

Beginning with Habitat

A new approach to conserving
Maine's landscape

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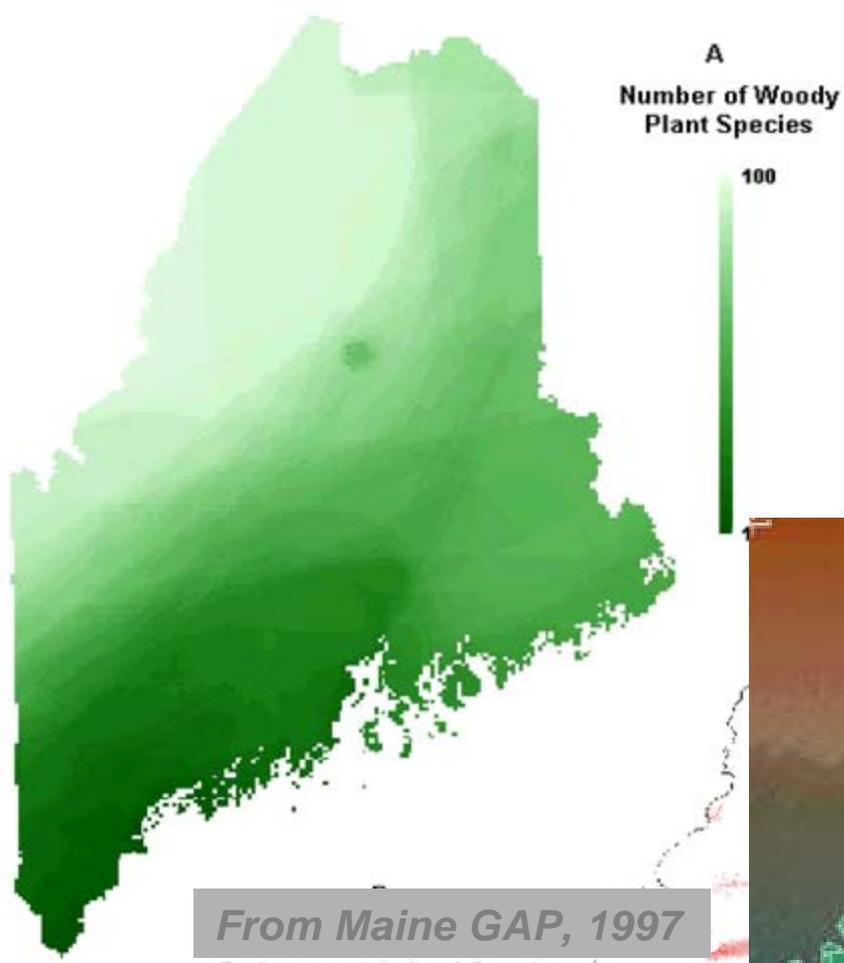
Where we're going today

- Background
- What is Beginning with Habitat?
- How BwH works with local, regional, and State resource protection strategies
- A note on funding



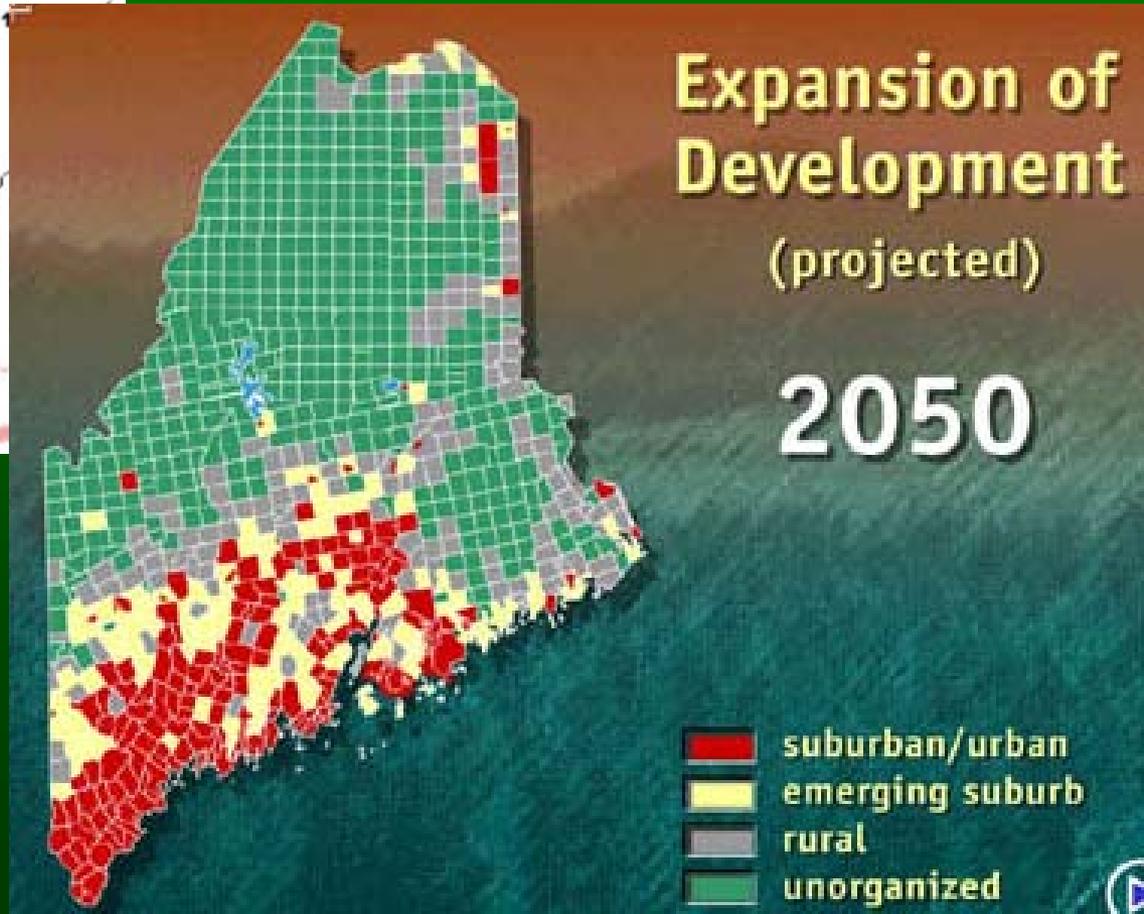
Environmental amenities add value to communities at many levels.





