
Mass Audubon's 30x30 Catalyst Fund: Accelerating the Pace of Land Protection for Climate and Biodiversity

MLTC Pre-Conference Workshop

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Great Blue Heron © Amy Erb

GO WILD

Mass Audubon's Action Agenda



Goal 1: Protect and Steward Resilient Landscapes



Goal 2: Advance Inclusive and Equitable Access to Nature



Goal 3: Mobilize to Fight Climate Change

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30x30 Strategy

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework



Conserve & restore
biodiversity



Mitigate & build resilience to
climate change



Inclusion of local
communities

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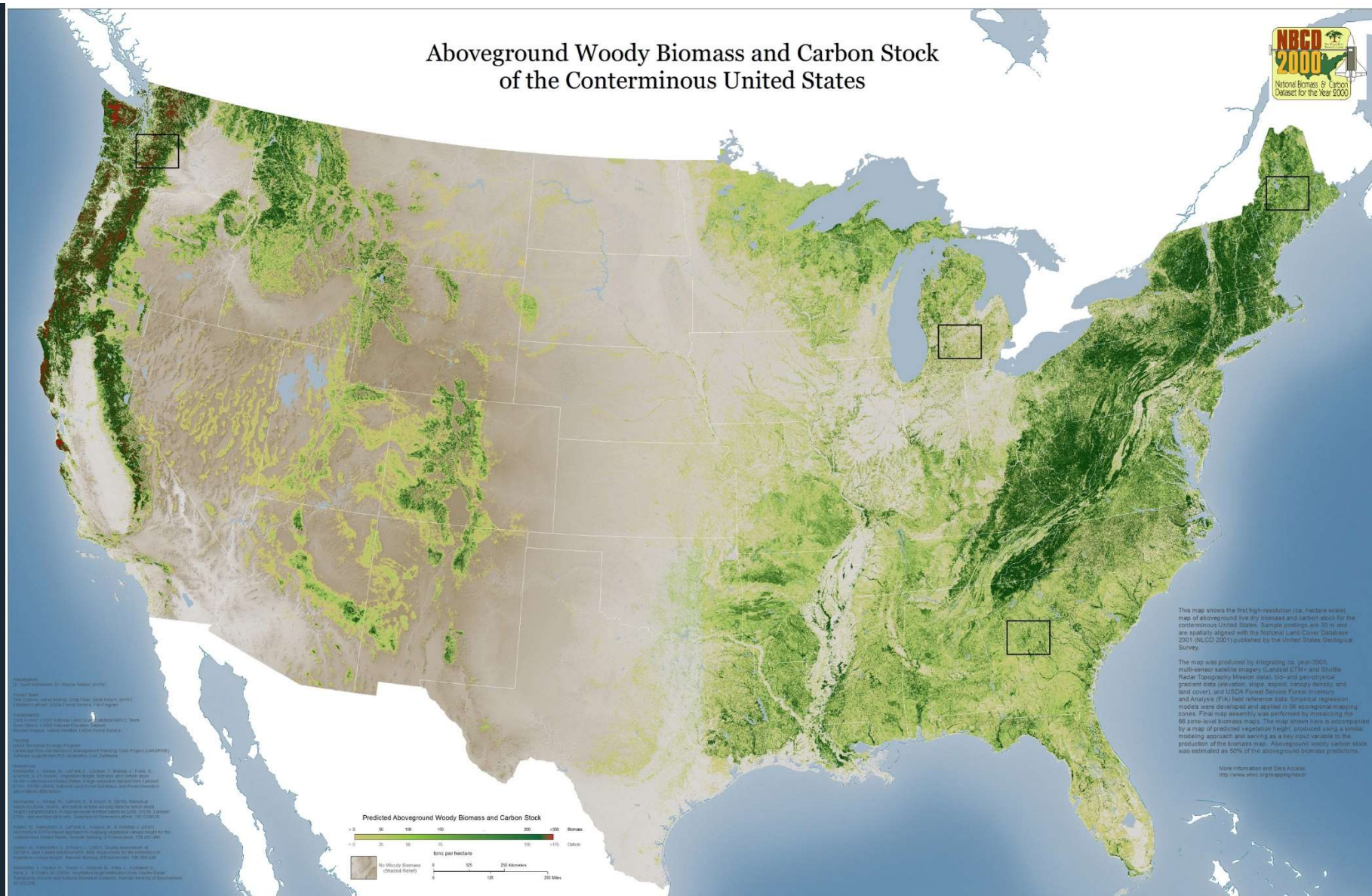


Massachusetts 30x30

- Commonwealth's Clean Energy & Climate Plan (2022)
 - 27% of land protected in 2022
 - 28% by 2025
 - **30% by 2030** → 100,000-acre goal
 - 40% by 2050
- Forests as Climate Solutions Report (2024)
- Governor's Biodiversity Executive Order (2023)
 - Set goals for 2030, 2040, 2050

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Massachusetts 30x30

Where are we now?

