

Public Conservation Funding in New England

Recent Trends in Government Spending
on Land Protection



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Highstead



Wildlands & Woodlands

A Vision for the New England Landscape

Data compilation and report by Mary Buchanan, Highstead

Front cover and pictured above: From West Mountain in the Northeast Kingdom, VT (Photo: Vermont Land Trust)

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Highstead in Redding, Connecticut

Introduction

The Wildlands and Woodlands vision calls for a future in which the New England landscape is strategically conserved to maintain a natural infrastructure that supports healthy ecosystems, economies, and food systems. Achieving this goal will require considerable investment from many directions and continuing innovations in conservation finance. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of recent trends in public conservation funding in New England. It is our hope that the contents of this document will provide a foundation for further conversations about the means by which conservation has been funded in the past and the ways it can be effectively funded in the future. This report is intended to be a resource to jumpstart those critical conversations and a reference for recent historical funding trends.

Our approach for this project defines conservation specifically as land protection through acquisition or easement. This report presents two frameworks for examining the funding data we have collected. The first half of the report presents a regional perspective for all of New England, relying on information collected for all six states. The second half of the report presents a state-by-state perspective that contains additional information on state-specific programs. For the sake of clarity and organization, public funding streams were categorized as belonging to one of three broad tiers of government: federal, state, or local. In the executive summary, we also examine the combined contributions of the federal and state tiers. We have focused specifically on the period from 2004-2014, sometimes referred to in this report as our “target range of years.”

The information used in this report comes from a range of sources including federal records, state agency reports, and correspondence with government employees and non-governmental experts in the field of conservation finance. Data sources are cited in the text as needed; a comprehensive list of contacts and web resources can be found in the Appendix.

We hope that this document will be a useful resource for all those working to advancing the scale and pace of conservation in New England. We welcome feedback on the contents or organization of this report to help us improve its utility.

A Note About the Numbers in This Report

This report provides a broad-scale perspective on public conservation funding in New England, bringing together information from all six states to estimate and assess the public funding available to finance land conservation in the region. It is our hope that presenting this information at a regional scale as well as in individual state profiles will assist big-picture conservation planning across state lines and illuminate opportunities for us to learn from the examples of our neighbors in New England.

We have put considerable effort into identifying the public funding streams that are active in our region and locating accurate and up-to-date data; however, sometimes data were unavailable for certain programs or certain years, and in some cases the data we obtained were not always fully comparable among programs, states, or governmental tiers (for example, some programs have data available in the form of appropriations or awards, while others provided exact expenditures). For this reason, the yearly totals and trends included in this report should be considered estimates, meant to convey an approximation of available funding rather than an exact dollar value. Full details on all data sources and the calculations of all estimated totals are available in the Appendix.

It should be noted that this report captures only a portion of the conservation finance opportunities available to protect New England lands. We focus here on funds that are appropriated, awarded, or spent on land protection by public entities at the federal, state, and local levels. This report does not delve into the vast array of funding mechanisms that exist in the private sector, nor does it include the tax credits that provide an additional financial incentive for land conservation. This is not meant to dismiss the importance of these in the larger conservation funding picture. The private sector of conservation finance continues to develop and innovate, and recent legislation has made permanent the federal tax incentive for conservation easement donations, ensuring that donations made in or after 2015 will qualify for significant federal tax benefits. Although these mechanisms are beyond the scope of this report, they have played a vital role in funding land protection in the past, and will no doubt be instrumental in continuing to finance conservation in the future.



Graf Farm in Pawlet and Rupert, Vermont (Photo: Vermont Land Trust)

1. Executive Summary

AT A GLANCE

- The Land and Water Conservation Fund is the main vehicle for federal conservation funding in New England, providing 55-78% of the region's federal conservation funding annually over the 2004-2014 period.
- Massachusetts led the region in total state-level spending from 2004-2014 by a substantial margin; Vermont and Rhode Island invested the most in state conservation spending on a per-capita basis. Connecticut is not on track to meet its conservation spending goals and will very likely fall far short.
- State conservation funds have been threatened, diverted, or withheld on multiple occasions, as in the cases of Connecticut's Community Investment Act, New Hampshire's Land and Community Heritage Investment Program, and Maine's Land for Maine's Future Program.
- When federal and state funds were combined, total estimated funding for New England conservation had declined 48% as of 2014, down from a peak in 2008.
- Local mechanisms like Massachusetts' Community Preservation Act present an example of innovation to other New England states.

Federal Funding

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is the primary vehicle for federal conservation funding in New England. Every year from 2004-2014, the funding streams deriving from the LWCF contributed approximately 55-78% of New England's annual federal conservation funding (excluding Natural Resources Conservation Service programs). The LWCF itself encompasses multiple fundingpools with different purposes. Especially relevant to New England is the Forest Legacy Program, which has been included under the umbrella of LWCF since 2004. In the fall of 2015, the Land and Water Conservation Fund was allowed to expire for the first time in its fifty-year history. Though the fund was reauthorized in December 2015, the reauthorization is only for three years. Given the significant role of the LWCF among the options available to New England states for federal conservation funding, the ultimate fate of this funding source will have strong ramifications for land protection in the region.

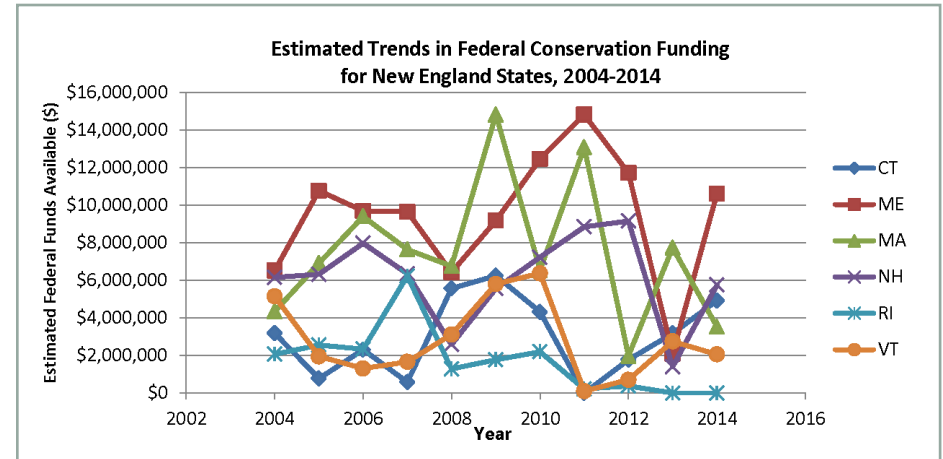


Figure 1-1. NRCS programs not included due to inadequate data for the full range of years.

Within New England, there is significant variation in how individual states utilize specific federal programs. Maine was a particularly strong beneficiary of the Forest Legacy Program, receiving appropriations every year from 2004-2014 that totaled \$52,855,000 over the decade. In contrast, Connecticut and Rhode Island received Forest Legacy appropriations much less frequently, with each state's ten-year total under \$5 million. Maine and Massachusetts were the primary recipients of North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants in the region, receiving over 80% of the total funds awarded through grants over the decade. Most of the Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson Act) spending on land protection projects took place in Massachusetts (approximately 82% of the total program spending on land protection in the region). Finally, New Hampshire accounts for most of the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund spending in the region (almost 70%), most of which was spent in the latter half of the decade. These differences suggest that some New England states might have untapped opportunities for federal funding.

Funding from several specific programs declined or ceased in the latter part of our target range of years from 2004-2014. There were no grants from the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund awarded to New England states after 2010, nor was there any spending from the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program on New England conservation projects after that year. Declines are also visible in the trends for the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program and the stateside LWCF funds spent on acquisition projects. At a regional scale, notable drops in our estimated totals occurred in 2008 and 2013. These patterns suggest that conservationists in New England must safeguard these funding streams for continued use in the region's future, and at the same time seek additional financing channels in order to ensure reliable and adequate resources to meet the Wildlands and Woodlands goal for conservation in the region. Figures 1-2 and 1-3 present estimated total federal contributions for conservation (defined here as land protection through acquisition or easement) in the New England states, an estimated regional total trend, and estimated per capita funding by state. Please note that NRCS programs are excluded from these estimates because we could not obtain data for the full range of years, and some federal program data are based on appropriations rather than spending. A list of included programs and exact data sources can be found in the Appendix.

Table 1-1. State-by-State Breakdown of Estimated Federal Funds (NRCS Programs Not Included)						
Year	CT	ME	MA	NH	RI	VT
2014	\$ 4,926,397	\$ 10,613,300	\$ 3,523,969	\$ 5,755,000	\$ 0	\$ 2,059,500
2013	\$ 3,171,900	\$ 2,100,000	\$ 7,739,750	\$ 1,399,870	\$ 0	\$ 2,750,000
2012	\$ 1,777,583	\$ 11,725,500	\$ 1,974,250	\$ 9,158,206	\$ 383,017	\$ 710,000
2011	\$ 0	\$ 14,826,100	\$ 13,078,481	\$ 8,849,275	\$ 218,558	\$ 106,355
2010	\$ 4,322,916	\$ 12,456,581	\$ 6,548,753	\$ 7,229,692	\$ 2,200,650	\$ 6,370,000
2009	\$ 6,241,666	\$ 9,182,635	\$ 14,817,112	\$ 5,569,000	\$ 1,775,000	\$ 5,808,832
2008	\$ 5,572,979	\$ 6,423,371	\$ 6,760,273	\$ 2,584,000	\$ 1,283,333	\$ 3,116,137
2007	\$ 585,250	\$ 9,655,836	\$ 7,644,712	\$ 6,353,367	\$ 6,232,367	\$ 1,659,000
2006	\$ 2,306,500	\$ 9,692,296	\$ 9,404,451	\$ 7,977,509	\$ 2,342,124	\$ 1,307,000
2005	\$ 780,000	\$ 10,767,516	\$ 6,919,535	\$ 6,321,228	\$ 2,560,030	\$ 1,950,000
2004	\$ 3,189,843	\$ 6,526,074	\$ 4,345,000	\$ 6,160,823	\$ 2,070,087	\$ 5,150,000

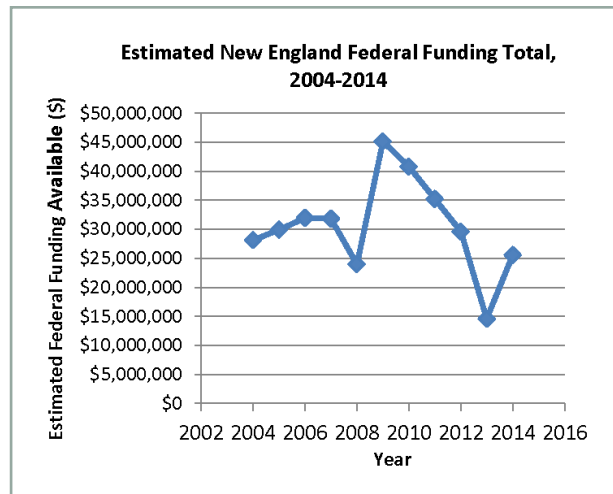


Figure 1-2. NRCS programs not included.

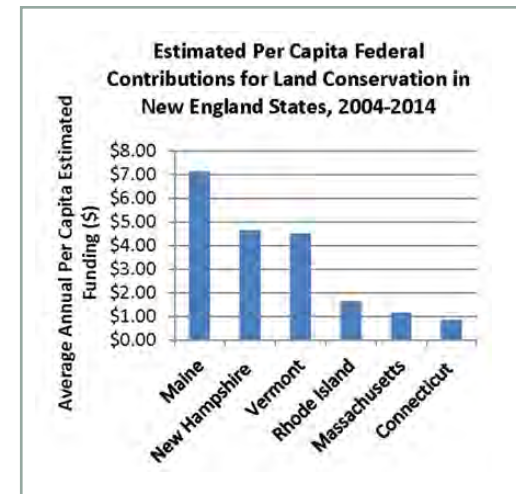


Figure 1-3. NRCS programs not included.

State-Level Funding

Funding for state-level land conservation programs varies widely by state. In absolute terms, Massachusetts consistently led the region in total state-level spending by a substantial margin. Vermont and Rhode Island invested the most on a per capita basis, spending an annual average of \$6.70 and \$5.31 per person, respectively, on land protection with state-level funds.

The means by which states fund their land conservation programs vary as well. In Massachusetts, the primary source of funding for state conservation has been environmental bond bills passed by the state. Several other New England states also rely on bond bills for much of their conservation funding, although none of them are investing at the same level as Massachusetts. Both Maine and Rhode Island rely on voter-approved bonds to fund their primary land protection programs. Connecticut's main programs for acquiring new state land and granting awards to nonprofit and municipal partners are funded through a combination of bonds and the state's Community Investment Act. In contrast, the state conservation programs in New Hampshire and Vermont are primarily funded through other mechanisms. New Hampshire's Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) has received appropriations from the state legislature, and in recent years has been supported by the funds raised through fees on deed registries. In Vermont, state conservation projects are handled by the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, which is funded primarily through a real estate transfer tax. A regional perspective therefore includes an array of options for channeling state funding towards conservation.

Though our analysis of state funding trends in New England revealed plenty to commend, such as Massachusetts' strong record, some troubling patterns also emerged. In every year from 2004-2014, Connecticut's state spending on conservation fell far short of the estimated average the state needs to stay on track to meet its goal of 21% of the state's acreage conserved by 2023. New Hampshire's LCHIP funding was diverted to other purposes on multiple occasions between 2004 and 2014, and did not receive its usual revenue in 2012 and 2013. The issue of fund diversion seems poised to continue beyond the years examined in depth in this analysis: Connecticut's Community Investment Act was partially diverted to the state's general fund for the 2016-2017 state budget, and in early 2015 Maine's governor withheld over \$11 million in voter-approved bond funds for the Land for Maine's Future Program, jeopardizing time-sensitive conservation projects. It is therefore not enough just to increase funding to state conservation programs — the funds must also be protected from diversion and used for their intended purposes even in times of economic and political tension.

State conservation programs are implemented by state-specific agencies, and so bookkeeping methods vary by state. Additional resources for tracking and verifying conservation spending in the region would improve the information available

to conservation advocates and policy-makers and would allow for more reliable assessments of successes and setbacks. The Trust for Public Land's Conservation Almanac is one such example of the type of long-term data necessary for well-informed conservation.

Figures 1-4, 1-5, and 1-6 present total state-level spending on conservation (defined here as land protection through acquisition or easement) in the New England states, an estimated regional total trend, and per capita spending by state. A list of included programs and exact data sources can be found in the Appendix.

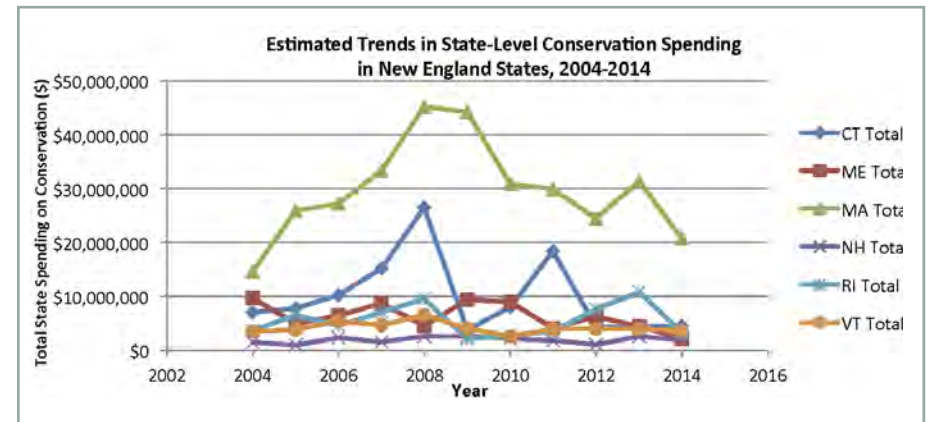
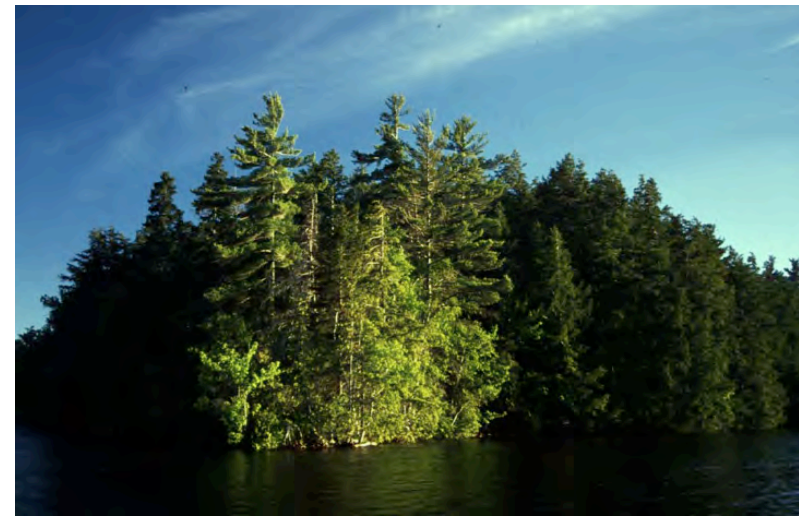


Figure 1-4.



Horseshoe Island in Winthrop, Maine (Photo: Jym St. Pierre)

Table 1-2. State-by-State Breakdown of State-Level Conservation Spending

Year	CT	ME	MA	NH	RI	VT
2014	\$ 4,496,361	\$ 2,191,697	\$ 20,800,000	\$ 1,880,844	\$ 3,305,000	\$ 3,650,000
2013	\$ 4,462,687	\$ 4,469,466	\$ 31,379,156	\$ 2,619,500	\$10,827,700	\$ 3,978,660
2012	\$ 4,319,204	\$ 6,288,611	\$ 24,440,446	\$ 1,083,255	\$ 7,674,574	\$ 3,989,279
2011	\$ 18,455,279	\$ 4,058,249	\$ 29,923,425	\$ 1,785,920	\$ 3,507,540	\$ 3,909,042
2010	\$ 8,042,539	\$ 8,984,118	\$ 30,887,454	\$ 2,126,234	\$ 2,736,275	\$ 2,571,236
2009	\$ 3,732,259	\$ 9,376,096	\$ 44,270,365	\$ 2,648,040	\$ 2,043,028	\$ 4,095,690
2008	\$ 26,531,864	\$ 4,542,035	\$ 45,201,766	\$ 2,553,806	\$ 9,551,797	\$ 6,509,368
2007	\$ 15,255,416	\$ 8,692,810	\$ 33,344,967	\$ 1,605,000	\$ 7,039,773	\$ 4,658,274
2006	\$ 10,260,323	\$ 6,474,802	\$ 27,219,096	\$ 2,371,051	\$ 4,601,839	\$ 5,476,434
2005	\$ 7,771,925	\$ 4,901,616	\$ 25,914,208	\$ 963,000	\$ 6,518,528	\$ 3,829,784
2004	\$ 7,056,777	\$ 9,723,359	\$ 14,661,451	\$ 1,481,375	\$ 3,661,950	\$ 3,476,368

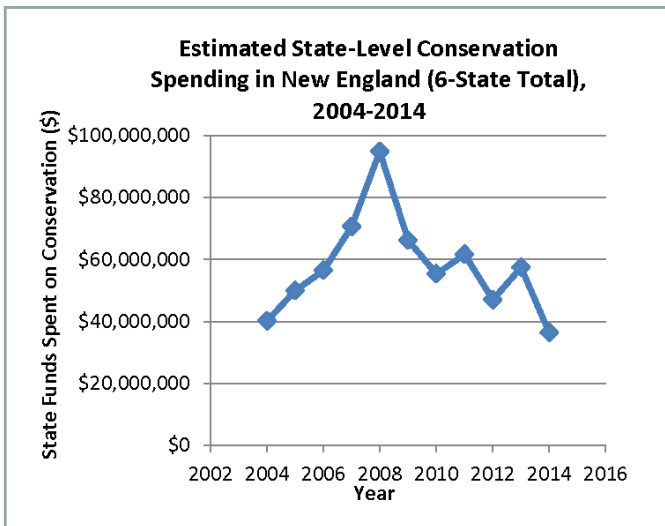


Figure 1-5.

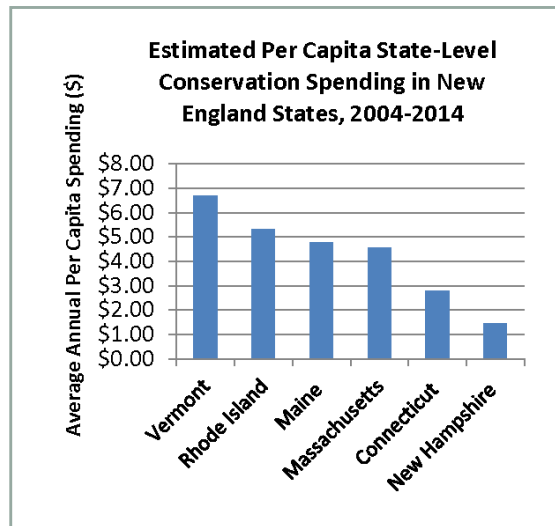


Figure 1-6.

Perkins Woods, Wayne, Maine (Photo: Brian Kent)

Federal & State Contributions Combined

If we combine the federal-level and state-level public conservation funding data described above, we can see that the total estimated funding available to New England as of 2014 had declined approximately 48% from a peak in 2008. Figure 1-7 represents combined funding for land conservation at the federal and state levels for New England as a whole. The regional picture is heavily influenced by the trend in Massachusetts, in which state spending greatly outweighed federal spending.

The relative contributions of federal and state-level conservation funding programs in each New England state are especially evident when the ten years from 2004 to 2014 are examined in sum. Our estimations for cumulative federal and state contributions to land conservation (excluding NRCS programs), summed for the region and rounded to the nearest million, totaled \$973,000,000. The pie charts on the following page break the cumulative sum down by state and level of government. Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Vermont all spent more in state-level conservation funding than these states received from federal funding programs during this ten-year period. Maine and New Hampshire both had more money available through federal funding streams than these states spent through their state-level conservation programs; in Maine this was due to exceptionally high levels of federal funds, while in New Hampshire this was due to exceptionally low state spending. Although Massachusetts led the region in total dollars, taking population into account presents a different perspective. The estimated combined funding available per capita ranged from an annual average of \$3.64 in Connecticut to \$11.89 in Maine.

Many federal funding programs require a certain percentage of match funding from other sources. States with significant state-level funding available for conservation projects therefore may be more attractive candidates for federal grants, allowing for additional financial leverage and capacity.



Highstead in Redding, Connecticut

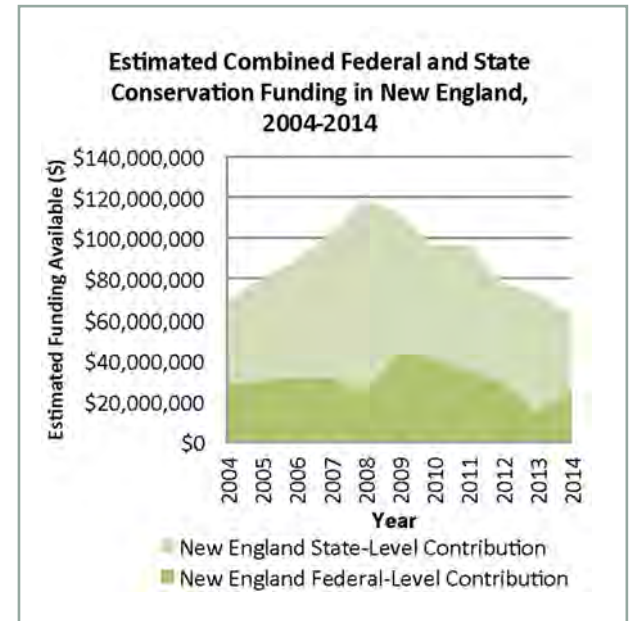


Figure 1-7. NRCS programs not included.

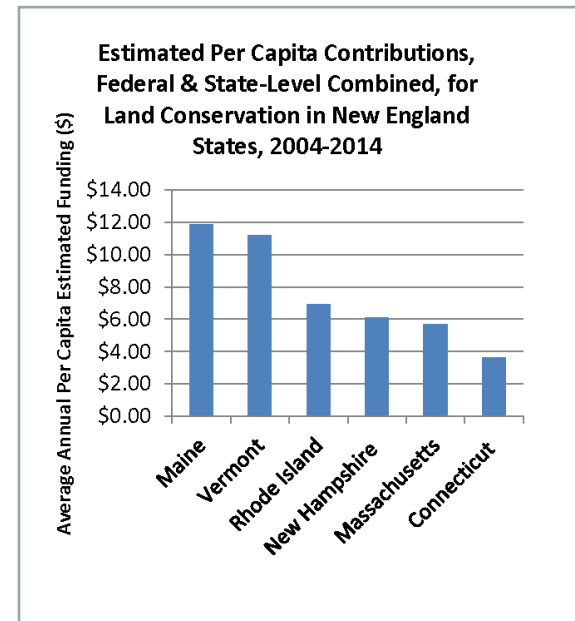
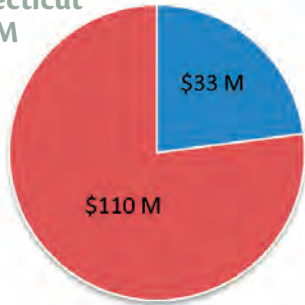


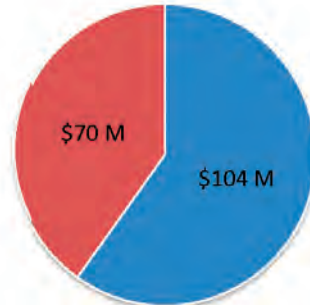
Figure 1-8. NRCS programs not included.

Figure 1-9. In the following graphs, **federal contributions are represented in blue, state contributions in red.** Contributions are summed for the period 2004-2014 and rounded to the nearest million (M).

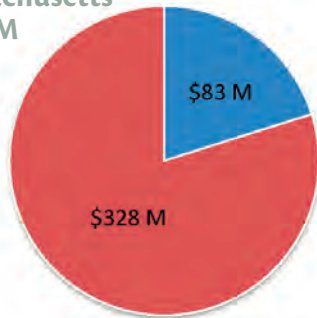
Connecticut
\$143 M



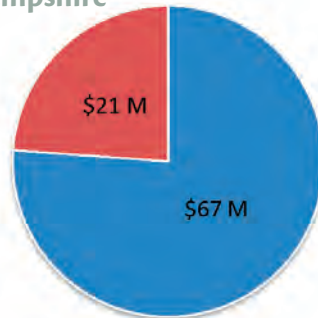
Maine
\$174 M



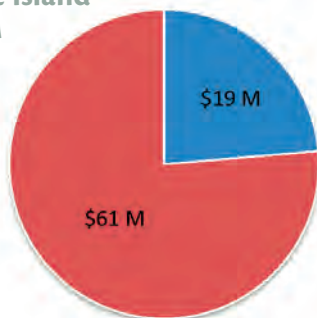
Massachusetts
\$411 M



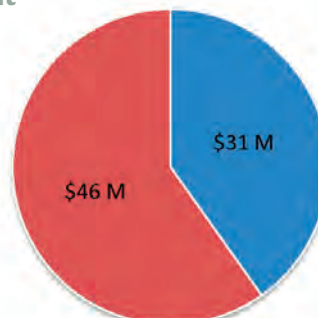
New Hampshire
\$88 M



Rhode Island
\$80 M



Vermont
\$77 M



Forwarder sorting wood in Scituate, Rhode Island (Photo: Rhode Island Woodland Partnership)

Local-Level Funding

Funding measures passed in individual municipalities contribute to New England's conservation funding picture as well, although data on these funding streams are much more difficult to collect and organize. Conservation funding approved by ballot referendums are tracked through the Trust for Public Land's LandVote database, but not all municipalities in the region approve conservation funding in this manner — municipalities in both New Hampshire and Vermont typically pass conservation funding measures through town meetings rather than by ballot vote. Vermont has been excluded from our regional perspective here altogether, as there does not appear to be any central source tracking municipal-level funding in this state passed through non-ballot measures.

Likewise, data for New Hampshire cities and towns are available only through 2010. Due to these information gaps, we could not combine municipal-level funding with our estimates from the other tiers of government with confidence, and so we examined contributions from municipalities separately from 2001-2010. Without more attention to tracking and reporting municipal spending on conservation, this important source of match funds will be impossible to capture fully in future regional analyses.

At the municipal level, Massachusetts is again a standout example of strong conservation support. The exceptionally high level of local funding in Massachusetts is largely due to this state's Community Preservation Act (CPA). Since the act was signed into law in 2000, 160 municipalities in Massachusetts have voluntarily adopted CPA by ballot vote, allowing these towns to raise money for open space and recreation, historical preservation, and affordable housing through a surcharge on local property taxes. The sums raised through CPA exceeded, sometimes substantially, those raised through other municipal measures in New England for most of the years included this analysis.

However, several states showed declines in approved conservation measures during this time period, including Massachusetts, which saw its measures plunge after 2005. A sharp decline in conservation funds passed in New Hampshire town meetings was also evident in the years from 2003-2010.

Figures 1-10 and 1-11 present a partial picture of municipal-level conservation funding measures passed in towns in the New England states and an estimated regional total trend (excluding Vermont due to inadequate data). Data for Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island includes all ballot-approved measures from the Trust for Public Land's LandVote database. Data for New Hampshire reflect conservation measures passed through town meetings and collected through 2010 by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. For all states, please note that these figures display funds approved, not necessarily spent. Additional information on data sources can be found in the Appendix.