Maine's richest areas of biodiversity are also the most threatened

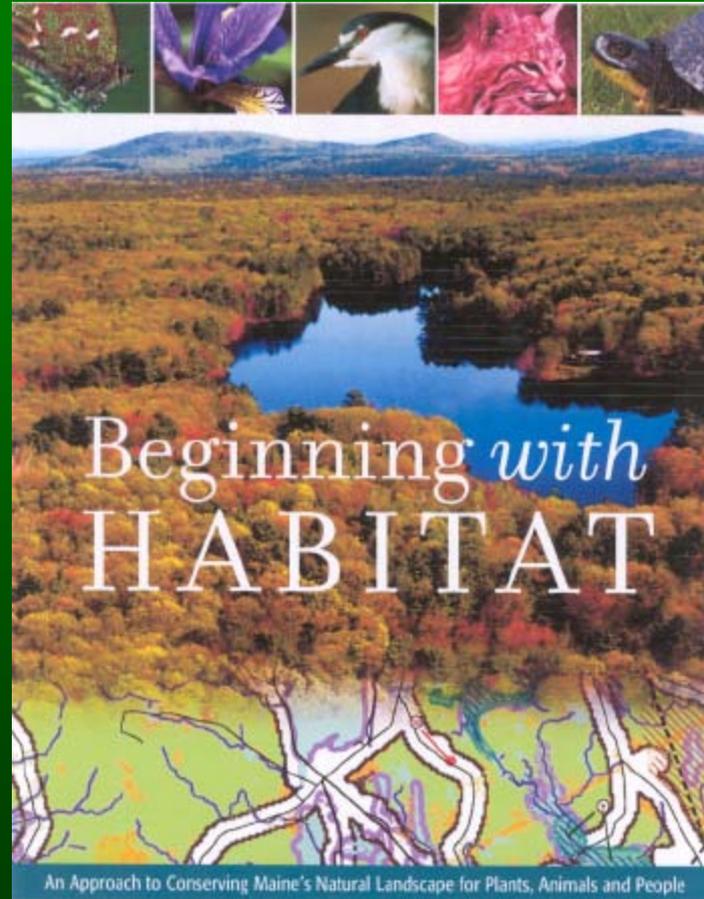
From Maine GAP, 1997





Beginning with Habitat:

A cooperative, non-regulatory approach to conserving open space

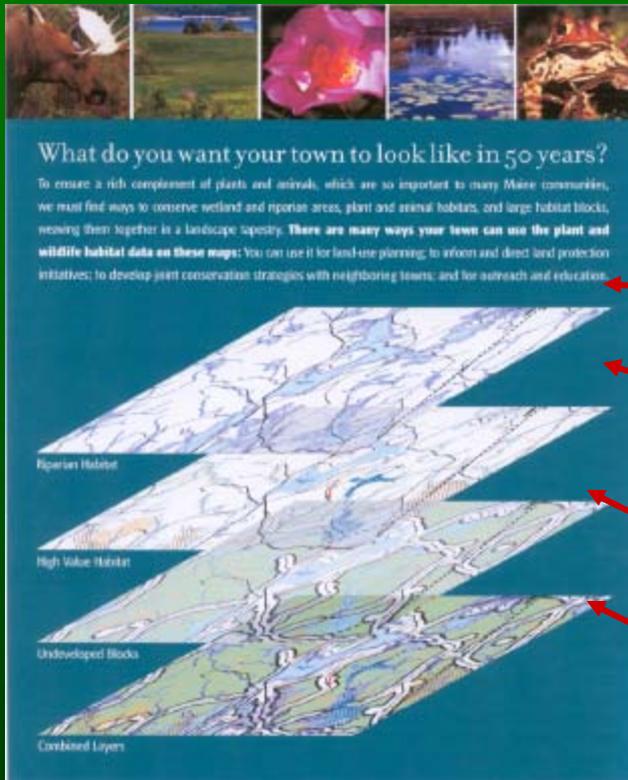


Beginning with Habitat:

A cooperative, non-regulatory approach to conserving open space

Purpose:

To provide the most up-to-date wildlife and plant habitat information available for use in Open Space, Conservation, and Comprehensive Planning.



Riparian Habitat

High Value Plant and Animal Habitat

Undeveloped Blocks

Building a Conservation Landscape

What Makes BwH a NEW Concept?

This is the first time that diverse organizations with different goals are partnering to provide habitat information through ONE focused project.

Who are the Partners?

- Dept of Conservation
- Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife
- Maine State Planning Office
- Maine Audubon Society
- The Nature Conservancy
- Maine Coast Heritage Trust
- US Fish and Wildlife Service

(DOT, DEP, DMR, RPCs, UMO, USM, WNERR)

Beginning With Habitat

Landscape based approach required to achieve meaningful conservation of all native species on a developing landscape



Focus Areas
(Chips/Chunks)

Matrix
(Dough)

The Primary Components

- Data
- Maps
- Technical assistance



Data and Maps

- BwH consists of a primary series of three maps which are
- supported by an additional four.

- Water resources and riparian zones
- High value plant and animal habitats
- Unfragmented blocks

- Focus Areas
- Conservation lands
- Wetlands Characterization
- SPOT imagery

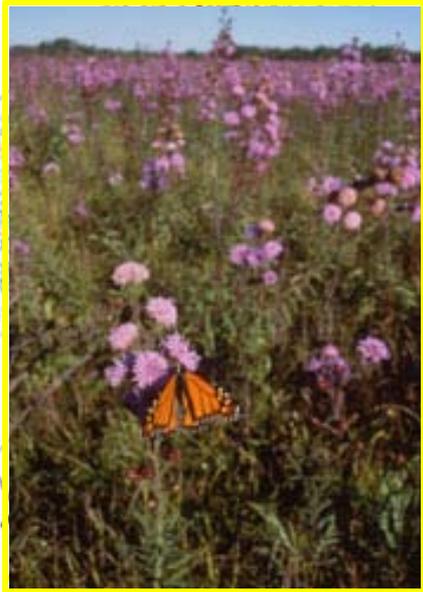
MAP 1: Water Resources and Riparian Habitats

Riparian Areas:

- Provide habitat for 50-75% of wildlife species
- Important for habitat connectivity and water quality
- 75' buffers on small streams
- 250' buffers on larger water bodies and wetlands

