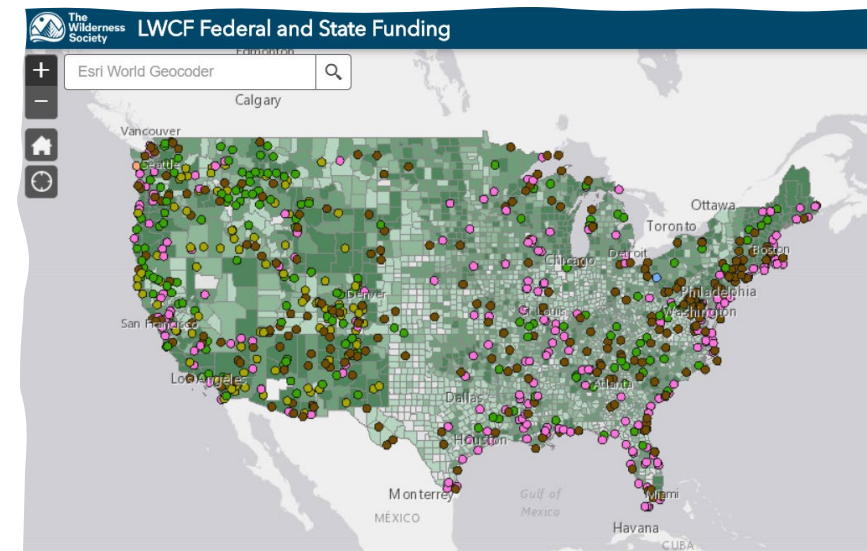




Increasing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Massachusetts' Land and Water Conservation Fund

2023 Massachusetts Land Conservation Conference
Melissa Cryan, Kristen Sykes and Markelle Smith

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)



- Enacted in 1964 to help preserve, develop and ensure access to natural and recreation resources for future generations.
- Funded through offshore oil and gas royalties
- Permanently fully funded at \$900M in 2020
- LWCF funds:
 - Federal Land Conservation
 - Battlefield Protection
 - Working Forests
 - Endangered Species Conservation
 - **State & Local Parks**



STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP)

Massachusetts Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2017

Submitted to the
National Park Service by
the Executive Office of
Energy and
Environmental Affairs



- LWCF Stateside grants are intended to implement states' SCORP goals
- Massachusetts' SCORP goals are:
 1. Access for Underserved Populations
 2. Support the Statewide Trails Initiative
 3. Increase the Availability of Water-based Recreation
 4. Support the Creation and Renovation of Neighborhood Parks





ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- Municipalities with up-to-date Open Space and Recreation Plans
- Department of Conservation and Recreation
- Department of Fish and Game
- Federally-recognized tribes



ELIGIBLE LWCF PROJECT TYPES

- Conservation projects:
 - Purchase land in fee simple or conservation restriction
- Recreation projects:
 - Purchase recreation land
 - Develop new recreational facilities
 - Renovate existing parks

ELIGIBLE PROJECT TYPES

- Trails projects:
 - Development of trails on existing municipally- or state-owned conservation or recreation land
 - Projects on state land must be submitted by DCR or DFG, not by the municipality in which they are located
- Federal definition of trail:
A pedestrian route provided primarily to connect elements, spaces, or facilities within a site is **not** a trail





ELIGIBLE PROJECT COSTS

For acquisition projects:

- Reimbursement is based on purchase price or appraised value, whichever is less
- Only acquisition cost is eligible for reimbursement

For renovation/development projects:

- Engineering
- Design (grants solely for design are not eligible)
- Construction
- Construction supervision



ELIGIBLE PROJECT COSTS

For trail projects:

- Development and marking of trails
- We cannot reimburse for donations or in-kind services
- Must have 100% appropriated from municipal budget (for municipalities), 100% from state budget (for state agencies), 100% from tribal budget (for tribes)
- 50% reimbursement rate up to \$750,000 (or \$1,000,000 for some projects)