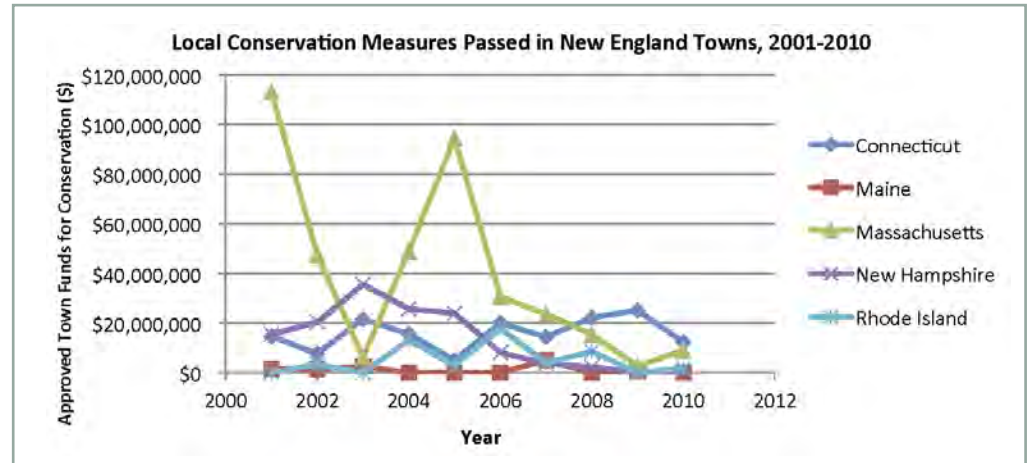


Figure 1-10. CT, ME, MA, and RI measures passed by ballot. NH measures passed in town meetings. Data unavailable for VT.

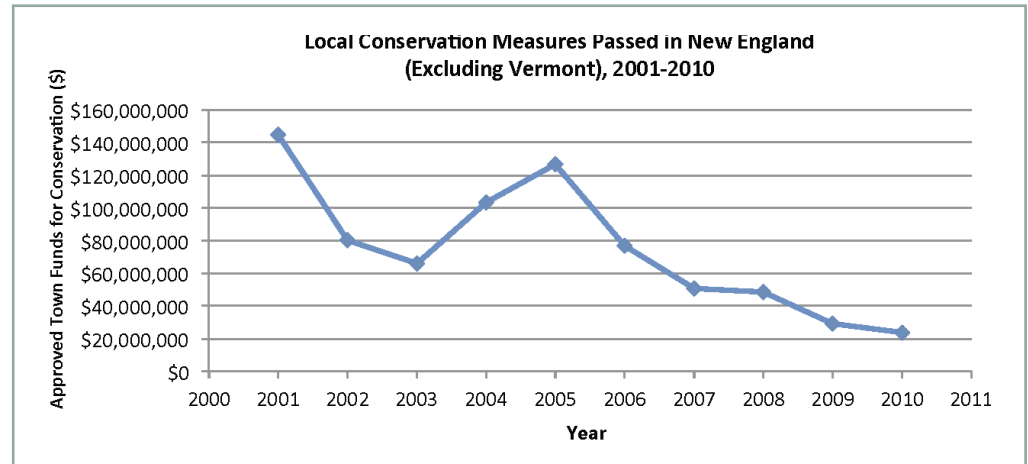


Figure 1-11. Data unavailable for Vermont towns.

Table 1-3. State-by-State Breakdown of Local Approved Funding, Vermont Excluded, 2001-2010

Year	CT	ME	MA	NH	RI
2010	\$ 12,290,000	\$ 0	\$ 9,079,954	\$ 421,000	\$ 2,000,000
2009	\$ 25,177,450	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 2,747,987	\$ 256,000	\$ 0
2008	\$ 22,206,000	\$ 0	\$ 15,425,933	\$ 2,400,000	\$ 8,500,000
2007	\$ 14,350,000	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 23,677,068	\$ 3,800,000	\$ 4,000,000
2006	\$ 19,950,000	\$ 0	\$ 30,629,839	\$ 8,200,000	\$ 18,000,000
2005	\$ 5,000,000	\$ 0	\$ 94,592,119	\$ 24,000,000	\$ 3,000,000
2004	\$ 15,560,000	\$ 0	\$ 48,858,902	\$ 25,900,000	\$ 13,150,000
2003	\$ 21,600,000	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 6,395,006	\$ 35,600,000	\$ 0
2002	\$ 7,700,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 47,546,162	\$ 20,400,000	\$ 3,300,000
2001	\$ 14,600,000	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 113,273,836	\$ 15,400,000	\$ 0



Tobacco barns in Hadley, Massachusetts (Photo: David Foster)



New England Regional Perspective

2. Trends in Federal Government Conservation Funding

Public money appropriated or collected by the federal government substantially contributed to permanent land conservation in New England in the years from 2004-2014. Because these monies derive from federal sources and are mostly distributed through nation-wide programs, they constitute funding streams that the New England states largely have in common (although not all programs are utilized equally in individual states). A full understanding of how these federal programs have been used and how they might be used in the future may therefore be helpful for building a regional perspective.

In order to piece together an overall perspective of federal-tier funding for conservation in New England, we chose to focus on the federal funding streams that lead specifically to permanent land conservation and are actively used in the New England states. With these criteria in mind, we relied on the expertise of Bruce Clendenning at the Appalachian Mountain Club and Ron Carlton, Andrew duMoulin, and Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land, as well as input from the Wildlands and Woodlands team members, to guide us in selecting programs and funds for further research. Records for each program were obtained from annual government reports where available and from personal correspondence with government and NGO contacts as needed. Each program is briefly summarized here and accompanied by as much regional data as we were able to collect.

Additional programs that we considered but ultimately decided to exclude from our analysis are listed at the end of this section.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is the primary vehicle for federal conservation funding. Multiple funding pools exist under the umbrella of the LWCF; major pools include “federal” funds, “stateside” funds, and funds for the Forest Legacy Program. Smaller funding streams under the LWCF that impact one or more of the New England states include the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund and the Highlands Conservation Act. Figures 2-1 and 2-2 show the recent funding trends of the LWCF as a whole in New England.

Placed in the context of the overall federal contribution to conservation in New England, the LWCF plays a crucial role. Every year from 2004-2014, the funding streams under LWCF’s umbrella contributed approximately 55-78% of New England’s annual federal conservation funding (note: NRCS programs excluded from New England total due to lack of adequate data).

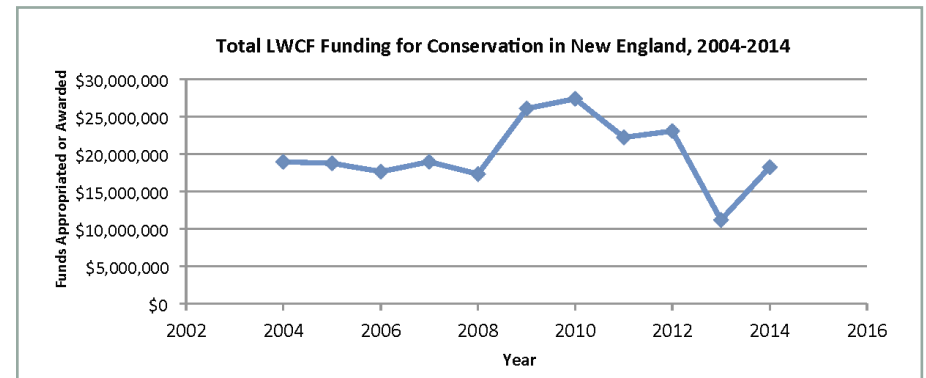


Figure 2-1. Data for federal-side projects and FLP from federal appropriations; stateside grants from NPS (acquisition and combination projects only), CESCFC data from U.S. F&WS; Highlands Act data from Appalachian Mountain Club.

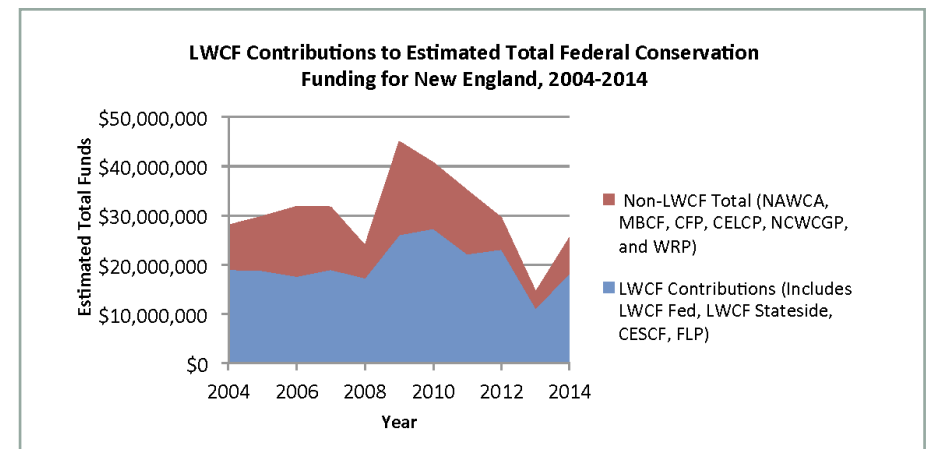


Figure 2-2. Data for federal-side LWCF projects and FLP from federal appropriations; LWCF stateside grants from NPS (acquisition and combination projects only), LWCF Highlands data from Appalachian Mountain Club; CESCFC, MBCFC, NAWCA, NCWCGP, and WRP data from U.S. F&WS reports; CFP data from USFS; CELCP data from the Trust for Public Land. Please see Appendix for exact contacts and full program names.

Figure 2-3 shows the component categories that make up LWCF and their respective roles in New England's recent conservation funding history. Much of the Fund's contributions to New England have been distributed through the Forest Legacy Program. Further information on these funding streams follows.

Federal LWCF funds are used to acquire public lands as national parks, national forests, national wildlife refuges, and similar protected areas. Typically the funds are spent in individual states for approved projects, but in some cases federal funds are shared by several states when a project crosses state boundaries (as in the case of the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge, funds for which are shown in Figure 2-5). All the federal LWCF data used in this report were obtained from Bruce Clendenning at the Appalachian Mountain Club in the form of federal appropriations records. From there we identified all records pertaining to projects in the New England states and calculated yearly totals by state.

The Silvio O. Conte National Forest & Wildlife Refuge has been the most consistently funded shared project in our target range of years. Additionally, on one occasion in the past ten years (2011), Maine and New Hampshire were joint recipients of \$2,240,000 in LWCF federal funds for the Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge.

The New England states also receive **LWCF stateside grant funds** to support outdoor state recreation and conservation projects, many of which are categorized as "acquisition" or "combination" (which includes both acquisition and site development). Stateside funds may also be used for developing plans or enhancing public facilities, but these projects do not result in direct land protection. Prior to receiving these funds, each state must complete a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan outlining specific priorities for expending the funds. Figure 2-6 includes only funds for acquisition or combination projects; for stateside grant trends that include all project categories, please see the individual state summaries. All data are from the National Park Service.

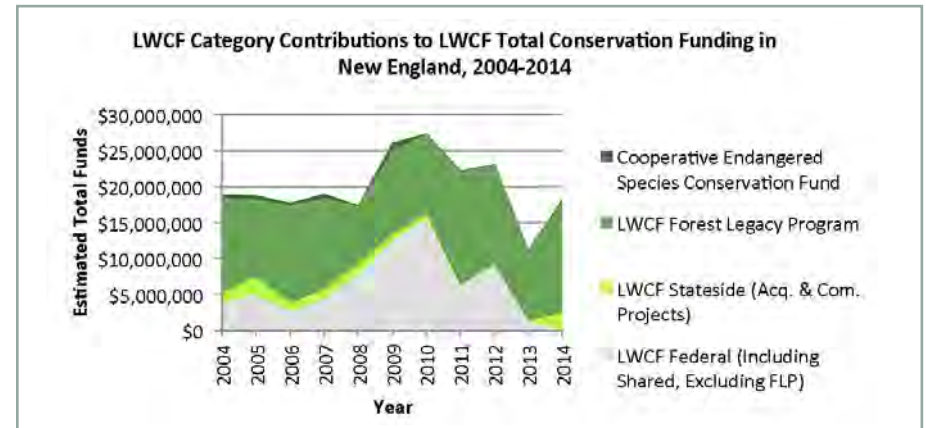


Figure 2-3. Federal, shared, and FLP data all from federal appropriations records; stateside grants data from National Park Service; CESCFC data from Fish & Wildlife Service.

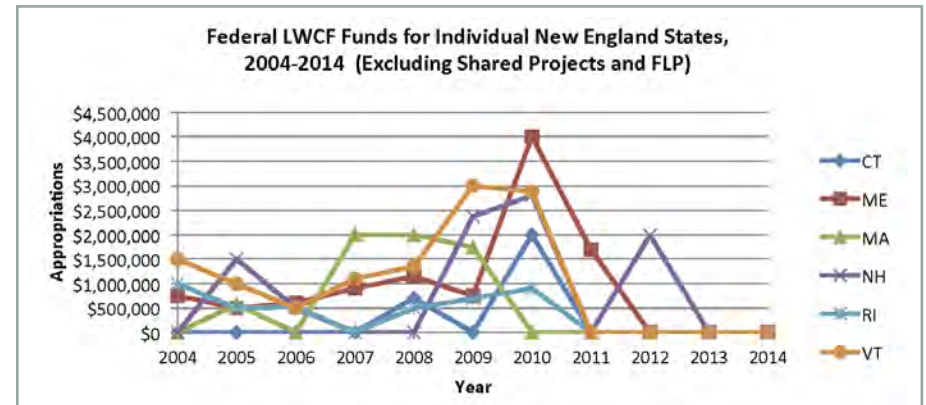


Figure 2-4. Data from federal appropriations records. Forest Legacy projects and shared projects are not included here.

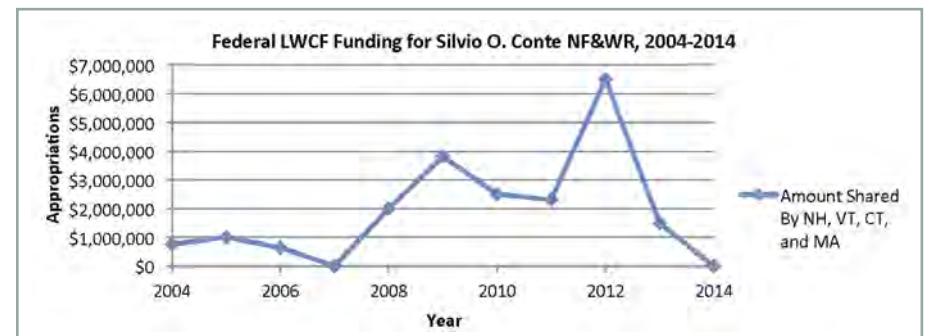


Figure 2-5. Data from federal appropriations records.

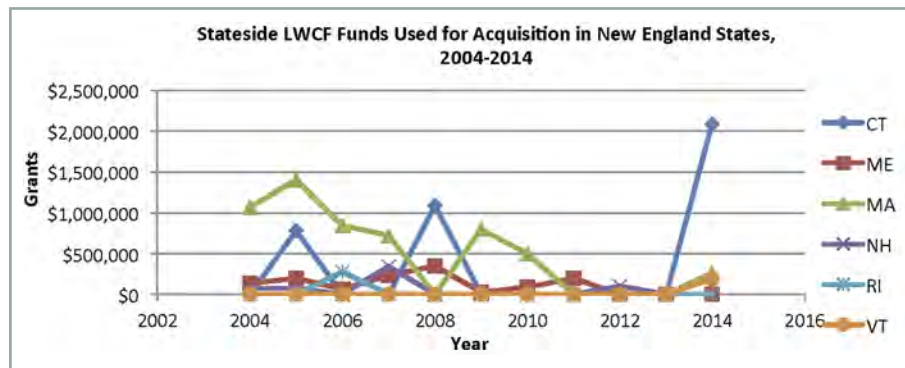


Figure 2-6. Data from National Park Service. Includes "acquisition" and "combination" projects.

The **Forest Legacy Program**, administered by the U.S. Forest Service, has been included under the umbrella of the Land and Water Conservation Fund since 2004. A substantial portion of the overall federal contribution to conservation spending in New England comes from this program, which specifically supports the conservation of forested land through acquisition and easements. The data for the Forest Legacy Program used in this report came from the federal appropriations records provided by Bruce Clendenning at the Appalachian Mountain Club. We identified all records pertaining to projects in New England and calculated yearly totals by state.

The **Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund** also derives from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. This fund, in accordance with the Endangered Species Act, provides funding for conservation projects related to endangered or threatened species. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service releases annual lists of the grants awarded by state, which provided the data used in this report. Of the New England states, only Maine and Vermont have received grants from this fund. Funding may be spent on acquisition projects and planning projects; only acquisition projects are counted here.

The **Highlands Conservation Act** is relevant only to Connecticut out of all the New England states. Connecticut is a joint recipient of funds from this act, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. This funding pool, included under LWCF, was established relatively recently, with no funded projects reported from before 2007. Funds from this act are shared among Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Mark Zakutansky at the Appalachian Mountain Club provided data for Highlands funding in Connecticut specifically, and noted that additional projects are in progress that use funds from 2013 and 2014. Additional funding for the HCA was appropriated in 2015.

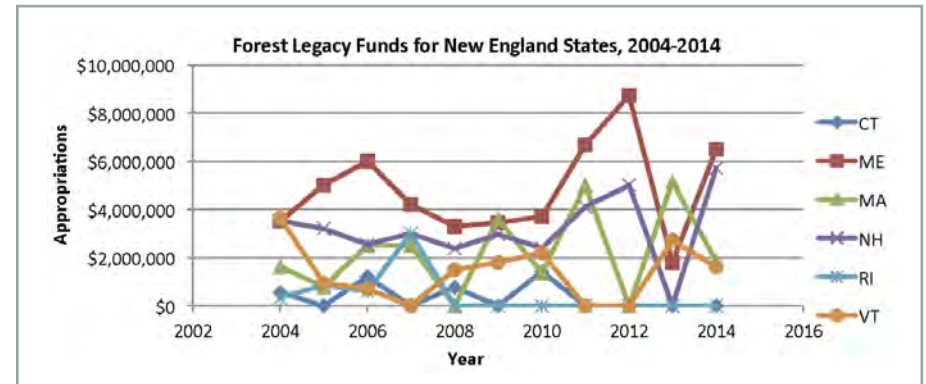


Figure 2-7. Data from federal appropriations records.

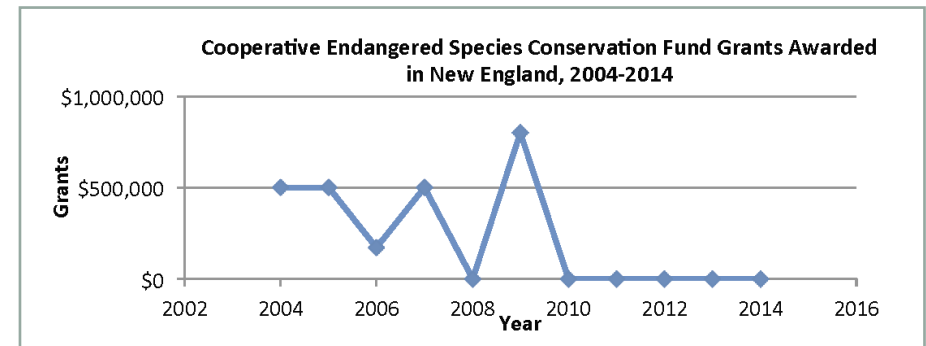


Figure 2-8. Grants from 2004-2006 all awarded to Maine. Grants in 2007 and 2009 all awarded to Vermont.

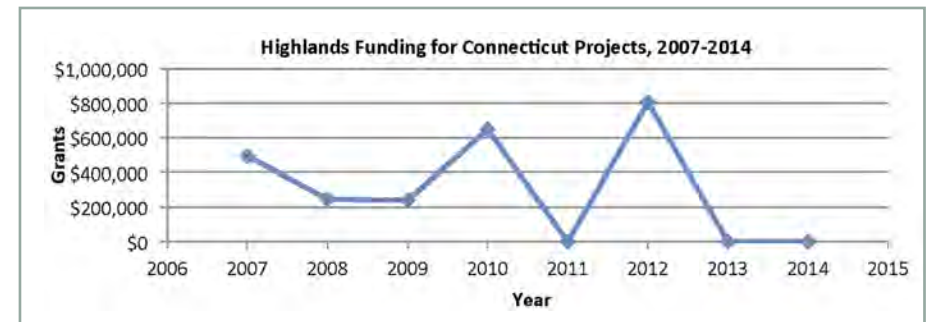


Figure 2-9. Projects from 2013 and 2014 are expected to receive funding in the future.

Looking Forward: LWCF's Future

Despite the pivotal role it plays in funding conservation throughout the United States, the LWCF was allowed to expire for the first time in its fifty-year history in the fall of 2015. The fund was reauthorized in December 2015 for a period of three years. Continued political and public support for this program will be necessary to safeguard this funding source for the future.



North American Wetlands Conservation Act

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) is a federal funding stream for land conservation coordinated by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Funds are distributed through matching grants awarded to projects conserving wetlands and associated ecosystems. Unlike the previous programs mentioned, NAWCA funds do not derive from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, but instead depend on Congressional appropriations as well as some revenue from fines, excise taxes, and interest. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service provides accessible records for projects funded by NAWCA Standard Grants, sorted by state and year.

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

The Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929 established a program to preserve important bird habitat. Money from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund is used by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to acquire lands considered important breeding, wintering, and resting habitat for migratory birds — primarily wetland habitats used by waterfowl. Funds for this program are derived from Duck Stamp proceeds and import duties on arms and ammunition. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service publishes an annual report detailing the land acquisitions purchased through this fund every year. From 2004-2014, MBCF funds spent in New England were most frequently allocated to projects in New Hampshire.

Community Forests Program

The Community Forest Program, administered by the U.S. Forest Service, provides matching grants to preserve forests in local communities. This is a relatively new program with only three grant rounds in our target range of years: FY2012, FY2013, and FY2014. These grant rounds included five New England projects distributed among four states: Maine (2014), Massachusetts (2014), New Hampshire (2012), and Vermont (2012 and 2014). Ron Carlton at the Trust for Public Land pointed us toward U.S. Forest Service publications that listed grant awards by year, which provided the data used in this report.

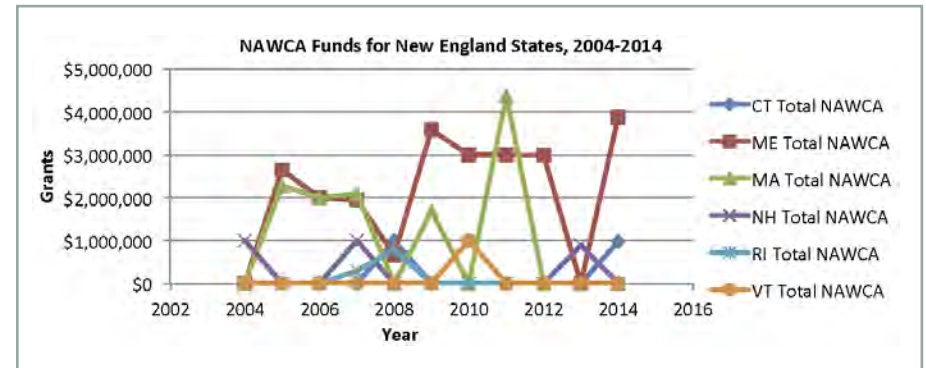


Figure 2-10. Based on Standard Grants. A \$1,000,000 grant was split between Vermont and New York in 2010 (included on VT line here, as we do not have information on the exact division of funds).

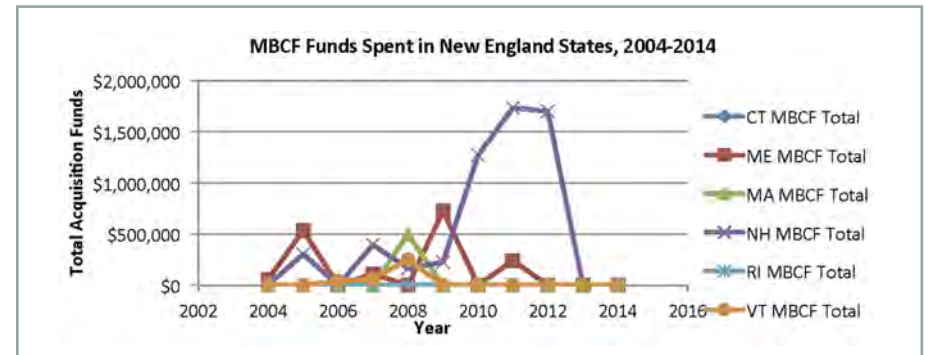


Figure 2-11. Data from U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

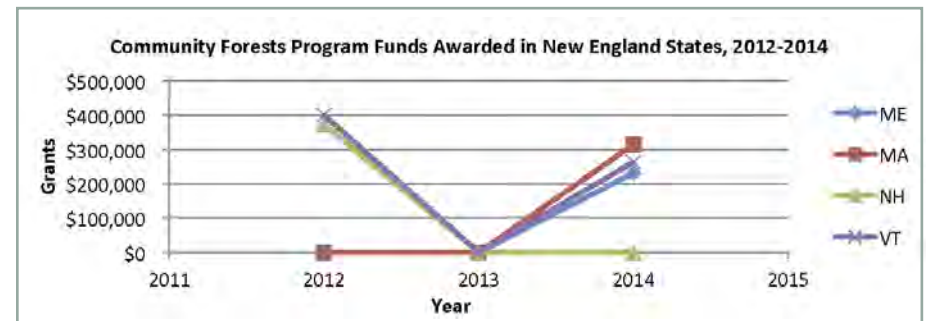


Figure 2-12. No Community Forests funds were spent in CT or RI during this time period.

◀ Plimpton Community Forest, Sturbridge, MA (Photo: Ed Hood)

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, provides matching funds to state and local governments to protect lands of coastal conservation value by acquisition or easement. Every New England state except Vermont received CELCP funding during our target range of years, although none received any funding after 2010. Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land provided spending data for this program.

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards matching grants to states for projects that protect, restore, or enhance coastal wetlands. Funds for this program are derived from taxes on fishing and boating equipment. Shelley Dibona at the U.S. F&WS provided data for program funds specifically spent on land protection (acquisition or easement) in the New England states. During our target range of years, NCWCGP funds were spent in Connecticut, Maine, and Massachusetts.

Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson)

The Wildlife Restoration Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards grants for projects that conserve, restore, or enhance wildlife habitat, as well as projects involving hunter education and shooting range management. Funding for this program is derived from taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. These funds are often referred to as Pittman-Robertson funds after the two legislators that sponsored the Wildlife Restoration Act in 1937. Shelley Dibona at the U.S. F&WS provided data for program funds specifically spent on land protection (acquisition or easement) in the New England states. The majority of the WRP funds spent on conservation in New England during this time period were spent in Massachusetts.

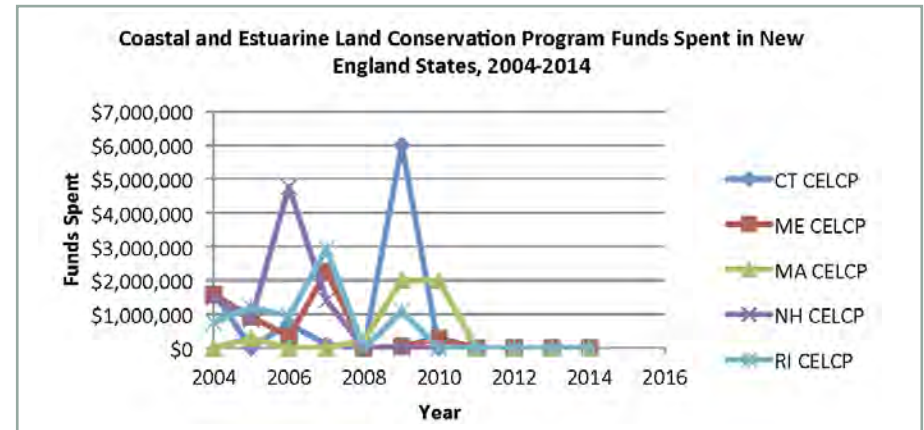


Figure 2-13. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at TPL. No CELCP funds were spent in Vermont during this period.

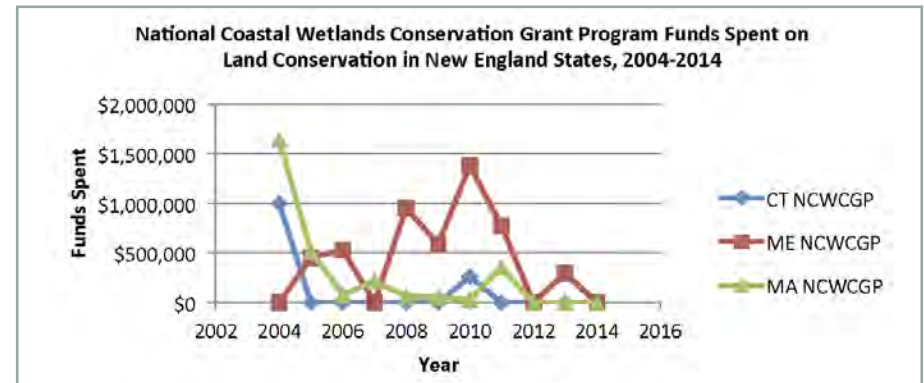


Figure 2-14. Data provided by Shelley Dibona at U.S. F&WS. No funds spent in NH, RI, or VT during this time period.