- 4.99 million acres of land in Massachusetts
- 1.407 million acres permanently protected (28.2%)
- 89,000-acre gap to 30% protection



Pathway to 30x30

To achieve 30x30 in Massachusetts, we must:

- Double the pace of land protection (current pace: 10,000 acres/per year)
- Expand collaborations and partnerships, including involvement of indigenous communities
- Increase funding for conservation:
 - \$200M (min.) in new public funding annually
 - Inspire and galvanize private sector support to Mass Audubon's 30x30 Catalyst Fund (\$75 million goal)

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30x30 Catalyst Fund Vision

Achieve Massachusetts' 30x30 land conservation goal by collaboratively protecting lands that are rich in biodiversity and carbon, and resilient to change over time.

Outcomes

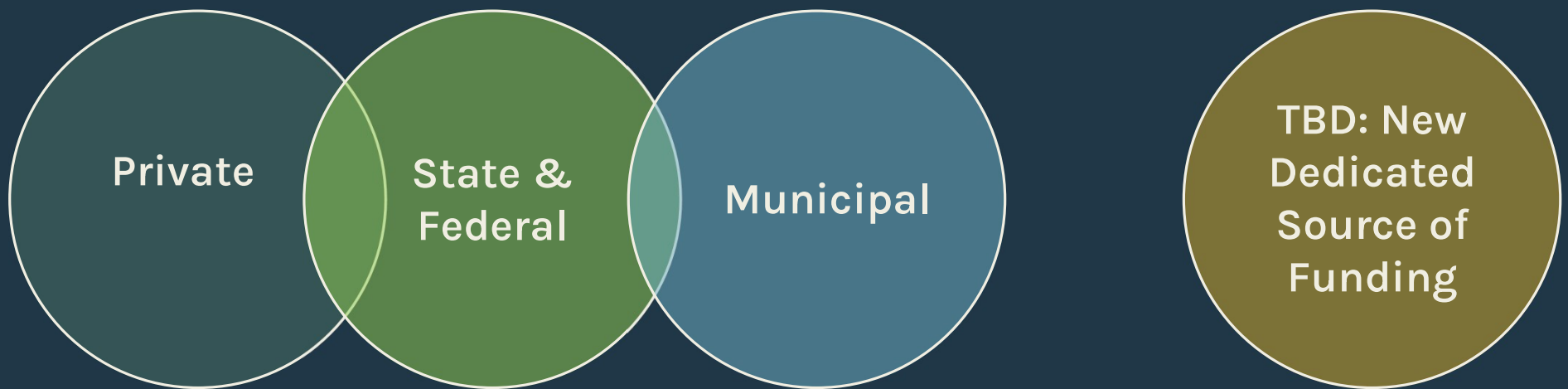
30% of Massachusetts is protected by 2030.

- 29,000 Acres of BioMap Core Habitat
- 60,000 Acres of BioMap Critical Natural Landscape
- 4 MMTons of carbon stored and sequestration potential secured

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30x30 Funding Ingredients



Catalyst Fund Design

- Funds available for projects led by Mass Audubon, regional and local land trusts, state and federal agencies, municipalities
- All projects facilitated by Mass Audubon land protection staff
- Funding determination based on:
 1. Resource prioritization
 2. Fund leverage
 3. Additional project benefits



Catalyst Fund Investment Strategies

- Project Start-Up Support
- Purchases (Fee & CR)
- Loans
- Pre-Acquisitions

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Resource Prioritization

Biodiversity 40%

BioMap

- Forest Core
- Rare Species Core
- Aquatic Core
- Wetland Core
- Vernal Pool Core
- Priority Natural Communities

