part of this region (35 towns spanning south-central



Massachusetts and northeastern Connecticut), which is a voluntary association of land trusts, conservation organizations, State agencies, and foresters focused on land protection efforts, promoting sustainable forestry practices, and public outreach and education efforts.

The overlapping Quinebaug Highlands Region consists of a 34,000-acre forest block of four towns in Connecticut and two towns in Massachusetts. It contains high quality streams and the largest drinking water supply watershed in Connecticut. [The Last Green Valley](#), formerly known as the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor, was designated by Congress as the management entity for the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor. [The Borderlands Project](#), which is focused on building greater awareness for the rural area that spans the Connecticut-Rhode Island border, has expanded and is now called the Heritage Forest Corridor, which is also a part of the [MassConn Sustainable Forest Partnership](#).

Additionally, [Yale's Quiet Corners Initiative](#) is underway in the area, creating partnerships that expand the educational and research opportunities, while supporting the work of private landowners, natural resource managers, and forest industry professionals to strengthen local livelihoods, increase forest health, and enhance rural economic development. Finally, the region is a concentration area for The Nature Conservancy, as well as for the U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and numerous local land trusts and other organizations active in the area. Collectively, these efforts and the partnerships that define them make future conservation in the area a shared community effort.

States: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island

Area contains portions† of the following America’s Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscape of National Significance

- [Connecticut River Watershed National Blueway](#)† – Connecticut, Massachusetts

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Blackstone River Valley Greenway](#)† – Massachusetts, Rhode Island

Existing Partnerships

- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [MassConn Partnership: Borderlands Project](#) – Heritage Forest Corridor
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Connecticut – Little River
 - ◊ Rhode Island – Tomaquag Brook-Pawcatuck River
- [New England Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [New England Governors’ Conference](#) – Keeping Forest as Forest Initiative
- [New England – New York Forestry Initiative](#)
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel](#)
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*New England cottontail*)
- [Yale School of Forestry – Quiet Corner Initiative](#)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Identify and reach out to building code decisionmakers on the use of local wood products in buildings.

[Quabbin to Cardigan \(Q2C\) Corridor and Partnership](#)

This [area](#) spans 100 miles from the Quabbin Reservoir in central Massachusetts to Mount Cardigan in New Hampshire and encompasses approximately 2 million acres of intact, interconnected, ecologically significant forest. The partnership is a group of 27 private organizations, including land trusts, conservancy groups, and other nongovernmental organizations, as well as several State and Federal agencies, established in 2003, working on land conservation in the region. The area also includes the [Freedom's Way National Heritage Area](#). Additionally, Congress recently designated the Mattabesett, Metacomet, and Monadnock (MMM) Trails as the [New England National Scenic Trail](#), a multi-State effort including Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.



States: Massachusetts, New Hampshire

Area contains portions† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Connecticut River Watershed National Blueway](#)† – Massachusetts, New Hampshire; White Mountain National Forest, NH
- [New England Forests and Waters](#)† – New Hampshire; White Mountain National Forest

Existing Partnerships

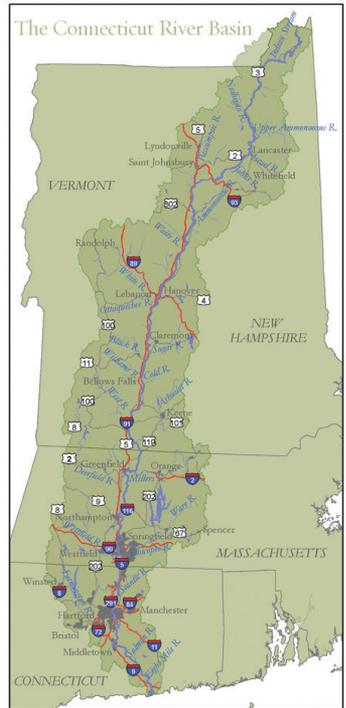
- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [New England Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [New England Governors' Conference](#) – Keeping Forest as Forest Initiative
- [New England – New York Forestry Initiative](#)
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel](#)
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*New England cottontail*)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Conserve large unfragmented forest blocks while they are still in relatively large ownerships.
- Secure links between new and existing conservation lands to form a continuous corridor of conservation and working forest land.

[Connecticut River Watershed](#)

The Connecticut River Watershed is the largest river ecosystem in New England, encompassing approximately 11,000 square miles and spanning four New England States. The [Connecticut River](#) was designated as a National Heritage River in 1998, and it is now a national blueway and priority landscape of national significance for the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. This is one of the most at-risk areas of New England for forest fragmentation. There is a major effort by the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Conte National Wildlife Refuge](#) underway in this region to develop a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the refuge, which encompasses the entire watershed. Additionally, Congress designated the Mattabesett, Metacomet, and Monadnock (MMM) Trails as the [New England National Scenic Trail](#)—a multi-State effort including Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. This is an area with multiple Federal and State interests, with public land acquisition, access to recreation, and economic interests leading the way.



States: Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont

Area contains all or portions† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Connecticut River Watershed National Blueway](#) – Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont; Green Mountain National Forest, VT; White Mountain National Forest, NH
- [New England Forests and Waters†](#) – New Hampshire, Vermont; Green Mountain National Forest, VT; White Mountain National Forest, NH

Existing Partnerships

- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ New Hampshire Drinking Water Improvement – White Mountain National Forest
 - ◊ Vermont Poultney-Mettowee Watershed Restoration Project – Green Mountain National Forest

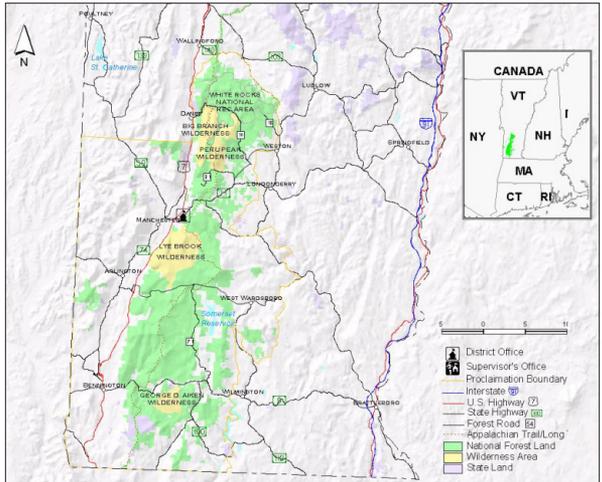
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#)
 - ◇ Communities surrounding White Mountain National Forest, NH
- [Connecticut River Gateway Commission](#)
- [Connecticut River Watershed Council](#)
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [MassConn Partnership: Borderlands Project](#) – Heritage Forest Corridor
- [New England Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [New England Governors’ Conference](#) – Keeping Forest as Forest Initiative
- [New England – New York Forestry Initiative](#)
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel](#)
- [North East State Foresters Association](#) – Northern Forest Lands Council
- [Northern Forest Center](#) – Sustainable Economy Initiative
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*New England cottontail*)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Forest Legacy tracts total 184–114 completed, 35 funded, 27 proposed, and 8 President’s Requests, as of December, 2015.
- Work at the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge continues to identify areas for protection, and also includes a Cooperative Weed Management Association.
- A proposed, easement-based National Forest continues to be discussed and remains an option for preserving forest land in Massachusetts that lies within this watershed.
- Forest Health Issues – including the potential for the Connecticut River Corridor to be a pathway for invasive pests. Interstate 91 travels along the river and provides opportunities for invasives to spread, as do major storm events that continue to increase in strength and frequency.
- White Mountain and Green Mountain National Forest were identified as potential partners on several of these issues, in addition to the Conte Refuge, State agencies, and universities in the region.
- Potential projects include:
 - ◇ Developing a Blueway trail for canoeing.
 - ◇ Acquiring land, easements, or both, for portages or campgrounds.

Green Mountain-Berkshire Hills

The [area](#) of the Berkshires is one of the largest (700,000 acres), most heavily forested, and least fragmented working forests in south-central New England. Nearly 70,000 acres have been identified as rare species habitat. The area includes the entire watershed of the Deerfield River in Massachusetts and the West River in Vermont.



Audubon Vermont has partnered with the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation to create the Foresters for the Birds initiative. It is designed to develop tools and training for foresters who want to help landowners manage their forests with bird habitat in mind. This effort has partnered with Massachusetts Audubon to preserve and enhance habitat in this area. Additionally, the [Staying Connected Initiative](#)—an international collaborative effort to conserve, restore, and enhance landscape connectivity with partners that include State agencies and several nongovernmental organizations—identified this area as a priority. Conservation efforts in this area will help to connect the Connecticut River Watershed and Berkshire Taconic landscapes; discussions are ongoing related to the development of an easementbased National Forest in the area. Additionally, emerald ash borer was identified in this area of Massachusetts in 2012.

States: Massachusetts, Vermont

Area contains portions† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

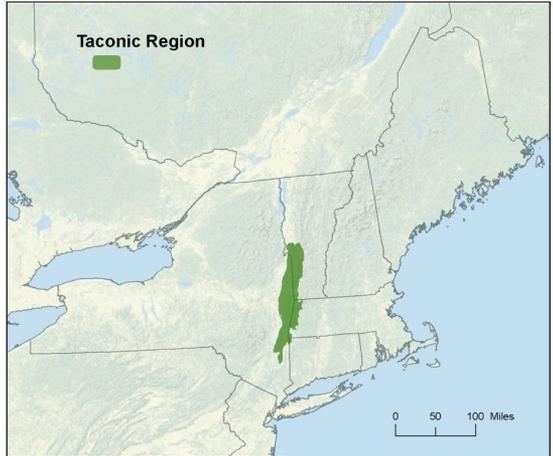
- [Connecticut River Watershed National Blueway](#)† – Massachusetts, Vermont; Green Mountain National Forest, VT
- [New England Forests and Waters](#)† – Vermont; Green Mountain National Forest

Existing Partnerships

- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Vermont Poultney-Mettowee Watershed Restoration Project – Green Mountain National Forest
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Highstead – Wildlands and Woodlands Initiative](#)
- [Massachusetts Audubon – Foresters for the Birds](#)
- Massachusetts-Vermont Woodland Partnership
- [New England Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [New England Governors' Conference](#) – Keeping Forest as Forest Initiative
- [New England – New York Forestry Initiative](#)
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel](#)
- [Staying Connected Initiative](#)

Berkshire Taconic Landscape

This important forested landscape crosses the mountains of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and Vermont. The conservation strategy for this area includes land protection, ecological restoration, applied conservation science, collaborative land management, and collaboration with local communities. Efforts in the area include: ongoing U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy land acquisition, the New England Governors' Conference Keeping Forest as Forest grant, and multiple partnerships of nongovernmental organizations including the [Rensselaer Plateau Alliance](#).