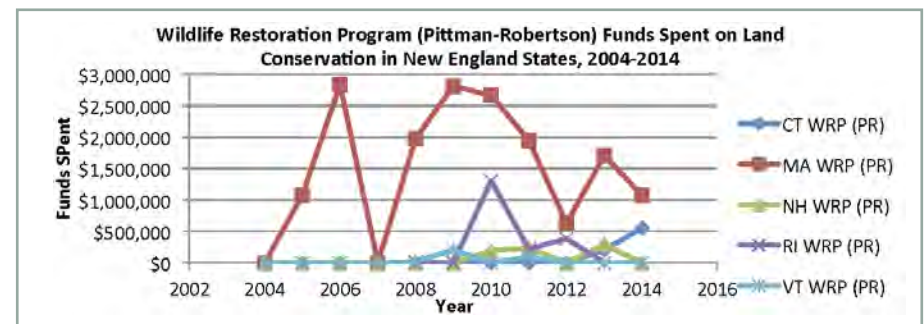


Figure 2-15. Data provided by Shelley Dibona at U.S. F&WS. No WRP funds were spent on land conservation in ME in this period.

Figure 2-16 compares trends in the major funding categories (summed for a regional total for each category) over the years from 2004-2014. The Forest Legacy Program stands out as a primary contributor. For additional information on the specific uses of these funding streams in each New England state, please refer to the state summaries.

By combining all of the various federal funding categories, we arrive at an overall estimate for federal conservation funding in New England from 2004-2014, both in terms of total dollars and on a per capita basis. Note that NRCS programs are not included as we do not have adequate data.

Programs and Funding Streams Used to Calculate the Federal Funding Total

- Land and Water Conservation Fund federal appropriations for each New England state
- Shared LWCF federal appropriations for the Silvio O. Conte NWR and Umbagog NWR
- LWCF stateside grants for each New England state (acquisition and combination projects)
- Highlands Conservation Act funds for Connecticut
- Forest Legacy Program appropriations for each New England state
- Community Forest Program grants for New England projects
- North American Wetlands Conservation Act grants for New England projects
- Migratory Bird Conservation Fund monies for New England projects
- Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund monies for New England projects
- Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program spending on New England projects
- National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program spending on land protection in New England states
- Wildlife Restoration Program spending on land protection in New England states

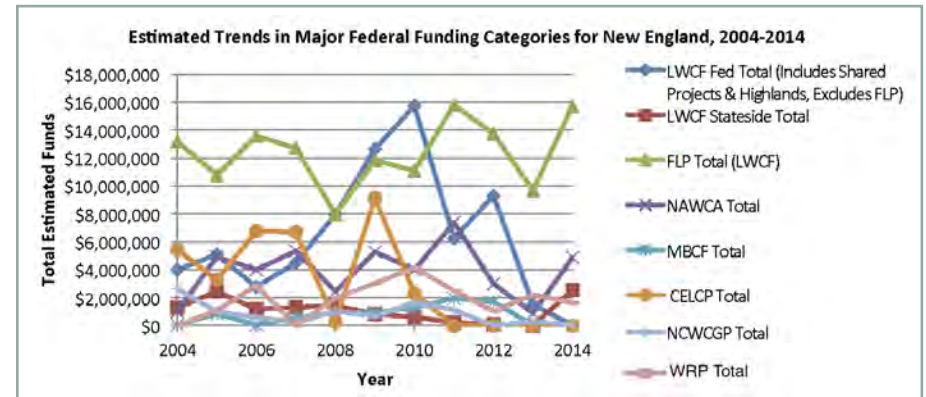


Figure 2-16. LWCF stateside grants included here are only those for acquisition/combination projects. NCWCGP and WRP funds included here are those spent specifically on land protection.

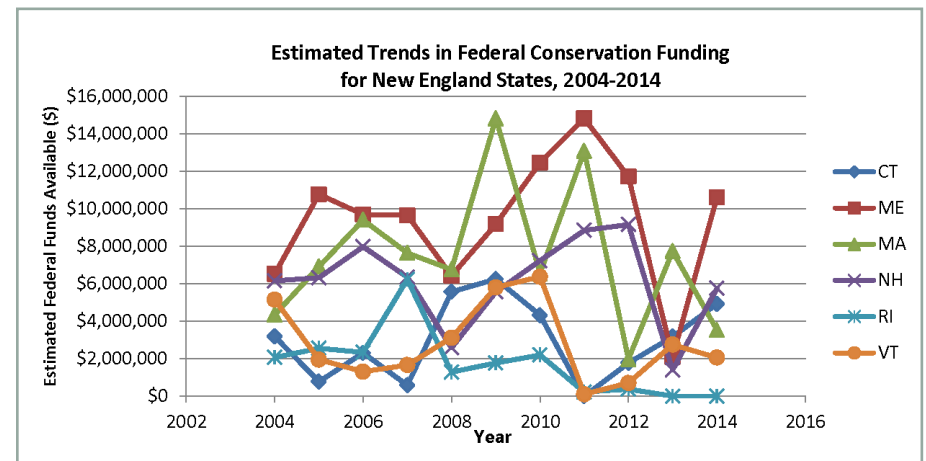


Figure 1-1. Also shown in Executive Summary.

Table 1-1. State-by-State Breakdown of Estimated Federal Funds (NRCS Programs Not Included)

Year	CT	ME	MA	NH	RI	VT
2014	\$ 4,926,397	\$ 10,613,300	\$ 3,523,969	\$ 5,755,000	\$ 0	\$ 2,059,500
2013	\$ 3,171,900	\$ 2,100,000	\$ 7,739,750	\$ 1,399,870	\$ 0	\$ 2,750,000
2012	\$ 1,777,583	\$ 11,725,500	\$ 1,974,250	\$ 9,158,206	\$ 383,017	\$ 710,000
2011	\$ 0	\$ 14,826,100	\$13,078,481	\$ 8,849,275	\$ 218,558	\$ 106,355
2010	\$ 4,322,916	\$ 12,456,581	\$ 6,548,753	\$ 7,229,692	\$ 2,200,650	\$ 6,370,000
2009	\$ 6,241,666	\$ 9,182,635	\$14,817,112	\$ 5,569,000	\$ 1,775,000	\$ 5,808,832
2008	\$ 5,572,979	\$ 6,423,371	\$ 6,760,273	\$ 2,584,000	\$ 1,283,333	\$ 3,116,137
2007	\$ 585,250	\$ 9,655,836	\$ 7,644,712	\$ 6,353,367	\$ 6,232,367	\$ 1,659,000
2006	\$ 2,306,500	\$ 9,692,296	\$ 9,404,451	\$ 7,977,509	\$ 2,342,124	\$ 1,307,000
2005	\$ 780,000	\$ 10,767,516	\$ 6,919,535	\$ 6,321,228	\$ 2,560,030	\$ 1,950,000
2004	\$ 3,189,843	\$ 6,526,074	\$ 4,345,000	\$ 6,160,823	\$ 2,070,087	\$ 5,150,000

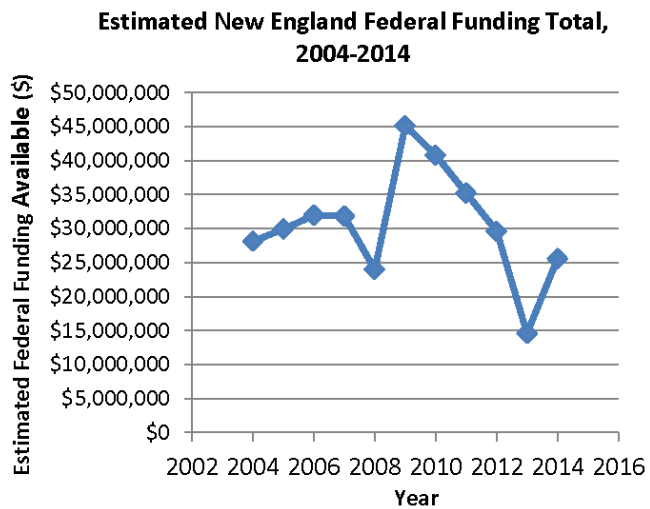


Figure 1-2. Also shown in Executive Summary.

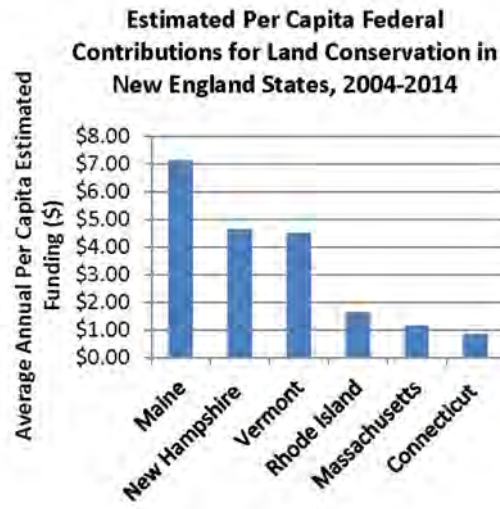
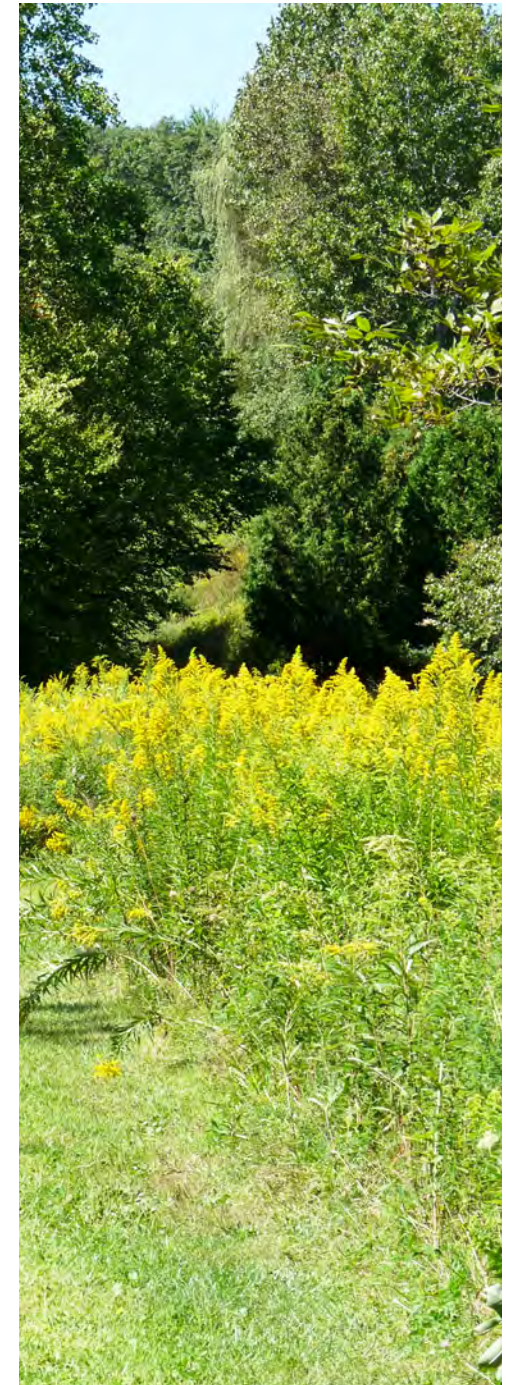


Figure 1-3. Also shown in Executive Summary.

► Goldenrod Path in Redding, Connecticut (Photo: Highstead)



Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs

The Natural Resources Conservation Service coordinates several programs that provide financial and technical assistance for conservation and stewardship projects. Not all of these programs are widely used in New England, and the financial assistance is not always spent on acquisition. We were not able to obtain data for the full target range of years, and so NRCS programs are not included in the estimated federal totals here. Please refer to your local NRCS office for information pertinent to your region.

Federal Programs Considered But Ultimately Not Included

We did not include the Conservation Reserve Program, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, or the Farmable Wetlands Program (all of which are coordinated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency) because these programs involve annual rental payments for land kept out of production rather than permanent land protection. We also considered the Department of Defense's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration program, which acquires land to create buffers around military facilities. However, we found that this program has not been used much in our region; only one New England project is listed in the program's project lists and annual reports.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

The rise in regional conservation partnerships (RCPs) across New England could represent a new avenue for attracting funding for conservation projects in the future. These collaborative networks engage land trusts, larger conservation organizations, and public agencies to coordinate conservation efforts across landscapes. Although RCPs are primarily community-driven and not themselves a federal initiative, public funding streams have already begun to shift in response to the growing influence of these partnerships. The recently-created Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a federal program designed to provide funding opportunities for conservation projects supported by partnerships like RCPs.

The RCPP, established in the 2014 Farm Bill and administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, makes financial and technical assistance available for conservation projects. Regions with active RCPs benefit from the additional leverage that these networks can provide in terms of local influence and matching funds, and so are attractive candidates for federal funding under this program. RCPP projects are categorized as either national, state, or "critical conservation areas" (note that there are no designated "critical conservation areas" in New England under this program). A partnership in the Long Island Sound region was awarded \$10 million from the national pool in 2015.



3. Trends in State Government Conservation Funding

Public funds spent by state government programs provide important and relatively consistent support for permanent land protection in New England. At this tier of government, conservation programs are implemented by state-specific agencies, and so program objectives, funding mechanisms, and bookkeeping methods vary from state to state. As a result, there is no single repository of data that adequately covers all programs for all years in our target range of 2004-2014 with a consistent reporting methodology. Examining the trends in state-level funding therefore began with collecting data from an assortment of sources and piecing them together into a regional overview.

The Trust for Public Land’s resources on conservation funding were tremendously valuable during the course of this research. The online Conservation Almanac, a repository of public funding data that TPL reviews for accuracy and consistency, was the starting point for all the state-specific research. By working with state data providers and reviewing records on a project-by-project basis, the Trust for Public Land reduces the chances of erroneously counting incomplete projects or projects providing only short-term land protection. The Almanac and the report “New England Statewide Land Conservation Programs,” also produced by TPL and shared by Andrew duMoulin, were used to identify the state-level public conservation funding programs currently active in each of the New England states. From there we proceeded to track down funding records for each individual program for the years from 2004-2014.

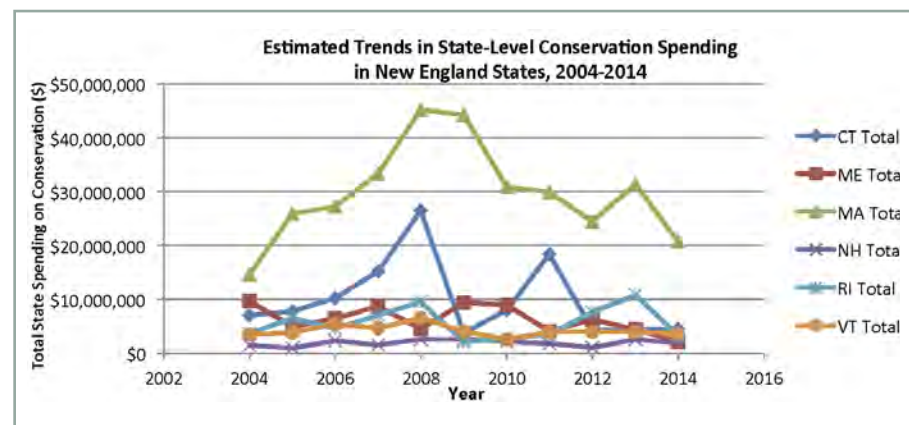


Figure 1-4. Also shown in Executive Summary

Table 3-1. Programs and Data Sources for New England State-Level Spending Totals

Connecticut	Includes the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program, the Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Program, and the Farmland Protection Program. All conservation spending data for these programs were provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.
Maine	Includes the Land for Maine’s Future Program, the Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program, and the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund. All conservation spending data for these programs were provided by the Trust for Public Land.
Massachusetts	The Massachusetts totals were provided by Bob O’Connor at the state Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs as yearly totals for all land conservation spending by state agencies.
New Hampshire	Includes the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program, the Water Supply Land Protection Grant Program, the Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund, and occasional appropriations by the Land Management Bureau of the state Department of Resources and Economic Development. All conservation spending data for these programs were provided by the Trust for Public Land, with input from Dijit Taylor, Executive Director of LCHIP.
Rhode Island	The Rhode Island state conservation spending totals were provided by the Trust for Public Land.
Vermont	The Vermont totals were provided by Larry Mires at the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board.

Some of these yearly records for individual state programs were available from the Conservation Almanac, or from personal correspondence with Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land. Where possible, we chose to use the TPL records, as TPL's reporting methodology is specifically designed to include only those funds that contributed to permanent conservation projects, excluding funds spent on temporary measures like leases or funds approved but never spent. Our state-level spending records for Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island programs are primarily provided by TPL. In the cases of Massachusetts and Vermont, we relied on records obtained from contacts at state agencies.

Conservation Tax Incentives in New England States

The Land Trust Alliance has kept track of which states have state tax incentives for land conservation. Of the New England states, only Connecticut and Massachusetts have such incentives.

Table 1-2. State-by-State Breakdown of State-Level Conservation Spending						
Year	CT	ME	MA	NH	RI	VT
2014	\$ 4,496,361	\$ 2,191,697	\$ 20,800,000	\$ 1,880,844	\$ 3,305,000	\$ 3,650,000
2013	\$ 4,462,687	\$ 4,469,466	\$ 31,379,156	\$ 2,619,500	\$ 10,827,700	\$ 3,978,660
2012	\$ 4,319,204	\$ 6,288,611	\$ 24,440,446	\$ 1,083,255	\$ 7,674,574	\$ 3,989,279
2011	\$ 18,455,279	\$ 4,058,249	\$ 29,923,425	\$ 1,785,920	\$ 3,507,540	\$ 3,909,042
2010	\$ 8,042,539	\$ 8,984,118	\$ 30,887,454	\$ 2,126,234	\$ 2,736,275	\$ 2,571,236
2009	\$ 3,732,259	\$ 9,376,096	\$ 44,270,365	\$ 2,648,040	\$ 2,043,028	\$ 4,095,690
2008	\$ 26,531,864	\$ 4,542,035	\$ 45,201,766	\$ 2,553,806	\$ 9,551,797	\$ 6,509,368
2007	\$ 15,255,416	\$ 8,692,810	\$ 33,344,967	\$ 1,605,000	\$ 7,039,773	\$ 4,658,274
2006	\$ 10,260,323	\$ 6,474,802	\$ 27,219,096	\$ 2,371,051	\$ 4,601,839	\$ 5,476,434
2005	\$ 7,771,925	\$ 4,901,616	\$ 25,914,208	\$ 963,000	\$ 6,518,528	\$ 3,829,784
2004	\$ 7,056,777	\$ 9,723,359	\$ 14,661,451	\$ 1,481,375	\$ 3,661,950	\$ 3,476,368

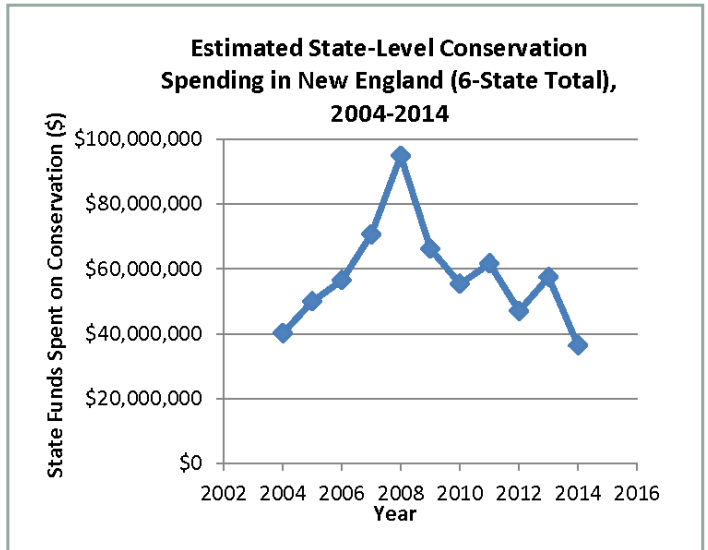


Figure 1-5. Also shown in Executive Summary.

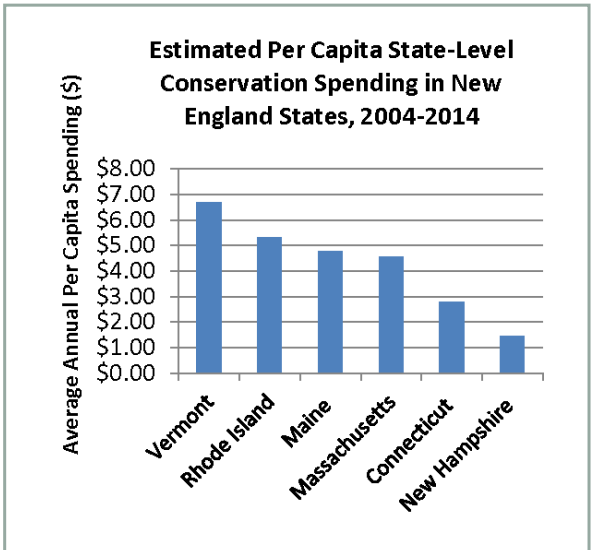


Figure 1-6. Also shown in Executive Summary.

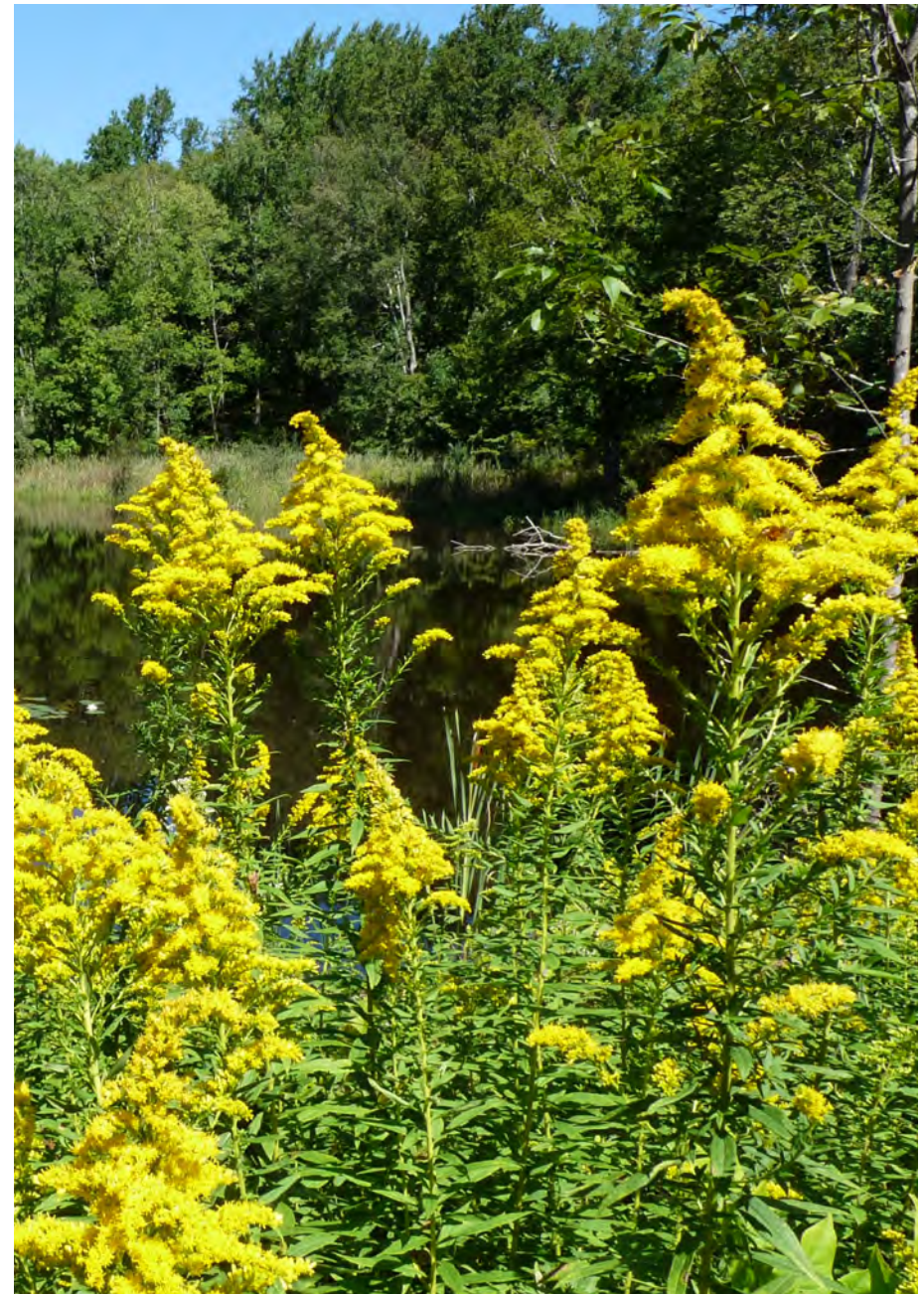
Conservation Tax Incentive in Connecticut

“Connecticut provides a state corporate income tax credit for donations of conservation land or easements equal to 50% of the donation’s fair market value. A 10-year carry forward period is available to donors whom do not use up the entire credit in the year of its origination. Donated land or easements must a) conserve natural or scenic resources, b) protect natural streams or water supplies, c) conserve of soils, wetlands, beaches, or tidal marshes, d) enhance neighborhood parks, forests, wildlife preserves, nature reservations, or other open space, e) enhance public, recreation opportunities, or f) preserve historic sites. The Connecticut conservation easement tax credit is non-transferable and applies in addition to federal tax benefit.” (Land Trust Alliance)

The Connecticut Department of Revenue Services provided the following additional information: “The Donation of Land tax credits are based on the difference between the use value of the donated land and the amount received for the land. On our tax credit schedules we only ask for the difference between these amounts to determine the amount of tax credit. We do not capture any information on acreage. The amounts that had been claimed for these credits are shown below: ”

CONNECTICUT CONSERVATION TAX INCENTIVE CREDITS BY YEAR, 1999-2011		
Income Year	Donation of Land Number of Credits	Donation Of Land Amount Claimed
2011	3	\$6,657
2010	2	3,616
2009	3	6,245
2008	3	1,344,066
2007	4	94,876
2006	2	6,778
2005	3	55,757
2004	4	1,234,270
2003		184,782
2002	5	334,414
2001	4	557,257
2000	9	665,663
1999	3	86,033

Table 3-2. Data from Connecticut Department of Revenue Services



Highstead in Redding, Connecticut (Photo: Highstead)

Conservation Land Tax Credit Incentive in Massachusetts (MA EEA)

“The Conservation Land Tax Credit program first became available to the public in October of 2011 and is authorized under Chapter 509 Acts of 2008 as amended by Chapter 409 Acts of 2010. It recognizes and rewards landowners who donate a real property interest (either through the fee or a conservation restriction) to a conservation organization. The donation must permanently protect an important natural resource such as forest land, priority habitats, drinking water supply, and more; and be in the public’s interest.

The Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (EEA) partners with the Department of Revenue (DOR) in administering this program. EEA accepts applications on a rolling basis and certifies the land’s natural resource values, the donation, and the dollar value of that donation. DOR then provides the tax credit directly to the landowner. Landowners are usually assisted throughout the process by land trusts in making the donations. The program is authorized for up to \$2 million in tax credits per year.

The donor(s) are provided a tax credit of 50% of the donation value, up to a credit of \$75,000. This is a refundable tax credit so the donor receives a check for the full amount once they complete their state taxes for the year they made the donation.” (Tom Anderson)

Further Information

The application for a donation, selection criteria as well as the regulations can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/eea/state-parks-beaches/land-use-and-management/land-conservation/massachusetts-conservation-tax-credit-program.html>

CONSERVATION LAND TAX CREDIT NUMBERS FROM 2011 TO SEPTEMBER 23, 2015

Year	Applications to date	Withdrawn/Denied	Completed to date	Total Gifts	Total Tax Credits Paid to date	“Leverage” or ratio
2011	31	9	22	\$ 4,810,150	\$ 975,725	4.93
2012	50	7	43	\$ 11,063,837	\$ 1,755,794	6.30
2013	56	12	44	\$ 8,804,911	\$ 1,967,250	4.48
2014	64	13	51	\$ 7,640,540	\$ 1,990,770	3.84
2015*	40	5	15	\$ 4,046,000	\$ 904,750	4.47
2016**	60					
Totals	301	46	175	\$36,365,438	\$ 7,594,289	4.79
Total Acres						
2011	916					
2012	2,567					
2013	1,626					
2014	2,521					
2015*	1,338					
2016**	2,803					

* The numbers are not complete for this year yet.

** Since there was no more room in calendar 2015, these applications were moved into 2016. They total \$3,725,000 worth of tax credit request.

Table 3-3. Text (right) and table credited to Tom Anderson, Program Coordinator, Conservation Land Tax Credit Program, Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs.

4. Trends in Local Government Conservation Funding

Individual municipalities in the New England states can also pass local measures for land conservation.

Often these funds are leveraged along with state and federal funds and nonprofit contributions to pay for land acquisition projects. Local funding mechanisms vary by state, and collecting and comparing data is a challenge. Here too, the Trust for Public Land's resources were invaluable to our research. TPL's LandVote database tracks state and local conservation funding measures passed by ballot vote across the United States. We relied on the LandVote database for all of the Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island data included here. In Connecticut, Maine, and Rhode Island, the majority of voter-approved measures were bonds. The majority of measures passed in Massachusetts towns were property taxes passed through this state's Community Preservation Act. For each state, funds approved in individual municipalities were summed to produce a total for each year.