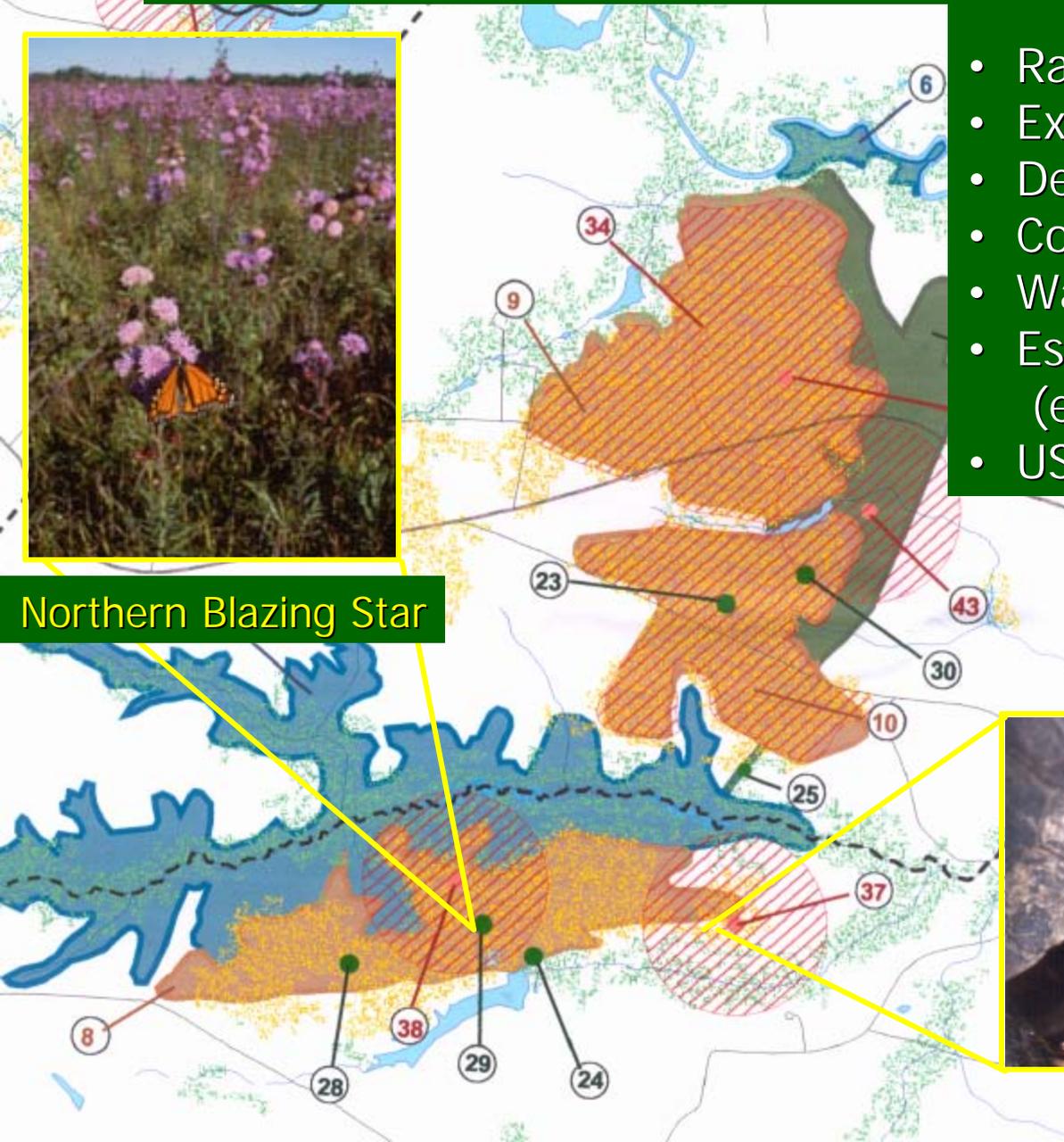


MAP 2: High Value Plant & Animal Habitats



Northern Blazing Star

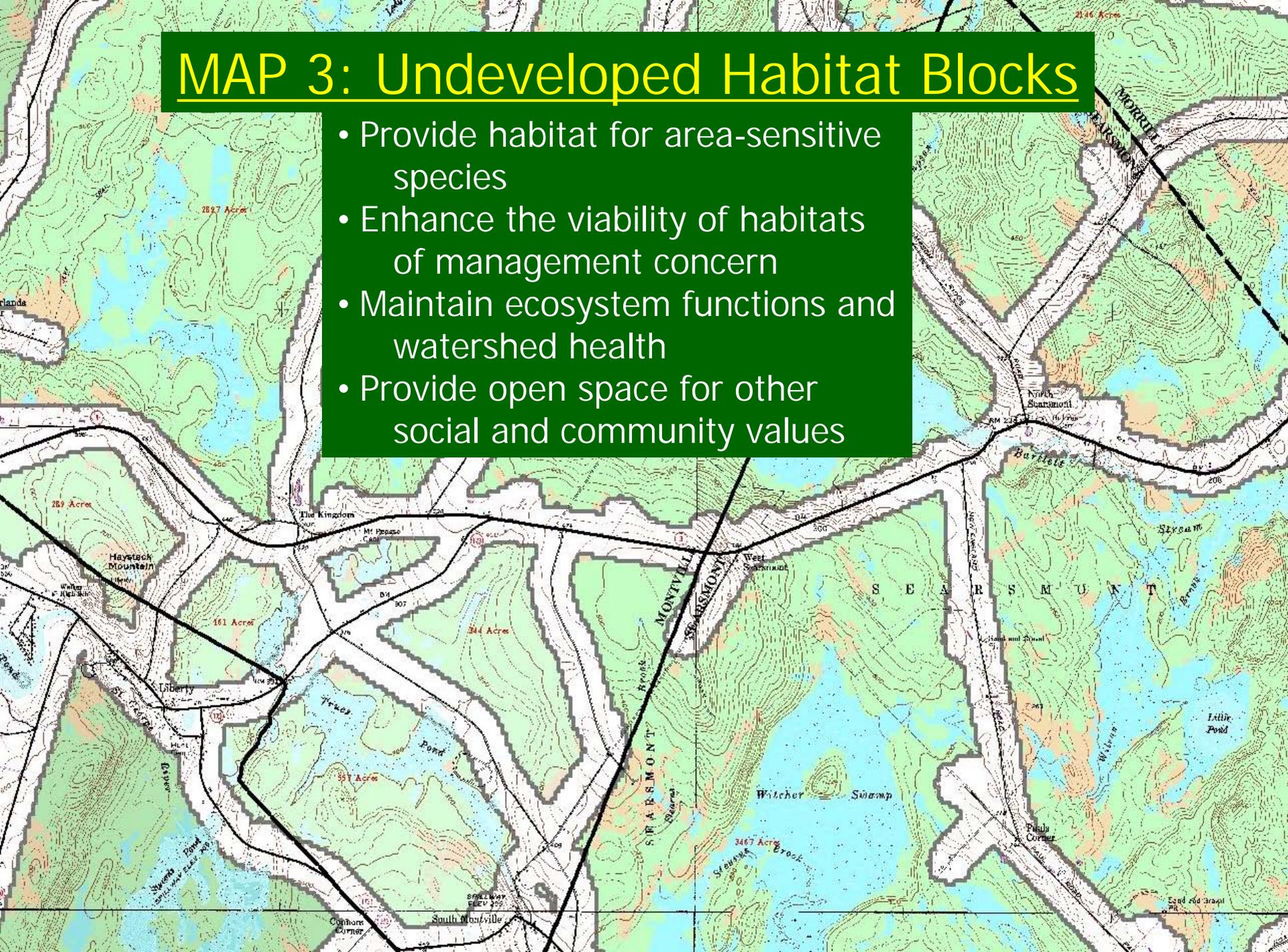
- Rare Plants and Animals
- Exemplary Natural Communities
- Deer Wintering Areas
- Coastal Bird Habitat
- Waterfowl / Wading Bird Habitat
- Essential Habitats
(e.g. Bald Eagle Nests)
- USFWS Trust Species Habitats