Carbon 40%

Harvard Forest Data

- Existing Carbon 2025
- Potential Sequestration 2050

Connectivity 10%

BioMap

- Critical Natural Landscape Blocks
- Regional Connectivity

Parcel Size 10%

Parcel Size

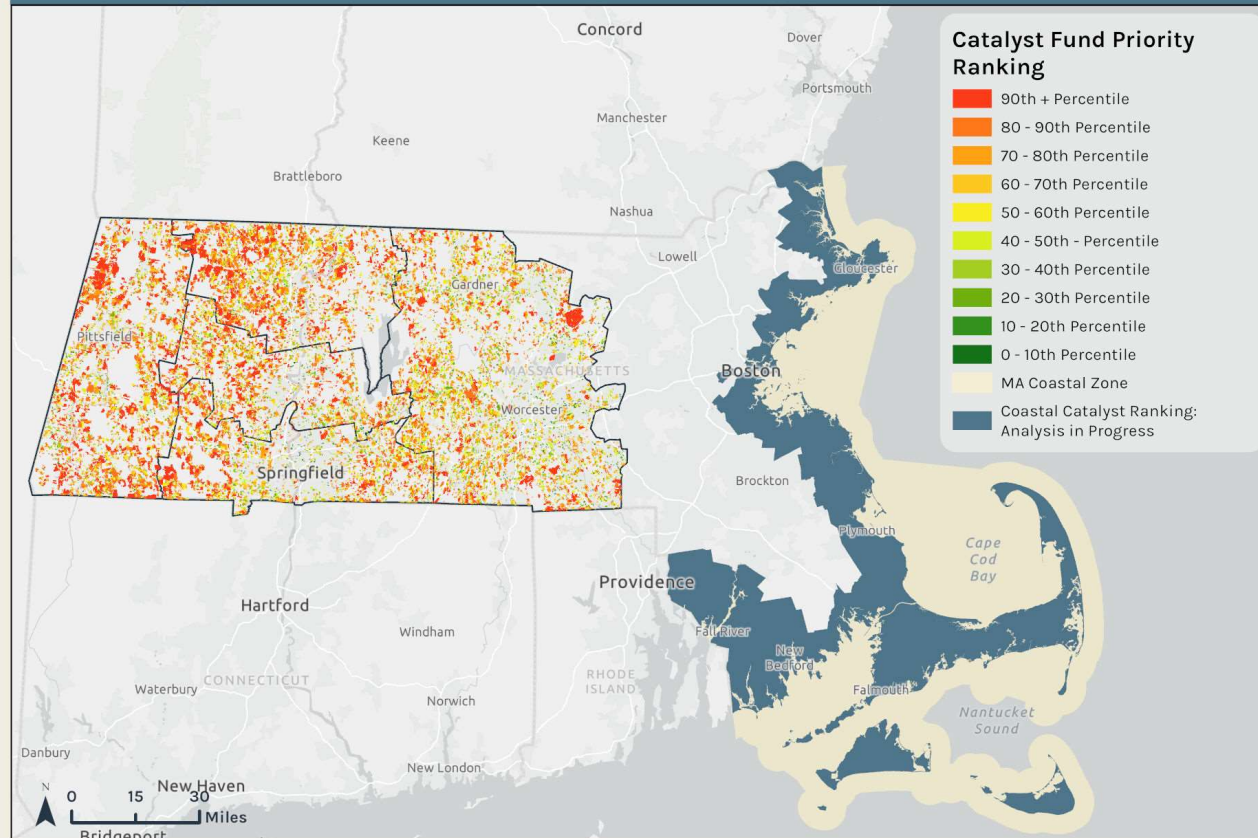
- Large landscape (over 20 acres)

Additional Project Criteria

- Connection to environmental justice (EJ) community
- Indigenous community benefit and project involvement
- Other community/conservation benefit (drinking water supply, flood mitigation, Important Bird Area, Area of Critical Environmental Concern, etc.)
- Provides public access
- Urgency & timeliness
- Feasibility & likelihood of success

Catalyst Fund Priority Ranking

Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, and Worcester Counties,
as well as Coastal Municipalities