TPL's LandVote database does not contain any records for New Hampshire because local conservation measures in this state are primarily passed through town meetings rather than by ballot. However, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests tracked the measures passed through town meetings from 2001-2010. Matt Leahy from the Society shared these records with us. Most local conservation measures in Vermont are likewise passed through town meetings and are not reflected in the LandVote database. There does not seem to be a central source tracking municipal funds for conservation across Vermont for our target range of years, and so Vermont funds are not included in the following graphs. Please see the individual state section on Vermont for additional information.

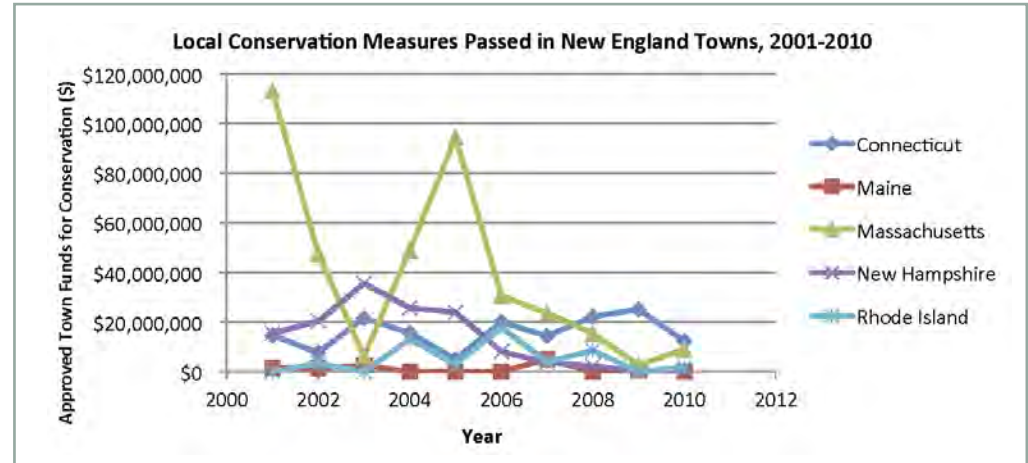


Figure 1-10. Data for CT, ME, MA, and RI from TPL's LandVote Database. Data for NH from Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (available for 2001-2010, which dictated the range of years shown). Also shown in Executive Summary.

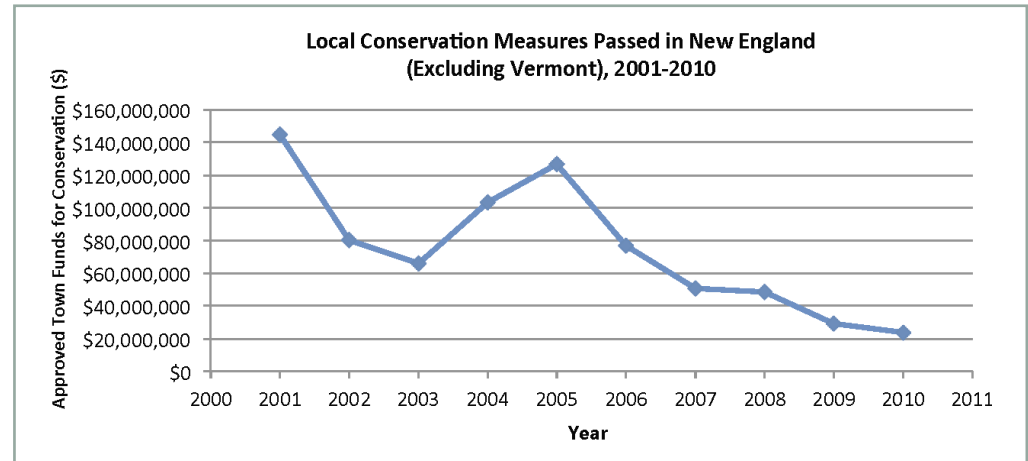
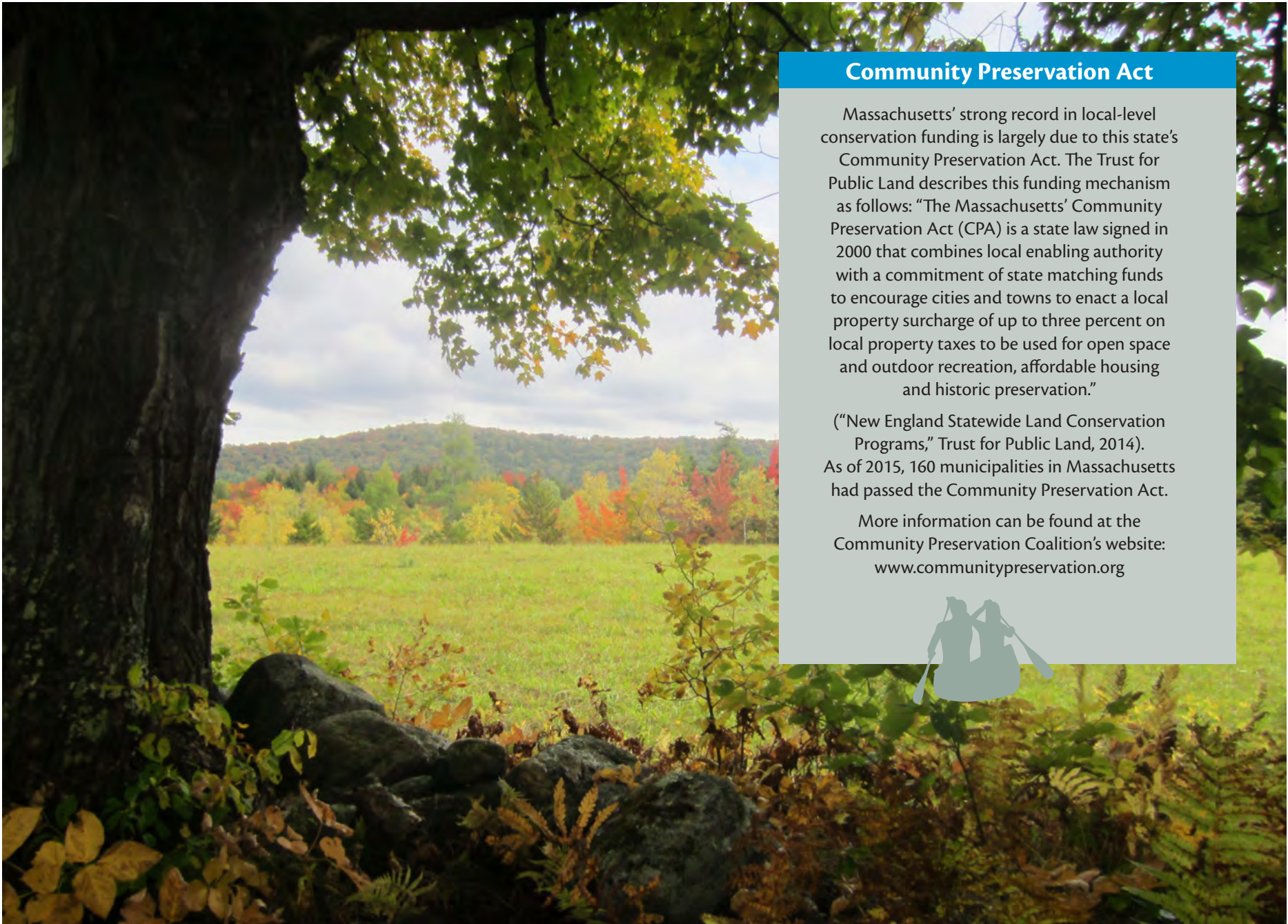


Figure 1-11. Data unavailable for Vermont towns. Also shown in Executive Summary.



Community Preservation Act

Massachusetts' strong record in local-level conservation funding is largely due to this state's Community Preservation Act. The Trust for Public Land describes this funding mechanism as follows: "The Massachusetts' Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a state law signed in 2000 that combines local enabling authority with a commitment of state matching funds to encourage cities and towns to enact a local property surcharge of up to three percent on local property taxes to be used for open space and outdoor recreation, affordable housing and historic preservation."

("New England Statewide Land Conservation Programs," Trust for Public Land, 2014). As of 2015, 160 municipalities in Massachusetts had passed the Community Preservation Act.

More information can be found at the Community Preservation Coalition's website: www.communitypreservation.org



Knoll Farm, Fayston, Vermont (Photo: Vermont Land Trust)

5. Trends in Farmland Preservation Funding

The Wildlands and Woodlands vision calls for a future in which the lands of New England are sustainably managed and protected to ensure the continued health of our ecosystems, economies, and communities. Strong local food systems are vital to achieving this goal, and so farmland preservation must not be overlooked. A future in which agricultural land is protected alongside forests, wetlands, and recreation lands is fully consistent with and supported by the W&W vision. As such, trends in farmland conservation funding are relevant to our goals and our partners.

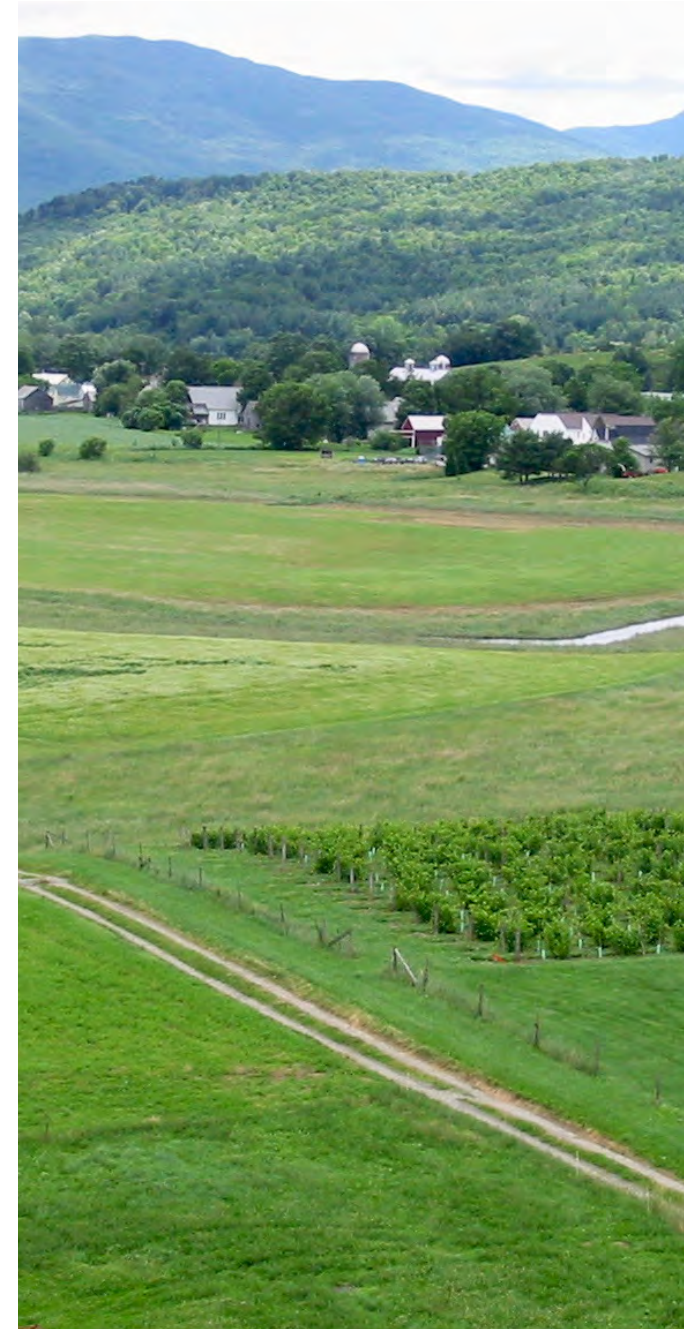
At the federal level, the main contributor to farmland conservation in New England in our target range of years seems to have been the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP), administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The FRPP ended with the Farm Bill of 2014, which also introduced a new program serving a similar purpose: the NRCS Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). The FRPP's funding pool was separate from state and local funds for farmland protection, but often contributed to the same projects as the state and local programs, providing matching funds for establishing easements. The 2014 New England Food Policy report published by the American Farmland Trust, the Conservation Law Foundation, and the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group describes the operations of this program as follows:

"The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program operates slightly differently in each New England state. In Vermont and Massachusetts, its primary partners are the state PACE programs. In the other four states, land trusts and towns partner more frequently with FRPP without the involvement of the state PACE program, either because the state program has insufficient funding or because the farmland to be protected does not meet the criteria of the state program. FRPP has become an increasingly problematic partner; according to a number of state PACE program managers and land trust staff, frequently changing program rules, inflexible easement terms, and delays caused by administrative reviews have led some states to return FRPP dollars and have caused some potential projects to fall through." (See Appendix for link to full report.)

We were not able to obtain NRCS data for our full range of target years; please see your local NRCS office for additional information pertaining to your region.

Stateside LWCF funds can also be used to preserve working farms. Apart from these programs we have not found much information on federal-tier farmland conservation spending. Likewise, the local-tier conservation spending data that we have collected are not refined enough to specify which funds have been spent on agricultural land.

The majority of our farmland trend analysis focused on state funds. In certain New England states, agricultural easement purchases are coordinated through a government program focused specifically on farmland, such as Connecticut's Farmland Preservation Program. In other states these easements are purchased through a wider funding framework that applies to non-agricultural acquisitions as well, such as New Hampshire's Land and Community Heritage Investment Program. Spending records for programs often



Boyden Farm in Cambridge, Vermont (Photo: Vermont Land Trust)

vary depending on the source and the state, and the ranges of years for which information is available also vary. Consequently, we were not always able to obtain estimates of purely farmland conservation funds from government records for a full ten-year period.

Avenues for State Farmland Conservation in New England States

- In Connecticut, the state Department of Agriculture coordinates the Farmland Preservation Program. The Trust for Public Land provided records for this program.
- The Land for Maine's Future Program is the primary state program for land conservation in Maine and has protected both agricultural and non-agricultural land. The records provided by the Trust for Public Land for this program include yearly totals for the whole program and do not indicate funds spent specifically on farmland conservation.
- Massachusetts does have a specific farmland conservation program, the Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program; however, we received our data for Massachusetts from the state Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in the form of yearly totals for all land conservation spending by state agencies rather than individual program totals.
- The Land and Community Heritage Investment Program is the primary state program for land conservation in New Hampshire; this program funds the conservation of both agricultural and non-agricultural land. The records provided by the Trust for Public Land include yearly totals for the whole program and do not indicate funds spent specifically on farmland conservation.
- In Rhode Island, the Agricultural Land Preservation Commission works with the state Department of Environmental Management (DEM) to coordinate the Farmland Preservation Program. The records provided by the Trust for Public Land for Rhode Island include yearly totals for the whole state and do not indicate funds spent specifically on farmland conservation.
- The Vermont Farmland Conservation Program is one of the programs coordinated and funded by the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). The VHCB provided records for farmland acquisition funds from 2004-2014.

Since we could not reliably extract farmland conservation funding data from these sources for all New England states, we also reached out to the American Farmland Trust for additional information. The AFT's Farmland Information Center tracks spending activity of "purchase of agricultural conservation easement" (PACE) programs through annual surveys to state program managers. The graph (left) depicts only data provided by the Farmland Information Center, in order to present an account from a single source with a consistent methodology. See the Appendix for AFT's methodology.



Sunflowers in Sunderland, Massachusetts (Photo: Clarisse Hart)

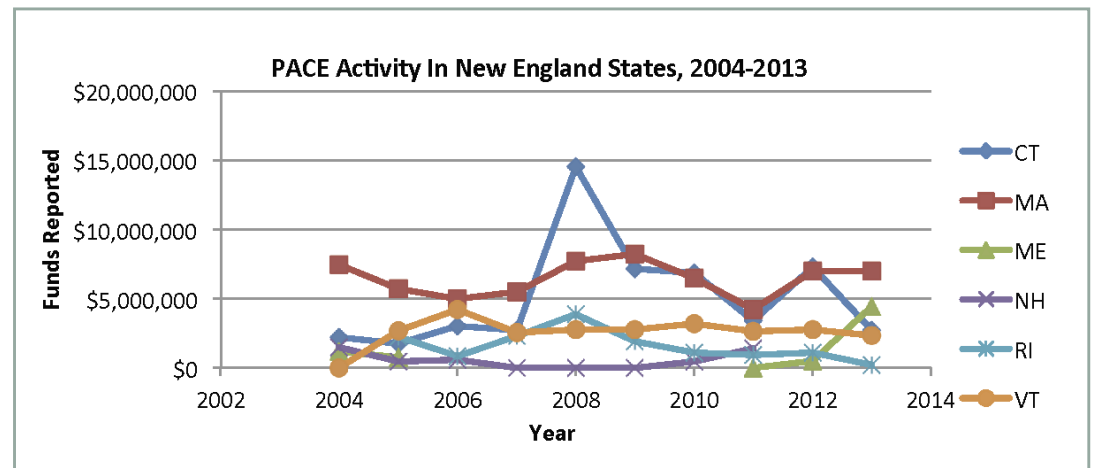


Figure 5-1. Data unavailable for ME 2006-2010, NH 2012-2013, and RI 2004. All data from American Farmland Trust.

From Dollars to Acres: Conservation Success Stories

Public funding for conservation produces lasting value for both people and wildlife by contributing to the permanent protection of New England landscapes. The funding streams outlined in this report, although we have broken them down into their separate trends, are most often part of the same stories. The costs of land protection are often beyond the capacity of any single group or program, and so resourceful partnerships that combine and leverage funding sources are key to a project's success.

A case from the southernmost part of New England exemplifies one such success. The official protection of 1,000 acres of forest known as "The Preserve" in early 2015 marked a significant conservation victory for coastal Connecticut. This forest, which stretches into Old Saybrook, Essex, and Westbrook, provides critical habitat for species of conservation concern as well as 25 miles of trails and connections to three watersheds. The effort to protect The Preserve demonstrated remarkable teamwork among a coalition of government and non-governmental supporters, who mustered a variety of funding streams to help cover the costs of the project. Stateside grant funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund contributed \$1.4 million, an uncommonly high expenditure for an acquisition project. Connecticut contributed additional funds through its two main state conservation programs: the Recreation & Natural Heritage Trust Fund and the Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition grant Program. At the local level, the towns of Old Saybrook and Essex supported the project through referendums and open space funds. A private fund-raising campaign championed by The Trust for Public Land along with local land trusts and volunteers raised nearly \$3 million and included support from The Nature Conservancy, Audubon Connecticut, and Newman's Own Foundation, among others. This diverse group of supporters assembled the funding necessary to protect The Preserve for good.

Similar resourcefulness is evident in conservation projects in northern New England. A recent addition to Maine's system of public lands, Crocker Mountain, represents the fruits of a successful partnership among public and private funding groups with multiple interests. The future management of the property will include sustainable timber harvesting and increased outdoor recreation opportunities (including the preservation of ten miles of the Appalachian Trail), providing economic benefits to the region in addition to the land's ecological value. Public funding was vital to meeting the financial costs of this project. Crocker Mountain was ranked third in the nation for potential Forest Legacy projects in 2012, securing nearly \$6 million from this program. Maine contributed state funds from the Land for Maine's Future Program; at the local level, the town of Carrabassett Valley supported the project. Non-governmental groups played a crucial role as well: The Trust for Public Land led the fundraising campaign, which drew support from over 100 donors, and the Plum Creek Timber Company and Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust were important partners. Thanks to this collaboration, 12,000 acres in Western Maine received lasting protection.

For more information on The Preserve and Crocker Mountain, please refer to the Trust for Public Land:

<https://www.tpl.org/media-room/preserve-permanently-protected>

<https://www.tpl.org/media-room/crocker-mountain-property-protected>



A photograph of a pond in winter. The foreground is a frozen, light blue pond. In the middle ground, there is a dense line of tall, brown reeds. Behind the reeds, a row of bare, deciduous trees stands against a backdrop of a forest. The sky is a clear, pale blue. A semi-transparent white banner is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text "Individual State Summaries" in a blue, sans-serif font.

Individual State Summaries

Shed Pond in Readfield and Manchester, Maine. (Photo: Norm Rodrigue)

6. Connecticut

Federal

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Connecticut receives LWCF funding through several avenues. LWCF “federal-side” funds have been appropriated for Connecticut’s individual use on two occasions in our target range of years (2008 and 2010), both for the Stewart McKinney National Wildlife Refuge.

Connecticut also shares LWCF federal-side funds for the Silvio O. Conte National Forest and Wildlife Refuge with three other New England states (Vermont, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire). This refuge has been more consistently funded over the past ten years than the Stewart McKinney NWR.

Connecticut also receives LWCF “stateside grant” funds to help fund outdoor state recreation and conservation projects, many of which are categorized as “acquisition” or “combination” (includes both acquisition and site development). Stateside funds may also be used for developing plans or enhancing public facilities, but these projects do not result in direct land protection. Prior to receiving these funds, each state must complete a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan outlining specific priorities for expending the funds. The stateside grant amounts used for acquisition in Connecticut fluctuated during our target range of years. For the years from 2000-2003 and the year 2014, the trend of acquisition/combination projects is exactly the same as the total stateside grants trend for the state (all the stateside grants were used for acquisition/combination projects), so only one line is visible on Figure 6-3.

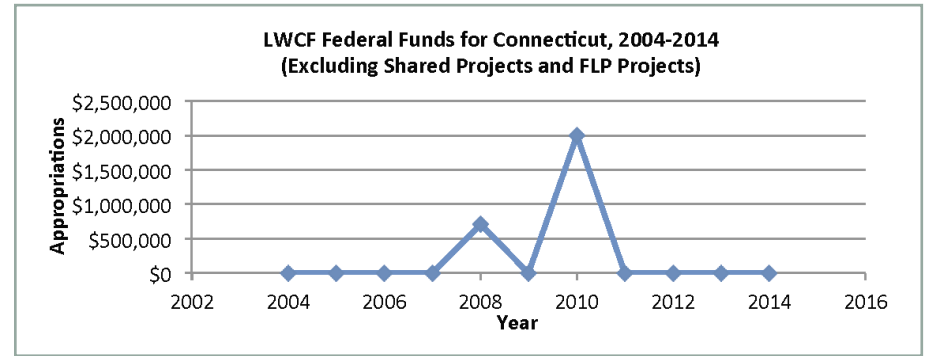


Figure 6-1. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

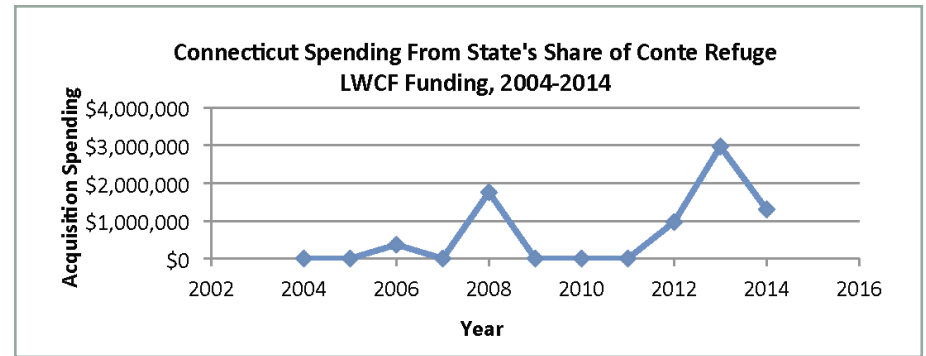


Figure 6-2. Data provided by Kim Lutz, The Nature Conservancy

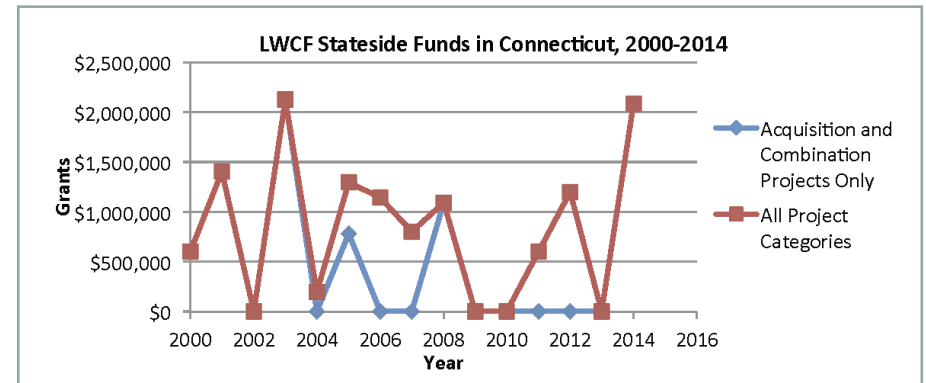


Figure 6-3. Original LWCF stateside grant project data from: <http://waso-lwcf.ncrc.nps.gov/public/index.cfm>. 2013 and 2014 data from Joel Lynch at National Park Service.



Pond View in Redding, Connecticut (Photo: Highstead)

Forest Legacy Program

In addition, Connecticut receives funds from the Forest Legacy Program, which supports the conservation of forested land through acquisition and easements. FLP is currently under the umbrella of LWCF, although the funds are separated in this summary.

Highlands Conservation Act

Connecticut is a recipient of funds from the Highlands Conservation Act, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Highlands funds are shared among Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. No funded projects are reported before 2007. Additional funds were appropriated to the HCA in 2015.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund

There were no CESCFC funds spent on Connecticut projects from 2004-2014.

Community Forest Program

There were no Community Forest funds spent in Connecticut from the program's first round of grants in 2012 to the end of our target range of years in 2014.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Connecticut also receives funding for permanent conservation from NAWCA.

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

There were no MBCFC funds spent on Connecticut projects from 2004-2014.

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program, administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, provides matching funds to state and local governments to protect lands of coastal conservation value by acquisition or easement. Connecticut received funding for this program on several occasions during our target range of years, although spending activity dwindled after 2009. Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land provided spending data for this program.

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program:

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards matching grants to states for projects that protect, restore, or enhance coastal wetlands. Funds for this program are derived from taxes on fishing and boating equipment. Shelley Dibona at the U.S. F&WS provided data for program funds specifically spent on land protection (acquisition or easement) in the New England states. During our target range of years, NCWCGP funds were spent on only two occasions, in Connecticut and Maine.

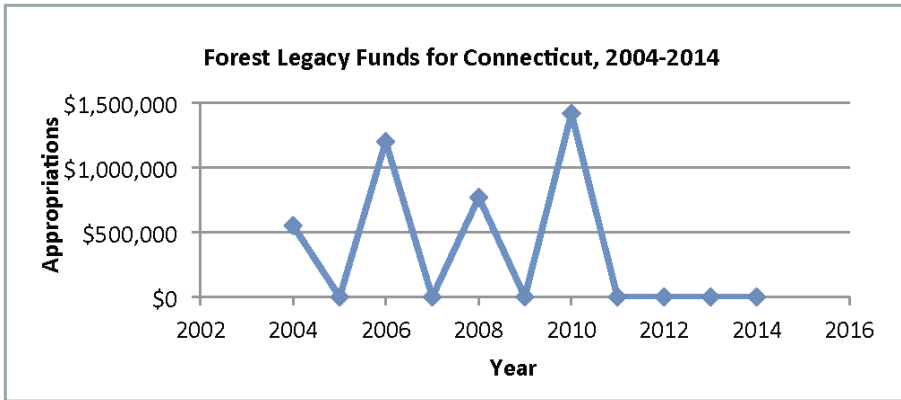


Figure 6-4. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

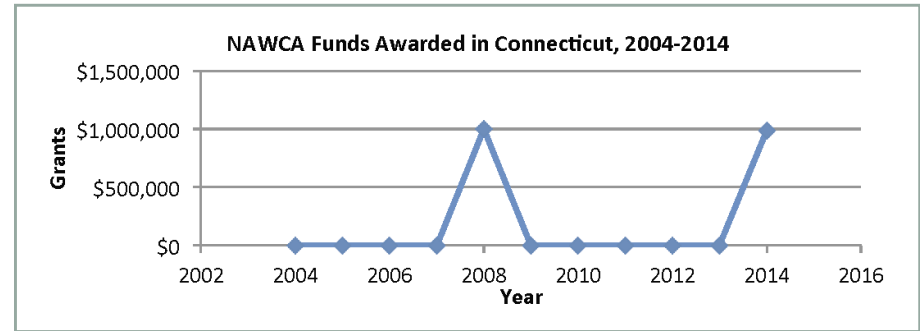


Figure 6-6. The grant in 2008 was shared with MA but spent entirely in CT. Data from US Fish & Wildlife Service: http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/US/Connecticut_Std.shtm

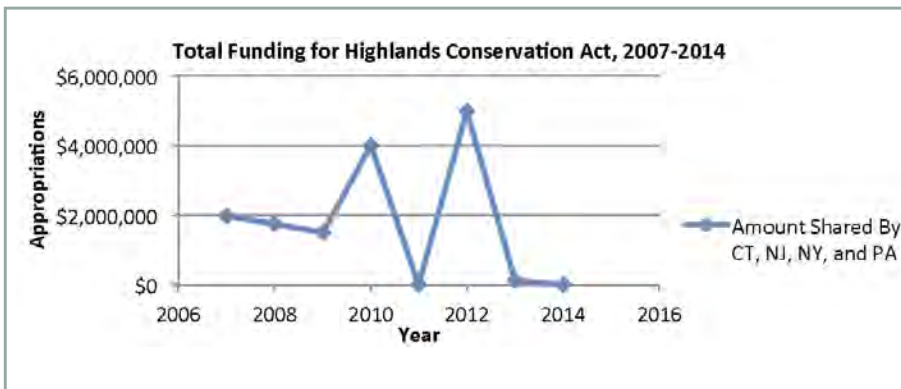


Figure 6-5. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

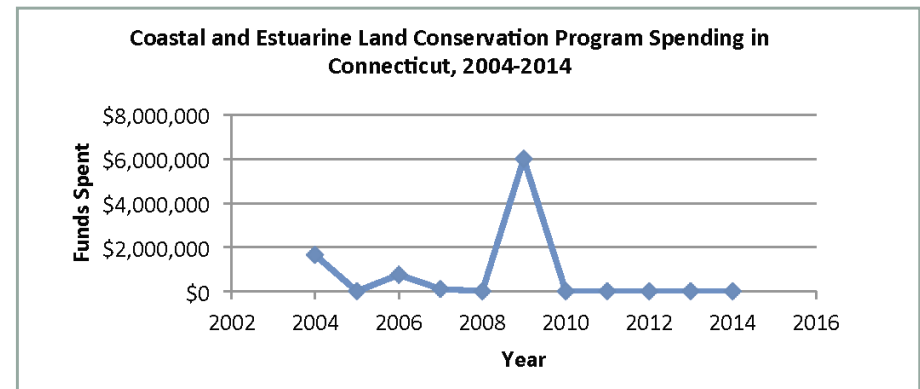


Figure 6-7. Spending data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

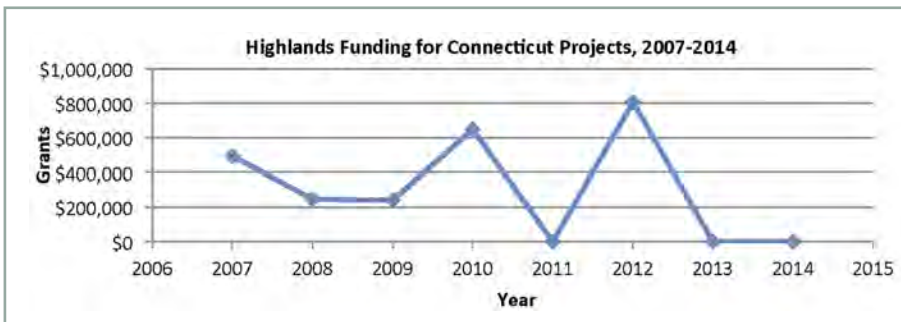


Figure 2-9. Data provided by Mark Zakutansky, Appalachian Mountain Club. Projects in progress for 2013 and 2014 are also slated to receive Highlands funding.

