

Announcing a **new interactive tool** for planning the **future of the land**

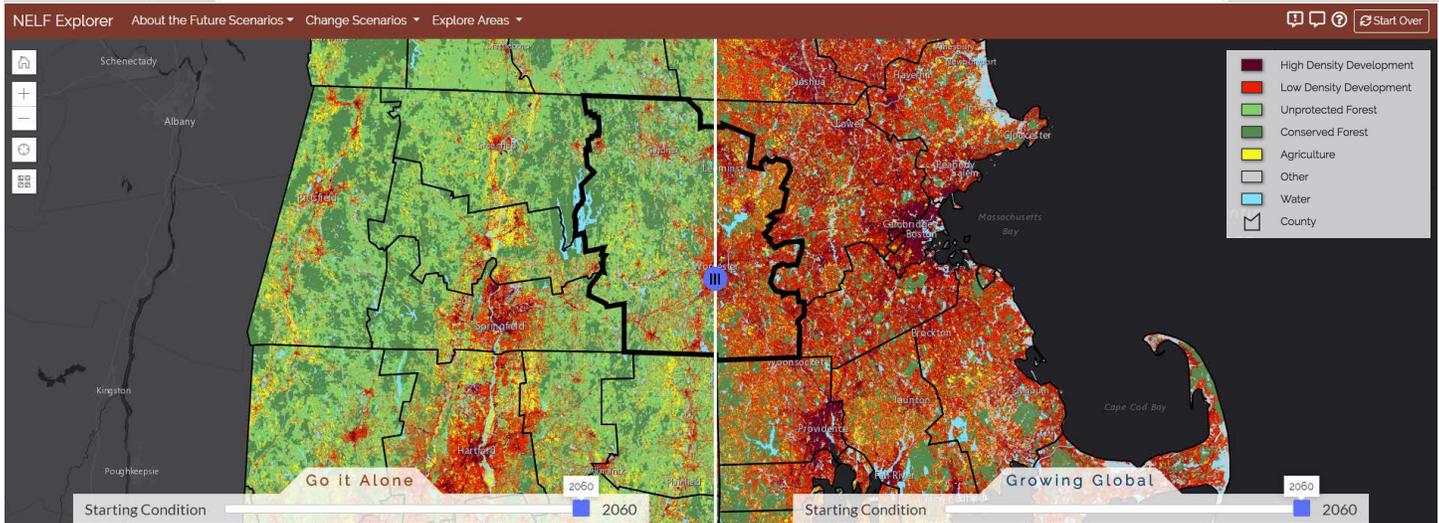
New England Landscape Futures Explorer

Hi! I'm the NELF Explorer. I'm here because **wondering about the future can help us make decisions** about our communities, land, forests, farms, and water resources. What will the future of your community look like? How would you change it if you could? I will help you explore different possible outcomes based on global trends and local decisions.

Start the activity

Tell me a story

Skip to maps



Explore land use over space and time

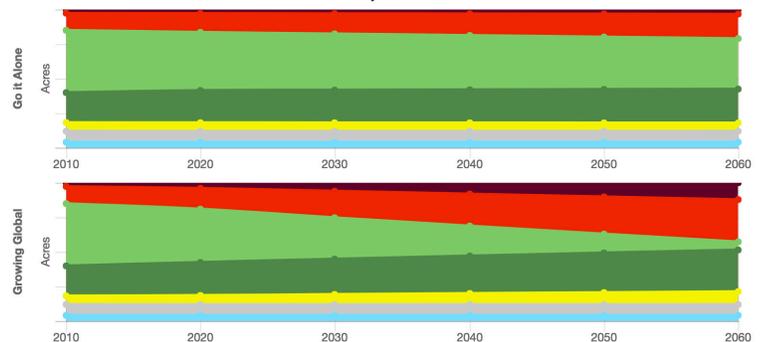
Maps and sliders show land use over space and time, and allow easy comparisons among scenarios, and between each scenario and recent trends. Graphs summarize land use trends over time for any area selected on the map.

In this example we see that by 2060 Worcester County will have more development and more conserved forest in a Growing Global scenario compared to Go It Alone.

Understand land-use impacts on conservation priorities

Select from a number of conservation priorities, such as wetlands, and see how much land gets developed or conserved in those areas under different scenarios. In this example, we see that Worcester County will have more conserved forest and developed land in wetlands in the right scenario, Growing Global, compared to the left scenario, Go It Alone. What might this mean for the ecosystem services that wetlands provide to communities in Worcester County?