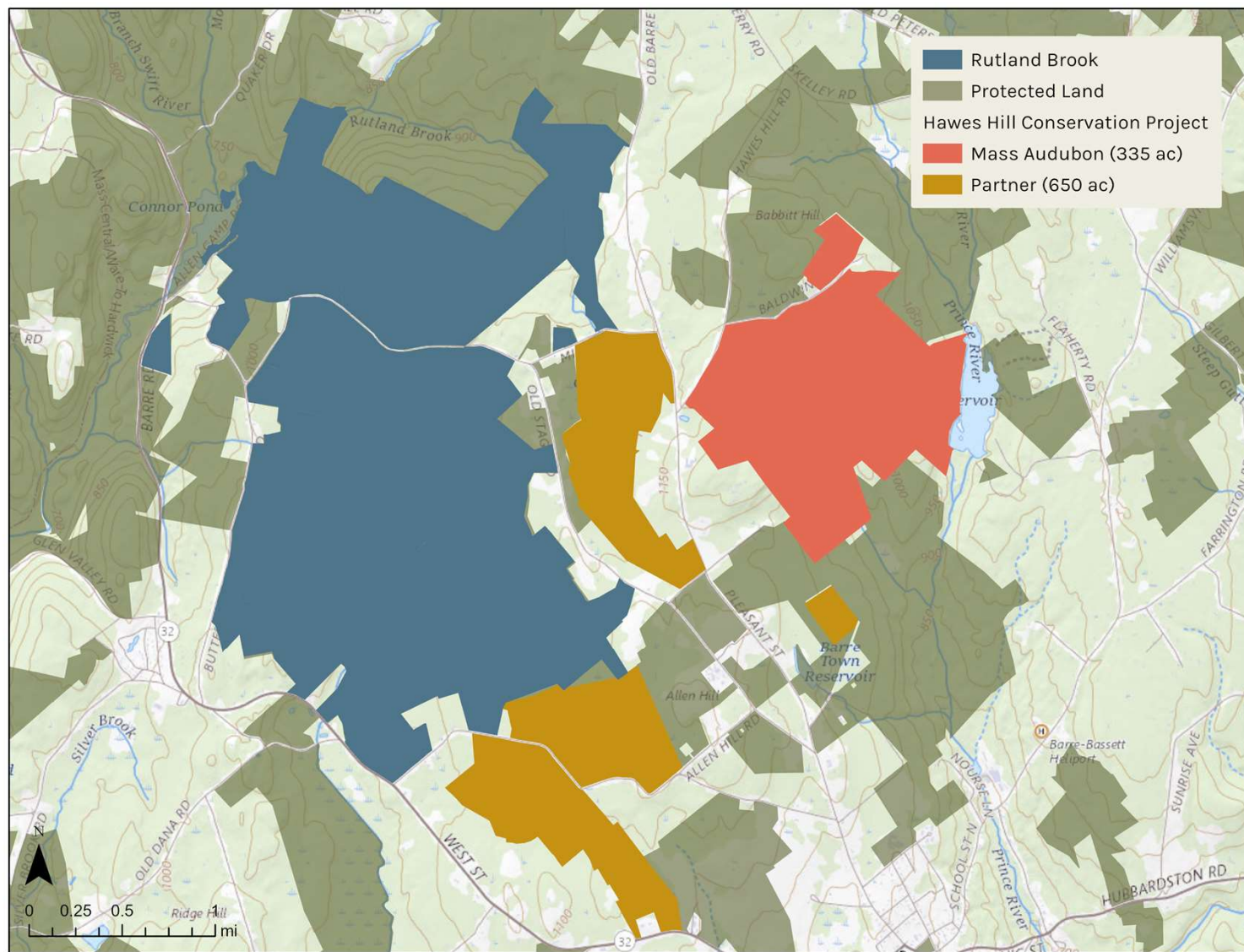


Completed Project: Hawes Hill Conservation Corridor
(Barre, 815 acres)

Completed Project: **Hawes Hill Conservation Corridor**

- A broad suite of project partners
- Conservation restrictions (CRs) on 815 total acres in 8 separate parcels
- \$1.25 million state grant
- Total project cost \$2.8 million