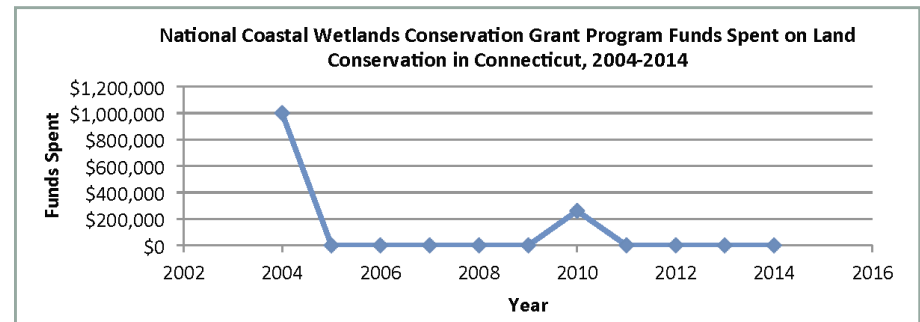


Figure 6-8. Spending data provided by Shelley Dibona at the U.S. F&WS.

Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson)

The Wildlife Restoration Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards grants for projects that conserve, restore, or enhance wildlife habitat, as well as projects involving hunter education and shooting range management. Funding for this program is derived from taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. These funds are often referred to as Pittman-Robertson funds after the two legislators that sponsored the Wildlife Restoration Act in 1937. Shelley Dibona at the U.S. F&WS provided data for program funds specifically spent on land protection (acquisition or easement) in the New England states; for Connecticut, spending occurred only in 2013 and 2014.

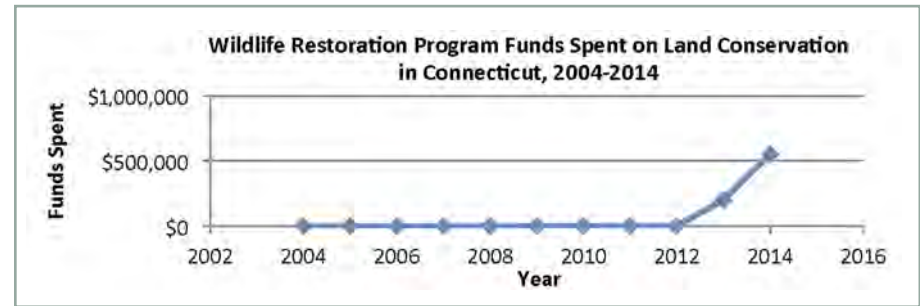


Figure 6-9. Spending data provided by Shelley Dibona at the U.S. F&WS.

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs

The Natural Resources Conservation Service coordinates several programs that provide financial and technical assistance for conservation and stewardship projects. We were not able to obtain data for the full target range of years, and so NRCS programs are not included in the estimated federal totals here. Please refer to the Connecticut NRCS office for additional information.

Total Federal-Level Funding

By combining these funding streams, we can estimate the federal contribution to public conservation funding in Connecticut as a whole, as shown in the graph below. On a per capita basis, from 2004-2014, the estimated federal contribution in Connecticut was \$9.20 for the full period, or approximately \$0.84 per Connecticut resident per year.

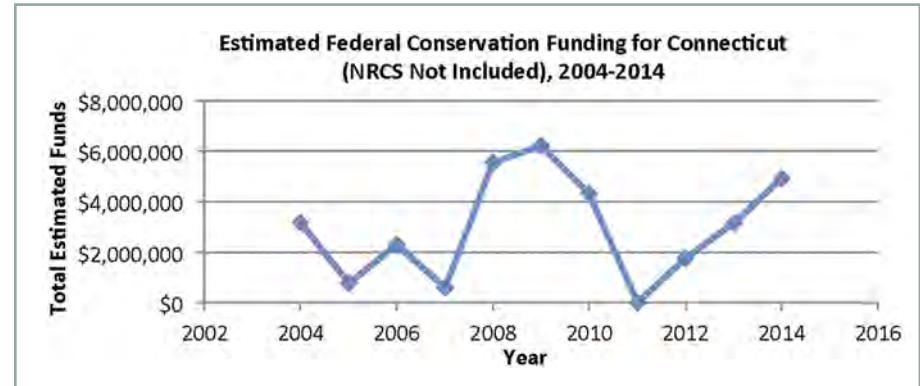


Figure 6-10. Includes LWCF federal (spending records from portion of shared Conte project, plus appropriations for individual projects), LWCF stateside (acquisition and combination projects), Highlands Conservation Act funds, Forest Legacy funds, NAWCA funds, CELCP spending, NCWCGP spending on land conservation, and WRP (PR) spending on land conservation.

State

Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program

This program is run by the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, is funded primarily through bonds, and is the primary program for expanding the state's system of open space. More information about the program can be found at the DEEP's website.

The Connecticut Green Plan from 2007 estimated: "Using an average per acre cost of \$6,000 which is slightly more than the average of the range, and given the +295,000 acres needed to meet the overall statutory goal... the total funding needs would equate to \$420 million for the Recreation and Natural Heritage (State acquisition) Program and \$736.6 million for the Open Space and Watershed (partner's) Program between now and 2023 (both numbers are in 2006 dollars unadjusted for inflation/land price escalation)." http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/open_space/green_plan.PDF



Figure 6-11. Data from Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

In order to spend \$420 million between 2007 and 2023 (the time of the Green Plan’s publication and the stated year for achieving this goal — a sixteen year period), the state would need to spend, on average, \$26,250,000 per year through the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program. If the years from 2004-2014 are any indication, the program is falling far short of this goal. Not a single year’s worth of funding has reached this estimated average target (and most years did not reach even a quarter of it).

Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

This program is run by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, and provides grants to municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and water companies for land conservation. Graham Stevens at DEEP estimated that a typical grant is roughly 50% of full market value of the land. OSWLA grants are funded through a combination of bonds and the Community Investment Act. More information about the program can be found at the DEEP’s website.

As noted above, the Connecticut Green Plan from 2007 estimated the total funding costs necessary to meet the state’s open space goal for the OSWLA program at \$736.6 million between 2007 and 2023. In order to reach that target, the OSWLA program would need to spend, on average, \$46,037,500 per year. Program spending records from the Trust for Public Land for 2004-2014 indicate the state’s recent spending history has fallen far short of this estimated yearly target.

➔ **Note About Connecticut’s State Lands:** Several contacts/resources have made it clear that lands owned by the state are not necessarily permanently protected, but may be exchanged or conveyed to other owners. See the following report by the Council on Environmental Quality for more information: http://www.ct.gov/ceq/lib/ceq/Preserved_But_Maybe_Not.pdf

Farmland Preservation Program

This program is run by the state Department of Agriculture, and aims to purchase development rights to agricultural land while allowing farmers to continue farming. This program is funded through a combination of bonds and the Community Investment Act. More information can be found at the Department of Agriculture’s website.

Agricultural land is mentioned in the 2007 Green Plan, although it is not counted in the same way as other categories of open space. The report states, “Despite having to exclude preserved agricultural land from the total open space tally, one focus of the grant programs discussed in this document is the preservation of local agricultural heritage for scenic and open space amenities.”

Although farmland acres do not count towards meeting the state’s statutory open space goal, we have included farmland preservation spending in our calculations for total conservation spending at the state level in Connecticut. The Trust for Public Land provided us with their records on the Farmland Preservation Program.



Figure 6-12. Data from Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

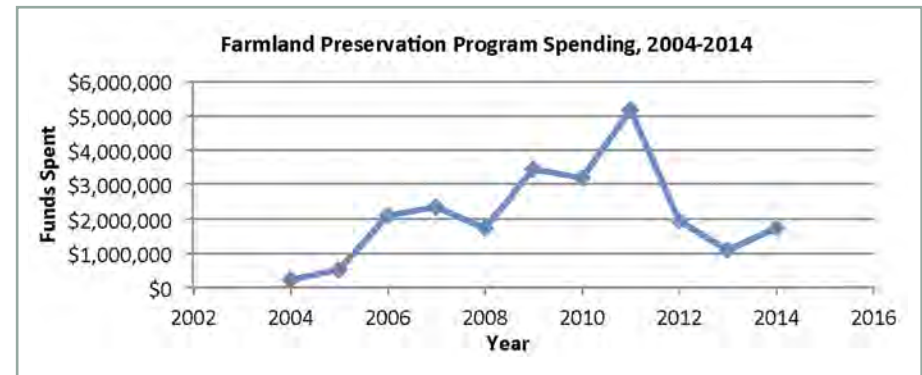


Figure 6-13. Data from Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

The regional overview section includes a state-by-state comparison of farmland spending trends based on the American Farmland Trust's records. The Farmland Information Center at the American Farmland Trust tracks PACE (purchase of agricultural conservation easement) spending at the state and local levels. The primary PACE program in Connecticut is the state Farmland Preservation Program. The trends evident from the AFT and TPL data differ noticeably, which may be due to differences in data collection and reporting methodology (such as inclusion of incidental costs or counting projects based on approval dates versus closing dates).

Total State-Level Funding

We calculated a state-level total based on the Trust for Public Land records for the three main land conservation programs in Connecticut. On a per capita basis, from 2004-2014, the estimated state-level spending on conservation in Connecticut was \$30.88 for the full period, or approximately \$2.81 per Connecticut resident per year.

Local

Individual municipalities in Connecticut have passed local voter-approved measures for land conservation, although a decline in this method of funding is visible in the years after 2009. Nearly all of these voter-approved measures are bonds. Measures approved in individual towns were added to produce a total for the state for each year.



Highstead in Redding, Connecticut (Photo: Highstead)

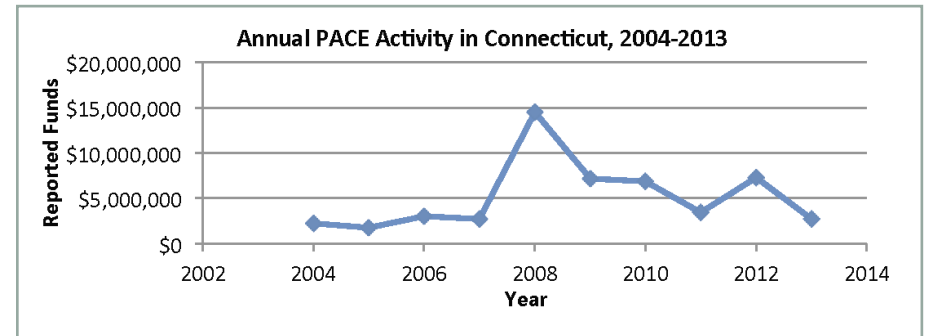


Figure 6-14. Data provided by Jennifer Dempsey, American Farmland Trust.

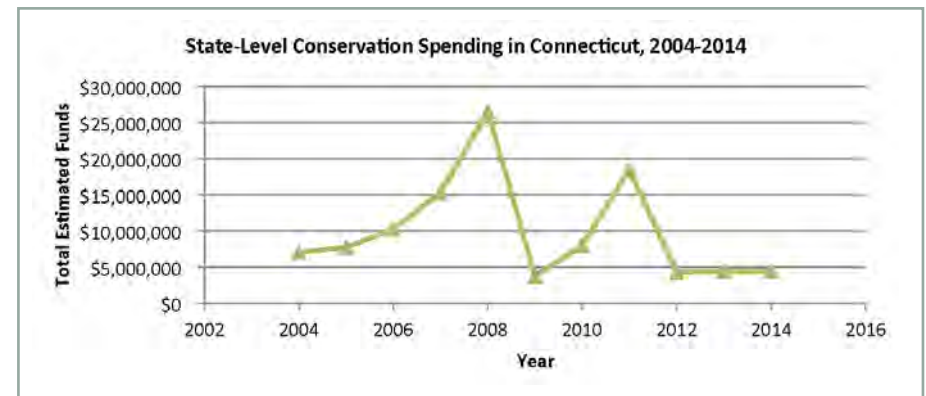


Figure 6-15. Includes Recreation & Natural Heritage Trust Program, Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Program, and the Farmland Preservation Program. All data from The Trust for Public Land.

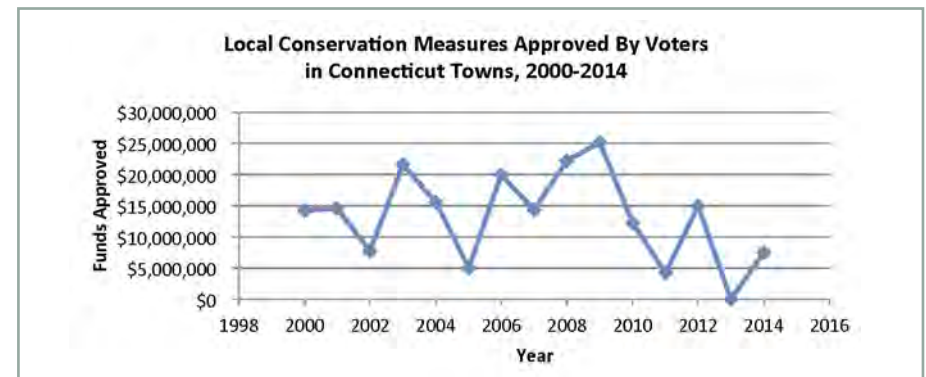


Figure 6-16. All data from the Trust For Public Land's LandVote Database: www.landvote.org (Number of towns passing measures each year ranged from 0 - 8.)

7. Maine

Federal

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Maine receives LWCF funding through several avenues. LWCF “federal-side” funds have been appropriated for Maine’s individual use fairly consistently over the past ten years. Most of this funding over the past decade has gone to support Acadia National Park and the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge. The Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge and the White Mountain National Forest have also received funds.

On one occasion in the past ten years (2011), Maine was a joint recipient of LWCF federal funds for the Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge. These funds, \$2,240,000 in total, were shared with New Hampshire.

Maine also receives LWCF “stateside grant” funds to help fund outdoor state recreation and conservation projects, many of which are categorized as “acquisition” or “combination” (includes both acquisition and site development). Stateside funds may also be used for developing plans or enhancing public facilities, but these projects do not result in direct land protection. Prior to receiving these funds, each state must complete a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan outlining specific priorities for expending the funds.

Forest Legacy Program

In addition, Maine receives funds from the Forest Legacy Program, which supports the conservation of forested land through acquisition and easements. FLP is currently under the umbrella of LWCF, although the funds are separated in this summary. Over the past ten years, the Forest Legacy Program in Maine has maintained higher funding levels than the other federal programs.

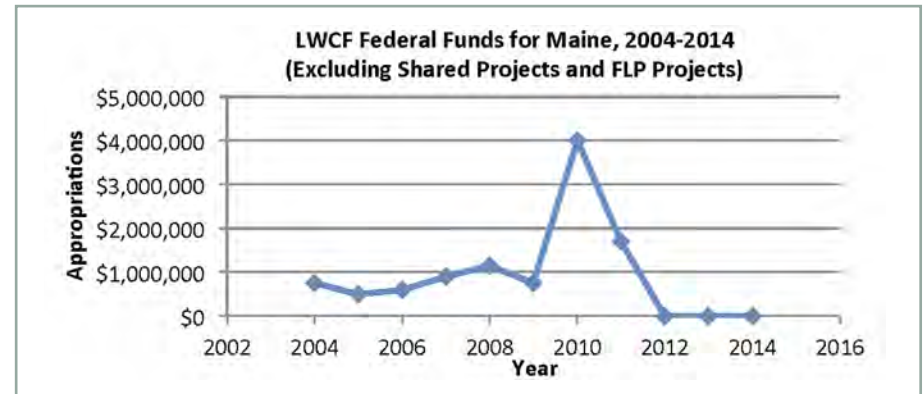


Figure 7-1. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

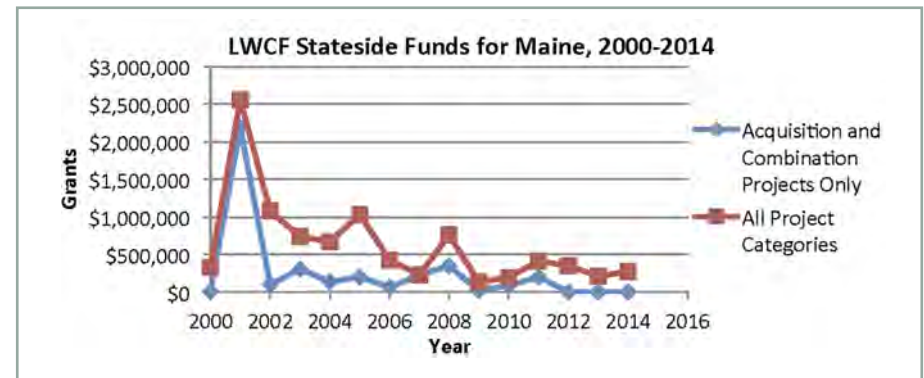


Figure 7-2. Original LWCF stateside grant project data from: <http://waso-lwcf.nrc.nps.gov/public/index.cfm>. 2013 and 2014 data from Joel Lynch at National Park Service.

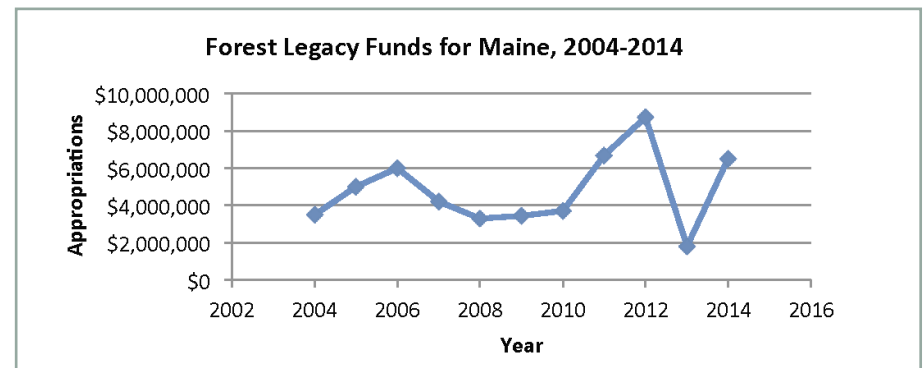


Figure 7-3. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund

The Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, in accordance with the Endangered Species Act, provides funding for conservation projects related to endangered or threatened species. Funding may be spent on acquisition projects and planning projects. Only acquisitions are counted here.

Community Forest Program

The Community Forest Program is a young program, and had only three grant rounds in our target range of years: FY2012, FY2013, and FY2014. One Maine project was funded: the North Falmouth Community Forest, which received \$231,800 in 2014.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Maine also receives funding for permanent land conservation from NAWCA.

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

Money from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund is used by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to acquire lands considered important breeding, wintering, and resting habitat for migratory birds. Funds for this program are derived from Duck Stamp proceeds and import duties on arms and ammunition. In Maine the most common MBCF recipient from 2004-2014 was the Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge.



Peter Miller Woodland in Vienna, Maine (Photo: Jane Davis, Kennebec Land Trust)

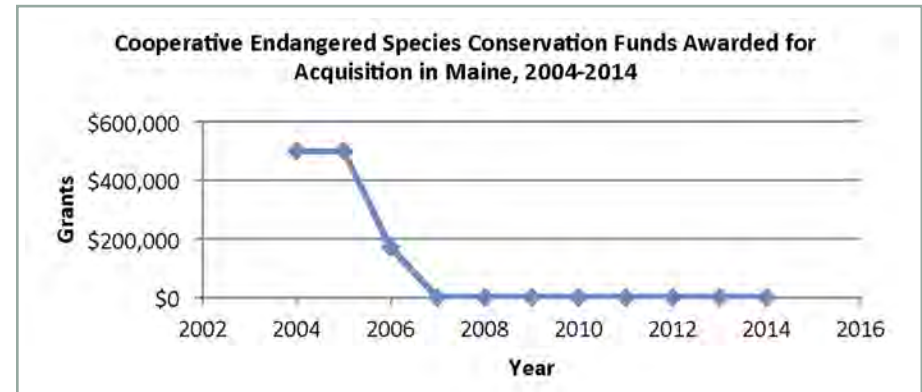


Figure 7-4. All data from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

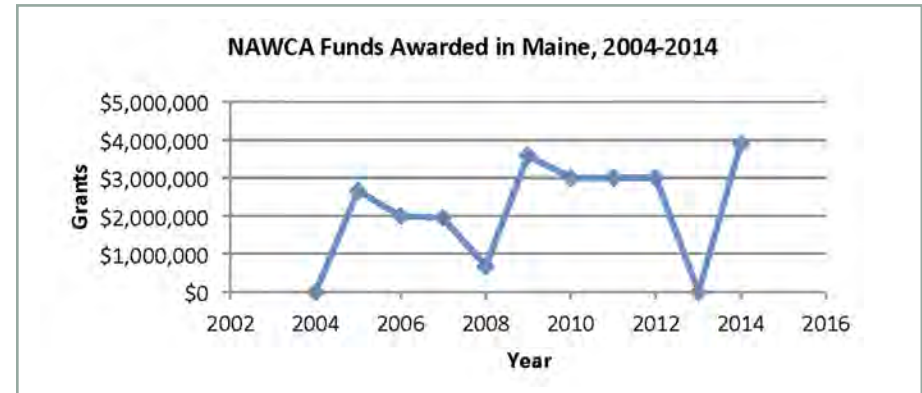


Figure 7-5. All data from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/US/Connecticut_Std.shtm

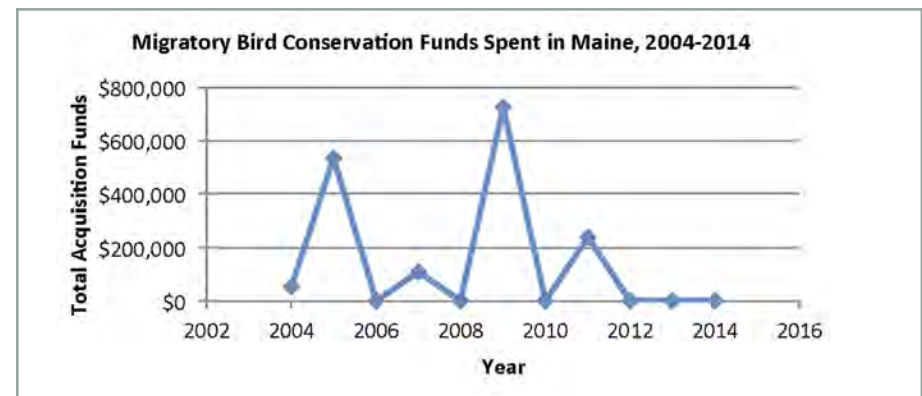


Figure 7-6. All data from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: <https://www.fws.gov/refuges/reality/archives.html>

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, provides matching funds to state and local governments to protect lands of coastal conservation value by acquisition or easement. Most spending from this program in Maine occurred from 2004-2007. Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land provided spending data for this program.

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards matching grants to states for projects that protect, restore, or enhance coastal wetlands. Funds for this program are derived from taxes on fishing and boating equipment. Shelley Dibona at the U.S. F&WS provided data for program funds spent on land protection (acquisition or easement) in New England. NCWCGP funds were spent regularly in Maine from 2004-2014.

Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson):

The Wildlife Restoration Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards grants for projects that conserve, restore, or enhance wildlife habitat, as well as projects involving hunter education and shooting range management. Funding for this program is derived from taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. These funds are often referred to as Pittman-Robertson funds after the two legislators that sponsored the Wildlife Restoration Act in 1937. Shelley Dibona at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service provided data for program funds specifically spent on land protection (acquisition or easement) in the New England states. There were no such WRP funds spent in Maine from 2004-2014.

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs

The Natural Resources Conservation Service coordinates several programs that provide financial and technical assistance for conservation and stewardship projects. Not all of these programs are widely used in New England, and the financial assistance is not always spent on acquisition. We were not able to obtain data for the full target range of years, and so NRCS programs are not included in the estimated federal totals here. Please refer to the Maine NRCS office for additional information.

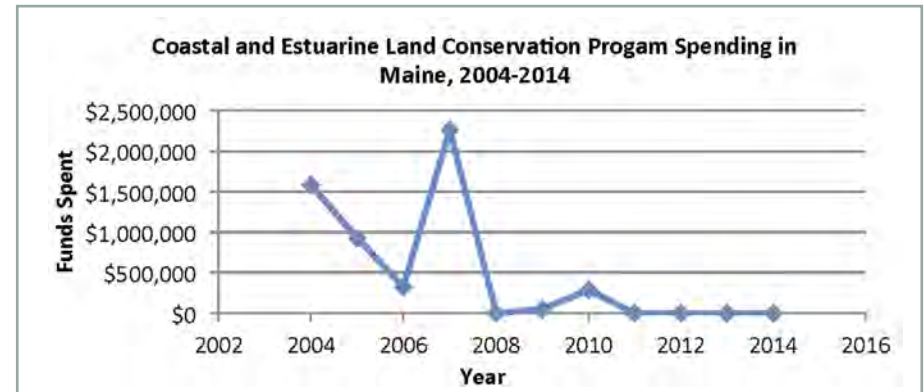


Figure 7-7. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

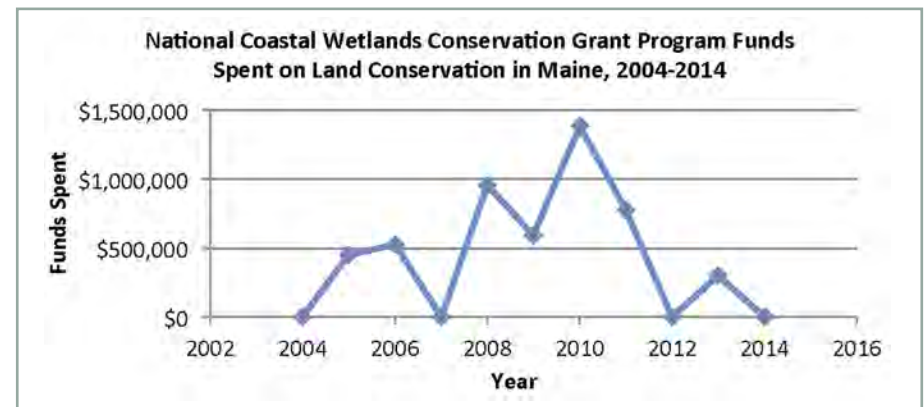


Figure 7-8. Data provided by Shelley Dibona at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Total Federal-Level Funding

By combining these federal funding streams, we can arrive at an estimate for the federal contribution to public conservation funding in Maine as a whole. On a per capita basis, from 2004-2014, the estimated federal contribution in Maine was \$78.27 for the full period, or approximately \$7.12 per Maine resident per year.

State

Land for Maine's Future

Land for Maine's Future is the main program through which the state government conserves land, and is primarily funded through voter-approved bonds. More information about the program can be found here: <http://www.maine.gov/dacf/lmf/>.