Online Trail Funding Matrix

Trails + Path Funding Sources in MA								LAND USE		DESIGN		BUILD	POST / SPECIFIC TYPES OF P			
GRANT SOURCES																
Questions about this document please contact Allison Burson allison@greenway.org																
Type	Source (Click link for website)	Descriptions	Due Date	Type	Eligibility	Amount - Range	Additional funding considerations	Land Acquisition	Easement	Permitting	Visioning/Planning	Design	Construction	Programming	Maintenance	Wayfinding
Local Funding																
	Chapter 90	State allocation of funding to municipalities for capital improvements on locally owned public ways.	Municipal apportionments are calculated before the start of each fiscal year. Munic	streets, trails, multi-use path, sidewalks	municipality	varies by municipality from 1m+ to 40k https://www.mass.gov/service-details/chapter-90-apportionment			right of way acquisition			Y	Y		Y	? direction and warning signs and signage in general is eligible
	Community Preservation Act (CPA)	Community Preservation Act (CPA) allows communities to create a local Community Preservation Fund for open space protection, historic preservation, affordable housing and outdoor recreation. Community preservation monies are raised locally through the imposition of a surcharge of not more than 3% of the tax levy against real property, and municipalities must adopt CPA by ballot referendum. To date, 187 municipalities in the state have adopted CPA. Check for individual municipality sites;	Varies by community	trails, multi-use path	municipal agencies, nonprofits	varies by community		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
	Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)	The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program supports community development activities to build stronger and more resilient communities. Activities may address needs such as infrastructure, economic development projects, public facilities installation, community centers, housing rehabilitation, public services, clearance/acquisition, microenterprise assistance, code	Administered locally	streets, trails, multi-use path, sidewalks	municipality, state agencies								Y			

<https://www.mass.gov/lists/trail-related-resources-and-funding>

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

Environmental Justice (EJ) is based on the principle that all people have a right to be protected from environmental hazards and to live in and enjoy a clean and healthful environment. EJ is the equal protection and meaningful involvement of all people with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies and the equitable distribution of environmental benefits.



Manchester Street Park, Lawrence Photo by Groundwork Lawrence



WHAT IS AN EJ POPULATION?

In Massachusetts, an environmental justice population is a neighborhood where one or more of the following criteria are true:

- The annual median household income is 65 percent or less of the statewide annual median household income
- Minorities make up 40 percent or more of the population
- 25 percent or more of households identify as speaking English less than “very well”
- Minorities make up 25 percent or more of the population and the annual median household income of the municipality in which the neighborhood is located does not exceed 150 percent of the statewide annual median household income

[Environmental Justice Populations in Massachusetts | Mass.gov](#)



DEI AND LWCF PROJECT RATINGS



SCORP/OSRP
Implementation

Environmental Justice –
does the project
provide access to EJ
populations?

Access for people with
disabilities – does the
project provide access
to people with
disabilities?

Enhanced outreach in
EJ neighborhoods

Project quality –
discretionary points
based on how well
project implements
EEA's policies

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION PLANS & EJ

- Municipalities with EJ populations must:
 - Identify where these populations are
 - Complete Enhanced Outreach in those neighborhoods
 - Discuss Environmental Equity
 - Include an EJ map