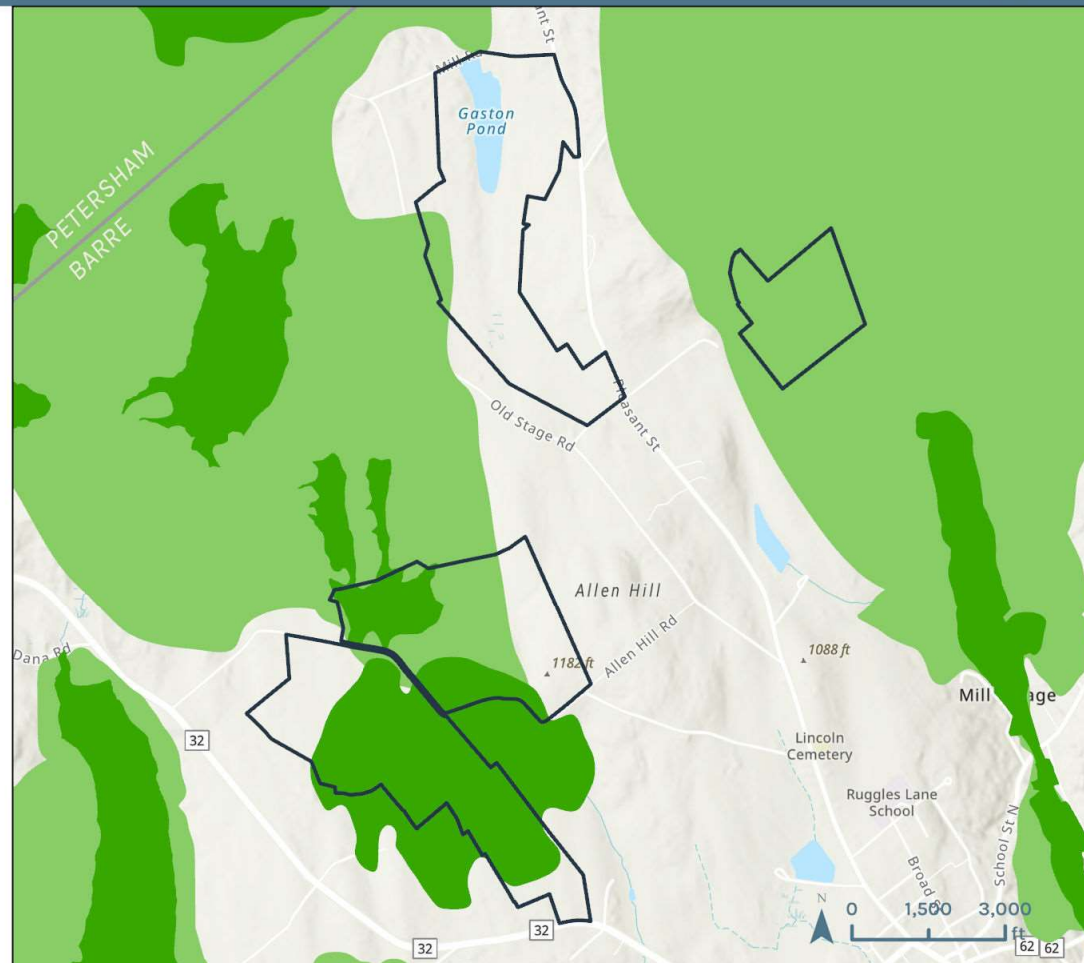


Hawes Hill

563 Acres in Barre, MA

Created by mgordon, 2024
Data: MassGIS, ESRI, MADFG/TNC

- Hawes Hill
- Municipal Boundaries
- BioMap**
- Core Habitat
- Critical Natural Landscape