Mt. Abraham in Franklin County, Maine
(Photo: Simon Rucker, Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust)

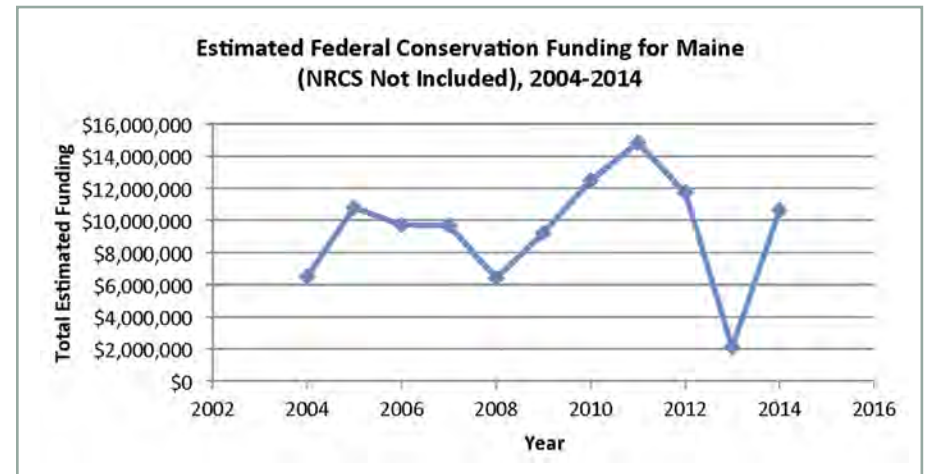


Figure 7-9. Includes LWCF federal (appropriations for shared Umbagog project plus individual projects), LWCF stateside (acquisition and combination projects), Forest Legacy funds, Community Forest Program funds, Migratory Bird Conservation Fund monies, NAWCA funds, Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund monies, CELCP conservation spending, and NCWCGP conservation spending.

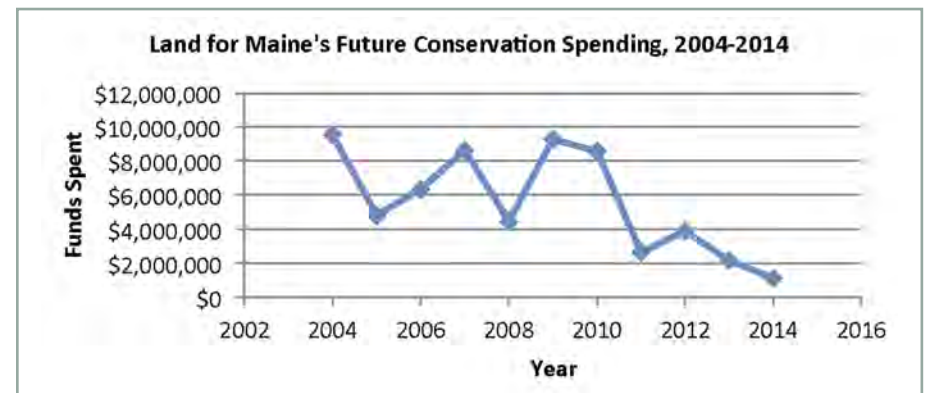


Figure 7-10. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program

The Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program awards grants to projects aimed at protecting aquatic habitats, which sometimes includes land acquisition. The program is funded by Maine's In Lieu Fee Compensation Program. This program has only been in existence for a few years. More information can be found here: <http://mnrpc.org/>

Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund

The Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund uses lottery tickets proceeds to fund conservation and wildlife projects throughout Maine. More information about the program can be found here: http://www.maine.gov/dacf/about/commissioners/outdoor_heritage_fund/index.shtml.

Farmland

The American Farmland Trust has provided us with a set of numbers for farmland preservation specifically. The Farmland Information Center at the American Farmland Trust tracks PACE (purchase of agricultural conservation easement) spending in states. Farmland preservation is included under the umbrella of the Land for Maine's Future funds, so these numbers should not be double-counted. Numbers for 2006-2010 were not available.

Total State-Level Funding

We calculated a state-level total based on the TPL records for these conservation programs in Maine. On a per capita basis, from 2004-2014, the estimated state-level spending on conservation in Maine was \$52.47 for the full period, or approximately \$4.77 per Maine resident per year.

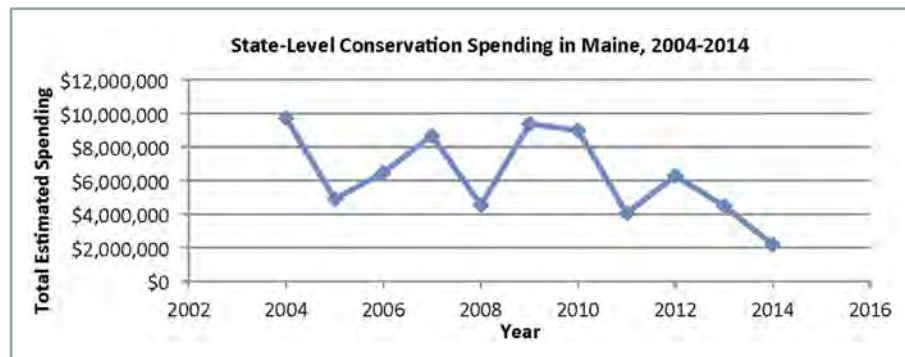


Figure 7-14. Includes Land for Maine's Future, Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund, and Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program. All data from the Trust for Public Land.

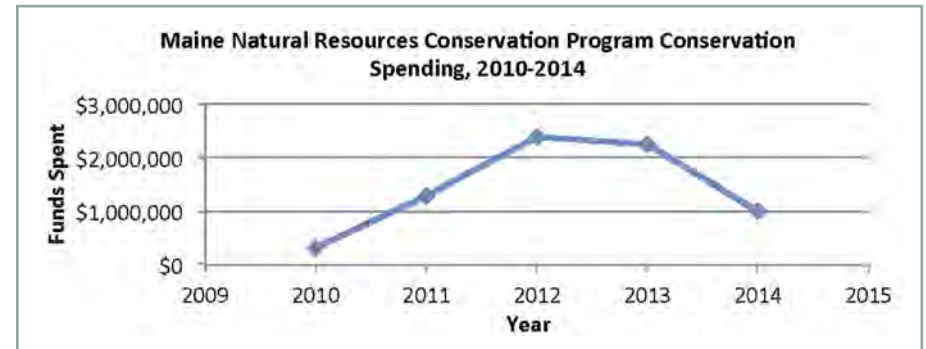


Figure 7-11. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

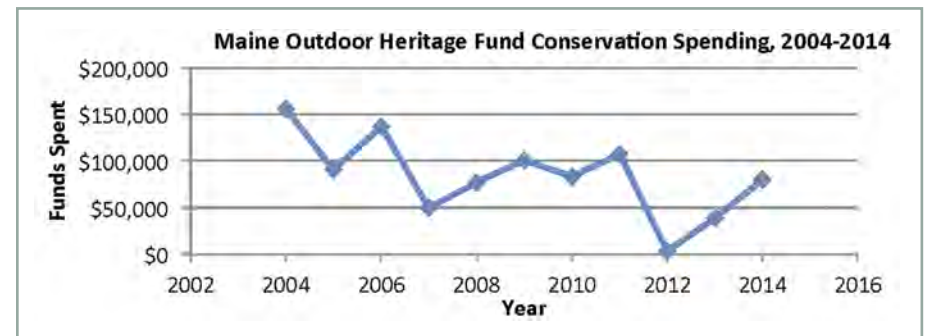


Figure 7-12. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

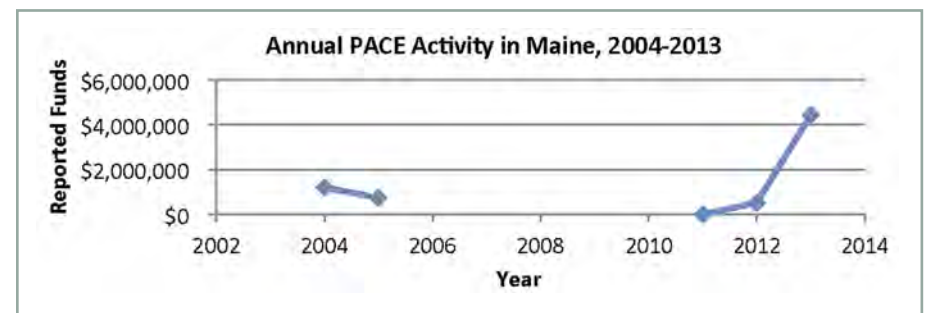


Figure 7-13. Data provided by Jennifer Dempsey, American Farmland Trust. Data unavailable for 2006-2010.

Local

Individual municipalities in Maine have passed local voter-approved measures for land conservation, although this method of funding has only been utilized by six towns in the past ten years. These measures, which were all voter-approved bonds, were added to produce a total for the state for each year.

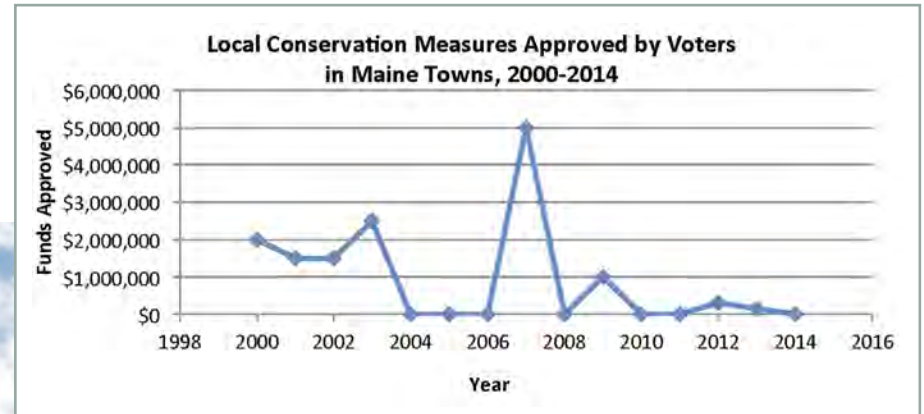
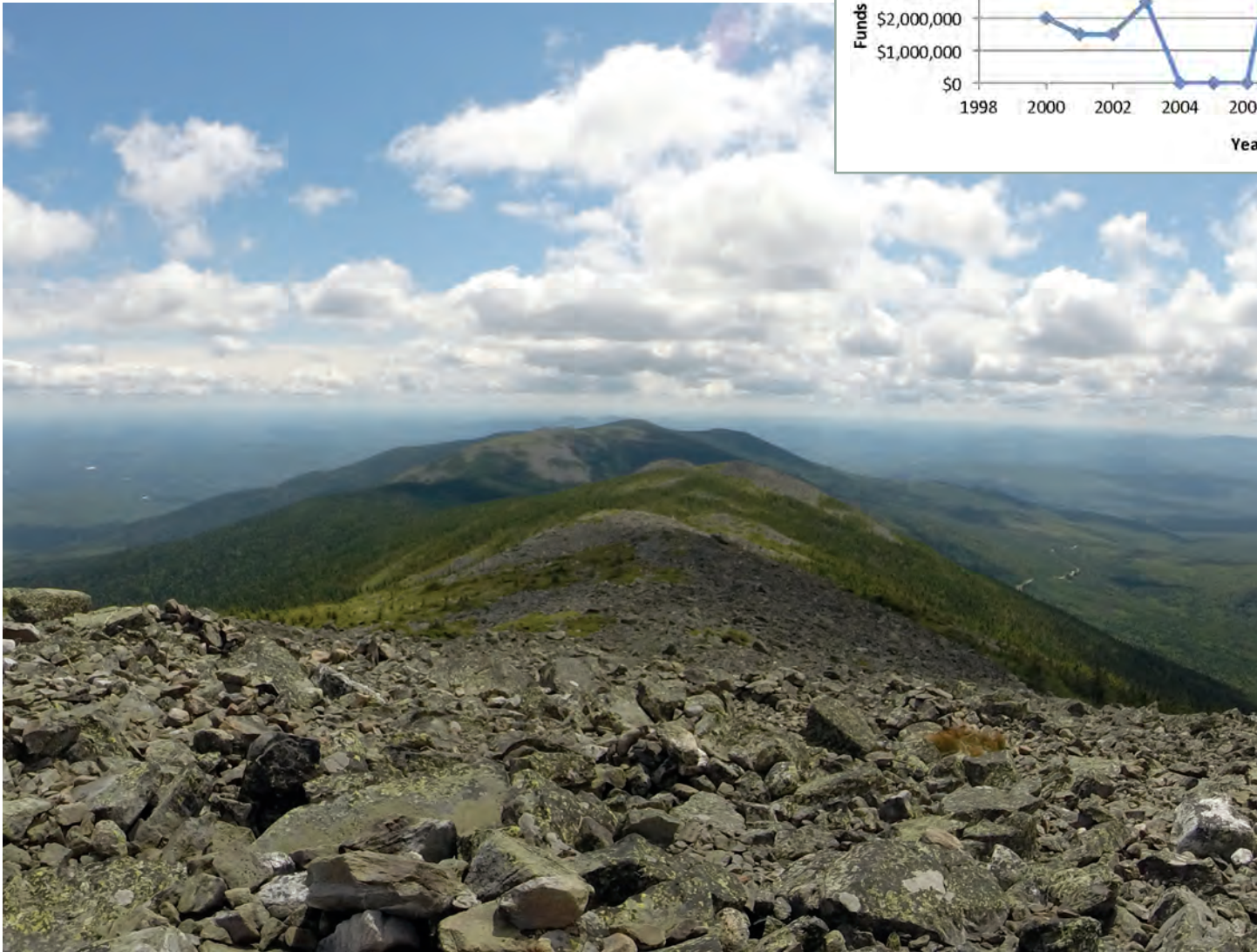


Figure 7-15. All data from the Trust For Public Land's LandVote Database: www.landvote.org. (Spike in 2007 due to a single town, Falmouth. Most years involved only one town passing a measure.)



Mt. Abraham in Franklin County, Maine (Photo: Simon Rucker)

8. Massachusetts

Federal

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Massachusetts receives LWCF funding through several avenues. LWCF “federal-side” funds have been appropriated for Massachusetts’ individual use on several occasions in the past ten years, most often for the Cape Cod National Seashore.

Massachusetts also shares LWCF federal-side funds for the Silvio O. Conte National Forest and Wildlife Refuge with three other New England states (Vermont, Connecticut, and New Hampshire).

Massachusetts also receives LWCF “stateside grant” funds to help fund outdoor state recreation and conservation projects, many of which are categorized as “acquisition” or “combination” (includes both acquisition and site development). Stateside funds may also be used for developing plans or enhancing public facilities,

but these projects do not result in direct land protection. Prior to receiving these funds, each state must complete a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan outlining specific priorities for expending the funds. The stateside grant amounts used for acquisition in Massachusetts have mostly been on the decline during our target range of years. For years when the funds for acquisition/combination projects were equal to the total stateside grants (all stateside grants were used for acquisition/combination projects), only one line is visible on Figure 8-3.



Flynt Quarry in Monson, Massachusetts (Photo: Ed Hood, Opacum Land Trust)

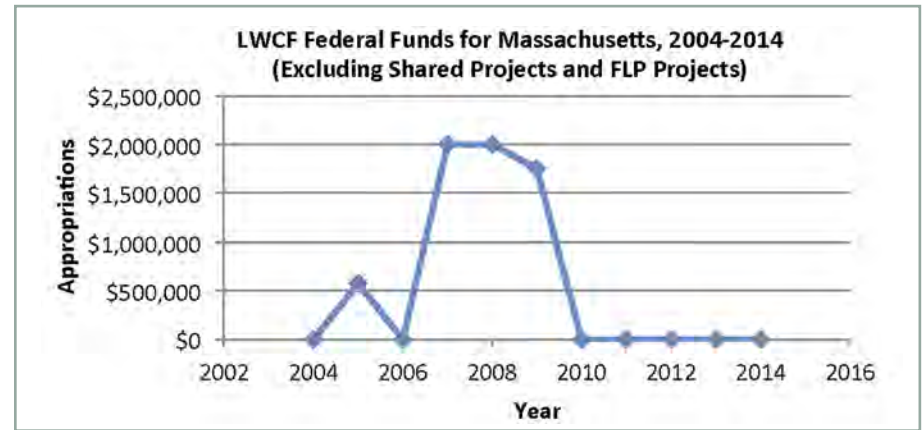


Figure 8-1. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

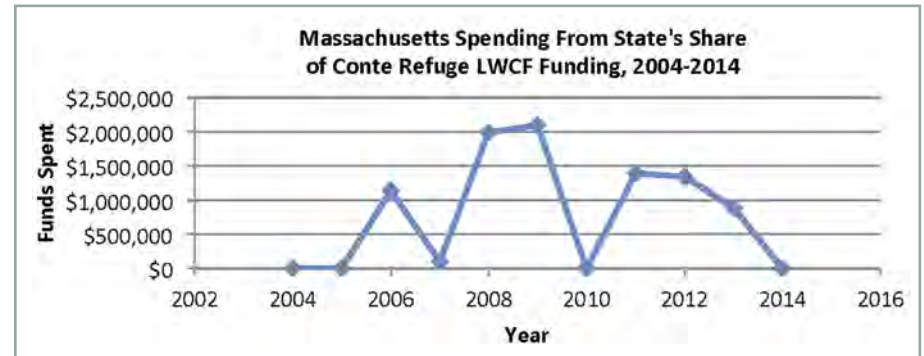


Figure 8-2. Data provided by Kim Lutz, The Nature Conservancy.

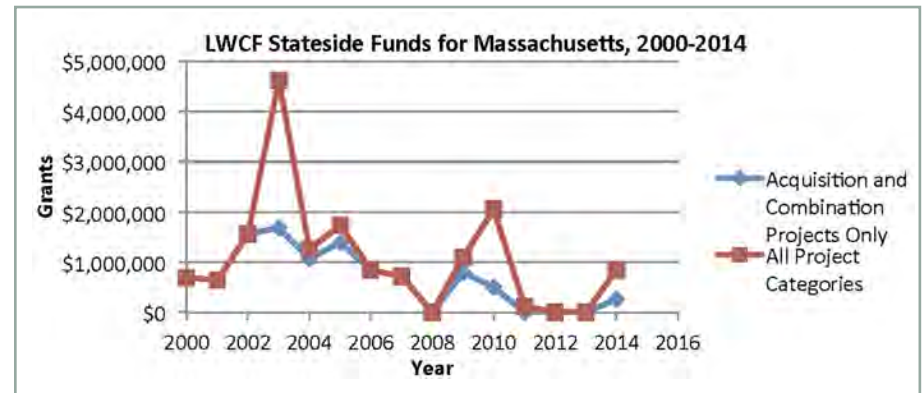


Figure 8-3. Original LWCF stateside grant project data from: <http://waso-lwcf.ncrc.nps.gov/public/index.cfm>. 2013 and 2014 data from Joel Lynch at National Park Service.

Forest Legacy Program

In addition, Massachusetts receives funds from the Forest Legacy Program, which supports the conservation of forested land through acquisition and easements. FLP is currently under the umbrella of LWCF, although the funds are separated in this summary.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund

There were no CESCFC funds spent on Massachusetts projects from 2004-2014.

Community Forest Program

The Community Forest Program is a young program, and had only three grant rounds in our target range of years: FY2012, FY2013, and FY2014. One Massachusetts project was funded: the Plimpton Community Forest, which received \$313,950 in 2014.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Massachusetts also receives funding for permanent land conservation from NAWCA.

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

Money from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund is used by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to acquire lands considered important breeding, wintering, and resting habitat for migratory birds. Funds for this program are derived from Duck Stamp proceeds and import duties on arms and ammunition. In the time period from 2004-2014, Massachusetts received MBCF funds only in 2008, for the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge and the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge. The funds received in 2008 totaled \$496,634.

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, provides matching funds to state and local governments to protect lands of coastal conservation value by acquisition or easement. Every New England state except Vermont received CELCP funding during our target range of years, although none received any funding after 2010. Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land provided spending data for this program.

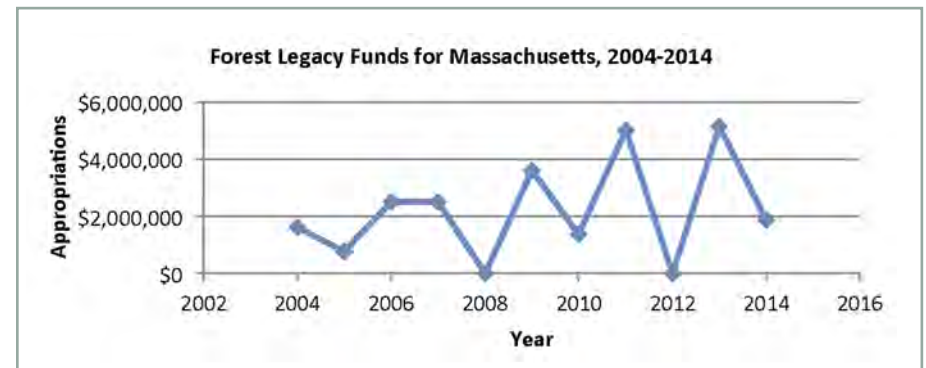


Figure 8-4. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

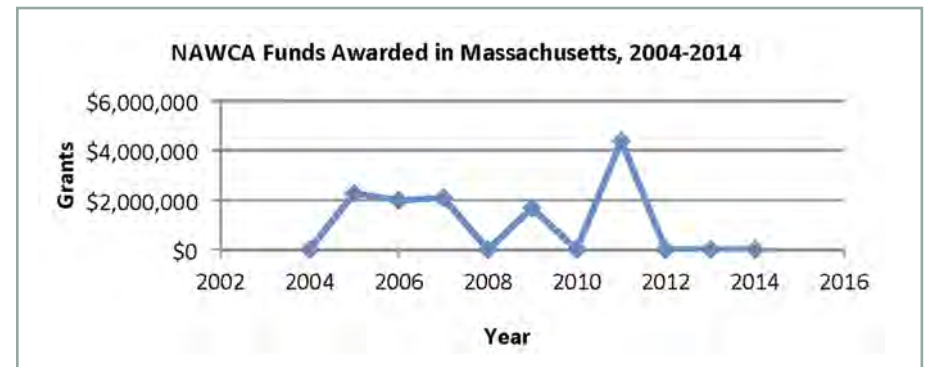


Figure 8-5. Data from U.S. F&WS: http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/US/Connecticut_Std.shtm. In 2008, a grant was awarded jointly to CT and MA but spent entirely in CT.

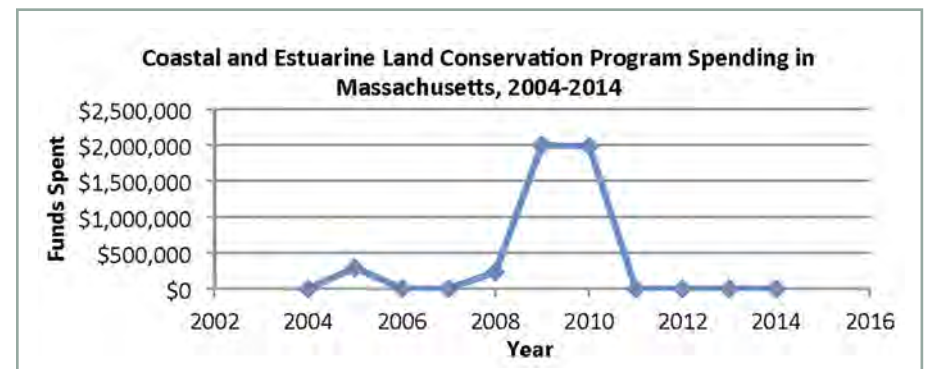


Figure 8-6. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards matching grants to states for projects that protect, restore, or enhance coastal wetlands. Funds for this program are derived from taxes on fishing and boating equipment. Shelley Dibona at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service provided data for program funds specifically spent on land protection (acquisition or easement) in the New England states.

Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson)

The Wildlife Restoration Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards grants for projects that conserve, restore, or enhance wildlife habitat, as well as projects involving hunter education and shooting range management. Funding for this program is derived from taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. These funds are often referred to as Pittman-Robertson funds after the two legislators that sponsored the Wildlife Restoration Act in 1937. Shelley Dibona at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service provided data for program funds specifically spent on land protection (acquisition or easement) in the New England states. The majority of the WRP funds spent on conservation in New England during this time period were spent in Massachusetts.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs

The Natural Resources Conservation Service coordinates several programs that provide financial and technical assistance for conservation and stewardship projects. Not all of these programs are widely used in New England, and the financial assistance is not always spent on acquisition. We were not able to obtain data for the full target range of years, and so NRCS programs are not included in the estimated federal totals here. Please refer to the Massachusetts NRCS office for additional information.

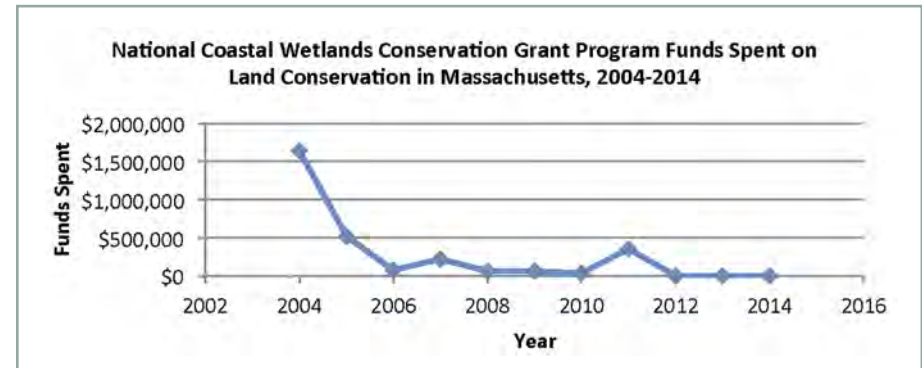


Figure 8-7. Data provided by Shelley Dibona at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

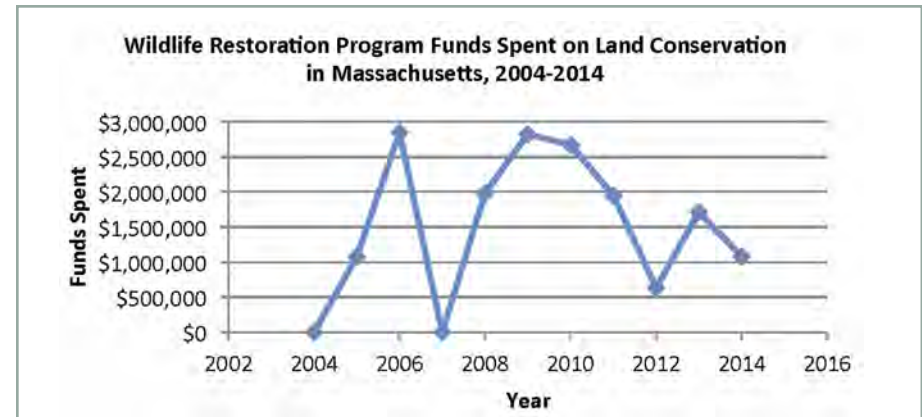


Figure 8-8. Data provided by Shelley Dibona at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.



Flynt Quarry in Monson, Massachusetts (Photo: Ed Hood)

Total Federal-Level Funding

By combining these federal funding streams, we can arrive at an estimated for the federal contribution to public conservation funding in Massachusetts as a whole. On a per capita basis, from 2004-2014, the estimated federal contribution in Massachusetts was \$12.64 for the full period, or approximately \$1.15 per Massachusetts resident per year.

State

Massachusetts has a large number of state programs that involve land conservation in some way, such as the Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program, the Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program, Conservation Partnership Grants, the Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) Program, and the Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Program, among others. More information can be found in TPL's Conservation Almanac. Most of these programs are funded by environmental bond bills passed by the state. Additional mechanisms for revenue include the Wildlands Conservation Stamp, through which individuals purchasing hunting, fishing, or trapping licenses contribute an extra fee to a fund for acquiring important wildlife habitat; these Wildlands stamps generated close to \$1,000,000 each year from 2004-2014. We received calculations of total state spending on conservation from the state's Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. On a per capita basis, from 2004-2014, the estimated state spending on conservation in Massachusetts was \$50.10 for the full period, or approximately \$4.55 per Massachusetts resident per year.

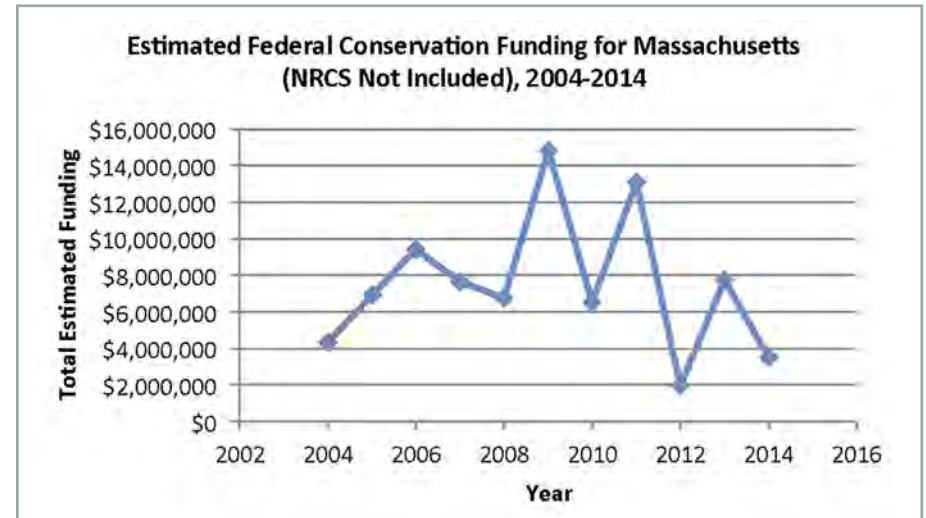


Figure 8-9. Includes LWCF federal (spending records from portion of shared Conte project, plus appropriations for individual projects), LWCF stateside (acquisition & combination projects), Forest Legacy funds, Community Forest Program funds, Migratory Bird Conservation Fund monies, NAWCA funds, CELCP spending, NCWCGP conservation spending, and WRP conservation spending.