THE NATURE GAP

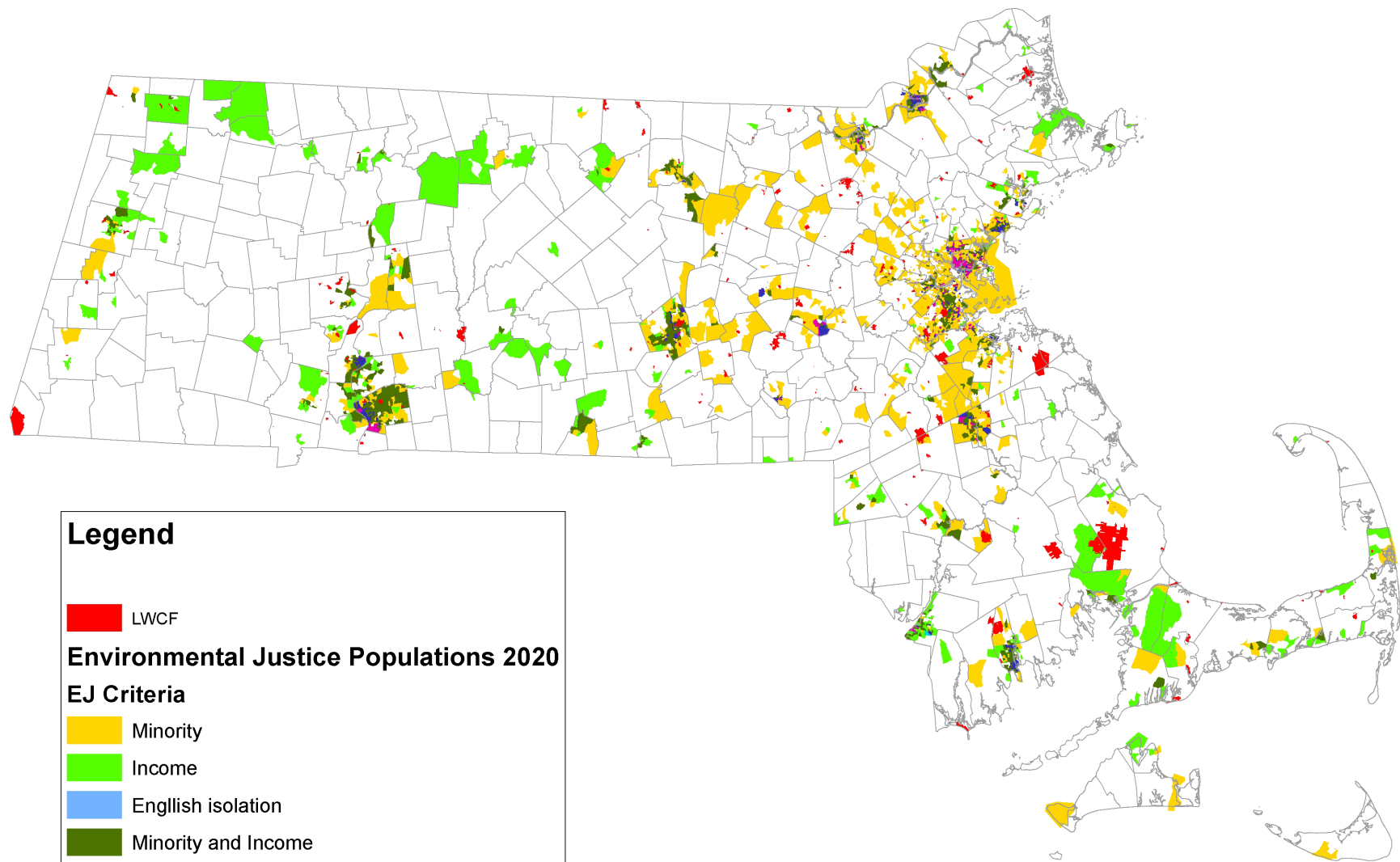
Percentage of people in MA living in a nature-deprived area by census tract demographics, 2017

Asian	Black	Hispanic	Native American	White
74%	85%	90%	63%	14%


High income	Middle income	Low income	Nonwhite and low income
33%	48%	94%	96%

The Nature Gap. 2020.Center for American Progress and Hispanic Access Foundation.

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/green/reports/2020/07/21/487787/the-nature-gap/>





