New England Landscape Futures Explorer

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What is NELF Explorer?

- NELF Explorer is an online mapping tool that uses scenarios of the future to help us think more expansively and act strategically on land-use issues.

- The tool shows maps of a business-as-usual scenario, which we call Recent Trends, and 4 alternatives that were created by New Englanders through a series of workshops and webinars.

- You can visualize each scenarios’ land use over space and time through the year 2060, and explore the implications of each possible future for ecosystem services.

- Access NELF Explorer here: https://newenglandlandscapes.org
  - Don’t use Internet Explorer as your web browser!

This document aims to provide a general overview on the NELF scenarios and Explorer and point to additional resources. Stay safe and be well!
Resources

• The NELF Help website has an FAQ, how-to videos, and more!
  • https://help.newenglandlandscapes.org
  • Or, access the help website from within NELF Explorer by clicking the button in top right corner of the Explorer

• Voices from the Land contains background information on the NELF project, quotes from workshop participants, and descriptions and illustrations of the scenarios.

• To get started using NELF Explorer, I recommend viewing our how-to videos
  Click links below to open them in YouTube, or view them on the help website
  • Intro to NELF Explorer
  • Adding context to maps
  • Analyzing and graphing Recent Trends

Review NELF Explorer! We’d love to hear your thoughts: http://bit.ly/NELFsurvey
How can I use NELF Explorer?

This would have been the bulk of the NELF Explorer workshop! Since I don’t have slides prepared, I will provide a list here.

- **Understand recent trends** in your area and the implications of their continuation
  - Set both sides of NELF Explorer to show Recent Trends, with the left year set to 2010 and the right year set to some future decade interesting to you!
- **Augment conservation plans** by visualizing areas vulnerable to development in coming decades
- **Fundraise** with donors
- **Show evidence of need** by including information from Recent Trends in grant proposals
  - See the [video on analyzing and graphing recent trends](#) for help with this!
- **Demonstrate the need for long-term planning** by showing how small changes add up over time
- **Use as a visual aid in conversations** about the need for proactive conservation to shape future development, the uncertainties facing our region due to climate change, and other topics related to the future of the land
The NELF Scenarios

Storylines & other things to know - to help contextualize what you are looking at in NELF Explorer!
The NELF Scenarios

Recent Trends based on linear continuation of land-use patterns within CBSAs 1990-2010
Other scenarios deviate from recent trends based on stakeholder ideas
Pure land use modeling, no econometric or population modeling
Conserved forest can be working forest
Climate change exists in all scenarios
  Impacts and government response varies
Value neutral – no scenario is intended to be “good” or “bad”
Randomness is inherent in the modeling – not intended to be used at parcel level
None of the scenarios is a prediction, though they are all plausible
The NELF Scenarios
Compared to Recent Trends
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The NELF Scenarios

- Local
- Socio-Economic
- Natural Resource
- Low

- High
- Planning & Innovation
- Connectedness
- Global

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES
GO IT ALONE
YANKEE COSMOPOLITAN
GROWING GLOBAL
The NELF Explorer

Overview - first slide shows the whole interface, and subsequent slides break down each component.
**Conserved forest land decreases**
Connected Communities: 6,171 acres | Growing Global: 802 acres
By 2060 in Monson, conserved forest land in wildlife habitats decreases in the Growing Global scenario compared to the Connected Communities scenario.

**Developed land increases**
Connected Communities: 250 acres | Growing Global: 5,088 acres
By 2060 in Monson, developed land in wildlife habitats increases in the Growing Global scenario compared to the Connected Communities scenario.

**About Wildlife Habitats:**
Important habitat for wildlife is defined as the areas identified by each state in their State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). SWAPs identify priority species and habitats for conservation, tailored to each state's needs while being consistent with national goals.
Components of the NELF Explorer

Multiple spatial scales of analysis
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Land use through 2060 with land use acreages every decade
Components of the NELF Explorer

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Land use through 2060 with land use acreages every decade

Impacts of land use on valuable land types
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- Land use through 2060 with land use acreages every decade
- Impacts of land use on valuable land types

Land use maps 2010-2060 at each decade
- Recent Trends or “business as usual”
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Multiple spatial scales of analysis
  Land use through 2060 with land use acreages every decade
  Impacts of land use on valuable land types

Land use maps 2010-2060 at each decade

Recent Trends or “business as usual”

Alternative scenarios defined by stakeholders

Click here for introductory video on how to navigate and interpret the NELF Explorer
newenglandlandscapes.org

Contact Us!

We are available to answer questions and to facilitate workshops to help you use NELF Explorer to meet your landscape planning needs:

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Marissa - marissaweiliss@fas.harvard.edu

Additional NELF Help Resources:

FAQ and video tutorials:  https://help.newenglandlandscapes.org/