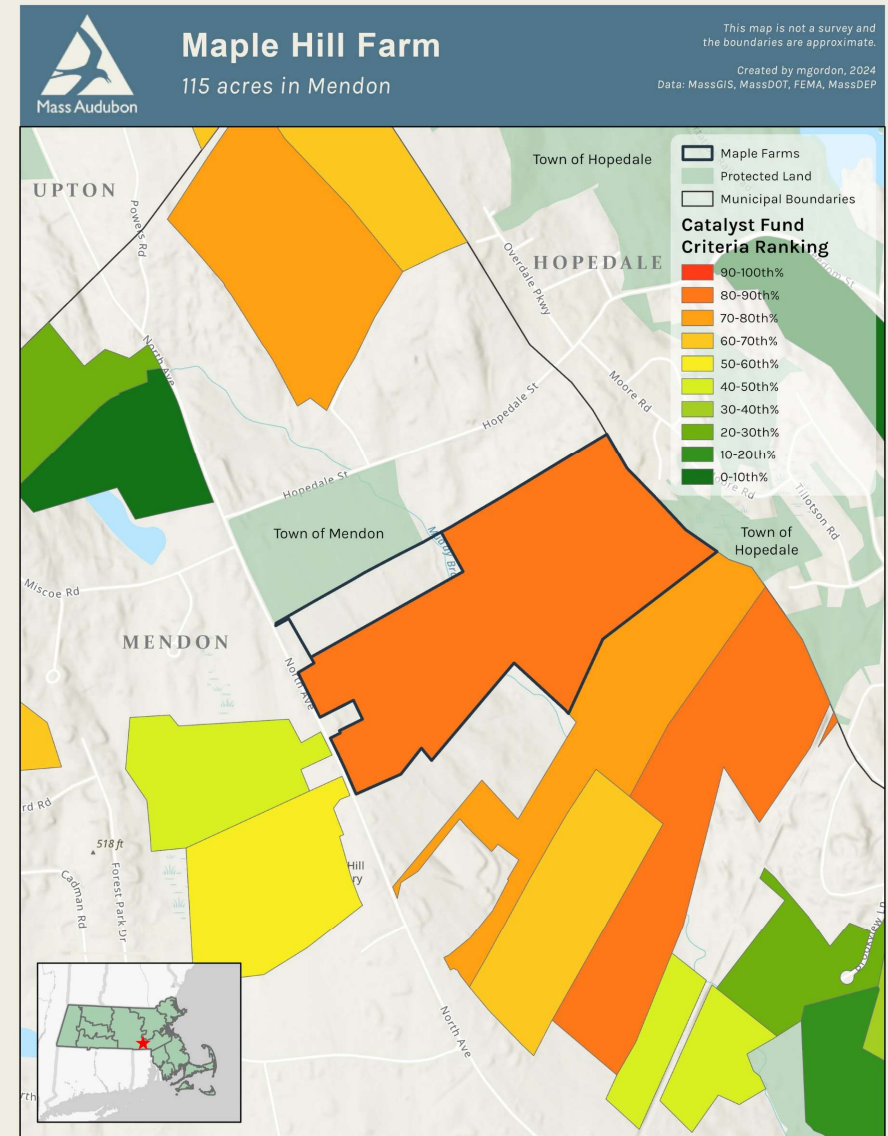


Completed Project: Loan and Project Contribution

Maple Farm, Mendon (115 acres)

Catalyst Fund Role

- \$200,000 project contribution
- \$175,000 bridge loan
- 80-90th percentile Catalyst score
- 7:1 leverage (State grant, CPA commitment)
- Filled funding gap in geography with limited philanthropic potential



- Mass Audubon acquisition
- Project Cost: \$715,000
- State Conservation Partnership Grant awarded
- Closing Date: June 20, 2024 (anticipated)
- Doubles the size of Mass Audubon Pierpont Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary



Current Project: Oxford Woodlands

(229 acres)



