

**Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (NEAFWA)**  
**Northeast Landscape Wildlife Conservation Committee**  
**Executive Summary of Progress to Date**  
**April 5, 2022 - March 6, 2023**

The Charter for the Northeast Landscape Wildlife Conservation Committee was approved by NEAFWA on April 5, 2022.

The mission of the Committee stated in that charter is: *Provide leadership and direction from the NEAFWA Directors and leadership within the Northeast Region of the FWS on efforts related to large-scale landscape conservation needs and opportunities, including the development and coordination of shared priorities and interjurisdictional efforts.*

That charter established the initial Steering Committee membership and the structure of a Working Group.

In November 2022, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service began supporting a Landscape Conservation Coordinator position and selected the first coordinator. NEAFWA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service selected members for the Working Group.

From November 2022 through January 2023, the Working Group and coordinator reviewed, compiled, and organized information on landscape partnerships, funded projects, potential projects, plans, focus areas, and funding sources resulting in an initial set of 21 priority landscapes focused on habitat types and associated species as well as specific watersheds in the region. The working group reviewed, discussed, organized, grouped, and prioritized this information and agreed on the following subset of seven landscape priorities and themes:

- Atlantic Coast: Coastal Resiliency and Coastal Habitat Restoration
- Northeast Region River, Stream, and Watershed Restoration (Source to the Sea)
- Appalachian and Northern Forests
- Pine Barrens, Grasslands and other Xeric Habitats and Dependent Species
- Appalachian Corridor Highlands and Streams
- Support and Coordination for Watershed and Other Delivery Partnerships
- Northeast One Health Initiative: Wildlife Disease Monitoring, Response, Management

The Steering Committee met jointly with the Working Group in January and reached consensus on these top two priorities:

- Atlantic Coast: Coastal Resiliency and Coastal Habitat Restoration
- Appalachian Corridor Highlands and Streams

The Steering Committee agreed that these two landscapes would be both the initial focus for NEAFWA and be the top two priorities to be submitted to the AFWA Joint Task Force on Landscape Conservation for consideration by the Department of the Interior as regional priorities for the America the Beautiful Challenge Grant program (and potentially other federal

funding). These two NEAFWA priorities were submitted to the AFWA Joint Task Force on Landscape Conservation on January 31.

The Coordinator and Working Group are working with Northeast states to develop two preproposals for the America the Beautiful Challenge Grant program for: *Atlantic Coast: Coastal Resiliency and Coastal Habitat Restoration* and *Appalachian Corridor Highlands and Streams* priority landscapes. A request for input on priority projects to be included in landscape-scale preproposals was sent to all NEAFWA Directors, Associations and Committees on March 3, 2023. (The America the Beautiful Challenge Grant Program posted their 2023 Request for Proposals on March 1, 2023 with a preproposal deadline of April 20, 2023).

The Steering Committee agreed with a role for the NEAFWA Landscape Wildlife Conservation Committee supporting coordination, input and support for funded and emerging watershed and other landscape scale delivery partnerships (Delaware River Watershed Chesapeake Bay Watershed, Highlands Region, New York – New Jersey Rivers Watershed, Connecticut River Watershed, Gulf of Maine, Large Lakes: Eastern Great Lakes and Lake Champlain).

The Steering Committee also agreed to review and collaboratively address challenges to effectively delivering landscape conservation in the region including capacity and match and continue discussions around the long-term structure and function of the Committee.

Steering Committee members and the coordinator will participate in the National AFWA Joint Task Force on March 20 at the *North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference*.

Steering Committee members and the coordinator will meet with the NEAFWA Directors at the *Northeast Fish and Wildlife Conference* April 30-May 2, 2023.

The Coordinator and Working Group are developing a webpage on the NEAFWA website on the work of the Northeast Landscape Wildlife Conservation Committee and are exploring options for a separate website.