Land uses over time for Worcester County, MA



Impacts on within Worcester County, MA

Conserved forest land increases

Go it Alone: 1,462 acres | Growing Global: 7,179 acres

Conserved forest land in current wetlands within Worcester County, MA **increases** by 2060 in the **Growing Global** scenario compared to the **Go it Alone** scenario.

Developed land increases

Go it Alone: 522 acres | Growing Global: 11,608 acres

Developed land in current wetlands within Worcester County, MA **increases** by 2060 in the **Growing Global** scenario compared to the **Go it Alone** scenario.

About Wetlands:

Wetlands are defined as all areas in the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's National Wetlands Inventory. These include forested swamps, freshwater herbaceous marshes, and saltwater marshes.

New England Landscape Futures Land Use Scenarios

newenglandlandscapes.org

Scenarios, Climate Resilience and Adaptation

Scenarios help us plan for an uncertain future by broadening our thinking as to how the future might unfold. **Considering the unexpected** can help us make more **robust decisions** and create more **resilient communities** no matter what the future holds.

The **New England Landscape Futures (NELF) Explorer** is a tool for communities to visualize and plan for the future of the land. The NELF Team is available to meet with you and **work with your community** on using the tool for **conservation and land-use planning**. **Get in touch!** Marissa Weiss (marissaweiss@fas.harvard.edu) and Lucy Lee (lucylee@fas.harvard.edu)

Use the NELF Explorer to . . .

Understand recent trends in land use, and visualize what could happen if those trends continue

Whether your local area has been changing a lot or just a little in recent decades, there is tremendous power in understanding current trajectories.

Compare a business-as-usual future to alternative scenarios of climate adaptation (or lack thereof)

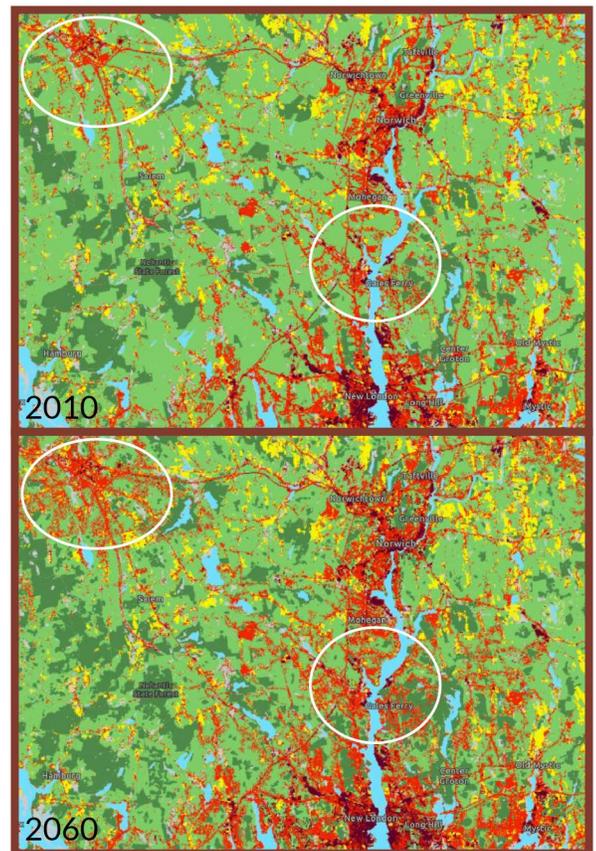
Effects of climate change on New England, and society's response to those effects, vary in each scenario. Scenario maps reveal how these differences might affect land use and ecosystem services.

Visualize how different development and conservation patterns affect key natural resources

Some scenarios call for climate adaptation through a combination of land protection, smart growth, and reduced coastal development, while in other scenarios society does not adapt to climate change.

Consider a regional perspective on land use change

Governments only control within their borders, but resilience is maximized when we work together across boundaries. The NELF Explorer provides tangible ways to engage with regional-scale land use change.



Land use in the Thames River, CT region in 2010 and in 2060 under a continuation of recent trends. White circles draw attention to areas of substantial change. (See map legend on reverse side.)

Tell us how you are using the **NELF Explorer** and how we can make it better:

<http://bit.ly/NELFsurvey>

Help resources are available!

<https://help.newenglandlandscapes.org>

Videos tutorials, FAQs, and more!