

THE TRUST for PUBLIC LAND

CONSERVING LAND FOR PEOPLE



The Trust for Public Land's

Connecticut River Program

ABOUT TPL

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come. We have protected over 2 million acres nationwide since our founding in 1972. In the Connecticut River watershed, we have completed over 50 projects, ranging from the 171,000 acre Connecticut Lakes working forest and biological reserve to four acres of urban farmland protected for a community group in Holyoke, MA.

Here's what makes us a strong leader watershed-wide:

- TPL's mission embraces the full range of land conservation objectives—farmland, working forest, habitat, trails, water quality, historic sites and urban parks—that can serve the watershed and its communities.
- TPL has offices and proven effectiveness in all four Connecticut River states, a New England region that is united in support of the River, and key national experience and relationships.
- TPL can help bring public and private funding to projects and initiatives that smaller organizations might not.
- In addition to on-the-ground land protection, TPL's expertise in prioritizing and financing conservation can help communities set and achieve their local goals.
- Our experience with the federal government and with landscape-scale efforts in other regions will help TPL work with partners to achieve land protection goals that require thinking beyond state lines.

The job is too large for any one organization to do alone. Together, we can help the Connecticut River watershed—New England's heartland and Great River—remain a healthy, vibrant source of pride and identity for all of New England.

WORKING REGIONALLY

Current Activities:

- Report: *The Connecticut River Watershed – Quintessential New England*
- *Listen to the River* citizen hearings
- Friends of Conte Refuge advocacy
- Communications initiative with The Nature Conservancy, American Farmland Trust, and the Connecticut River Watershed Council
- Coffee-table book featuring high quality photography and original place-based essays by top authors

WORKING LOCALLY

Current Activities:

- West Fairlee (VT) - Creating a Community Forest
- Walpole (NH) - Protecting Ballam Farm
- Hadley (MA) - Acquiring habitat for the Conte Refuge in collaboration with the Fort River Partnership
- Deerfield (MA) - Greenprinting, Conservation Vision and Finance services
- Easthampton (MA) - saving Echodale Farm
- Hartford (CT) - Greenprinting Phase I (TPL's Parks for People program)
- Simsbury (CT) - Protecting the Ethel Walker School land

THE FACTS

Location

The Connecticut River Watershed – from the River's source at the Canadian border to Long Island Sound

Size

7.2 million acres, nearly one third of the total area of Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.

Drained by the 410-mile Connecticut River mainstem and thousands of miles of tributaries.

Protection to Date

1.65 million acres (23 percent)

Undeveloped but Unprotected

4.75 million acres (66 percent)



View of valley farms from Mt. Sugarloaf, Sunderland, MA

Andrew M. Whalen

NEW ENGLAND'S GREAT RIVER

The Connecticut River drains nearly one sixth of New England and provides 70 percent of Long Island Sound's fresh water. Its farmland, forests, and waters, as well as its unique communities and rich history, make it one of only 14 American Heritage Rivers. The journey from source to sound passes through nearly every variant of the New England landscape, combining to form a mosaic that is truly the heart of New England.

OVERVIEW

Goal: To protect New England's great river, the landscapes that support it, and the diverse character of River communities.

Resource: With its rich mosaic of farmland, forests, habitat, recreational opportunities, and compact communities, the Connecticut River watershed is the essence of New England life.

Threat: The Connecticut River watershed is 89 percent undeveloped, but rural and suburban sprawl are reshaping the forest-and-farm landscape that defines New England's unique sense of place.

Need: Increased effort, funding, and leadership to shape priorities and get land conservation results that make life better in individual communities and the entire watershed.

Why TPL? Our Land-for-People mission, our track record in watersheds across the country, our national experience, and our commitment to working in partnership.



Ned Therrien

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Connecticut Lakes, Pittsburg, NH

The richness and diversity of the Connecticut River's supporting landscape is unmatched in New England, and critical to our identity as a region.

Heritage and Economy. The River defined colonial America's first western frontier, and powered the advent of precision manufacturing.

Farming. Known as New England's breadbasket, the River valley boasts some of the nation's best farmland.

Forests. Highly productive hardwood and coniferous forests dominate the landscape, including portions of the Northern Forest, Green Mountain and White Mountain National Forests, and the Berkshires.

Habitat. The Connecticut River valley is among the most biologically rich areas in each of the four River states. The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge aims to protect the most threatened of the watershed's terrestrial and aquatic species across dozens of ecosystem types.

Recreation & Tourism. The tri-state Metacomet-Monadnock Trail, the Connecticut River Water Trail, portions of the Appalachian Trail and East Coast Greenway, several Wild and Scenic tributaries, River-oriented Scenic Byways in three states, and hundreds of local and regional greenways provide a multitude of recreational and tourism opportunities.