States: Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Vermont

Area contains portions† of the following America's Great Outdoors priority:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [New England Forests and Waters](#)† – Vermont; Green Mountain National Forest

Existing Partnerships

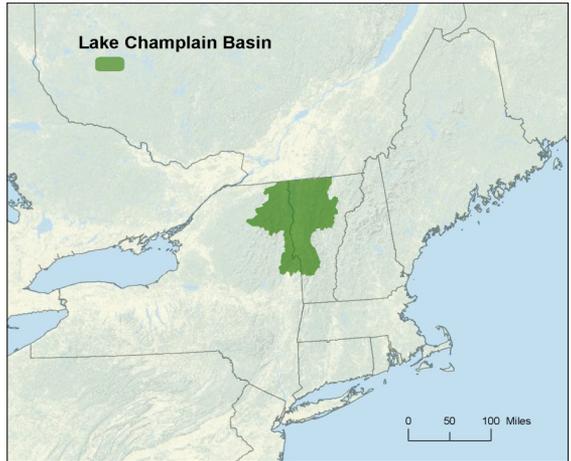
- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Vermont Poultney-Mettowee Watershed Restoration Project – Green Mountain National Forest
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Litchfield Hills Greenprint Collaborative](#)
- [New England Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [New England Governors' Conference](#) – Keeping Forest as Forest Initiative
- [New England – New York Forestry Initiative](#)
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel](#)
- [Rensselaer Plateau Alliance – Taconics Initiative](#)
- [The Nature Conservancy](#), LandVest, and the [Berkshire Natural Resources Council](#)
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*bog turtle and New England cottontail*)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Protect regional forest connectivity through partnerships with land trusts, conservation organizations, local communities, and State agencies.
 - ◊ Outreach to local communities to garner support for ecosystem protection.
 - ◊ Acquiring fee interest or conservation restrictions over the largest remaining parcels of unprotected forest land, as well as working forest easements in buffer areas, to reduce the threat of development in these forests.
 - ◊ Invasive species prevention and removal strategies should minimize new invasive species and treat existing invasives to promote native forest regeneration.
- Fund trails and recreation areas to maintain and expand recreation opportunities.
 - ◊ There is opportunity for a crossborder railtotrail partnership on the site of the historic Delaware and Hudson Rail bed that Vermont has managed as a multiuse trail along its border with New York.
- Work with the Green Mountain National Forest, VT, which has significant holdings here.
- Collaborate with the several small colleges in the Taconics—especially those that focus on environmental issues.

[Lake Champlain Basin](#)

This [area](#) contains a multi-State, multinational resource impacted by urban development and agricultural runoff. Challenges include maintaining tree canopy and watershed health to reduce pollution and protect water quality. The effort is being coordinated by the Lake Champlain Commission. The basin was also a pilot Signature Landscape of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. Cooperative efforts include the Skidder Bridge Loan Program, which provides logging operations to implement best management practices in an affordable way. The area has been and continues to be the top priority for Vermont, and their efforts also include an urban green infrastructure initiative in Burlington, VT, which is the most densely populated portion of the basin.



States: New York, Vermont, (Quebec*)

Area contains all or portion† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [New England Forests and Waters](#)† – Vermont; Green Mountain National Forest

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Winooski River – Conservation for Flood Resilience](#) – Vermont

Signature Landscape (*pilot*)

- [Lake Champlain](#) – New York, Vermont; Green Mountain National Forest, VT

Existing Partnerships

- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Vermont Poultney-Mettowee Watershed Restoration Project – Green Mountain National Forest
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Vermont – Rock River
- [New England Climate Change Response Framework](#)

- [New England Governors' Conference](#) – Keeping Forest as Forest Initiative
- [New England – New York Forestry Initiative](#)
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel](#)
- [New York Department of Environmental Conservation Trees for Tribes](#)
- [Vermont Ecosystem Restoration Program](#) (formerly Clean and Clear Program)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Pursue urban forestry projects that provide increased urban forest canopy and storm water mitigation through vegetation plantings.
 - ◊ Work with local developers and communities to plan development that includes forested areas, vegetation plantings, and storm water runoff mitigation.
- Control the introduction, spread, and impact of nonnative plant species in surrounding forests, in order to preserve the integrity of the Lake Champlain ecosystem.

Interstate 95 Corridor

Forested watersheds along the I-95 corridor face threats from expanding development, heavy use, and poor urban planning. Degradation of watersheds, forest fragmentation, and a reduction of forested land along the corridor pose severe risks to water quality, forest diversity, and watershed health. Heavy use of the corridor also increases the potential spread of invasive plants and insects.



States: (Connecticut), Delaware, (District of Columbia), (Maine), Maryland, (Massachusetts), New Hampshire, New Jersey, (New York), (Pennsylvania), Rhode Island, Virginia*

Area contains portions† of the following America’s Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Connecticut River Watershed National Blueway](#)† – Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire
- [Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail](#)† – Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia*
- [Penobscot River Restoration Project](#)† – Maine

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Naugatuck River Greenway](#)† – Connecticut
- [Anacostia River Restoration](#)† – District of Columbia, Maryland
- [Blackstone River Valley Greenway](#)† – Massachusetts, Rhode Island
- [Delaware River Restoration](#)† – New Jersey
- [Bronx River National Water Trail](#)† – New York

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Anacostia Riverwalk Trail](#)† – District of Columbia
- [Philadelphia Urban Greening](#)† – Pennsylvania

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

- [Bronx and Harlem River Watersheds](#) – New York, NY
- [Anacostia River Watershed](#) – District of Columbia and Maryland
- [Delaware River Watershed](#) – Metropolitan Philadelphia, PA

- [Mystic River Watershed](#) – Metropolitan Boston, MA
- [Patapsco River Watershed](#) – Baltimore, MD
- [Passaic River Watershed](#) – Newark, NJ

Existing Partnerships

- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Appalachian Mountains Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative](#)
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◇ Maine – Halfmoon Stream, Nickerson Lake, Smith Brook-Meduxnekeag River, Sandy Stream, and Unity Pond
 - ◇ Massachusetts – Palmer River
 - ◇ Rhode Island – Tomaquag Brook-Pawcatuck River
- [New England Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [New England Governors' Conference](#) – Keeping Forest as Forest Initiative
- [New England – New York Forestry Initiative](#)
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel](#)
- [University of Maryland](#) and [University of the District of Columbia](#) Cooperative Extension Services
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*bog turtle and New England cottontail*)

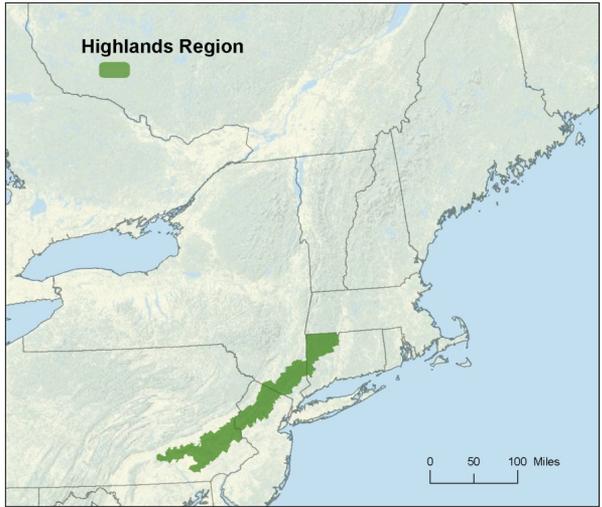
Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Link local open space and resource management efforts to broader megaregional conservation goals with meetings and research materials designed to build an understanding of larger issues and trends.
- Link the conservation of critical landscapes and forests to broader public policy goals including reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting drinking water, and improving water quality in the Northeast.
- Enhance best practices and coordination across jurisdictional boundaries by convening and promoting partnerships between local, State, and Federal government agencies, and other land-use decisionmakers and natural resource managers.
- Expand conservation education programs across the region commensurate with the magnitude of benefits, issues, and tradeoffs related to forest conservation.

- Cooperate across agencies (Federal and State) in partnership with land trusts, private landowners, and communities, to identify important landscapes to protect and manage.
- Educate community officials on forest conservation and ensure they have good planning tools, so they can decide zoning ordinances and practices that benefit forests and watersheds.
- Work with urban communities to promote healthy trees and urban forests, which contribute to improved air and water quality, watershed function, energy conservation, and social well-being.

Highlands Region of Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania

This [area](#) of national significance was identified as a critical watershed for nearby metropolitan areas. The [Highlands Conservation Act of 2004](#) recognized the importance of the water, forest, agricultural, wildlife, recreational, and cultural resources in the region. More than \$9.25 million in Federal funding for land protection in the Highlands region has been appropriated by Congress to date. Related collaborative conservation efforts, like the work of the [Appalachian Trail Conservancy](#), have protected thousands of acres in each State, including portions of the Appalachian Trail. This work continues to provide crucial landscape-scale linkages between Federal, State, and private forest lands that were already protected.