Wood Turtle

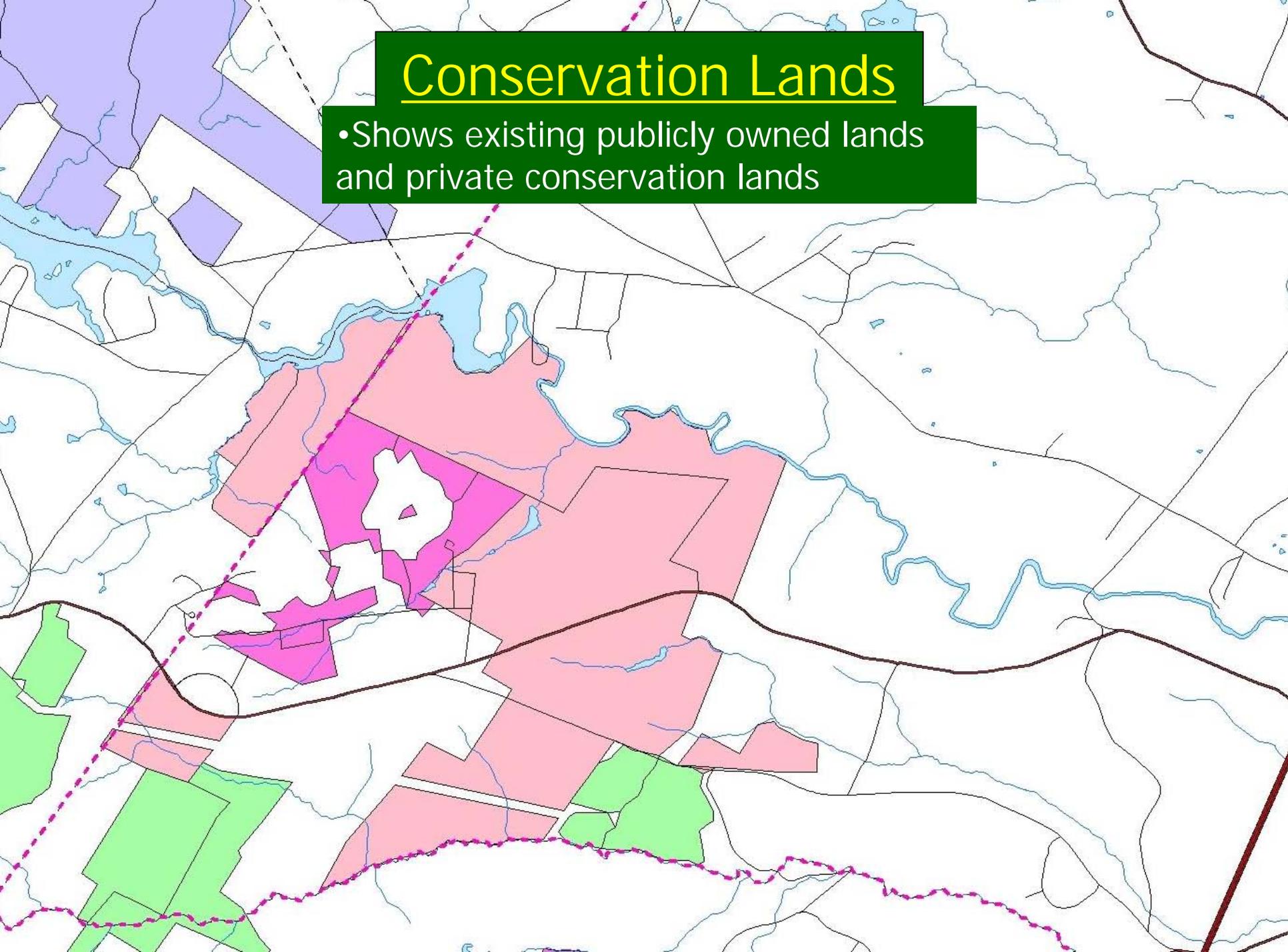
MAP 3: Undeveloped Habitat Blocks

- Provide habitat for area-sensitive species
- Enhance the viability of habitats of management concern
- Maintain ecosystem functions and watershed health
- Provide open space for other social and community values