Oxford Woodlands

220 Acres in Oxford, MA

Created by mgordon, 2024
Data: MassGIS, Mass Audubon

Protected Land

Oxford Woodlands

Catalyst Fund Ranking

90th + Percentile

80 - 90th Percentile

70 - 80th Percentile

60 - 70th Percentile

50 - 60th Percentile

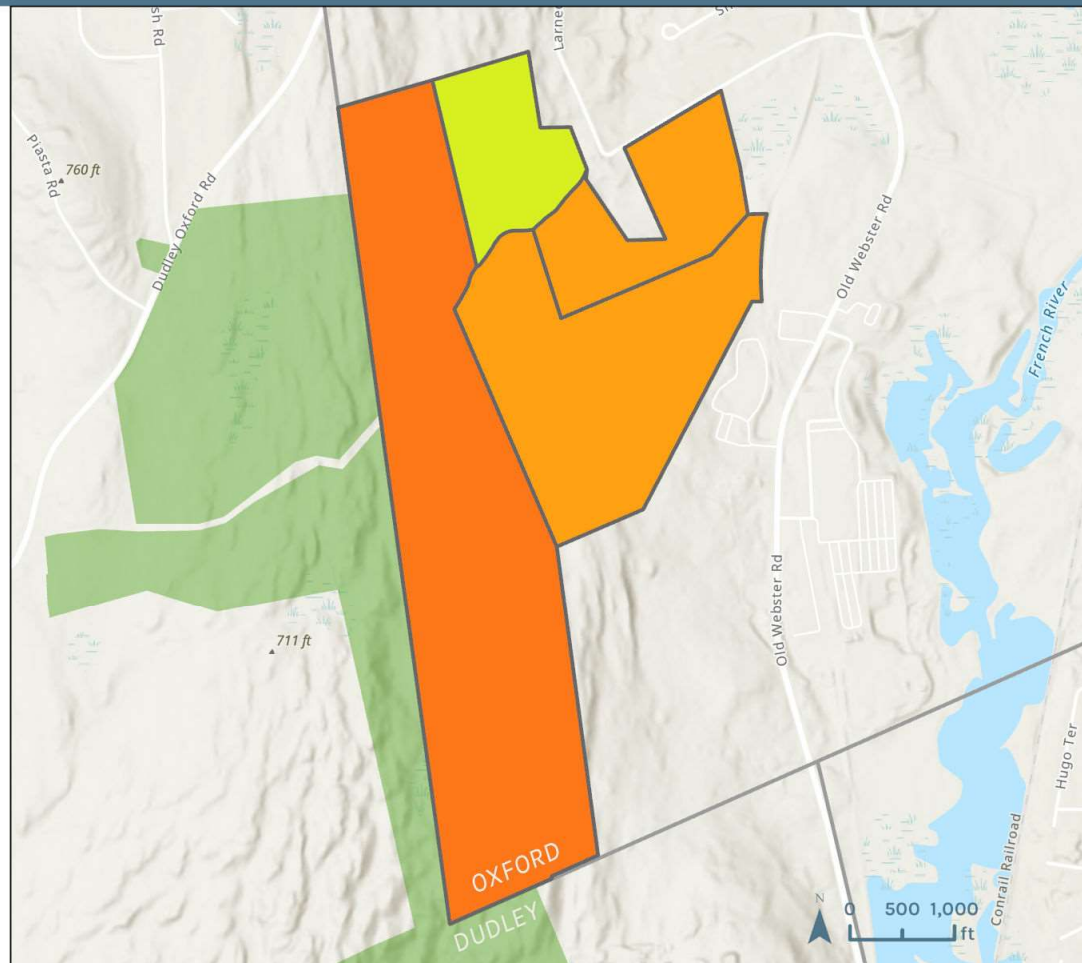
40 - 50th - Percentile

30 - 40th Percentile

20 - 30th Percentile

10 - 20th Percentile

0 - 10th Percentile





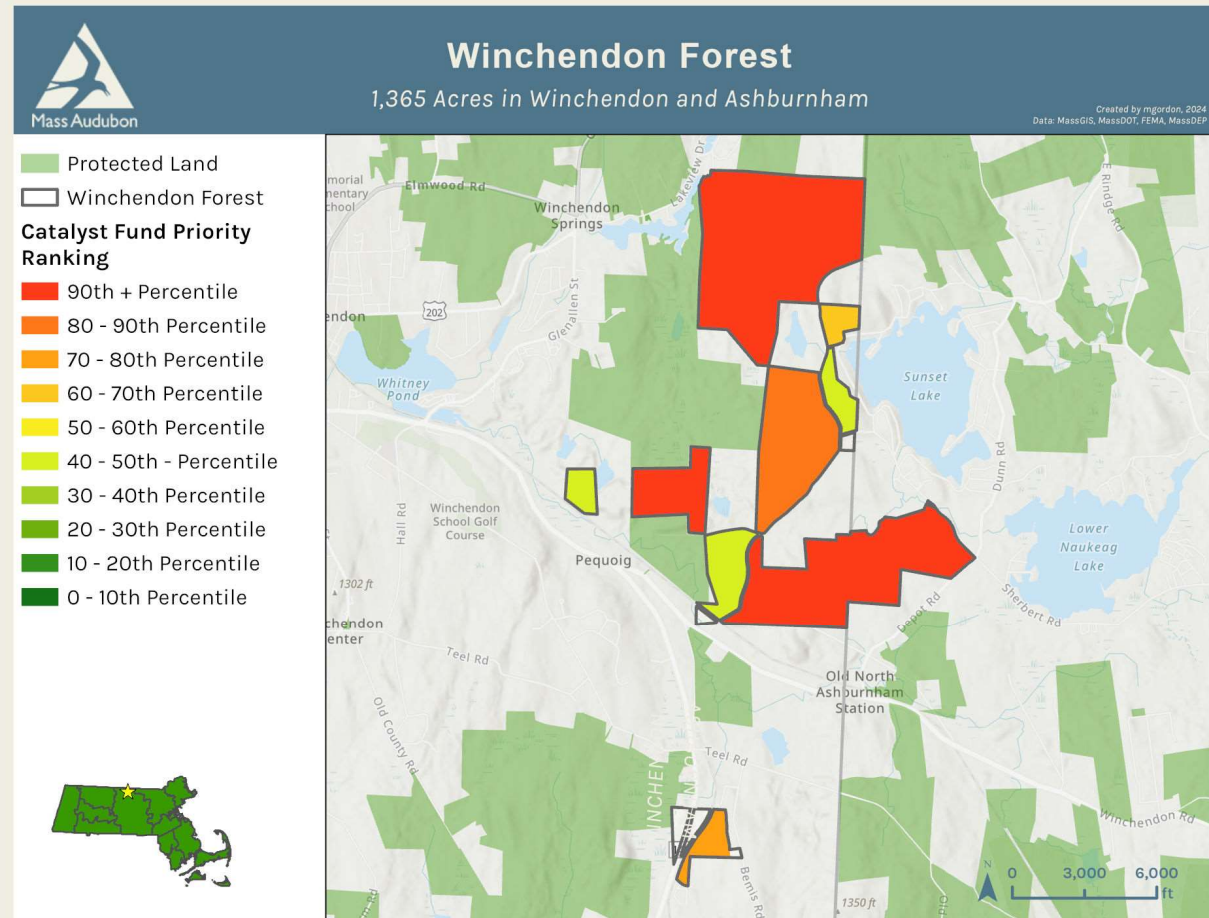
Current Project: State Agency Pre-Acquisition

Winchendon Forest, Winchendon & Ashburnham

(1,365 acres)

Conservation Values

- 85% of the property is designated as BioMap Core Habitat/Critical Natural Landscape
- Significant area mapped as Priority Habitat for Endangered Species by NHESP
- Core acquisition focus area for State Division of Fisheries & Wildlife