States: Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania

Area contains portions† of the following America’s Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Connecticut River Watershed National Blueway](#)† – Connecticut

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Naugatuck River Greenway](#)† – Connecticut
- [Delaware River Restoration](#)† – New Jersey
- [Lower Susquehanna River Initiative and Captain John Smith Connecting Water Trail](#)† – Pennsylvania

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

- [Delaware River Watershed](#) – Metropolitan Philadelphia, PA
- [Passaic River Watershed](#) – Newark, NJ

Existing Partnerships

- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Appalachian Mountains Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)

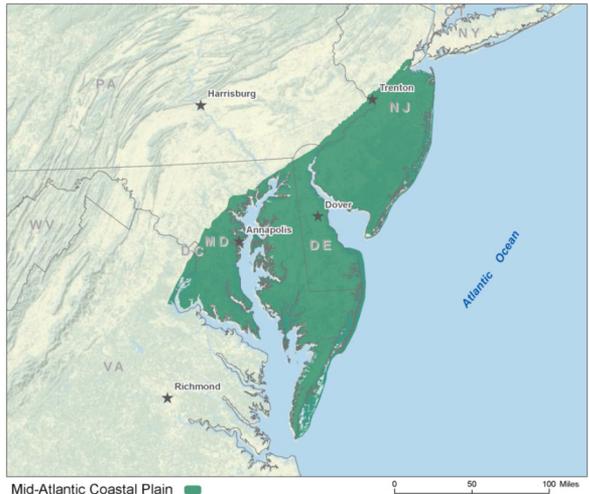
- [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative](#)
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
- [New England Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [New England Governors' Conference – Keeping Forest as Forest Initiative](#)
- [New England – New York Forestry Initiative](#)
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel](#)
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*bog turtle, golden winged warbler, and New England cottontail*)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Partner with land trusts, conservation organizations, local communities, and State agencies, to maintain connectivity between forests across the region.
- Conduct outreach to local communities, including counties, to gather support for ecosystem protection.
- Acquire fee interest or conservation restrictions over the largest remaining parcels of unprotected, high conservation value forest land as identified in the Forest Service Highlands studies within the forest core, and working forest easements in buffer areas, to reduce the threat of development.
- Invasive species prevention and removal strategies minimize new invasive species and treat existing invasives to promote native forest regeneration.

Delmarva Peninsula and Mid-Atlantic Coastal Plain

Several issues important across this peninsula include forest threats such as development and fragmentation, the Southern pine beetle and other invasive pest and plant species, maintaining unique forest types and wetlands such as the Atlantic white-cedar bogs, and supporting forest markets to utilize wood from throughout the region.



States: Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, (Virginia*)

Area contains all or portion† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail](#)† – Delaware, Maryland, Virginia*
- [Delaware National Bayshore](#) – Delaware

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Barnegat Bay Landscape Preservation and Recreation/Water Access](#) – New Jersey

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Anacostia River Restoration](#)† – Maryland
- [Nanticoke River – Captain John Smith Chesapeake Connecting Trail](#) – Delaware
- [Chester River Captain John Smith Connecting Trail](#) – Maryland
- [Delaware River Restoration](#)† – New Jersey

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historic Park](#) – Maryland

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

- [Patapsco River Watershed](#) – Baltimore, MD
- [Anacostia River Watershed](#) – District of Columbia and Maryland
- [Delaware River Watershed](#) – Metropolitan Philadelphia, PA

Existing Partnerships

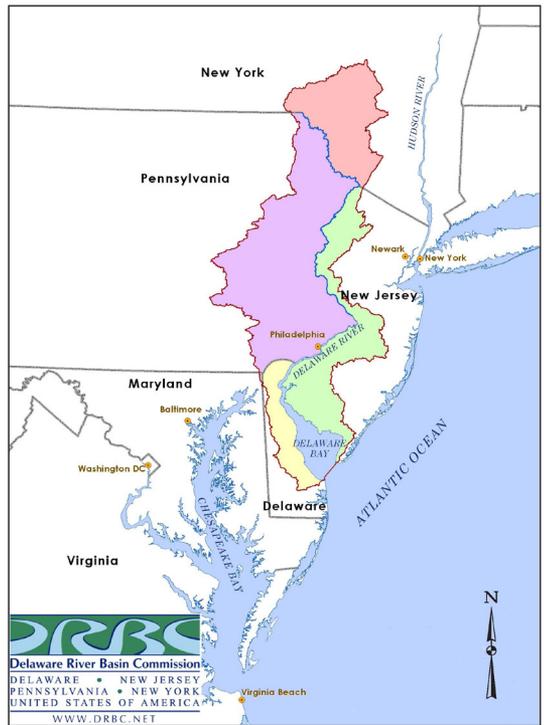
- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Appalachian Mountains Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Commission](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative](#)
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Delaware – Clear Brook-Nanticoke River
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*bog turtle*)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- *Land Conversion*—The fast pace of land consumption in the region, especially along the I-95 Corridor between Philadelphia, PA, and Newark, NJ, endangers habitat and natural systems while consuming open space. Patterns of growth, along with common threats, like the high cost of housing, rising income inequalities, and climate change, affect the health and future prosperity of the region. Urban forestry and improved land-use planning can mitigate some of these impacts.
- *Fragmentation*—Fragmentation exacerbates the main problems of habitat loss and the need for fire suppression. Much work remains to be done in planning and creating migration corridors along the coast. Road and highway corridors have accelerated fragmentation and remain a threat to much of the region.
- *Southern Pine Beetle*—Southern pine beetle is one of the most destructive insects in the southern United States. Beetle outbreaks in the area have increased in recent years, and significant outbreaks are expected in the next few years as drought and other environmental stressors continue to weaken host species such as shortleaf, loblolly, Virginia, and pitch pines. Meanwhile, increasing average temperatures and longer growing seasons have extended the northern range of this pest.

[Delaware River Watershed](#)

This watershed's estuaries contain some of the most important lands for migratory birds within the Atlantic Flyway. In addition, several Atlantic white-cedar swamps are located within estuaries that feed the Delaware River and Bay. This watershed provides drinking water for 17 million people in four States, and water quality is an issue within Delaware's portion of the watershed. However, a collaborative effort titled the [Common Waters Partnership](#), which is led by the Pinchot Institute, has worked closely with Federal, State, and local partners, including the [Delaware River Basin Commission](#), to improve water quality in recent years. In fact, these efforts have been so successful that the partnership has shifted its focus to planning for the impacts of a changing climate in order to enhance the resilience of this important watershed and landscape in the face of future uncertainty. Additionally, the area of the watershed in and around Philadelphia is now a part of the [Urban Waters Federal Partnership](#), a national multiagency program that helps communities reconnect with and improve their urban waters.



Map used by permission.

States: Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania

Area contains the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscape of National Significance

- [Delaware National Bayshore](#) – Delaware

Rivers and Water Trail

- [Delaware River Restoration](#) – New Jersey

Great Urban Park and Wildlife Area

- [Philadelphia Urban Greening](#) – Pennsylvania

Urban Waters Federal Partnership

- Delaware River Watershed – Metropolitan Philadelphia, PA

Existing Partnerships

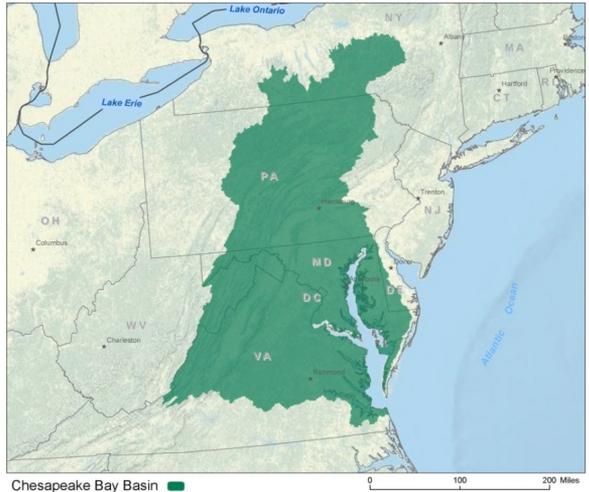
- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Appalachian Mountains Migratory Bird Habitat Join Venture](#)
- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Catskills Watershed Agriculture Council](#)
- [Delaware River Basin Commission](#)
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ New Jersey – Upper Alloway Creek, Upper Cohansey River, and Upper Salem River
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Pinchot Institute – Common Waters Initiative](#)
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*bog turtle and golden winged warbler*)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Coordinate within the “rivershed,” similar to collaborative processes in place for the Chesapeake Bay and Great Lakes.
- Participate in climate-related work of the Common Waters Initiative.

Chesapeake Bay

Several natural resource and conservation efforts have taken place over the past decade to clean up and restore the [Chesapeake Bay](#). This is recognized as a high national priority, involving Federal agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Agriculture, and Department of the Interior, as well as State agencies and other partners. States are involved in various efforts to reforest



Chesapeake Bay tributaries, reduce sediment loads into those streams, minimize urban impacts, and restore the bay to its former condition. Since 2008 these efforts have protected a total over 150,000 acres of high-value private working forests from development. Additionally, the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, and [Chesapeake Bay Program](#) (2012) completed and jointly released the “[Chesapeake forest restoration strategy](#).”

States: Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, (Virginia*)

Area contains the following America’s Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail](#) – District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia*

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Anacostia River Restoration](#) – District of Columbia, Maryland
- [Nanticoke River – Captain John Smith Chesapeake Connecting Trail](#) – Delaware
- [Chester River Captain John Smith Connecting Trail](#) – Maryland
- [Lower Susquehanna River Initiative and Captain John Smith Connecting Water Trail](#) – Pennsylvania

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Anacostia Riverwalk Trail](#) – District of Columbia
- [Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historic Park](#) – Maryland

Early Pilot Landscape

- [Monongahela National Forest](#) – West Virginia

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

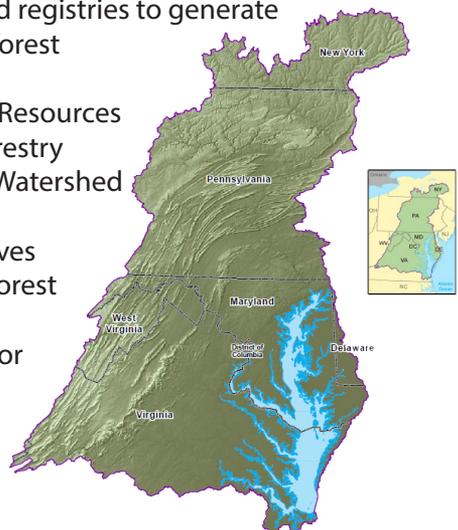
- [Anacostia River Watershed](#) – District of Columbia and Maryland
- [Patapsco River Watershed](#) – Baltimore, MD

Existing Partnerships

- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Appalachian Mountains Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Atlantic Coast Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Central Appalachians Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Appalachians Spruce Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Commission](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◇ Susquehanna Watershed Riparian Buffer Enhancements in South Central New York
 - ◇ West Virginia Restoration Venture – Monongahela National Forest
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◇ Maryland – Lower, Middle, and Upper Catoctin Creek
 - ◇ Pennsylvania – Upper Kishacoquillas Creek
- [North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Northeast Aquatic Nuisance Species Panel](#)
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*bog turtle and golden winged warbler*)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Support ecosystem markets and land registries to generate additional incentives for continued forest conservation and restoration.
- Work closely with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to prioritize forestry projects under the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative.
- Develop sustainable forestry incentives and policies to stimulate improved forest conservation through:
 - ◇ Tax incentives: income tax credit for developing a forest stewardship plan; expanded property tax rebate for forest stewardship plans.