Nuestras Raices Tierra de Oportunidades in Holyoke, MA

Janet Torres

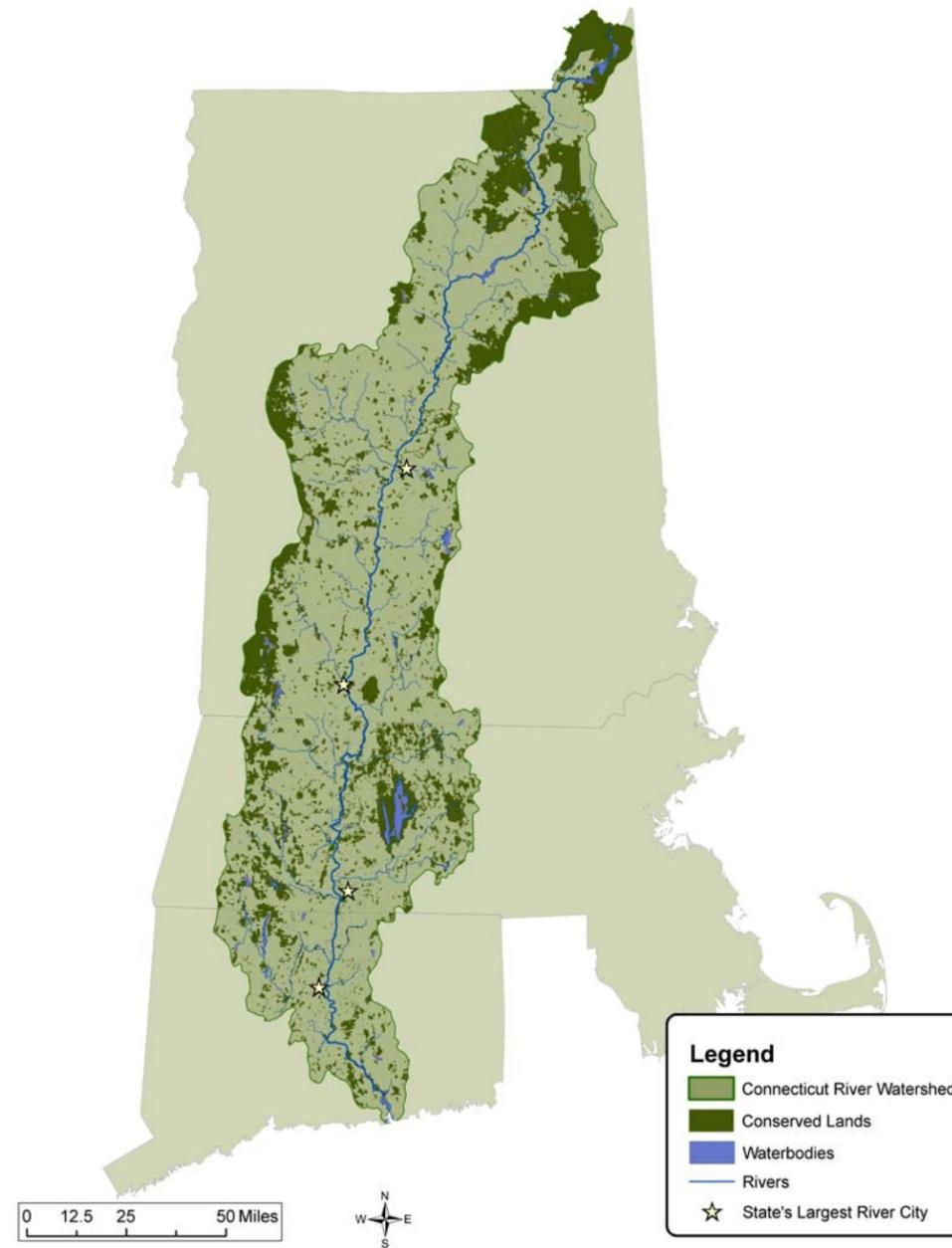
THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND'S VISION

We are fortunate to have a richly diverse and largely intact watershed in the midst of our densely populated region. In the Connecticut River watershed, we have an opportunity to use precious open space and waters wisely and protect them for future generations or watch them become more generic with each passing year. Wherever people connect to the land, our grandchildren should inherit a landscape that tells an inspiring story of New England, illustrated with farms, forest, clean water in the River and the Sound, abundant wildlife, and vibrant communities small and large.

THE CONNECTICUT RIVER PROGRAM

To achieve this vision, we must increase the pace and scope of land conservation in the watershed, and we must work both locally and regionally. Towns and cities need help achieving local conservation priorities to ensure quality of life for future generations. At the same time, we must protect resources that are important to the region and the nation by increasing state and federal investments.

TPL builds partnerships across the watershed to develop land conservation priorities and increase funding to protect key resources. TPL also directly engages River communities to help them define conservation goals, figure out how to pay for land protection, and take action to protect important parcels. Our work at the regional level helps us to link local accomplishments to river-wide goals.



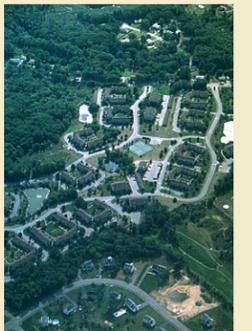
Among the myriad conservation needs in the watershed, TPL's Connecticut River Program focuses on these priorities:

- Protect **Riverfront parcels** and secure appropriate public River access;
- Protect **prime farmland** and **community forests**;
- Integrate **regional initiatives**, such as the Conte Refuge, with local efforts;
- Help **communities** identify and achieve their top conservation goals; and
- Protect **iconic properties** that tell an important story, are under threat, and would not be conserved without TPL's help.

GROWTH'S CHALLENGE

Even as the 30-year effort to clean the River of sewage and industrial pollution begins to pay off, changing land development patterns present new threats. The watershed lost over 19 percent of its farmland between 1982 and 1997, while developed land area increased by over one third. An additional 7.5 percent of farmland was lost between 1997 and 2002—fully 45 percent of all farmland lost in New England. Forest loss and fragmentation are also significant. Both American Farmland Trust and the US Forest Service ranked parts of the watershed among the nation's most threatened regions containing important farmland and working forests, respectively.

As rural sprawl becomes more common, small increases in population translate into large impacts on the landscape. Many of the towns that help define New England's identity are struggling to protect their character.



Future Community Forest, West Fairlee, VT

R.K. Bailey



Breakwater Light, Old Saybrook, CT

Sonja K. Keohane