Legend


 LWCF


Environmental Justice Populations 2020


EJ Criteria


 Minority


 Income

 English isolation

 Minority and Income

 Minority and English isolation

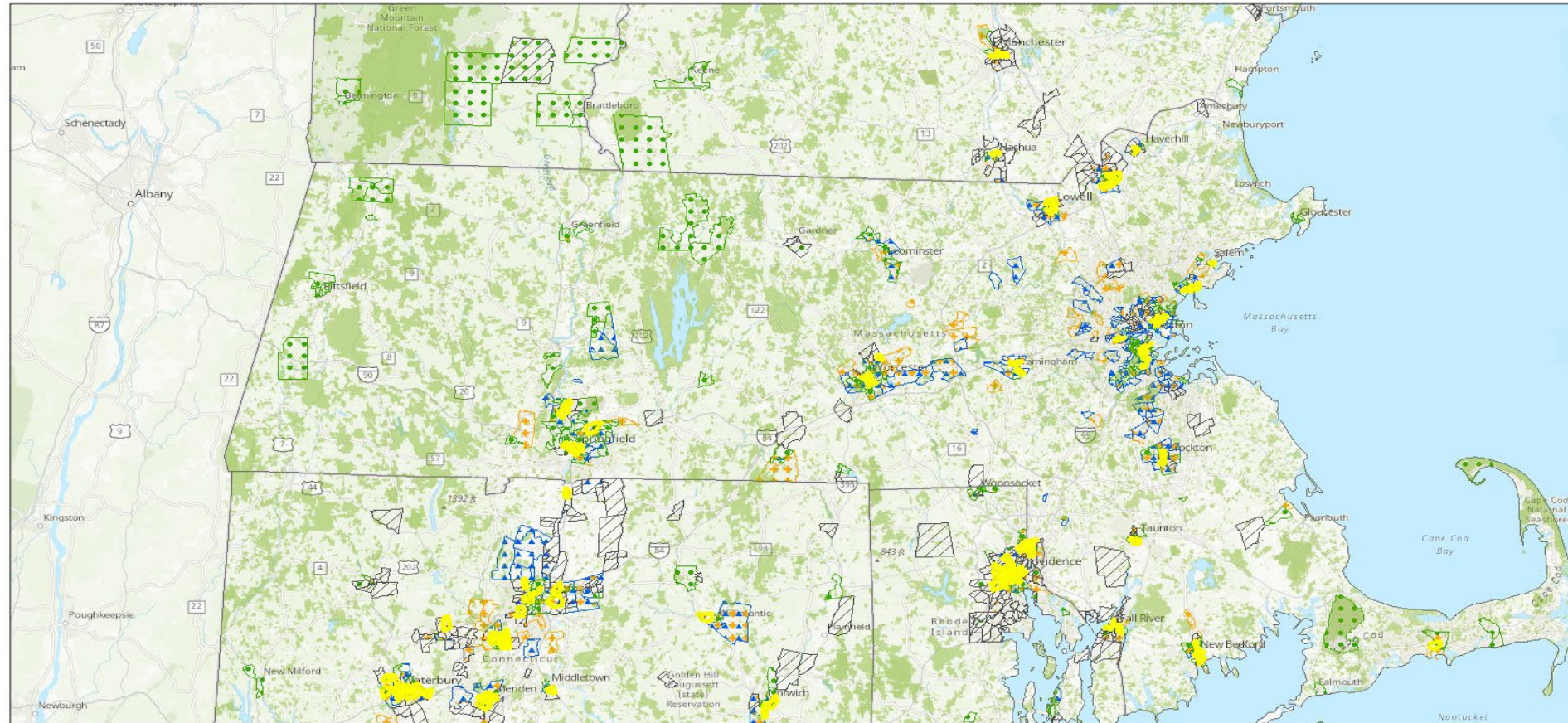
 Income and English isolation

 Minority, Income and English isolation

LWCF PROJECTS IN EJ COMMUNITIES

Massachusetts Potential EJ Focus Areas for LWCF Funding

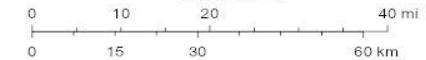
ArcGIS Web Map



7/28/2021, 1:33:56 PM

- Protected Open Space
- Income - lowest 25%
- Priority + Language Isolation tracts
- Language isolation - highest 25%
- Open space - lowest 25%
- EJ Priority tracts
- People of color - highest 25%
- ne_states_detailed

1:1,155,581



Esri, CGIAR, USGS, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS

ArcGIS Web AppBuilder
Esri, CGIAR, USGS | Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS |

Compiled by Lucy Lee - based on work by Katherine Sims and Margot Lurie at Amherst College, Lee and Thompson at Harvard University, Harvard Forest and Neenah Estrella-Luna at StarLuna Consulting.