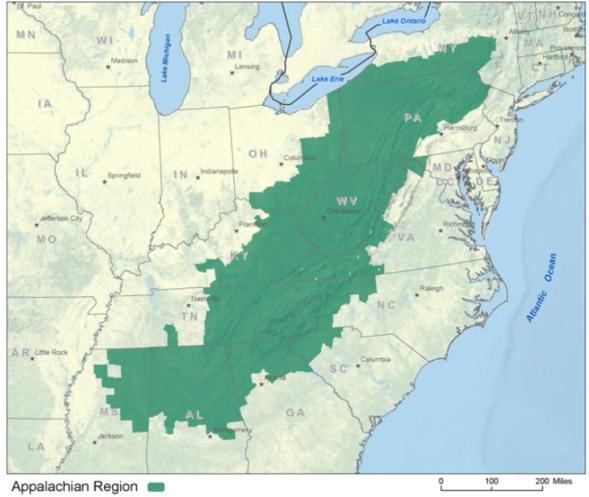
- ◊ Effective and equitable regulations, particularly related to harvesting.
- ◊ Forest enterprise zones to support healthy forest product markets and technical innovation for new markets.
- ◊ Forest health reserve fund to improve response to forest health threats.
- ◊ Family forest revolving loan fund to support intact intergenerational transfer of forest land.
- Link forests, storm water, and water supply through Comprehensive Plan elements like Sensitive Areas, Water Resources, and Land Protection Plans, and through new requirements for prioritized environmental site design for storm water.
- Support dedicated land conservation funding through State and local ballot measures.
- Adopt a transferable or refundable tax credit program, or both, for donated conservation easements.
- Support effective Transferable and Purchase of Development Rights programs in local jurisdictions.
- Work with Federal, State, and local organizations to improve technical assistance to forest landowners.
- Invest in ongoing conservation education, outreach, and technical assistance to local jurisdiction planners and landowners to improve forest conservation and management, and to schools.
- Identify high priority ridge and valley landscapes, in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia, in relation to continuity of ridge forests for migration corridors, recreation, and forest protection.

Reference

Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry; Chesapeake Bay Program. 2012. Chesapeake forest restoration strategy. Newtown Square, PA: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 35 p. <http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/chesapeakeforestrestorationstrategy.pdf>. (18 February 2016)

Appalachian Forest Region and Marcellus Shale

In the Appalachian Forest region 42 percent of the population is rural and the region's economy, once highly dependent on mining, forestry, agriculture, chemical industries, and heavy industry, has become more diversified in recent times. This area has unique vegetation, with some of the highest plant and animal biodiversity in the United States. Preservation of its rural character in the face



of ever-expanding urban areas is a constant challenge. A major component of this area is the Appalachian Trail. The [Appalachian Forest Heritage Area](#) integrates central Appalachian forest history, culture, products, and forest management into a multi-State heritage tourism initiative.

Technological developments in the oil and gas industry allow the drilling of deeper wells to tap previously unreachable gas deposits in the Marcellus Shale region within the Appalachians. Most of the wells are drilled on forest land, resulting in habitat disruption, fragmentation, and invasive species introductions. Also, the large amount of water used in the process creates erosion problems, sedimentation, and other types of water quality and quantity impacts to streams. Currently, at least three States (Maryland, New York, Vermont) have a moratorium on the utilization of hydraulic fracturing to extract oil and gas from these types of deep wells.

States: Maryland, (New York), Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, (Alabama*), (Georgia*), Kentucky,* (Mississippi*), (North Carolina*), (South Carolina*), (Tennessee*), Virginia*

Area contains all or portion† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Great Lakes](#)† – Ohio, New York

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- Northeast Ohio Wetland Restoration – Ohio
- [Ohio to Erie Trail Connection](#)† – Ohio
- [Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge](#) – West Virginia

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Sulphur Springs Stream Restoration](#) – Ohio
- [Lower Susquehanna River Initiative and Captain John Smith Connecting Water Trail](#) – Pennsylvania
- [Ohio River Native Mussel Recovery](#) – West Virginia
- [New River Gorge National River](#) – West Virginia

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Pittsburgh Urban Greening](#) – Pennsylvania

Early Pilot Landscape

- [Monongahela National Forest](#) – West Virginia

Existing Partnerships

- [Appalachian Forest Renewal Initiative](#)
- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Appalachian Mountains Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative](#)
- [Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Catskills Watershed Agriculture Council](#)
- [Central Appalachians Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Appalachians Spruce Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Commission](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)
- [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Collaborative Oak Management in the Ohio Appalachian Mountains – Wayne National Forest
 - ◊ Susquehanna Watershed Riparian Buffer Enhancements in South Central New York
 - ◊ West Virginia Restoration Venture – Monongahela National Forest
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#)
 - ◊ Communities surrounding [Wayne National Forest](#)
- [Delaware River Basin Commission](#)
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Lake Erie Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)

- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◇ Ohio – East South Fork Sugar Creek and East Fork Little Miami River-Fivemile Creek
 - ◇ Pennsylvania – Upper Kishacoquillas Creek
 - ◇ West Virginia –Knapps Creek
- [Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Pinchot Institute – Common Waters Initiative](#)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*golden winged warbler*)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- West Virginia is beginning to look at the issue of Marcellus Shale development. Pennsylvania has extensive experience on this issue, as does Ohio, so learning networks and other opportunities related to managing Marcellus development in concert with surrounding forests are plentiful.
- Identify high priority ridge and valley landscapes, in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia in relation to continuity of ridge forests for migration corridors, recreation, and forest protection.

Ohio River Basin and Wabash River Valley

The [Ohio River](#) is 981 miles long, starting at the confluence of the Allegheny and the Monongahela Rivers in Pittsburgh, PA, and ending in Cairo, IL, where it flows into the Mississippi River and eventually the Gulf of Mexico. It is a direct source of drinking water for more than 3 million people. There is a growing recognition that conservation efforts to address water quality and urbanization issues in the States bordering the Ohio River



would highly benefit the environment along this major national waterway. Forestry would be a major part of any such wide-scale effort. Efforts underway include an [Ohio River Basin Study](#) led by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as efforts around the Wabash River—a priority River and Water Trail in the America’s Great Outdoors Initiative, flowing over 475 miles through Indiana and draining over 33,000 square miles of land into its confluence with the Ohio River below Mount Vernon, IN.

States: (Kentucky*), Illinois, (Indiana), Ohio, (Pennsylvania), (Tennessee*), West Virginia

Area contains all or portion† of the following America’s Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Ohio to Erie Trail Connection](#)† – Ohio
- [Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge](#) – West Virginia

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Wabash River Healthy Rivers Initiative](#) – Indiana
- [Ohio River Native Mussel Recovery](#) – West Virginia
- [New River Gorge National River](#) – West Virginia

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Pittsburgh Urban Greening](#) – Pennsylvania

Early Pilot Landscape

- [Monongahela National Forest](#) – West Virginia

Existing Partnerships

- [Appalachian Forest Renewal Initiative](#)
- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Appalachian Mountains Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative](#)
- [Central Appalachians Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Appalachians Spruce Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Collaborative Oak Management in the Ohio Appalachian Mountains – Wayne National Forest
 - ◊ Kinkaid Lake Watershed Restoration in Southern Illinois – Shawnee National Forest
 - ◊ West Virginia Restoration Venture – Monongahela National Forest
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#)
 - ◊ Communities surrounding Shawnee National Forest
 - ◊ Communities surrounding [Wayne National Forest](#)
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Illinois – Crooked-Bonpas Creek, Lake De Revey, Lake Vermillion, and North Fork Vermillion River
 - ◊ Indiana – Eagle Creek Reservoir-Eagle Creek, Ell Creek, and Silver Creek
 - ◊ Ohio – East South Fork Sugar Creek, and East Fork Little Miami River-Fivemile Creek
 - ◊ West Virginia –Knapps Creek
- [Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Coordinate within the “rivershed,” similar to collaborative processes in place for the Chesapeake Bay and Great Lakes.
- Identify high priority ridge and valley landscapes, in Pennsylvania and West Virginia in relation to continuity of ridge forests for migration corridors, recreation, and forest protection.

Upper Ohio River Appalachian Forests

The Appalachian forests of the Upper Ohio River support a robust forest products industry and a rich diversity of flora and fauna while providing clean drinking water and recreational opportunities. This effort would involve multiple partners taking an “all lands” approach to conserving, connecting, and restoring forests within the priority area.

States: (Kentucky*), Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia

Area contains all or portions† of the following America’s Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Ohio to Erie Trail Connection](#)† – Ohio
- [Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge](#) – West Virginia

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Ohio River Native Mussel Recovery](#) – West Virginia
- [New River Gorge National River](#) – West Virginia

Early Pilot Landscape

- [Monongahela National Forest](#) – West Virginia

Existing Partnerships

- [Appalachian Forest Renewal Initiative](#)
- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Appalachian Mountains Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative](#)
- [Central Appalachians Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Appalachians Spruce Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Chiefs’ Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Collaborative Oak Management in the Ohio Appalachian Mountains – Wayne National Forest
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#)
 - ◊ Communities surrounding [Wayne National Forest](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Working Lands for Wildlife](#) (*golden winged warbler*)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Identify high priority ridge and valley landscapes, in Pennsylvania and West Virginia in relation to continuity of ridge forests for migration corridors, recreation, and forest protection.
- Marcellus Shale development is an issue West Virginia is beginning to look at it. Pennsylvania has extensive experience on this issue, as does Ohio, so learning networks and other opportunities related to managing Marcellus development in concert with surrounding forests are plentiful.