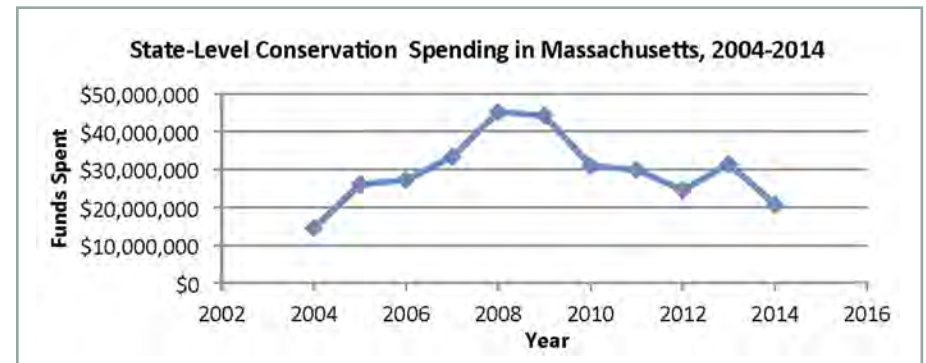


Figure 8-10. Data provided by Bob O'Connor, Director of Land and Forest Conservation, who "added up all the state funding for agency acquisitions and state grants for 2004-2014 and subtracted park expenditures (which don't add conservation land)...this includes agricultural easements and all other conservation fee and easement expenditures."

Farmland

The American Farmland Trust has provided data for farmland preservation specifically. The Farmland Information Center at AFT tracks PACE (purchase of agricultural conservation easement) spending. The primary PACE program in Massachusetts is the Agricultural Restriction Preservation Program. (This program is already included in the state totals and should not be double-counted.)

Local

Conservation funding at the local level in Massachusetts stands out among the New England states due to Massachusetts' Community Preservation Act. The Trust for Public Land describes this funding mechanism as follows: "The Massachusetts' Community Preservation Act (CPA) is a state law signed in 2000 that combines local enabling authority with a commitment of state matching funds to encourage cities and towns to enact a local property surcharge of up to three percent on local property taxes to be used for open space and outdoor recreation, affordable housing and historic preservation. State matching funds are provided from a \$10 and \$20 fee on documents recorded at registries of deeds." ("New England Statewide Land Conservation Programs," Trust for Public Land, 2014). As of 2015, 160 municipalities in Massachusetts had passed the CPA.

We relied on the Trust for Public Land's LandVote database for data regarding conservation funds that have been approved at the local level in Massachusetts. Voter-approved conservation measures passed in individual towns, including bonds and the conservation portion of CPA property taxes, were added to produce a yearly total.

The cumulative contributions of these towns are significant, and their contributions are often used to leverage additional funds from the state. From 2004 to 2014, according to Bob O'Connor at the state Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, municipalities contributed \$117.7 million to conservation projects involving state grants or agency acquisitions. Of this sum, \$15.1 million came from towns' Community Preservation Act funds and \$102.6 million came from other municipal funds.

- ▶ Wysocki Property in Massachusetts (Photo: Ed Hood, Land Trust)

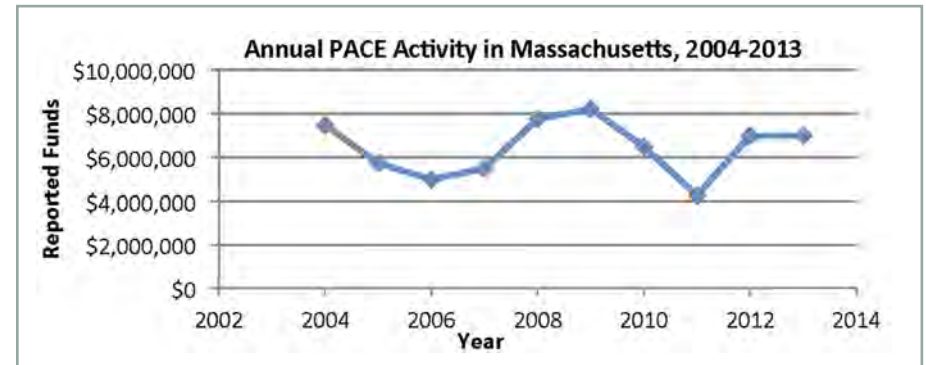


Figure 8-11. Data provided by Jennifer Dempsey, American Farmland Trust.

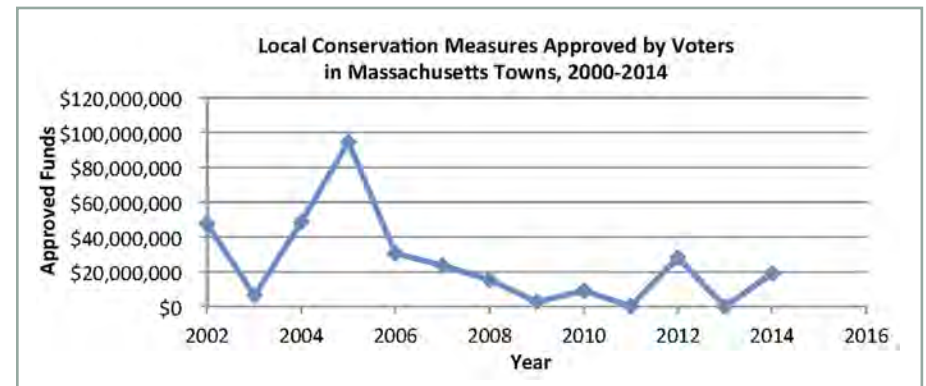


Figure 8-12. Data from the TPL's LandVote Database: www.landvote.org. (Number of towns each year ranged from 0 to 36).



9. New Hampshire

Federal

Land and Water Conservation Fund

New Hampshire receives LWCF funding through several avenues. LWCF “federal-side” funds have been appropriated for New Hampshire’s individual use on several occasions in the past ten years for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge.

New Hampshire also shares LWCF federal-side funds for the Silvio O. Conte National Forest and Wildlife Refuge with three other New England states (Vermont, Connecticut, and Massachusetts).

On one occasion in the past ten years (2011), New Hampshire was a joint recipient of LWCF federal funds for the Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge. These funds,

\$2,240,000 in total, were shared with Maine.

New Hampshire also receives LWCF “stateside grant” funds to help fund outdoor state recreation and conservation projects, many of which are categorized as “acquisition” or “combination” (includes both acquisition and site development).

Stateside funds may also be used for developing plans or enhancing public facilities, but these projects do not result in direct land protection. Prior to receiving these funds, each state must complete a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan outlining specific priorities for expending the funds.



Valpey Property in Dover, New Hampshire (Photo: Dea Brickner-Wood, Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership)

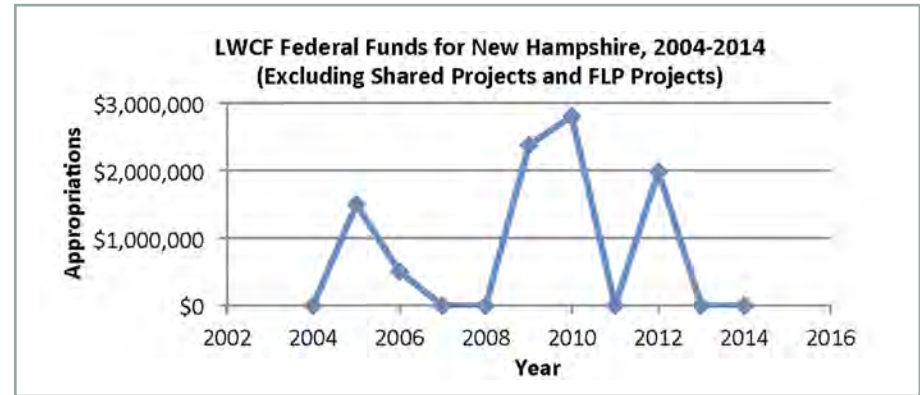


Figure 9-1. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

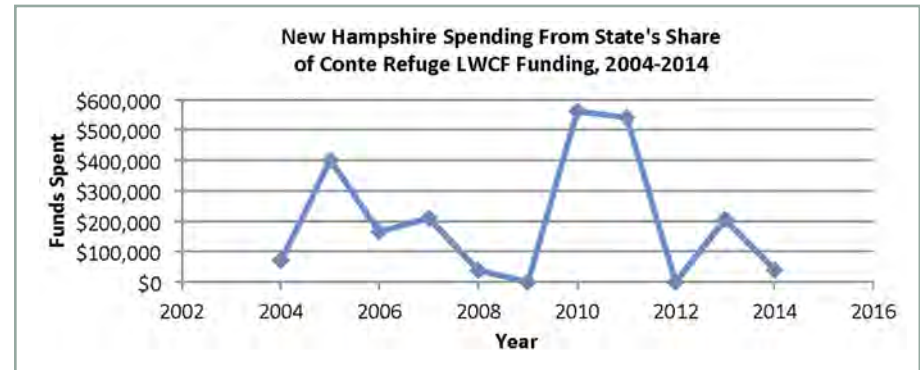


Figure 9-2. Data provided by Kim Lutz, The Nature Conservancy.

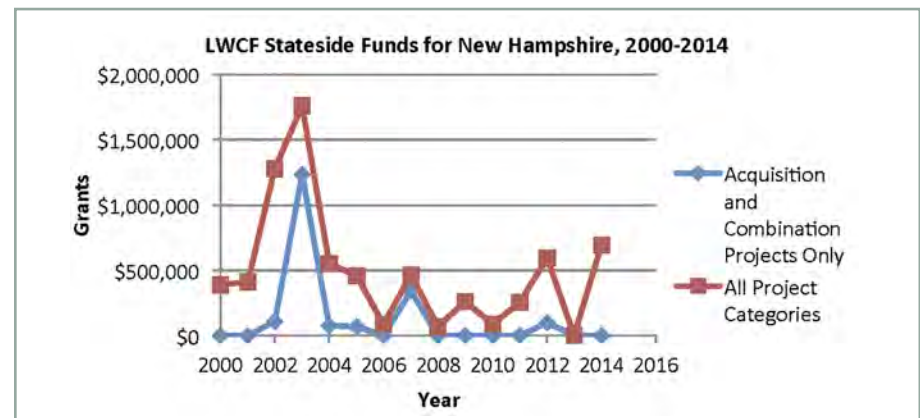


Figure 9-3. Original LWCF stateside grant project data from: <http://waso-lwcf.nrcps.gov/public/index.cfm>. 2013 and 2014 data from Joel Lynch at the National Park Service.

Forest Legacy Program

In addition, New Hampshire receives funds from the Forest Legacy Program, which supports the conservation of forested land through acquisition and easements. FLP is currently under the umbrella of LWCF, although the funds are separated in this summary.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund

There were no CESCFC funds spent on New Hampshire projects from 2004-2014.

Community Forest Program

The Community Forest Program is a young program, and had only three grant rounds in our target range of years: FY2012, FY2013, and FY2014. One New Hampshire project was funded: the Easton – Sugar Hill Community Forest, which received \$372,200 in 2012.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act

New Hampshire also receives funding for permanent land conservation from NAWCA.

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

The Migratory Bird Conservation Fund is used by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to acquire breeding, wintering, and resting habitat for migratory birds. Funds for this program are derived from Duck Stamp proceeds and import duties on arms and ammunition. In New Hampshire, the primary MBCF recipients from 2004-2014 were the Umbagog and Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuges.

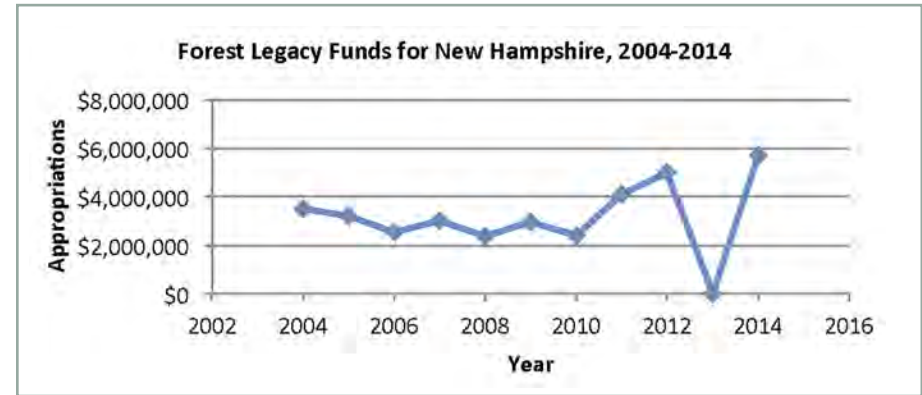


Figure 9-4. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

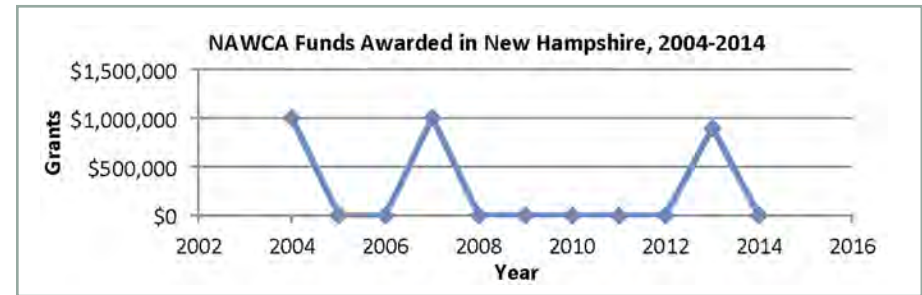


Figure 9-5. Data from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/US/Connecticut_Std.shtm

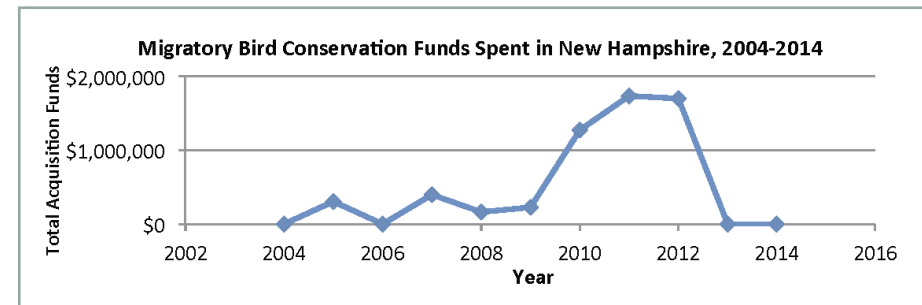


Figure 9-6. Data from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: <https://www.fws.gov/refuges/realty/archives.html>



Langley Great Bay (Photo: Dea Brickner-Wood)

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, provides matching funds to state and local governments to protect lands of coastal conservation value by acquisition or easement. Spending from this program in New Hampshire ceased after 2007 in our target range of years. Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land provided spending data for this program.

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards matching grants to states for projects that protect, restore, or enhance coastal wetlands. No NCWCGP funds were spent on land protection in New Hampshire from 2004-2014.

Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson)

The Wildlife Restoration Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards grants for projects that conserve, restore, or enhance wildlife habitat, as well as projects involving hunter education and shooting range management. Funding for this program is derived from taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. These funds are often called Pittman-Robertson funds after the two legislators that sponsored the Wildlife Restoration Act in 1937. Shelley Dibona at the U.S. F&WS provided data for program funds specifically spent on land protection (acquisition or easement).

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs

The Natural Resources Conservation Service coordinates several programs that provide financial and technical assistance for conservation and stewardship projects. We could not obtain data for the full target range of years, and so NRCS programs are not included in the estimated federal totals here. Please refer to the New Hampshire NRCS office for additional information.

Total Federal-Level Funding

By combining these funding streams, we can estimate the federal contribution to conservation funding in New Hampshire as a whole. On a per capita basis, the estimated federal contribution in New Hampshire was \$51.17 from 2004-2014, or approximately \$4.65 per New Hampshire resident per year.

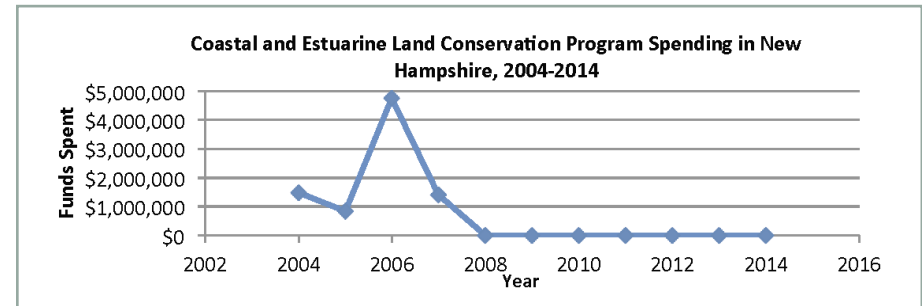


Figure 9-7. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

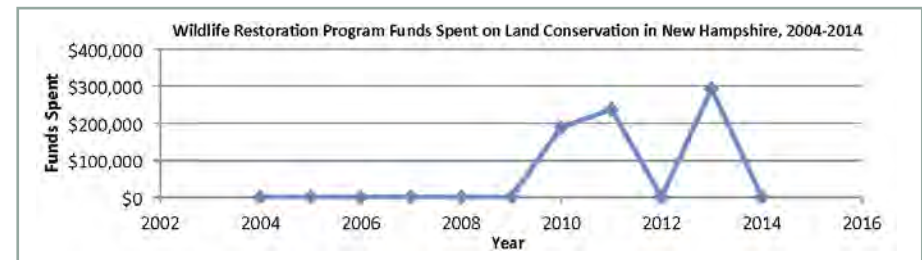


Figure 9-8. Data provided by Shelley Dibona at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

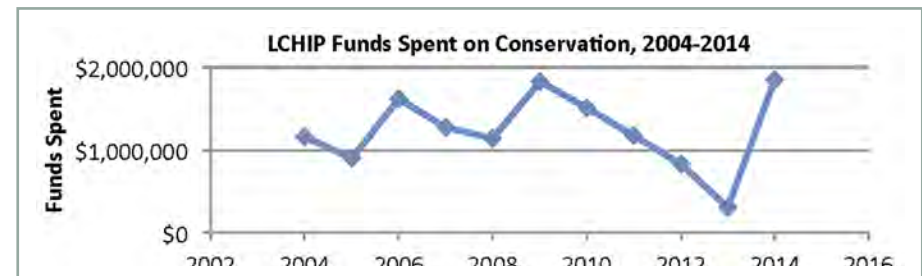


Figure 9-9. Includes LWCF federal (spending records from portion of shared Conte project, plus appropriations for individual projects and shared Umbagog project), LWCF stateside (acquisition and combination projects), Forest Legacy funds, Community Forest Program funds, Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, NAWCA funds, CELCP spending, and WRP conservation spending.



Pearson Property, Crommet Creek, Newmarket, New Hampshire
(Photo: Dea Brickner-Wood)

State

Land and Community Heritage Investment Program

New Hampshire's Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), unlike many other New England state conservation programs, does not primarily receive its revenue from bonds. LCHIP has received appropriations from the state legislature, and in recent years has been supported by the funds raised through fees on deed registries. The Trust for Public Land provided records of the conservation funds spent from LCHIP. Dijit Taylor, Executive Director of LCHIP, also provided input.

Water Supply Land Protection Grant Program

The Water Supply Land Protection Grant Program is administered by Department of Environmental Services and is funded through legislative appropriations. The Trust for Public Land provided records of this program's conservation spending for the years 2004-2014.

Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund

The Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund is administered by the Department of Environmental Services. Funds are contributed by development projects to mitigate damage to aquatic resources.

According to The Trust for Public Land, there were three instances of appropriations from the state Land Management Bureau between 2004-2014: \$60,000 in 2005, \$40,000 in 2009, and \$9,017 in 2010.

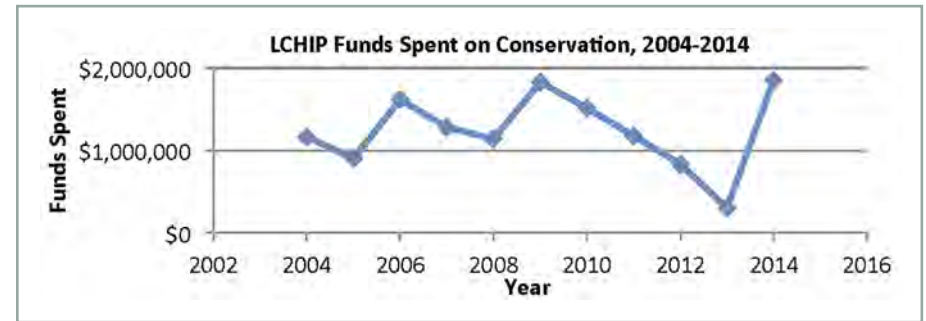


Figure 9-10. Data provided by the Trust for Public Land and Dijit Taylor, Executive Director of LCHIP.

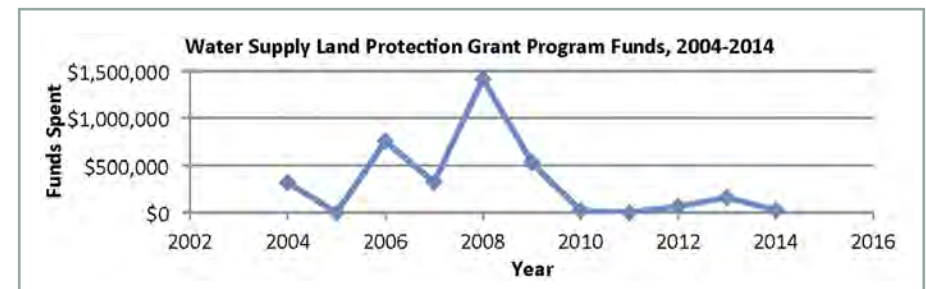


Figure 9-11. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden, Trust for Public Land.

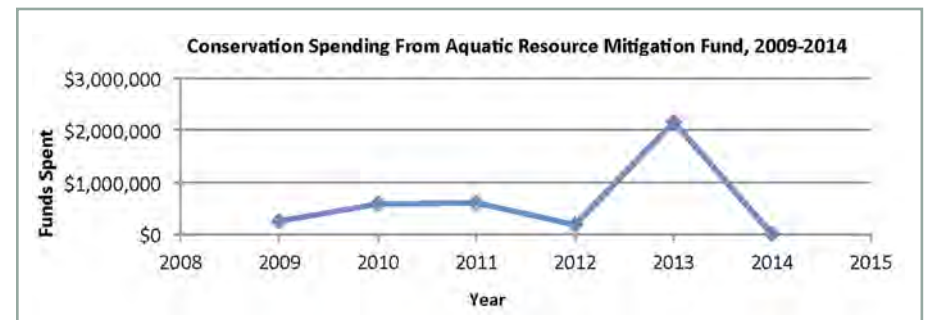


Figure 9-12. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden, Trust for Public Land. The first projects were funded in 2009.

Farmland

The American Farmland Trust has provided data for farmland preservation. These should not be double-counted with other state numbers, and may show different trends due to methodology variations.

Total State-Level Funding

We calculated a state-level total based on the TPL records for these conservation programs in New Hampshire. On a per capita basis, the estimated state-level spending on conservation in New Hampshire was \$16.04 for the full period, or approximately \$1.46 per New Hampshire resident per year.

Local

New Hampshire does not have any records for local measures in TPL's LandVote database, because conservation measures are passed through town meetings rather than by ballot. However, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests tracked town meeting measures from 2001-2010.

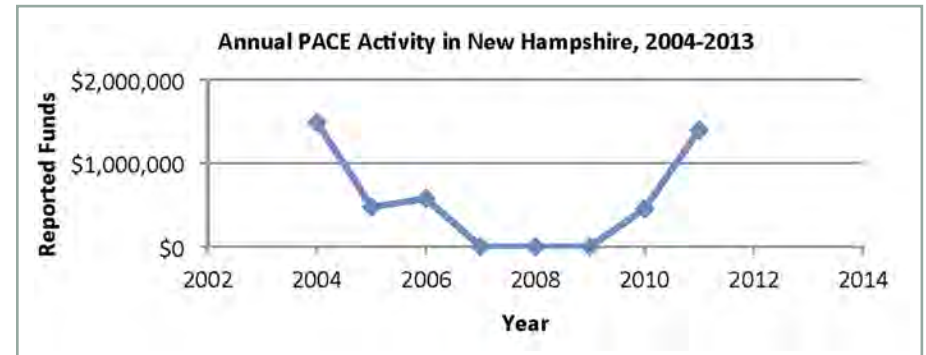


Figure 9-13. Data provided by Jennifer Dempsey, American Farmland Trust.

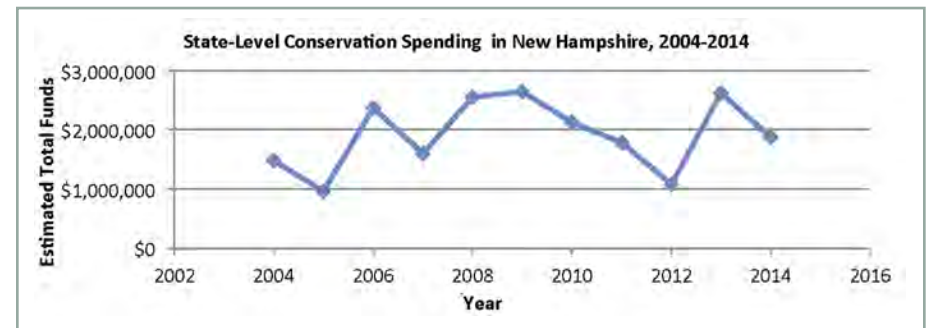


Figure 9-14. Includes the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program, the Water Supply Land Protection Grant Program, the Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund, and appropriations by the Land Management Bureau. Data from TPL and Dijit Taylor.

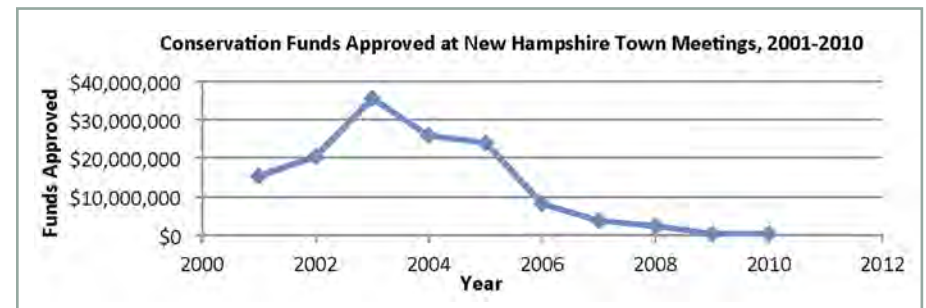


Figure 9-15. Data provided by Matt Leahy, Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. Data includes conservation funding approved directly by voters at Town Meeting, not funds approved by City Councils. Number of measures each year range from 15 - 28.

10. Rhode Island

Federal

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Rhode Island receives LWCF funding through several avenues. LWCF “federal-side” funds have been appropriated for Rhode Island’s individual use on several occasions in the past ten years, most often for the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex. No federal-side funds have been appropriated for Rhode Island conservation projects since 2010.

Rhode Island also receives LWCF “stateside grant” funds to help fund outdoor state recreation and conservation projects, many of which are categorized as “acquisition” or “combination” (includes both acquisition and site development). Stateside funds may also be used for developing plans or enhancing public facilities, but these projects do not result in direct land protection. Prior to receiving these funds, each state must complete a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan outlining specific priorities for expending the funds. During this period, there has been only one stateside grant used for an acquisition or combination project in Rhode Island, a \$281,281 project in 2006.

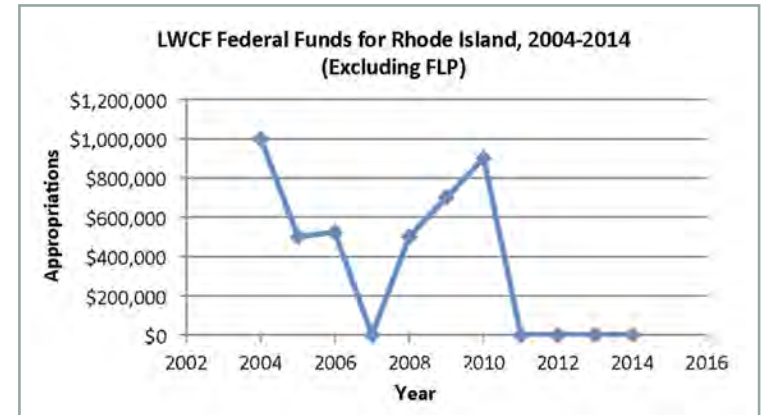


Figure 10-1. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

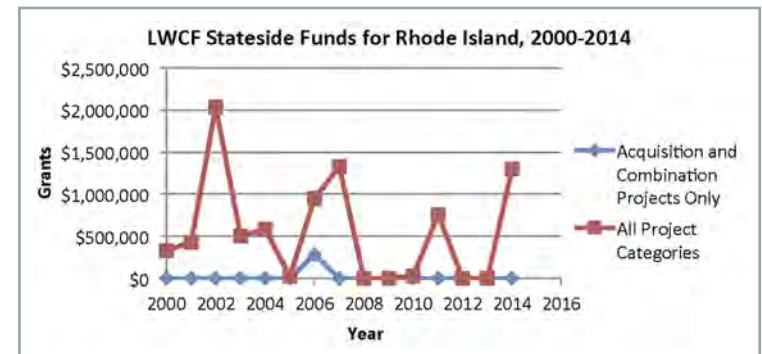


Figure 10-2. Original LWCF stateside grant project data from: <http://waso-lwcf.nrc.nps.gov/public/index.cfm>
2013 and 2014 data from Joel Lynch at the National Park Service.