Catalyst Fund In Action

Winchendon Forest

- Imminent risk of development
- State agencies and regional land trust requested Mass Audubon's assistance
- Towns agreed to assign their Chapter 61 option to Mass Audubon
- Mass Audubon acquired the property using Catalyst Fund
- Anticipate transferring to state agencies by end of fiscal year



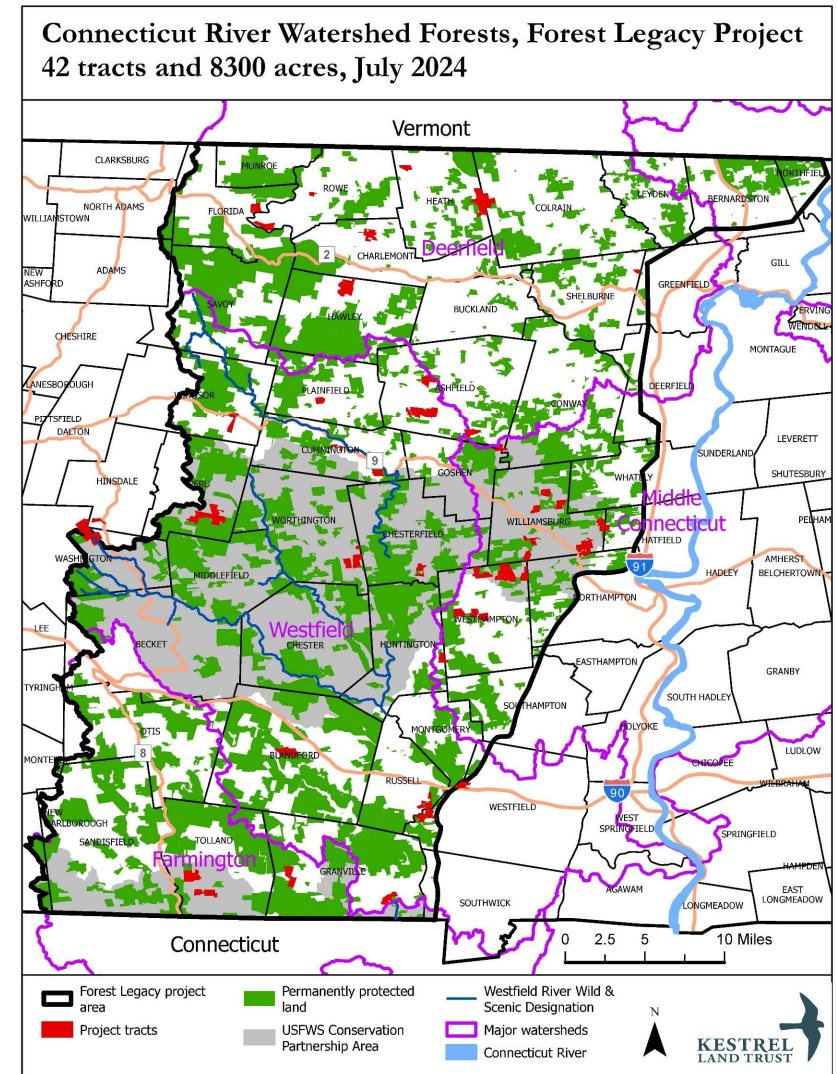




Current Project: Connecticut River Watershed Forests (8,300 acres)

Connecticut River Watershed Headwaters

- 13 organizations formed the Connecticut River Watershed Forests Initiative, led by Kestrel Land Trust
- Outreach to 500+ forestland owners
- Prioritized by parcel size and BioMap
- 46 individual landowners expressed interest and signed “Willing Landowner” letters
- Catalyst Fund role to pre-acquire the most at-risk parcels



30x30 Catalyst Fund Impact

6,434 acres protected

BioMap Core Habitat

2,454 8,000

■ Acres protected □ Remaining

BioMap Critical Natural Landscapes

3,958 16,000

■ Acres protected □ Remaining

Carbon Stored in Protected Acres

190,375 800,000

■ Metric tons of carbon □ Remaining

Carbon Sequestration Potential of Protected Acres

49,495 260,000

■ Metric tons of carbon



Catalyst Fund Fundraising Report

Funds raised from individuals/foundations: **\$40M**

Funds into projects: **\$15M**

Fund leverage: **1:9**

Additional funds raised from public sources: **\$34M**

Project Partners/Collaborators: **17**

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Looking Ahead

- Lift project pace and success
- Expand partnerships
- Complete coastal mapping & analysis; address data management issues
- Develop and grow sources of public funding
- Raise \$35M to achieve \$75M 30x30 Catalyst Fund goal
- Nature for Massachusetts campaign leadership

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Thank you

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QUESTIONS?

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30x30 Catalyst Fund Impact