Mid-Ohio River Valley Biomass Feedstock Zone and Project

The West Virginia Division of Forestry is working with the Ohio Division of Forestry and the West Virginia University Appalachian Hardwood Center on a Mid-Ohio River Valley Woody Biomass Project. Project partners are working to develop estimates of woody biomass quantity and availability and to organize the woody biomass supply chain, in order to supply large quantities of biomass for new bioenergy projects.

States: Ohio, West Virginia

Area contains all or portion† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Ohio to Erie Trail Connection](#)† – Ohio
- [Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge](#) – West Virginia

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Ohio River Native Mussel Recovery](#) – West Virginia
- [New River Gorge National River](#) – West Virginia

Early Pilot Landscape

- [Monongahela National Forest](#) – West Virginia

Existing Partnerships

- [Appalachian Forest Renewal Initiative](#)
- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Appalachian Mountains Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative](#)
- [Central Appalachians Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Appalachians Spruce Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Collaborative Oak Management in the Ohio Appalachian Mountains – Wayne National Forest
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#)
 - ◊ Communities surrounding [Wayne National Forest](#), OH
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)

Great Lakes Basin

The Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario Lakes contain 18 percent of the world's fresh surface water. The Great Lakes provide approximately 4.2 percent of all U.S. drinking water. They are essential to commerce, trade, wildlife, and transportation of goods. The Nature Conservancy had identified the Great Lakes region as "critical" to the hundreds of millions of birds that migrate through North



America each year. The collaborative initiatives listed below are currently active in the Great Lakes Region. This area is also a Landscape of National Significance in the America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

States: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Ontario*

Area contains all or portion† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscape of National Significance

- [Great Lakes](#) – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, New York, Wisconsin

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Grand Lake St. Mary's Watershed Wetland Development](#) – Ohio
- [Northeast Ohio Wetland Restoration†](#) – Ohio
- [Ohio to Erie Trail Connection†](#) – Ohio
- [Ice Age Trail†](#) – Wisconsin

Rivers and Water Trail

- [Detroit River Restoration](#) – Michigan
- [Finger Lakes Water Trail](#) – New York
- [Sulphur Springs Stream Restoration](#) – Ohio
- [Lake Michigan Water Trail](#) – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin
- [Milwaukee River Restoration and Fish Passage](#) – Wisconsin

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Calumet Millennium Reserve†](#) – Illinois
- [Indiana Dunes](#) – Indiana

Signature Watershed (*pilot*)

- [Saginaw Bay](#) – Michigan, Huron-Manistee National Forest

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

- [Lake Michigan/Little Calumet River](#) – Northwest Indiana
- [Grand River Watershed](#) – Grand Rapids, MI
- [Western Lake Erie Basin](#) – Toledo, OH

Existing Partnerships

- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◇ Lake Superior Landscape Restoration Partnership in Northern Wisconsin – Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
 - ◇ Minnesota Lake Superior North Shore Coastal Restoration Project – Superior National Forest
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Lake Erie Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Huron Binational Partnership Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Michigan Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Ontario Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Superior Binational Program Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◇ Michigan – Pigeon Creek and Hayworth Creek
 - ◇ New York – Browns Creek-Genesee River, Christie Creek-Genesee River, and Otter Creek
 - ◇ Ohio – Brandywine-Broken Sword Creeks
 - ◇ Wisconsin – Big Green Lake
- [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Urban Climate Change Response Framework](#) (Metropolitan Chicago)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)

Great Lakes Regional Collaboration and Strategy

The [Council of Great Lakes Governors](#), the [Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative](#), Great Lakes Tribes (represented by the [Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission](#)) and the [Great Lakes Congressional Task Force](#) moved to convene a group now known as the [Great Lakes Regional Collaboration](#). Formed with input from the Federal [Great Lakes Interagency Task Force](#), this is a wide-ranging, cooperative effort to design and implement a strategy for the restoration, protection, and sustainable use of the Great Lakes. Several plans have been created to respond to this [strategy](#) including the [Great Lakes Water Compact](#), [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#), [Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan](#), [Michigan Great Lakes Plan](#), and [Wisconsin Great Lakes Strategy](#).

States: Illinois, (Indiana), Michigan, Minnesota, (New York), Ohio, (Pennsylvania), Wisconsin, Ontario,* Quebec*

Area contains all or portion† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Great Lakes](#) – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, New York, Wisconsin

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Grand Lake St. Mary's Watershed Wetland Development](#) – Ohio
- Northeast Ohio Wetland Restoration† – Ohio
- [Ohio to Erie Trail Connection](#)† – Ohio
- [Ice Age Trail](#)† – Wisconsin

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Detroit River Restoration](#) – Michigan
- [Finger Lakes Water Trail](#) – New York
- [Sulphur Springs Stream Restoration](#) – Ohio
- [Lake Michigan Water Trail](#) – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin
- [Milwaukee River Restoration and Fish Passage](#) – Wisconsin

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Calumet Millennium Reserve](#)† – Illinois
- [Indiana Dunes](#) – Indiana

Signature Watershed (*pilot*)

- [Saginaw Bay](#) – Michigan, Huron-Manistee National Forest

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

- [Lake Michigan/Little Calumet River](#) – Northwest Indiana
- [Grand River Watershed](#) – Grand Rapids, MI
- [Western Lake Erie Basin](#) – Toledo, OH

Existing Partnerships

- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Lake Superior Landscape Restoration Partnership in Northern Wisconsin – Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
 - ◊ Minnesota Lake Superior North Shore Coastal Restoration Project – Superior National Forest
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Lake Erie Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Huron Binational Partnership Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Michigan Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Ontario Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Superior Binational Program Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Michigan – Pigeon Creek and Hayworth Creek
 - ◊ New York – Browns Creek-Genesee River, Christie Creek-Genesee River, and Otter Creek
 - ◊ Ohio – Brandywine-Broken Sword Creeks
 - ◊ Wisconsin – Big Green Lake
- [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Urban Climate Change Response Framework](#) (Metropolitan Chicago)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Partner with land trusts, conservation organizations, local communities, and State agencies, to protect or restore riparian forests and upland habitats.
- Partner with State water quality regulatory agencies to promote the use of urban forests for storm water reduction and on-site infiltration.
- Northeastern Area staff is working on watershed planning and landscape scale conservation issues for the Great Lakes, and these efforts could be expanded to include climate change, with the [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#) as a natural avenue for this to happen.

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

This initiative, led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ([EPA](#)), targets the most significant problems in the region, including invasive aquatic species, nonpoint-source pollution, and contaminated sediment. The EPA and its Federal partners are coordinating with State, Tribal, local, and forest industry entities to protect, maintain, and restore the chemical, biological, and physical integrity of the Great Lakes. To date, the Northeastern Area alone has administered grants for nearly 100 projects that will plant tens of thousands of trees and treat hundreds of acres of contaminated brownfields.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service ([NRCS](#)) is also working with its partners in the eight-State area. Through financial assistance and technical assistance, NRCS assists private landowners with conservation planning and conservation practices, such as cover crops, conservation crop rotations, filter strips, prescribed grazing, and wetlands restoration.

States: Illinois, (Indiana), Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, (Pennsylvania), Wisconsin

Area contains all or portion† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Great Lakes](#) – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, New York, Wisconsin

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Grand Lake St. Mary's Watershed Wetland Development](#) – Ohio
- [Northeast Ohio Wetland Restoration†](#) – Ohio
- [Ohio to Erie Trail Connection†](#) – Ohio
- [Ice Age Trail†](#) – Wisconsin

Rivers and Water Trails

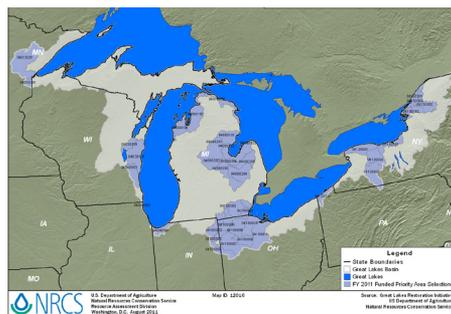
- [Detroit River Restoration](#) – Michigan
- [Finger Lakes Water Trail](#) – New York
- [Sulphur Springs Stream Restoration](#) – Ohio
- [Lake Michigan Water Trail](#) – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin
- [Milwaukee River Restoration and Fish Passage](#) – Wisconsin

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Calumet Millennium Reserve†](#) – Illinois
- [Indiana Dunes](#) – Indiana

Signature Watershed (*pilot*)

- [Saginaw Bay](#) – Michigan, Huron-Manistee National Forest



Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

- [Lake Michigan/Little Calumet River](#) – Northwest Indiana
- [Grand River Watershed](#) – Grand Rapids, MI
- [Western Lake Erie Basin](#) – Toledo, OH

Existing Partnerships

- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Lake Superior Landscape Restoration Partnership in Northern Wisconsin – Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
 - ◊ Minnesota Lake Superior North Shore Coastal Restoration Project – Superior National Forest
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Lake Erie Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Huron Binational Partnership Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Michigan Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Ontario Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Superior Binational Program Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Michigan – Pigeon Creek- and Hayworth Creek
 - ◊ New York – Browns Creek-Genesee River, Christie Creek-Genesee River, and Otter Creek
 - ◊ Ohio – Brandywine-Broken Sword Creeks
 - ◊ Wisconsin – Big Green Lake
- [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Urban Climate Change Response Framework](#) (Metropolitan Chicago)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Northeastern Area staff is working on watershed planning and landscape scale conservation issues for the Great Lakes, and these efforts could be expanded to include climate change, with the [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#) as a natural avenue for this to happen.
- Annual funding for projects is available, some through competitive grant processes and others through priority lands opting-in to conservation programs administered by the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and other Federal agencies.

Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) are Department of the Interior-led management-science partnerships that inform integrated resource management actions addressing climate change and other stressors. The Upper Midwest and Great Lakes LCC, focuses on a range of fish, wildlife, and other natural resources that transcend State and international borders, including the Great Lakes—as well as coastal wetlands, boreal forests, major river systems, and prairie-hardwood ecosystems. Many of these ecosystems surround populous urban centers.

The LCC envisions a conservation community that, while governed by their unique purposes and missions, collaborates on sustaining lands and waters that support natural and cultural resources and the services they provide. Their mission is to support and sustain this conservation community by facilitating communication, coordination, and collaboration to bridge cutting-edge scientific research with natural resources management.

States: Illinois, Indiana, (Iowa), (Michigan), Minnesota, (New York), (Ohio), (Pennsylvania), Wisconsin

Area contains all or portion† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Great Lakes](#) – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, New York, Wisconsin
- [Mississippi River Bluffs](#)† – Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge](#)† – Illinois, Wisconsin
- Northeast Ohio Wetland Restoration – Ohio
- [Ohio to Erie Trail Connection](#)† – Ohio
- [Ice Age Trail](#) – Wisconsin

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Detroit River Restoration](#) – Michigan
- [Finger Lakes Water Trail](#) – New York
- [Sulphur Springs Stream Restoration](#) – Ohio
- [Mississippi National River and Recreation Area](#)† – Minnesota
- [Lake Michigan Water Trail](#) – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin
- [Milwaukee River Restoration and Fish Passage](#) – Wisconsin

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Calumet Millennium Reserve](#)† – Illinois
- [Indiana Dunes](#) – Indiana



Signature Watershed (*pilot*)

- [Saginaw Bay](#) – Michigan, Huron-Manistee National Forest

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

- [Lake Michigan/Little Calumet River](#) – Northwest Indiana
- [Grand River Watershed](#) – Grand Rapids, MI

Existing Partnerships

- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Lake Superior Landscape Restoration Partnership in Northern Wisconsin – Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest
 - ◊ Minnesota Lake Superior North Shore Coastal Restoration Project – Superior National Forest
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#) – Superior National Forest communities
- [Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative](#)
- [Driftless Area Restoration Effort Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
- [Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Lake Erie Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Huron Binational Partnership Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Michigan Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Ontario Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Superior Binational Program Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Michigan – Pigeon Creek and Hayworth Creek
 - ◊ New York – Browns Creek-Genesee River, Christie Creek-Genesee River, and Otter Creek
 - ◊ Wisconsin – Big Green Lake
- [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Urban Climate Change Response Framework](#) (Metropolitan Chicago)
- [Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)

Upper Mississippi Watershed

Issues in the Mississippi watershed include water pollution, loss of migratory bird habitat, and forest loss and fragmentation. There are many overlapping initiatives and opportunities for partnership. The area also includes several priority areas of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. The [Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership](#) was founded by Northeastern Area and the State Foresters in the region to build a watershed-wide approach to forestry efforts in the area. The purposes of the partnership include demonstrating how important forests are in healthy watersheds, assessing how forest conditions relate to water quality, promoting forestry solutions that cut the basin's sediment and nutrient losses, and developing and supporting forest restoration work in the basin.

States: Illinois, (Indiana), Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Wisconsin

Area contains all or portionst of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Mississippi River Bluffs](#) – Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Southern Prairie Potholes National Wildlife Refuge](#) – Iowa
- [Loess Hills](#)† – Iowa
- [Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge](#)† – Illinois, Wisconsin
- [Ozark Trail](#)† – Missouri
- [Ice Age Trail](#)† – Wisconsin

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Pecatonica River Water Trail](#) – Illinois
- [Mississippi National River and Recreation Area](#) – Minnesota
- [Minnesota River Blueway \(upper corridor\)](#) – Minnesota, South Dakota*

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Calumet Millennium Reserve](#)† – Illinois

Urban Waters Federal Partnership

- [Meramec and Big River Watershed](#) – St. Louis, MO

Existing Partnerships

- [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◇ Kinkaid Lake Watershed Restoration in Southern Illinois – Shawnee National Forest
 - ◇ Minnesota Lake Superior North Shore Coastal Restoration Project – Superior National Forest



- ◇ Upper Mississippi Headwaters Restoration in north-central Minnesota – Chippewa National Forest
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#)
 - ◇ Communities surrounding Superior National Forest
- [Driftless Area Restoration Effort Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
- [Middle Mississippi River Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◇ Illinois – Douglas Creek
 - ◇ Iowa – Wall Lake Inlet, Badger Creek
 - ◇ Minnesota – Big Twin Lake-Elm Creek, Gilchrist Lake-East Chippewa River, Sevenmile Creek
 - ◇ Missouri – Upper Troublesome Creek
- [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership](#)
- [Urban Climate Change Response Framework](#) (Metropolitan Chicago)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Northeastern Area staff are working on watershed planning and landscape scale conservation issues for the Upper Mississippi River. These efforts could be expanded to include climate change, with the [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#) and [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#) as natural avenues for this to happen.
- Northeastern Area and Upper Mississippi Forest Partnership participants analyzed where several major initiatives have set priorities, trying to find areas of overlap. Through this analysis and talking to local partners, a list of priority watersheds for the Upper Mississippi Forest Partnership was completed.
- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation managed an [Upper Mississippi Watershed Fund](#) for the Upper Mississippi Forest Partnership. The annual request for proposals was sent to about 250 potential partners and could be revitalized to advance renewed efforts in the watershed.

Moraine Forest

The Valparaiso Moraine is a terminal moraine around the Lake Michigan basin. It is a band of high, hilly terrain made up of glacial till and sand that reaches an elevation of near 300 feet above the level of Lake Michigan at its maximum height in Indiana and 17 miles wide at its maximum width in Indiana. The area includes an Indiana State Nature Preserve managed by The Nature Conservancy as well as the [Indiana Dunes](#), which is a Great Urban Park and Wildlife Area in the America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

States: Illinois, (Indiana), (Michigan), (Wisconsin)

Area contains portions† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Great Lakes](#)† – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge](#)† – Illinois, Wisconsin
- [Ice Age Trail](#)† – Wisconsin

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Lake Michigan Water Trail](#)† – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Calumet Millennium Reserve](#)† – Illinois
- [Indiana Dunes](#)† – Indiana

Urban Waters Federal Partnership

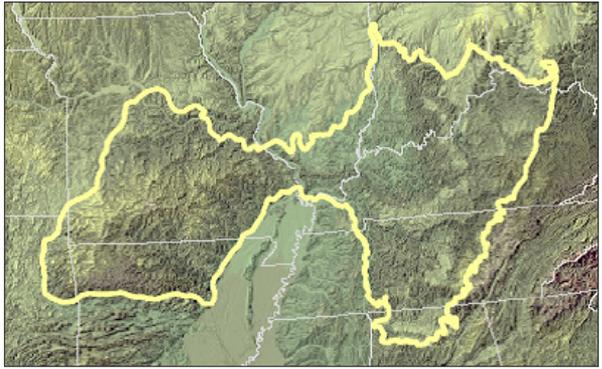
- [Lake Michigan/Little Calumet River](#) – Northwest Indiana

Existing Partnerships

- [Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Lake Michigan Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◇ Michigan – Pigeon Creek and Hayworth Creek
 - ◇ Wisconsin – Big Green Lake
- [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Urban Climate Change Response Framework](#) (Metropolitan Chicago)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)

[Central Hardwoods Region](#)

This region includes the south central lowlands (Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana), the interior low plateau (northern Alabama, central Tennessee, and Kentucky), the Ouachita and Ozark plateaus (northern Arkansas and southern Missouri), the ridge and valley (central Alabama through Vermont, from the coastal plain to the south and the St. Lawrence lowland to the north) and Blue



(Source: Central Hardwoods Joint Venture. Used by permission.)

Ridge areas (northern Georgia to central Pennsylvania, including the central and southern portions of the Appalachian crest). The [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#) covers 42 million acres of southern Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana. Climate change has the potential to worsen threats that are already present, such as habitat fragmentation, exotic species invasions, insects, diseases, and soil erosion, putting forest benefits at greater risk.

Members of the [Central Hardwoods Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#) formed a partnership, beginning in 2000, to elevate emphasis on bird conservation within the Central Hardwoods Region. Many of the bird species that inhabit this area migrate between Mexico, the Central Hardwoods, and Canada. The partnership works to maintain native bird populations and implement the conservation objectives of the various national and international bird conservation plans under the [North American Bird Conservation Initiative](#).

States: (Alabama*), (Arkansas*), (Kentucky*), Illinois, (Indiana), Missouri, (Ohio), (Oklahoma*), (Tennessee*)

Area contains all or portion† of the following America’s Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Ozark Trail](#) – Missouri; Mark Twain National Forest

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Wabash River Healthy Rivers Initiative](#) – Indiana

Early Pilot Landscape

- [White River Blueway](#)† – Arkansas,* Missouri; Mark Twain National Forest, MO

Urban Waters Federal Partnership

- [Meramec and Big River Watershed](#) – St. Louis, MO

Existing Partnerships

- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◇ Kinkaid Lake Watershed Restoration in Southern Illinois – Shawnee National Forest
 - ◇ Missouri Ozark Highlands Restoration Partnership – Mark Twain National Forest
- [Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program](#)
 - ◇ Missouri Pine-Oak Landscape Restoration (State and Federal forest lands only)
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#)
 - ◇ Communities surrounding Shawnee National Forest
- [Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Middle Mississippi River Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◇ Illinois – Crooked-Bonpas Creek
 - ◇ Indiana – Ell Creek
- [Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Southeast Aquatic Resources Fish Habitat Partnership](#)

Chicago Wilderness

Chicago Wilderness is a regional alliance—active in Chicago, IL; Gary, IN; and southern Wisconsin—that connects people and nature. The partnership includes more than 250 organizations that work together to restore natural resources, protect the region’s lands and waters, and to improve the quality of life for people. [Urban Climate Change Response Framework](#) efforts through the U.S. Forest Service’s Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science are just beginning in this area.