LWCF EDUCATION & OUTREACH PROGRAM

In 2020, the Great American Outdoors Act provided permanent, dedicated funding of \$900M annually to the fund

LWCF's Stateside program distributes funding to states for open space, recreation, and acquisition opportunities. In 2022, Massachusetts received \$5,758,425

Two statewide listening sessions were held: one with municipalities and regional planning agencies; and one with conservation, recreation, and Environmental Justice organizations

Sessions began with grant description and examples of innovative projects, then, participants were divided by experience level into breakouts



FINDINGS FROM OUTREACH PROGRAM

There was an overall lack of awareness of what types of projects LWCF Stateside grants can fund

The required Department of Interior Yellow Book appraisal process is arduous and expensive and requires selection of specific appraisers qualified to complete this type of report, which led to some projects not getting submitted for funding

Limited staff capacity at the municipal level prevents communities from applying – inability to manage grant, let alone complete application

A list of successful applicants who could be available to speak about their projects would be helpful for peer-to-peer learning



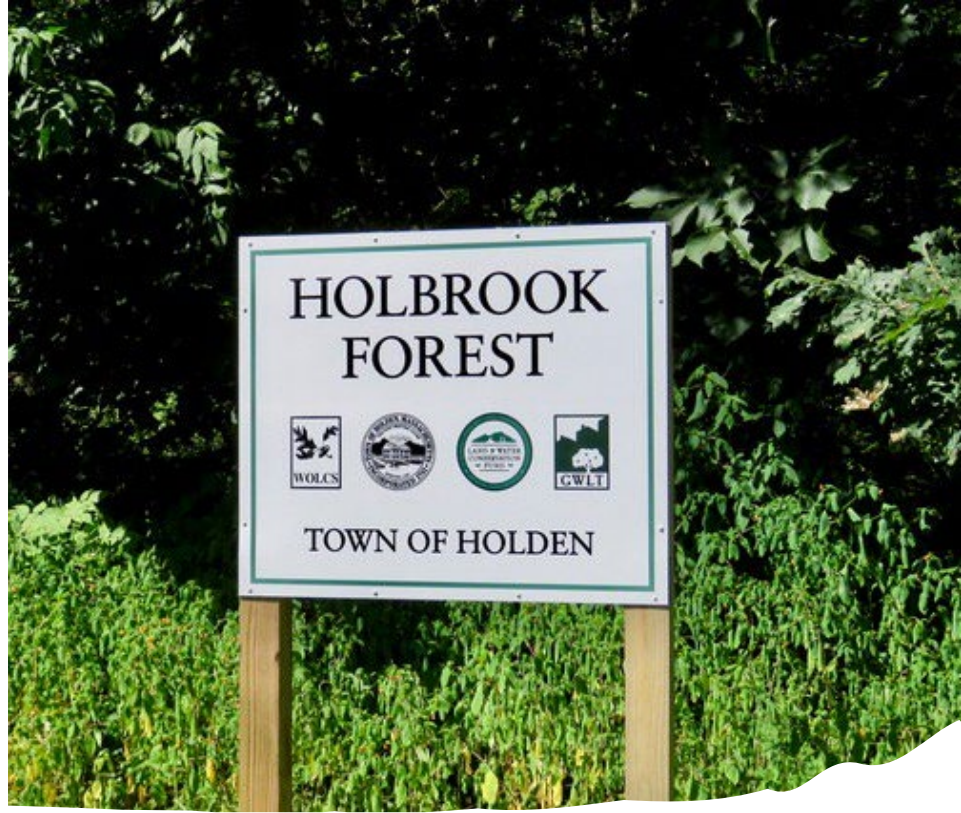
LWCF PROJECTS WITH LAND TRUST PARTNER

Grantee	Partner	Project
Town of Berlin	Sudbury Valley Trustees	Webjo Co Property
Town of Holden	Greater Worcester Land Trust, White Oak Land Conservation Society	Holbrook Forest
Town of Middleborough	Ja Mar Farm	The Compact/Wildlands Trust
Dept. of Fish & Game	North County Land Trust	Mt. Watatic II



Ja Mar Farm, Middleborough





Town of Holden,
Holbrook Forest

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