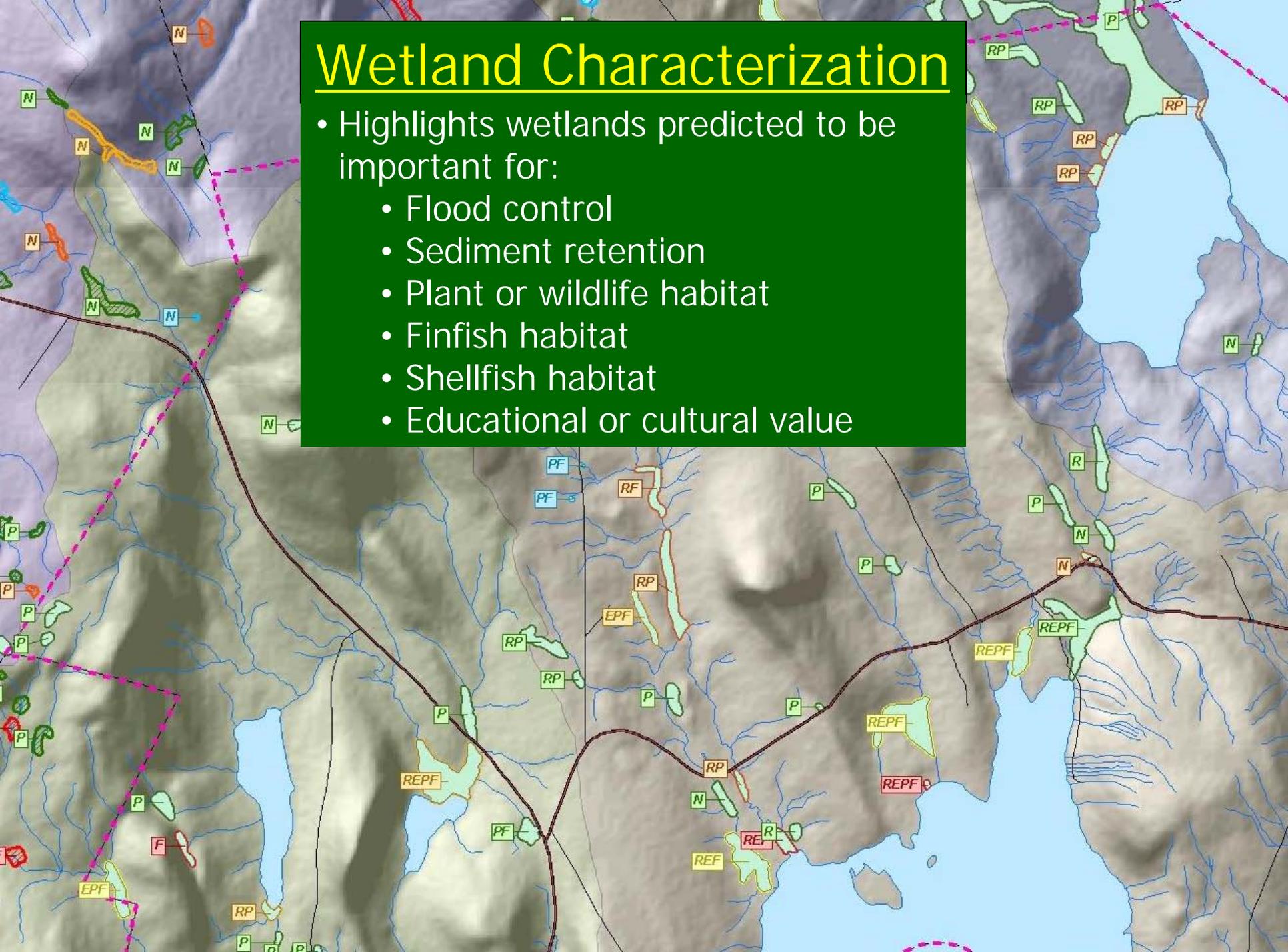
Conservation Lands

- Shows existing publicly owned lands and private conservation lands



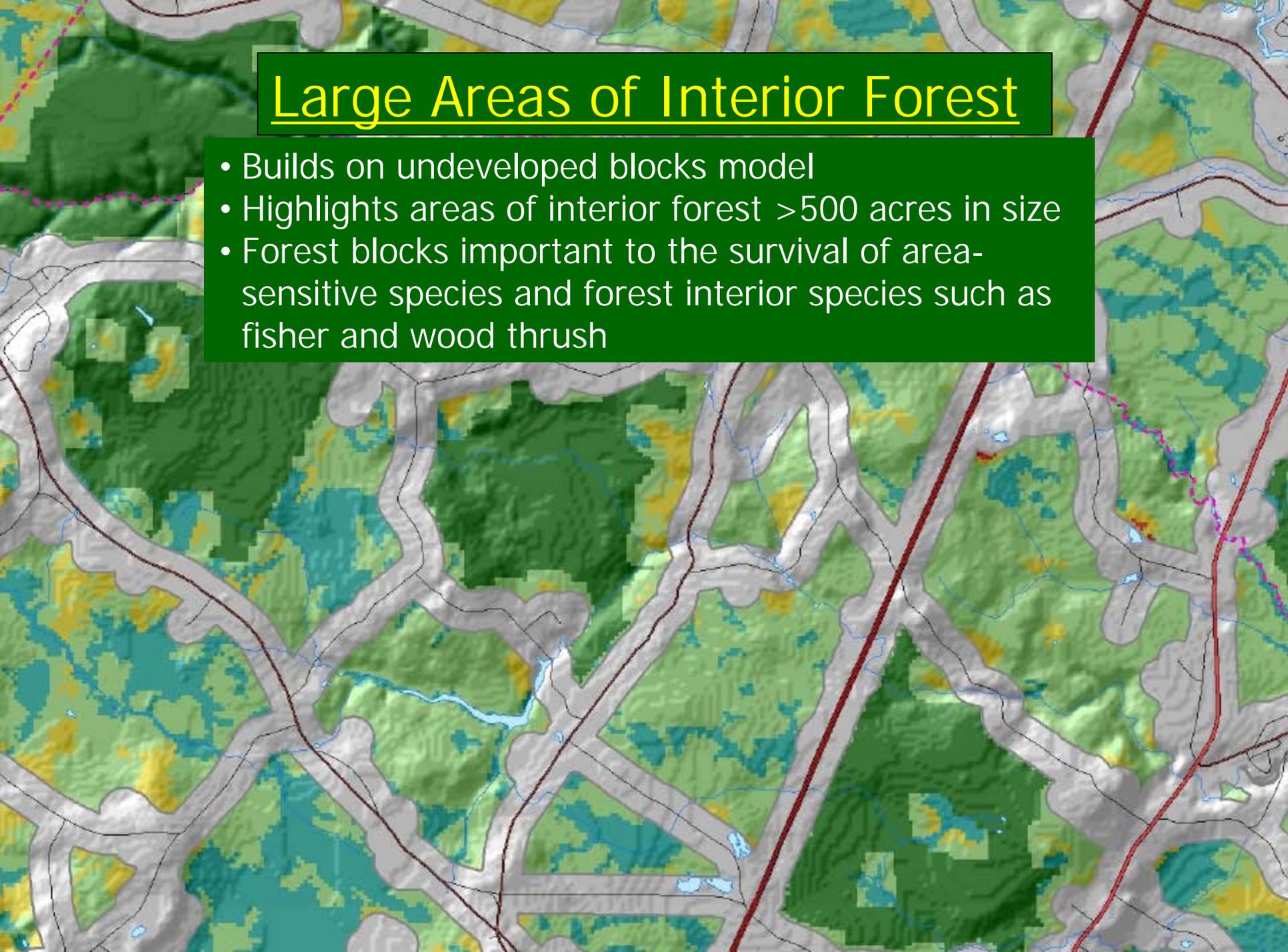
Wetland Characterization

- Highlights wetlands predicted to be important for:
 - Flood control
 - Sediment retention
 - Plant or wildlife habitat
 - Finfish habitat
 - Shellfish habitat
 - Educational or cultural value