States: Illinois, (Indiana), (Wisconsin)

Area contains portions† of the following America’s Great Outdoors Priority Areas:

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Lake Michigan Water Trail](#)† – Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Calumet Millennium Reserve](#)† – Illinois
- [Indiana Dunes](#)† – Indiana

Urban Waters Federal Partnership

- [Lake Michigan/Little Calumet River](#) – Northwest Indiana

Existing Partnerships

- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
- [Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Lake Michigan Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership](#)
- [Urban Climate Change Response Framework](#) (Metropolitan Chicago)

Karst Topography Areas

The [Karst areas](#) have geology of limestone or other soluble rock that is characterized by caves, sinkholes, and sinking streams. These areas are important for native bat populations, which are being impacted by white-nose syndrome, as well as other threats.

States: Illinois, (Indiana), (Iowa), (Michigan), (Minnesota), Missouri, (Nebraska*), (South Dakota*), (Wisconsin)

Area contains all or portion† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Great Lakes](#)† – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin
- [Mississippi River Bluffs](#) – Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin

Landscapes of Regional Significance

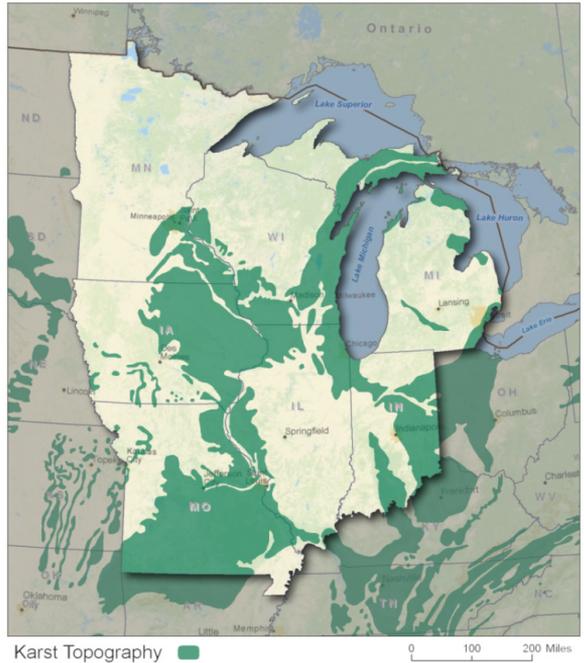
- [Southern Prairie Potholes National Wildlife Refuge](#)† – Iowa
- [Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge](#) – Illinois, Wisconsin
- [Ozark Trail](#) – Missouri; Mark Twain National Forest
- [Ice Age Trail](#) – Wisconsin

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Wabash River Healthy Rivers Initiative](#) – Indiana
- [Detroit River Restoration](#) – Michigan
- [Pecatonica River Water Trail](#) – Illinois
- [Mississippi National River and Recreation Area](#) – Minnesota
- [Lake Michigan Water Trail](#)† – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin
- [Milwaukee River Restoration and Fish Passage](#) – Wisconsin

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Calumet Millennium Reserve](#)† – Illinois
- [Indiana Dunes](#)† – Indiana
- [Memorial Arch and Mississippi River in St. Louis \(Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Revitalization\)](#) – Illinois, Missouri



Signature Watershed (*pilot*)

- [Saginaw Bay](#) – Michigan, Huron-Manistee National Forest

Early Pilot Landscape

- [White River Blueway](#)[†] – Arkansas,* Missouri; Mark Twain National Forest, MO

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

- [Lake Michigan/Little Calumet River](#) – Northwest Indiana
- [Grand River Watershed](#) – Grand Rapids, MI
- [Meramec and Big River Watersheds](#) – St. Louis, MO

Existing Partnerships

- [Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Kinkaid Lake Watershed Restoration in Southern Illinois – Shawnee National Forest
 - ◊ Missouri Ozark Highlands Restoration Partnership – Mark Twain National Forest
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#)
 - ◊ Communities surrounding Shawnee National Forest
- [Driftless Area Restoration Effort Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
- [Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Lake Erie Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Huron Binational Partnership Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Michigan Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Superior Binational Program Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Middle Mississippi River Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Illinois – Douglas Creek

- [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Southeast Aquatic Resources Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership](#)
- [Urban Climate Change Response Framework](#) (Metropolitan Chicago)

Opportunities for Partnership, Cooperation, and Projects

- Partnering with nonprofit organizations and with State and Federal fish and wildlife agencies could provide environmental education on sinkhole management and how humans impact the spread of deadly disease for sensitive species through cave exploration.
- Since limitations for management in areas with sensitive species often result in small project areas, coordinating with adjacent States for forest management projects may increase cost-effectiveness and make it possible to manage lands that otherwise would not be big enough to conduct necessary management activities

[Driftless Area Initiative](#)

The Driftless Area Initiative is a partnership of six Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Areas in four States. The Driftless Area is characterized by karst topography with shallow limestone bedrock, caves, and sinkholes. Several watersheds in the area have been designated as priority watersheds for the [Upper Mississippi Forest Partnership](#). Maintaining a high quality forest resource is a priority for the initiative. The initiative also includes bird



friendly forestry, as described in “[Managing From a Landscape Perspective: A Guide for Integrating Forest Interior Bird Habitat Considerations and Forest Management Planning in the Driftless Area](#)” (Wilson 2008) and “[A Bird’s Eye View: Restoring Upper Mississippi River Basin Bird Habitat](#)” (Northeastern Area n.d.). The [Driftless Area Restoration Effort \(DARE\)](#) is a Fish Habitat Partnership led by Trout Unlimited, to protect, restore, and enhance rivers and streams for fish and other aquatic life throughout the Driftless Area.

States: Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin

Area contains the following America’s Great Outdoors priority:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Mississippi River Bluffs](#) – Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin

Existing Partnerships

- [Driftless Area Restoration Effort Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#) – Root River Stewardship Council (*ongoing collaborative project*)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)

- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership](#)

References

Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry. n.d. Upper Mississippi Forestry Partnership. A bird's eye view: restoring Upper Mississippi River Basin bird habitat. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 1 sheet.

Wilson, David C. 2008. Managing from a landscape perspective: a guide for integrating forest interior bird habitat considerations and forest management planning in the Driftless Area of the Upper Mississippi River Basin. Version 1.1. PUB-FR-421-2008. Dodgeville: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. 35 p. http://www.driftlessareainitiative.org/pdf/Managing_from_a_Landscape_Perspective_Web_Version_1_1.pdf (15 May 2015)

Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership

The Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership works to protect, rehabilitate, and enhance sustainable fish habitats in glacial lakes larger than 10 acres. Glacial lakes are an integral part of the communities within which they are found and, taken collectively, are a resource of national importance. Local economies depend on their fisheries and recreation value. Communities sometimes rely on them for dependable sources of water, and lakeshore property is more valuable than land off water.



The partnership provides a forum for sharing programs, strategies and techniques that have proven their worth but have not yet been applied at a larger, regional scale. The goals are to protect and maintain intact and healthy lake systems; prevent further degradation of fish habitats that have been adversely affected; reverse declines in the quality and quantity of aquatic habitats in lakes to improve the overall health of fish and other aquatic organisms; and increase the quality and quantity of fish habitats in lakes that support a broad natural diversity of aquatic species.

States: Illinois, (Indiana), (Iowa), (Michigan), Minnesota, (North Dakota*), (Ohio), (South Dakota*), (Wisconsin)

Area contains all or portions† of the following America’s Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of National Significance

- [Great Lakes](#)† – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Southern Prairie Potholes National Wildlife Refuge](#) – Iowa
- [Loess Hills](#)† – Iowa
- [Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge](#) – Illinois, Wisconsin
- [Ice Age Trail](#) – Wisconsin

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Calumet Millennium Reserve](#) – Illinois
- [Indiana Dunes](#) – Indiana

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Big Sioux River Fish Passage and Recreation](#) – Iowa, Minnesota, South Dakota*

- [Detroit River Restoration](#) – Michigan
- [Mississippi National River and Recreation Area](#) – Minnesota
- [Minnesota River Blueway \(upper corridor\)](#) – Minnesota, South Dakota*
- [Lake Michigan Water Trail](#) – Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin
- [Milwaukee River Restoration and Fish Passage](#) – Wisconsin

Signature Watershed (*pilot*)

- [Saginaw Bay](#) – Michigan; Huron-Manistee National Forest

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

- [Lake Michigan/Little Calumet River](#) – Northwest Indiana
- Grand River Watershed – Grand Rapids, MI
- [Western Lake Erie Basin](#) – Toledo, OH

Existing Partnerships

- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◇ Lake Superior Landscape Restoration Partnership in Northern Wisconsin – ChequamegonNicolet National Forest
 - ◇ Minnesota Lake Superior North Shore Coastal Restoration Project – Superior National Forest
 - ◇ Upper Mississippi Headwaters Restoration in N. Central Minnesota – Chippewa National Forest
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#) – Superior National Forest communities in Minnesota
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
- [Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Great Lakes Restoration Initiative](#)
- [Great Plains Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Lake Erie Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Huron Binational Partnership Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Michigan Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Lake Superior Binational Program Action and Management Plan](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative \(Northern Plains States\)](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◇ Michigan – Pigeon Creek and Hayworth Creek

- ◇ Minnesota – Big Twin Lake-Elm Creek, Gilchrist Lake-East Chippewa River, and Sevenmile Creek
- ◇ Wisconsin – Big Green Lake
- [Northwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Plains and Prairie Potholes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Prairie Pothole Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Prairie Pothole Wetland and Grassland Retention Project](#)
- [Red River Basin Initiative](#)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership](#)
- [Urban Climate Change Response Framework](#) (Metropolitan Chicago)

Lower Mississippi Bottomland Area

This area is threatened by a loss of bottomland forests and forest fragmentation but has significant restoration potential. One example is the River Bends Conservation Opportunity Area that spans across Missouri and Kentucky.

States: (Arkansas*), Kentucky*, Illinois, Missouri, (Tennessee*)

Existing Partnerships

- [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Kinkaid Lake Watershed Restoration in Southern Illinois – Shawnee National Forest
- [Community Engagement through Recreation and Tourism](#)
 - ◊ Communities surrounding Shawnee National Forest in Illinois
- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
- [Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Middle Mississippi River Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative \(Gulf States\)](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Southeast Aquatic Resources Fish Habitat Partnership](#)

Missouri and Mississippi Rivers Confluence

Habitat restoration and recreational opportunities are important in this area. The area is also a priority River and Water Trail of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

States: Illinois, Missouri

Area contains the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Missouri/Mississippi Rivers Confluence Conservation and Recreation](#) – Missouri

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Memorial Arch and Mississippi River in St. Louis \(Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Revitalization\)](#) – Illinois, Missouri

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

- [Meramec and Big River Watershed](#) – St. Louis, MO
- [Middle Blue River Watershed](#) – Kansas City, MO

Existing Partnerships

- [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
- [Middle Mississippi River Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Illinois – Douglas Creek
- [Southeast Aquatic Resources Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership](#)

St. Louis Metro Urban Area

Metropolitan St. Louis transcends State lines, and includes a vibrant urban tree program in Missouri. The [East-West Gateway Council of Governments](#) is a Regional Planning Organization for the area, which is also a Great Urban Park and Wildlife Area of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

States: (Illinois), Missouri

Area contains the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Mississippi and Missouri Rivers Confluence Conservation](#) – Missouri

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Memorial Arch and Mississippi River in St. Louis \(Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Revitalization\)](#) – Illinois, Missouri

Urban Waters Federal Partnerships

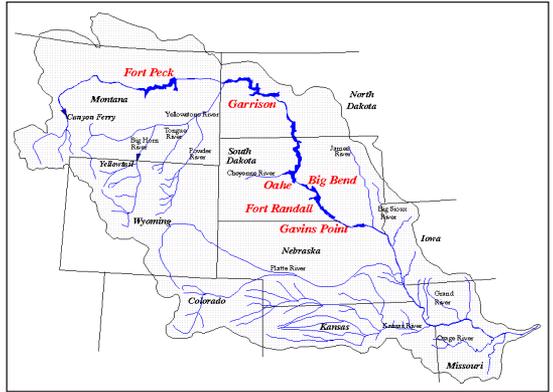
- [Meramec and Big River Watershed](#) – St. Louis, MO

Existing Partnerships

- [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
- [Middle Mississippi River Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
 - ◊ Illinois – Douglas Creek
- [Southeast Aquatic Resources Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Upper Midwest and Great Lakes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River Forest Partnership](#)

Missouri River Corridor and Watershed

There are habitat restoration, water quality, and recreational opportunities in this watershed. One issue in this region is the over maturity of cottonwood forests along the Missouri River. The Missouri River Watershed Coalition is active in the area as well as the [Midwest Invasive Plant Network](#), both of whom focus on combating invasive weeds.



States: (Colorado*), Kansas,* (Iowa), Missouri, (Montana*), Nebraska,* North Dakota,* South Dakota,* (Wyoming*)

Area contains the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Loess Hills](#) – Iowa

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Big Sioux River Fish Passage and Recreation](#) – Iowa, South Dakota*
- [Missouri/Mississippi Rivers Confluence Conservation and Recreation](#) – Missouri

Great Urban Parks and Wildlife Areas

- [Memorial Arch and Mississippi River in St. Louis \(Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Revitalization\)](#) – Missouri

Existing Partnerships

- [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
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- [Plains and Prairie Potholes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Southeast Aquatic Resources Fish Habitat Partnership](#)

Ice Storm Recovery Area

Coordinated efforts are needed to improve forest health, reduce fuel loading, and improve utilization opportunities for recovery efforts after severe ice storms. The Northeastern Area continues to develop resources that promote reforestation efforts utilizing ice storm resistant trees.

States: (Arkansas*), (Kentucky*), Missouri, (Tennessee*)

Area contains all or portion† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Ozark Trail](#) – Missouri; Mark Twain National Forest

Early Pilot Landscape

- [White River Blueway](#)† – Arkansas,* Missouri, Mark Twain National Forest

Existing Partnerships

- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Missouri Ozark Highlands Restoration Partnership – Mark Twain National Forest
- [Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative \(Gulf States\)](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Southeast Aquatic Resources Fish Habitat Partnership](#)

Kansas City Metro Urban Area

In Metropolitan Kansas City, the emphasis is on urban areas that transcend State lines. The Mid-America Regional Council led an [iTree](#) assessment in the area, and both States are working cooperatively to advance related planning efforts and combat emerald ash borer.

States: (Kansas*), Missouri

Urban Waters Federal Partnership

- [Middle Blue River Watershed](#) – Kansas City, MO

Existing Partnerships

- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Great Plains Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Panel on Aquatic Nuisance Species](#)
- [Southeast Aquatic Resources Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Upper Mississippi River and Great Lakes Region Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)

Loess Hills

Forest restoration opportunities of this rare loess community type exist in this Conservation Opportunity Area in Missouri, which is also an important migratory bird habitat. This area is also a Landscape of Regional Significance in the America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

States: (Iowa), (Kansas*), Missouri, (Nebraska*)

Area contains all or portions† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of Regional Significance

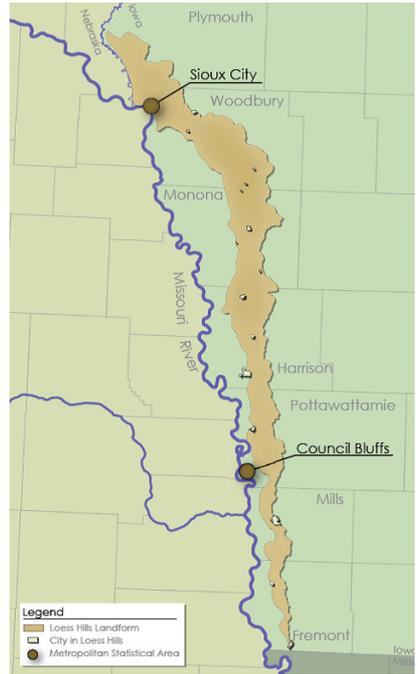
- [Loess Hills](#) – Iowa

Rivers and Water Trails

- [Big Sioux River Fish Passage and Recreation†](#) – Iowa

Existing Partnerships

- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Great Plains Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
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Weston Bend Conservation Opportunity Area, Fort Leavenworth

Recent land acquisitions in this area enhance forest and woodland landscape [restoration](#) opportunities.

States: (Kansas*), Missouri

Existing Partnerships

- [Eastern Tallgrass Prairie and Big Rivers Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Great Plains Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
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- [Southeast Aquatic Resources Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
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Bentonville, AR, and Joplin, MO

This important urban area has related issues that transcend State lines. The tornado that devastated the area in 2011 brought additional Federal assistance, including a U.S. Forest Service Rapid Response Team and a restoration coordinator for the City of Joplin.

States: (Arkansas*), Missouri, (Oklahoma*)

Existing Partnerships

- [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Great Rivers Partnership](#)
- [Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative](#)
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- [National Water Quality Initiative](#)
- [Southeast Aquatic Resources Fish Habitat Partnership](#)

[Ozark Highlands](#)

Forest and woodland landscape restoration opportunities exist in the area, such as shortleaf pine restoration and expansion, which has been supported by the Doris Duke Foundation in the past. Additionally, a new project through the U.S. Forest Service's Northern Research Station is focusing on resilience in the Joplin, MO, community, and there may be opportunities to incorporate forest climate change adaptation in that project. The area also includes the [Ozark Highlands Trail](#), which is a Landscape of Regional Significance in the America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

States: Arkansas,* Missouri, Oklahoma*

Area contains all or portions† of the following America's Great Outdoors priorities:

Landscapes of Regional Significance

- [Ozark Trail](#) (pictured) – Missouri; Mark Twain National Forest

Early Pilot Landscape

- [White River Blueway](#)† – Arkansas,* Missouri; Mark Twain National Forest

Existing Partnerships

- [Central Hardwoods Climate Change Response Framework](#)
- [Central Hardwoods Migratory Bird Habitat Joint Venture](#)
- [Chiefs' Joint Landscape Restoration Partnership](#)
 - ◊ Missouri Ozark Highlands Restoration Partnership – Mark Twain National Forest
- [Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program](#) – Missouri Pine-Oak Landscape Restoration
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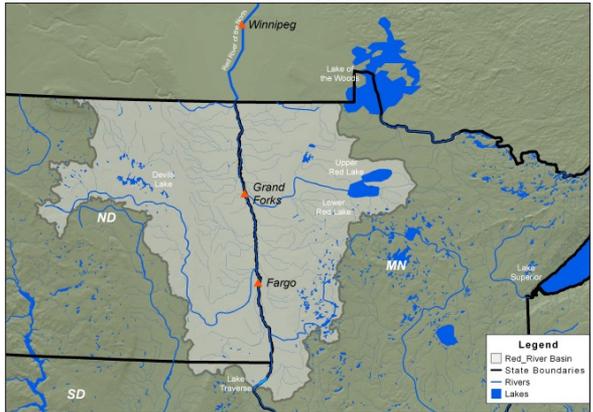


(Map: www.ozarktrail.com.
Used by permission.)

Red River Basin Watershed

Over the years there have been many collaborative efforts in this region aimed at flood mitigation, planning and mapping; data collection and integration; and river, soil, and bank restoration. Much of the cooperation and joint efforts have been between the United States and Canadian governments through the [International Joint Commission](#) and at

State and provincial levels through the [Red River Basin Commission](#) and the [Red River Watershed Management Board](#). Early consultation and collaboration among all stakeholders in the basin has been a key to the continuing success of projects in this watershed. The [Red River Basin Initiative](#), led by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, is focused on enhancing water quality while limiting flooding potential and restoring habitat.



States: Minnesota, (North Dakota*), (South Dakota*), Manitoba*

Existing Partnerships

- [Fishers and Farmers Fish Habitat Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin](#)
- [Great Plains Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Glacial Lakes Fish Habitat Partnership](#)
- [Midwest Natural Resources Group](#)
- [Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative \(Northern Plains States\)](#)
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- [Plains and Prairie Potholes Landscape Conservation Cooperative](#)
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