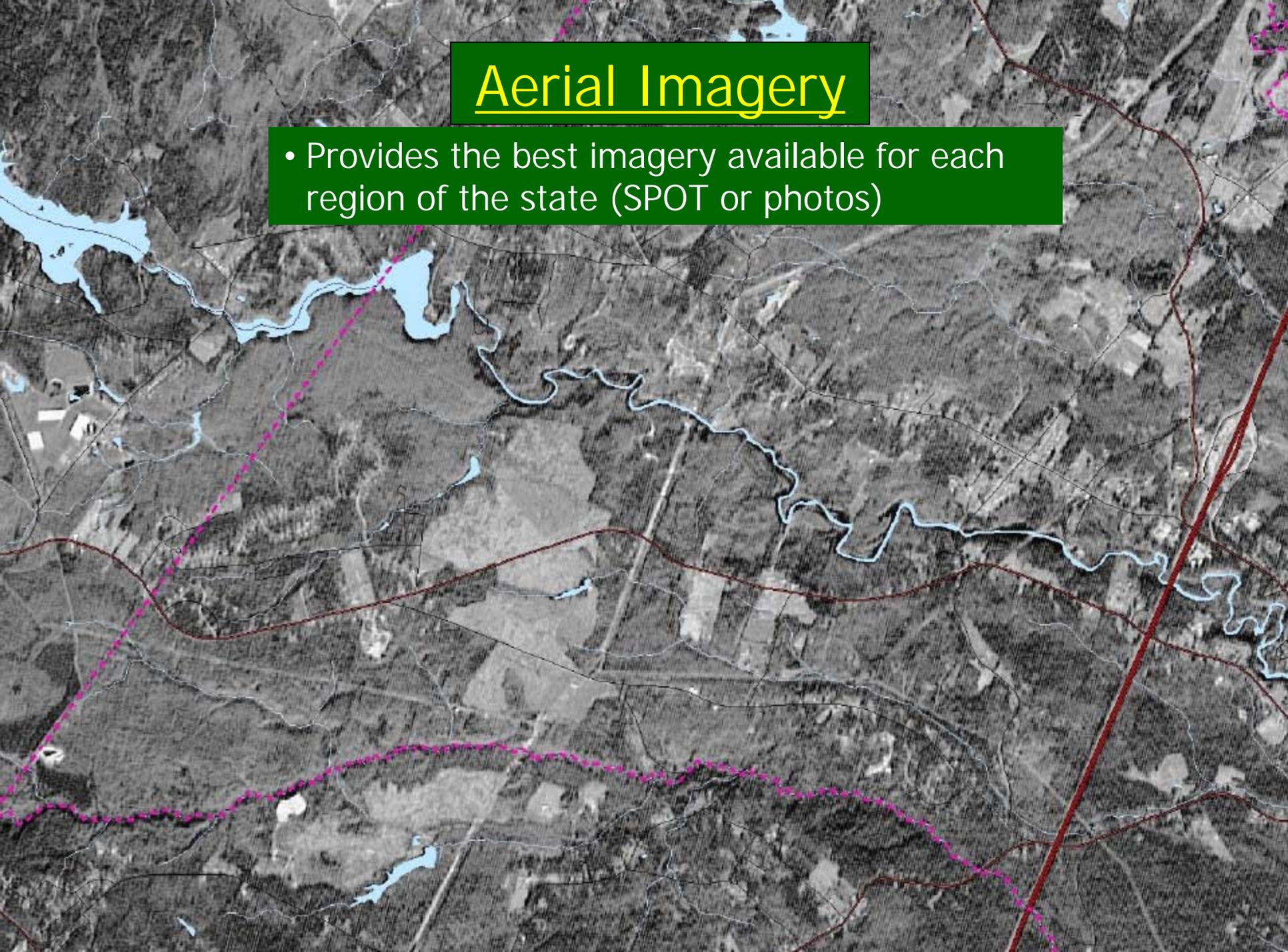
Large Areas of Interior Forest

- Builds on undeveloped blocks model
- Highlights areas of interior forest >500 acres in size
- Forest blocks important to the survival of area-sensitive species and forest interior species such as fisher and wood thrush

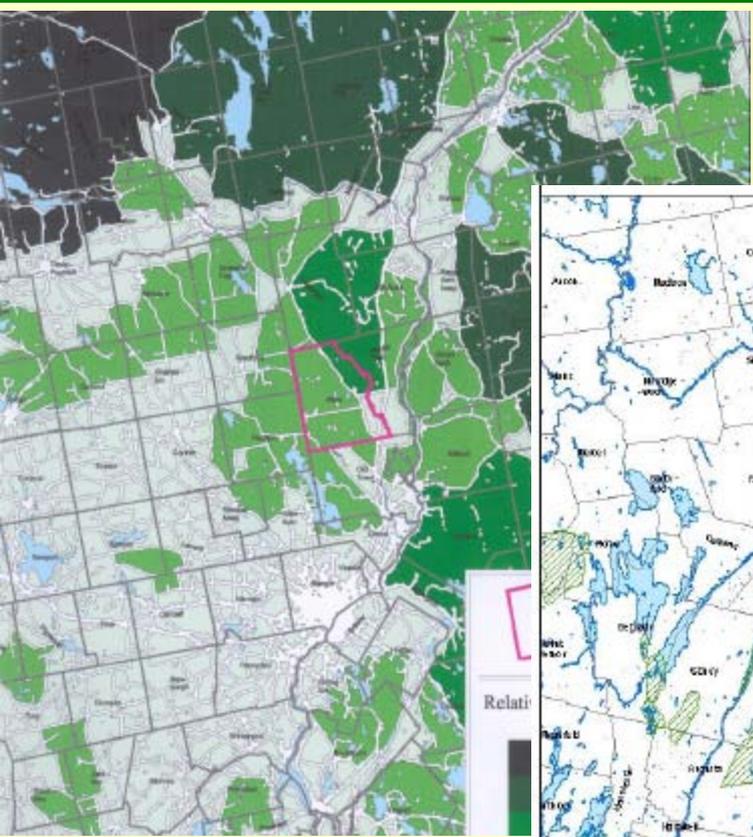


Aerial Imagery

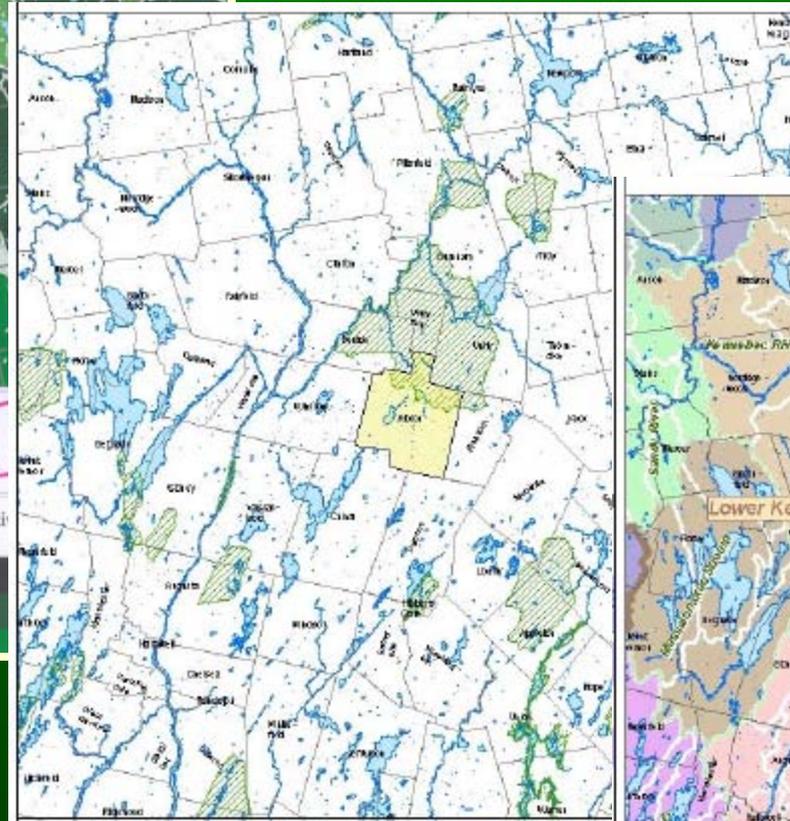
- Provides the best imagery available for each region of the state (SPOT or photos)



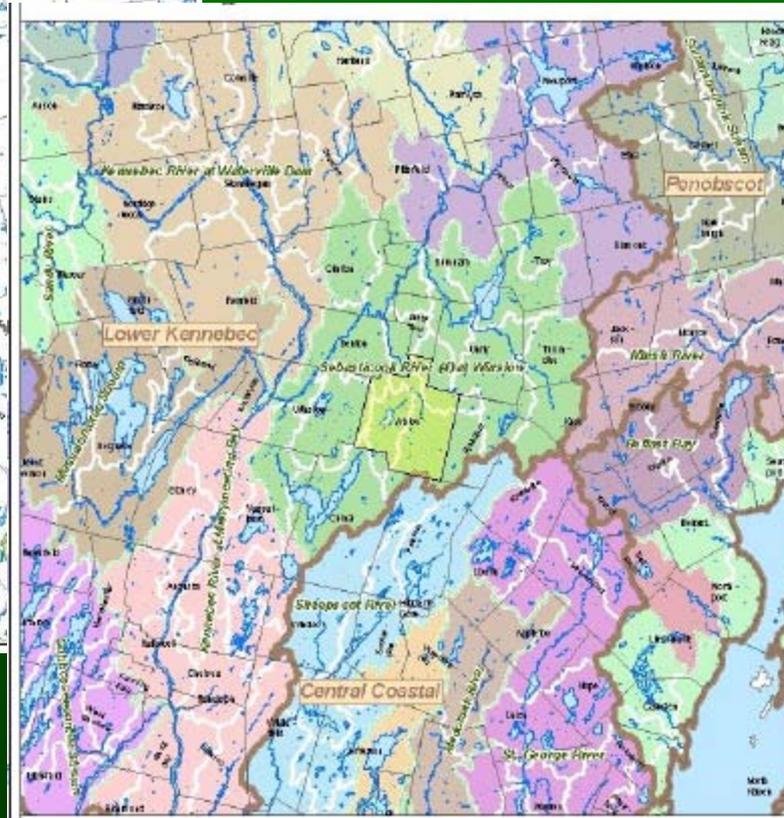
Inset Maps: Regional Views



Habitat Blocks

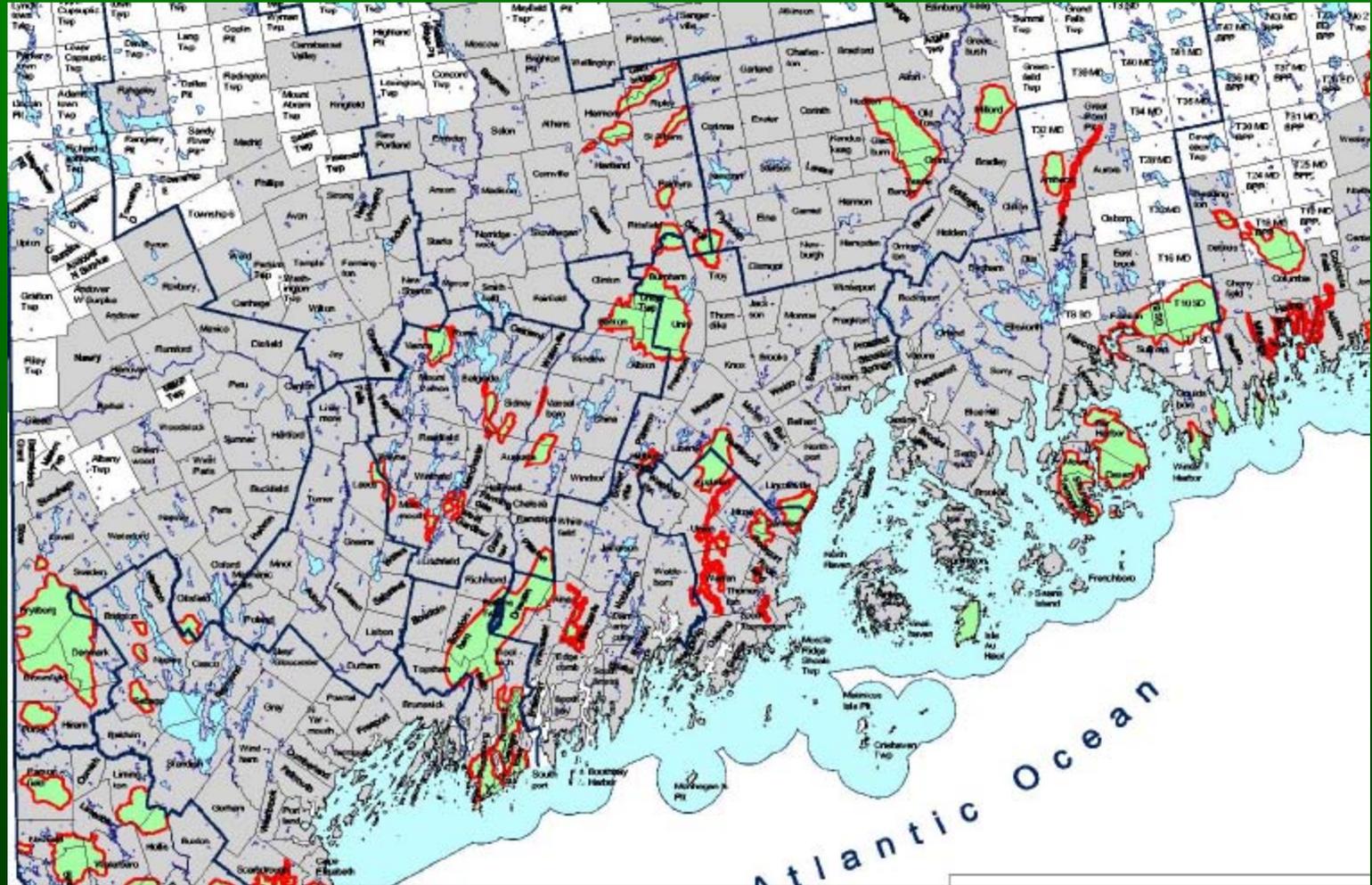


Focus Areas



Watersheds

Beginning with Habitat Focus Areas



Materials

- Hard copy paper and mylar maps
- Digital data of all data sets
- Notebook including
 - Area and resource specific factsheets
 - Materials on biodiversity and land use planning
 - All maps in paper format



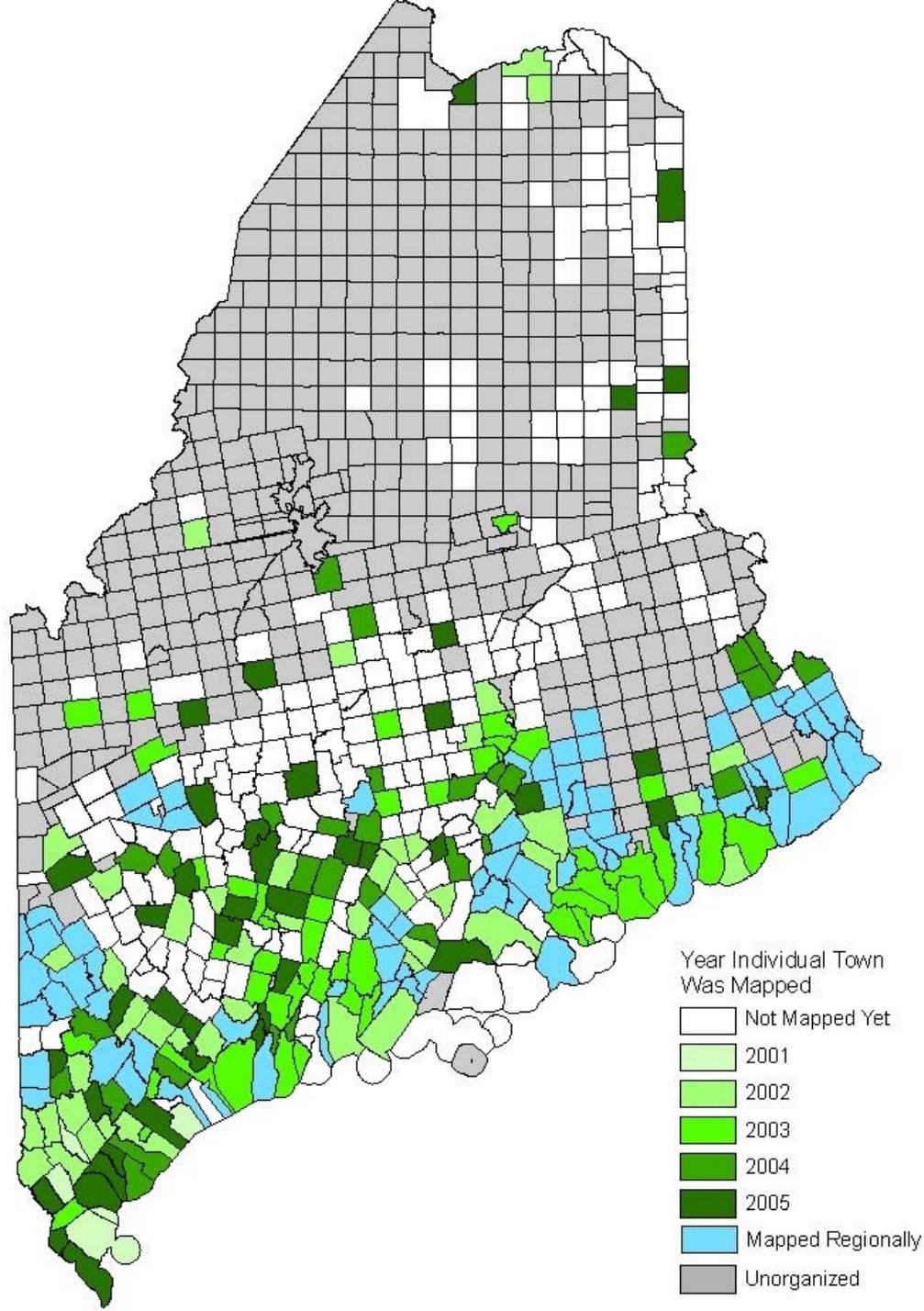
Technical Assistance

- Presentation
 - General ecological principles
 - What the different BwH layers are and how they work together
 - Discussion of important features within the area of interest
- Follow up

Habitat Size – Area Sensitive



- Northern Parula warbler: 50% chance in 1000 acres, 100% chance in 7400 acres
- Hermit thrush: average patch size 1955 acres



Mapping Progress to Date:

- 175 Towns mapped individually
- 77 more towns mapped as part of a region
- 20+ regions mapped

Mapping Goals:

- Map all 446 organized cities and towns
- Keep maps up to date
- Address needs of land trusts and other regional groups

What are Towns doing with BwH

- Comprehensive planning (63%)
- Open space planning (16%)
- Outreach/education to landowners (15%)
- Ordinance creation/revision (20-30%)

What are Towns doing with BwH

- As support for increased shoreland zoning protection
- Prioritizing lands for conservation through purchase or easement
- Encouraging new landowners to enroll in current use tax programs
- Regional cooperation for conservation or open space/land use planning

State and Federal uses of BwH

- DOT: to assess alternative routes
- DOT: to guide inventory efforts
- MFS: review of forest notifications
- MDIFW: consultation with landowners and developers
- DoAg: to guide farmland protection
- NRCS: in WHIP and EQIP application scoring

Next Steps.....

- Respond to stated needs of Towns
- Increase capacity to address Regionalism (pilot-Sagadahoc)



Next Steps.....

- Develop Interagency Internet Mapping Service
- Compose marine resource map for coastal communities (MCPI/CELCP)



State Wildlife Grants

- The BwH program is an essential part of the state's plan
- BwH has received significant funding from the State Wildlife Grant program

Our Patrons to Date

- EPA
- NOAA
- USFWS
- MAS
- TNC
- Betterment Foundation
- Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund
- Maine Loon License Plate Fund
- ME Dept. of Conservation
- ME Community Foundation

And Yet.....

- No core funding from the State itself



www.beginningwithhabitat.org



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