◀ Scituate, Rhode Island (Photo: Rhode IslandWoodland Partnership)

Forest Legacy Program

In addition, Rhode Island receives funds from the Forest Legacy Program, which supports the conservation of forested land through acquisition and easements. FLP is currently under the umbrella of LWCF, although the funds are separated in this summary. No Forest Legacy funds have been spent in Rhode Island since 2007.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund

There were no CESCFC funds spent on Rhode Island projects from 2004-2014.

Community Forest Program

There were no Community Forest funds spent in Rhode Island from the program's first round of grants in 2012 to the end of our target range of years in 2014.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Rhode Island also receives funding for permanent land conservation from NAWCA, although there have only been two occasions of funding in the last ten years.

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

There were no MBCF funds spent on Rhode Island projects from 2004-2014.

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program, administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, provides matching funds to state and local governments to protect lands of coastal conservation value by acquisition or easement. No CELCP funds were spent in Rhode Island after 2009. Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land provided spending data for this program.

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards matching grants to states for projects that protect, restore, or enhance coastal wetlands. No NCWCGP funds were spent in Rhode Island from 2004-2014.

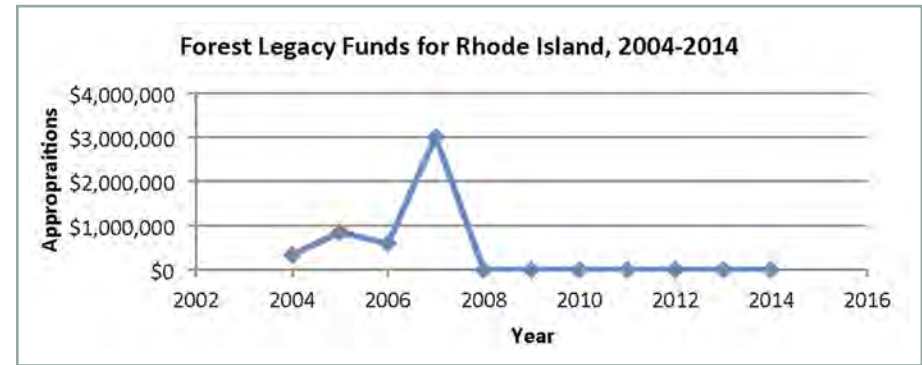


Figure 10-3. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

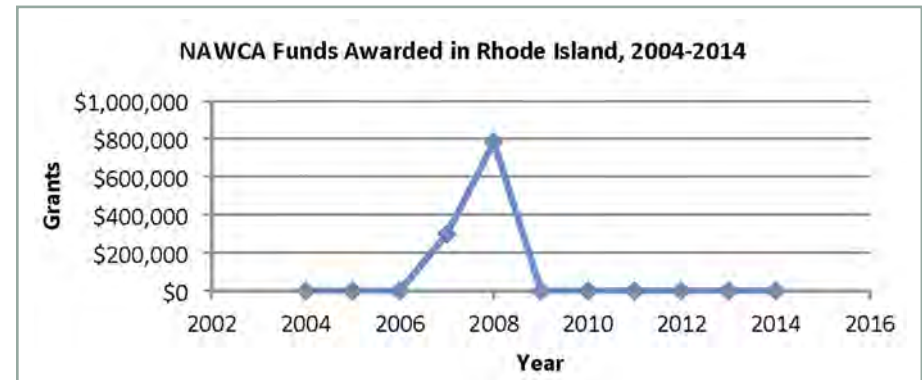


Figure 10-4. Data from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/US/Connecticut_Std.shtm

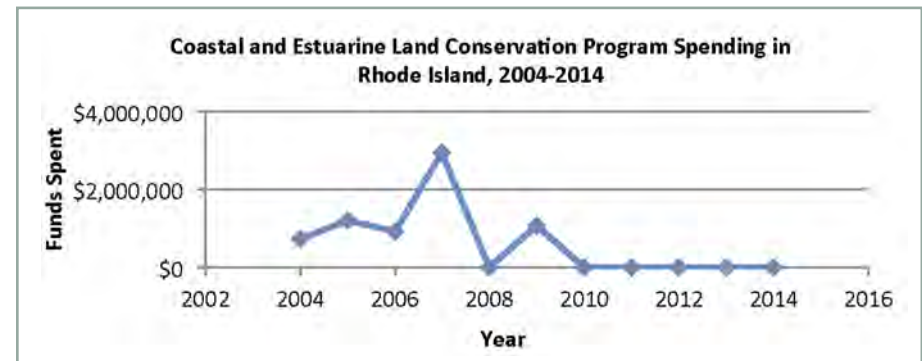


Figure 10-5. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson)

The Wildlife Restoration Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards grants for projects that conserve, restore, or enhance wildlife habitat, as well as projects involving hunter education and shooting range management. Funding for this program is derived from taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. These funds are often called Pittman-Robertson funds after the two legislators that sponsored the Wildlife Restoration Act in 1937. Shelley Dibona at U.S. F&WS provided data for funds specifically spent on land protection (acquisition or easement) in New England.

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs

The Natural Resources Conservation Service coordinates several programs that provide financial and technical assistance for conservation and stewardship projects. Not all of these programs are widely used in New England, and the financial assistance is not always spent on acquisition. We were not able to obtain data for the full target range of years, and so NRCS programs are not included in the estimated federal totals here. Please refer to the Rhode Island NRCS office for additional information.

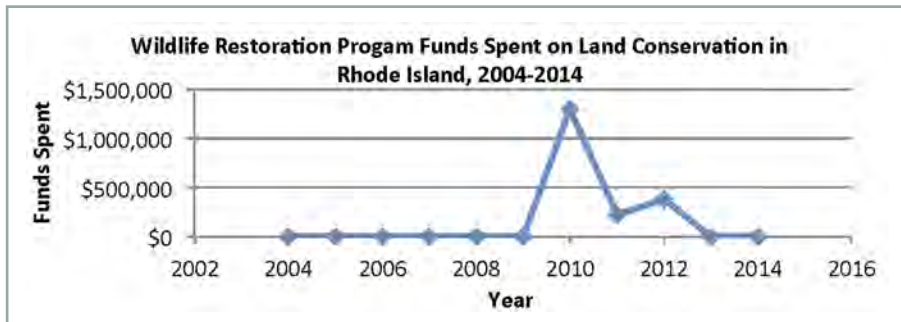


Figure 10-6. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.



Barden Reservoir in Foster, Rhode Island (Photo: Rhode Island Woodland Partnership)

Total Federal-Level Funding

By combining the federal funding streams for which we have adequate data, we can arrive at an estimated for the federal contribution to public conservation funding in Rhode Island as a whole. On a per capita basis, from 2004-2014, the estimated federal contribution in Rhode Island was \$18.11 for the full period, or approximately \$1.65 per Rhode Island resident per year.

State

Rhode Island's main state programs for land conservation include the Local Open Space Grant Program, the Land Conservation and Acquisition Program, and the Agricultural Land Preservation Program. These are all funded primarily through voter-approved open space bonds. We received records of total state spending on conservation in Rhode Island from the Trust for Public Land. Spending totals in both 2012 and 2013 were largely influenced by the Rocky Point and India Street projects, which were funded by voter-approved bonds specifically aimed at the acquisition of these properties.

On a per capita basis, from 2004-2014, the estimated state spending on conservation in Rhode Island was \$58.40 for the full period, or approximately \$5.31 per Rhode Island resident per year.

Public Drinking Water Protection Program

The Public Drinking Water Protection Program is administered by Water Resources Board. One cent is collected from participating water suppliers per hundred gallons of water delivered; these funds are set aside for acquisition or water quality improvement projects. There are no electronic records for this program, and so this program is not included in the state-level totals for Rhode Island. According to Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land, this program has been inactive since 2009.

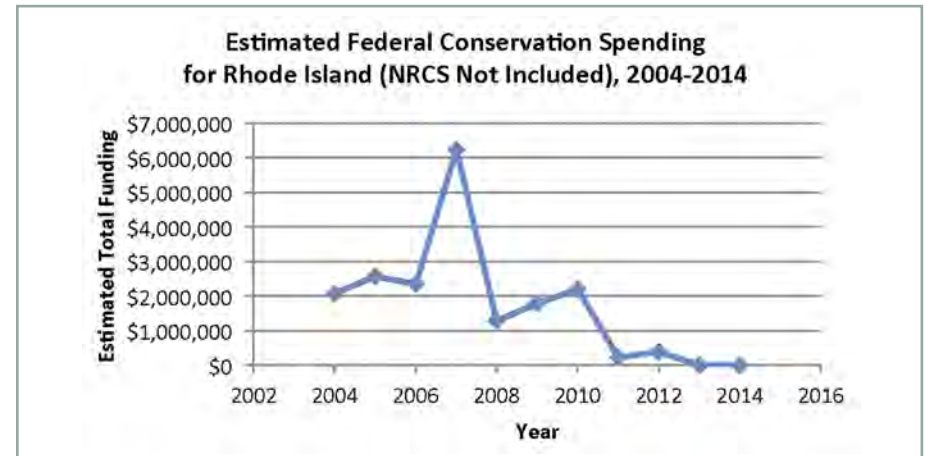


Figure 10-7. Includes LWCF federal, LWCF stateside (acquisition and combination projects), Forest Legacy funds, NAWCA funds, CELEP spending, and WRP spending on conservation.

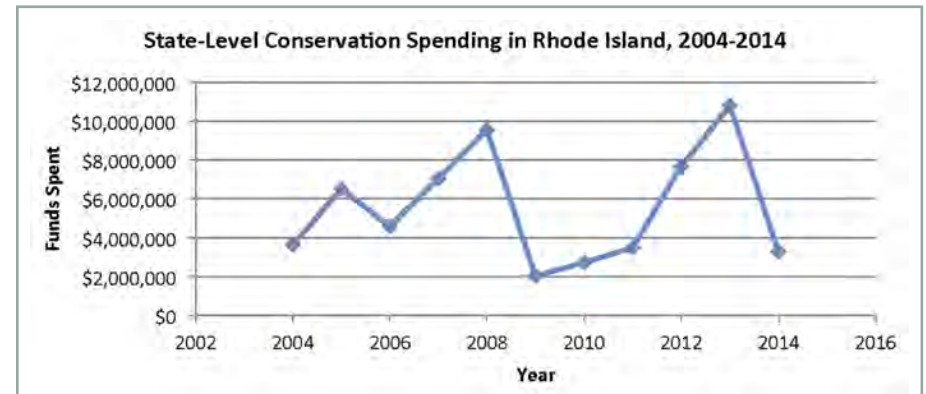


Figure 10-8. Data from Jennifer Plowden at TPL. Rocky Point and India Street projects accounted for much of the funding in 2012 and 2013.

Farmland

The American Farmland Trust provided data for farmland preservation specifically. AFT's Farmland Information Center tracks PACE (purchase of agricultural conservation easement) spending in states through annual surveys. Much of the funding for agricultural preservation in Rhode Island comes from the state open space bonds reflected in the state spending totals, so these numbers should not be double-counted.

Local

Individual municipalities in Rhode Island have at times passed local voter-approved measures for land conservation, although not many used this strategy in the years after 2008. Most of these measures were voter-approved bonds. Measures approved in individual towns were added to produce a total for the state for each year.

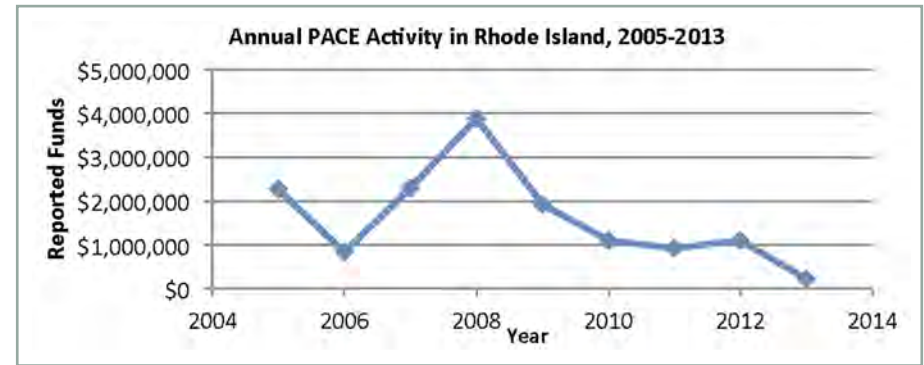


Figure 10-9. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

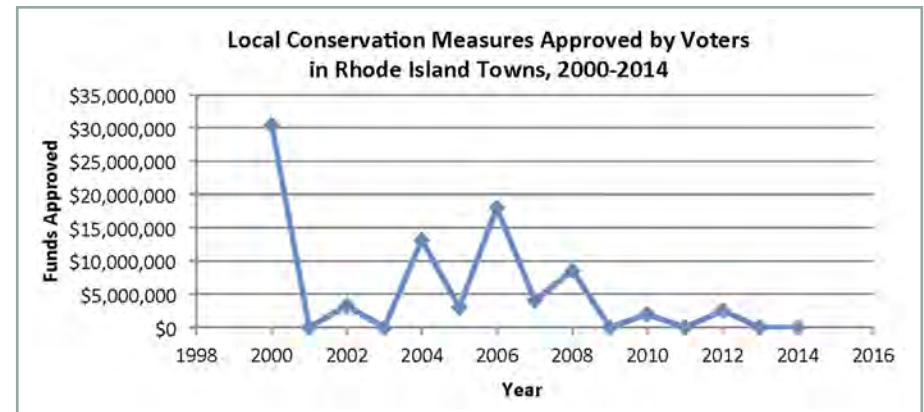


Figure 10-10. Data provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.



◀ Betty Pond in Scituate, Rhode Island (Photo: Rhode Island Woodland Partnership)

11. Vermont

Federal

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Vermont receives LWCF funding through several avenues. LWCF “federal-side” funds have been appropriated for Vermont’s individual use on several occasions in the past ten years, most often for the Green Mountain National Forest. Vermont has not received any individual LWCF federal-side appropriations since 2010.

Vermont also shares LWCF federal-side funds for the Silvio O. Conte National Forest and Wildlife Refuge with three other New England states (Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire).

Vermont also receives LWCF “stateside grant” funds to help fund outdoor state recreation and conservation projects, many of which are categorized as “acquisition” or “combination” (includes both acquisition and site development). Stateside funds may also be used for developing plans or enhancing public facilities, but these projects do not result in direct land protection. Prior to receiving these funds, each state must complete a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan outlining specific priorities for expending the funds. The stateside grant appropriations used for acquisition in Vermont have been infrequent and small during this time period.



Knoll Farm in Fayston, Vermont (Photo: Vermont Land Trust)

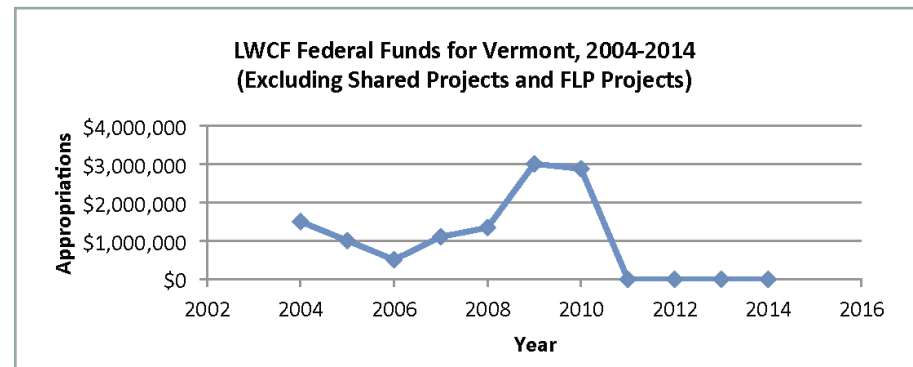


Figure 11-1. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

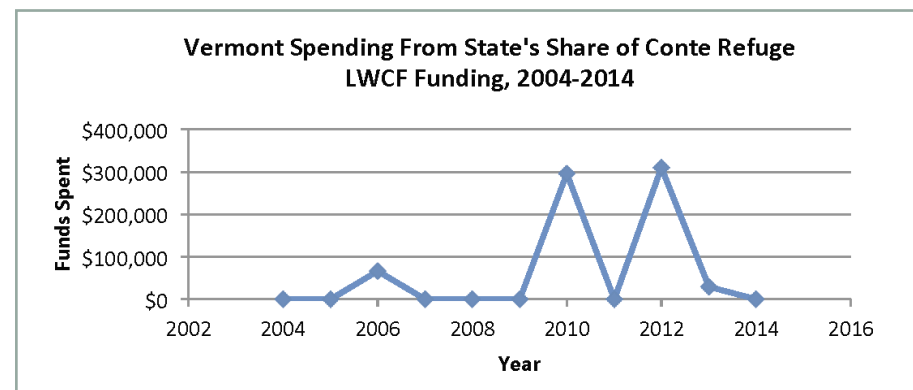


Figure 11-2. Data provided by Kim Lutz, The Nature Conservancy

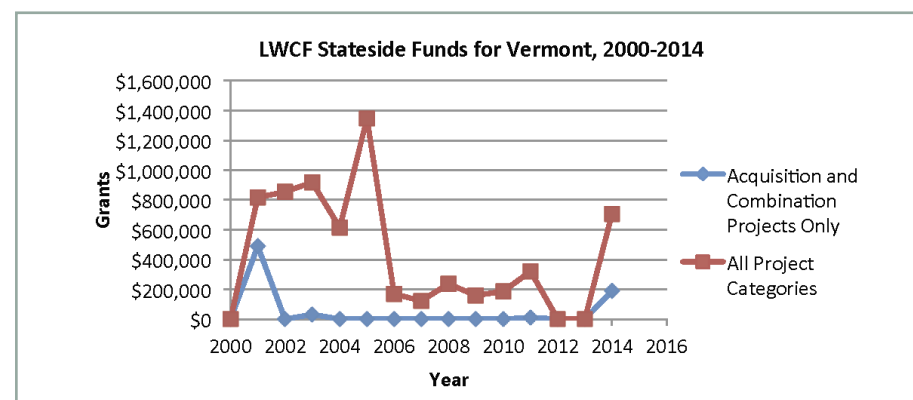
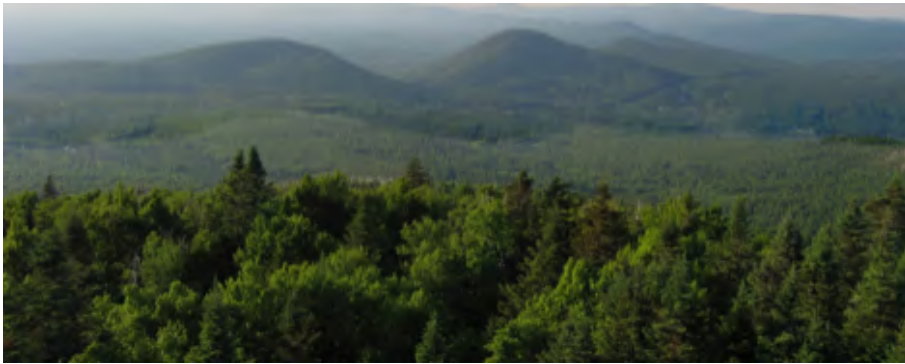


Figure 11-3. Original LWCF stateside grant project data from: <http://waso-lwcf.nrc.nps.gov/public/index.cfm>. 2013 and 2014 data from Joel Lynch at the National Park Service.



View from West Mountain in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom
(Photo: Vermont Land Trust)

Forest Legacy Program

In addition, Vermont receives funds from the Forest Legacy Program, which supports the conservation of forested land through acquisition and easements. FLP is currently under the umbrella of LWCF, although the funds are separated in this summary.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund

The Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, in accordance with the Endangered Species Act, provides funding for conservation projects related to endangered or threatened species. Funding may be spent on acquisition projects and planning projects. Only acquisition projects are counted here.

Community Forest Program

The Community Forest Program is a young program, and had only three grant rounds in our target range of years: FY2012, FY2013, and FY2014. Two Vermont projects received funding: the Barre Town Forest received \$400,000 in 2012, and the Dorset Town Forest received \$263,500 in 2014.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Vermont also receives funding for permanent land conservation from NAWCA, although there has only one occasion of funding in the last ten years (shared with NY).

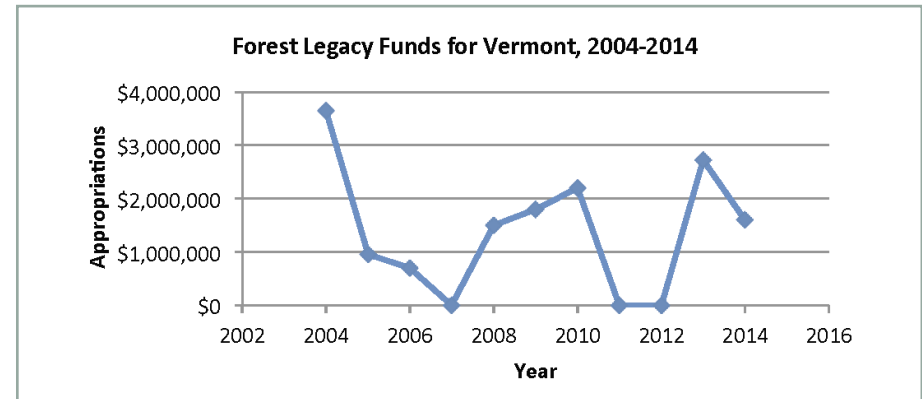


Figure 11-4. Data from federal appropriations records, provided by Bruce Clendenning.

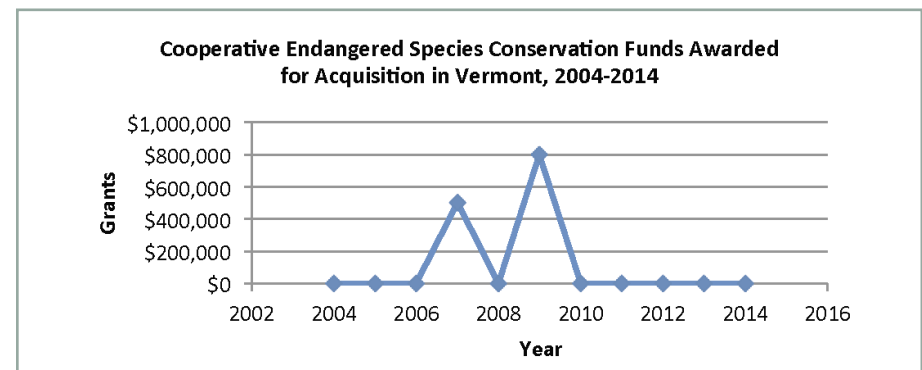


Figure 11-5. All data from U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

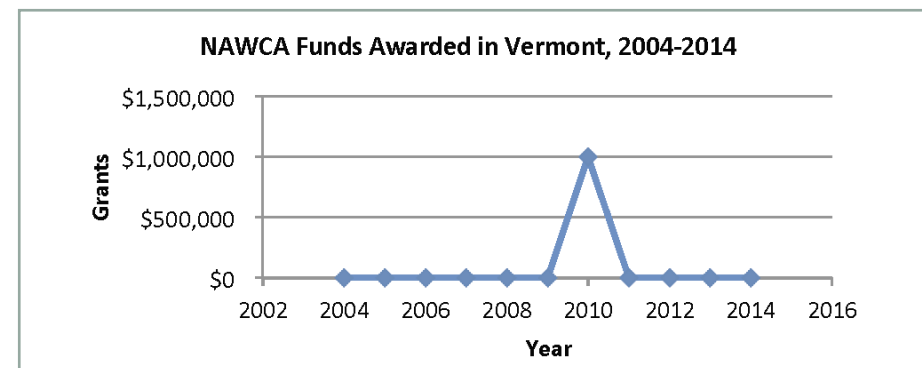


Figure 11-6. Data from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/US/Connecticut_Std.shtm. 2010 funding shared with New York.

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund

Money from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund is used by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to acquire breeding, wintering, and resting habitat for migratory birds. Funds for this program are derived from Duck Stamp proceeds and import duties on arms and ammunition. In Vermont, the primary MBCF recipients from 2004-2014 were the Missisquoi and Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuges.

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program:

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, provides matching funds to state and local governments to protect lands of coastal conservation value by acquisition or easement. No CELCP spending occurred in Vermont from 2004-2014.

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program

The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards matching grants to states for projects that protect, restore, or enhance coastal wetlands. No NCWCGP funds were spent in Vermont from 2004-2014.

Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson)

The Wildlife Restoration Program, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, awards grants for projects that conserve, restore, or enhance wildlife habitat, as well as projects involving hunter education and shooting range management. Funding for this program is derived from taxes on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. These funds are often called Pittman-Robertson funds after the two legislators that sponsored the Wildlife Restoration Act in 1937. Shelley Dibona at U.S. F&WS provided data for funds specifically spent on land protection (acquisition or easement) in New England.

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs

The Natural Resources Conservation Service coordinates several programs that provide financial and technical assistance for conservation and stewardship projects. Not all of these programs are widely used in New England, and the financial assistance is not always spent on acquisition. We were not able to obtain data for the full target range of years, and so NRCS programs are not included in the estimated federal totals here. Please refer to the Vermont NRCS office for additional information.

Total Federal-Level Funding

By combining these funding streams, we can arrive at an estimated for the federal contribution to public conservation funding in Vermont as a whole. On a per capita basis, from 2004-2014, the estimated federal contribution in Vermont was \$49.52 for the full period, or approximately \$4.50 per Vermont resident per year.

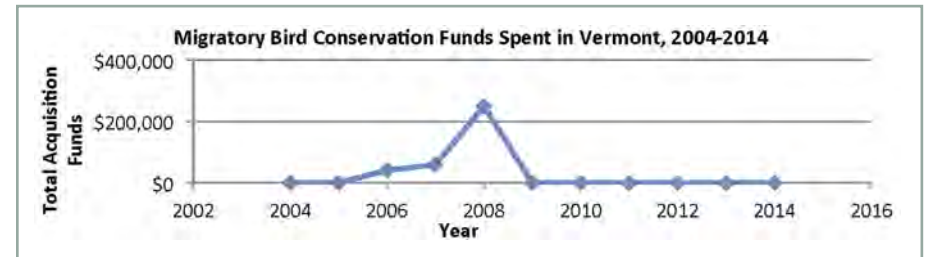


Figure 11-7. Data from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: <https://www.fws.gov/refuges/realty/archives.html>

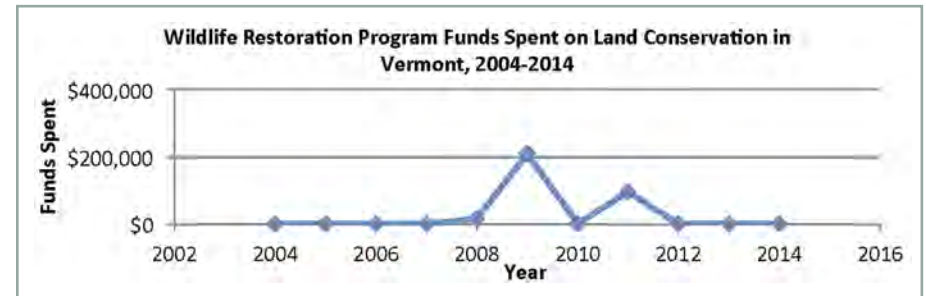


Figure 11-8. Data provided by Shelley Dibona at U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

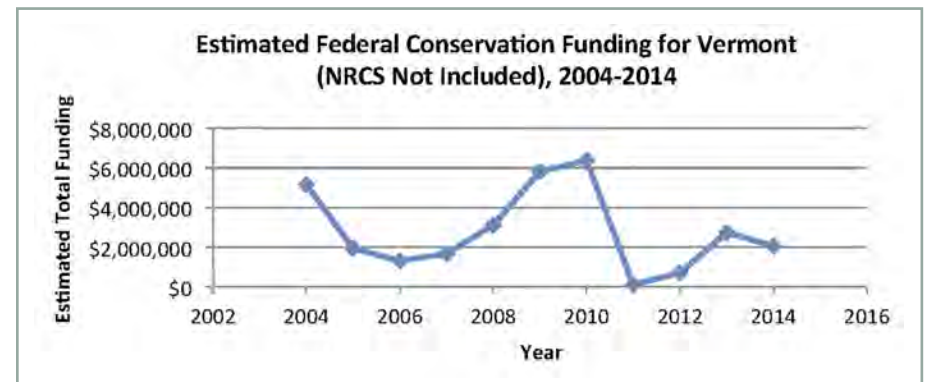


Figure 11-9. Includes LWCF federal (spending records from portion of shared Conte project, plus appropriations for individual projects), LWCF stateside (acquisition and combination projects), Forest Legacy funds, Community Forest Program funds, Migratory Bird Conservation Fund monies, NAWCA funds, Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund monies, and WRP spending on conservation.

State

Three conservation programs are administered by the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, which is funded mostly by a real estate transfer tax (along with some appropriations and bonds). The VHCB's conservation programs are the Farmland Conservation Program, the Recreational Land, Natural Areas, and Historic Properties Program, and the Local Conservation Grant Program. We received a yearly breakdown of total conservation spending, including farmland conservation, for 2004-2014 from the VHCB. On a per capita basis, from 2004-2014, the estimated state spending on conservation in Vermont was \$73.74 for the full period, or approximately \$6.70 per Vermont resident per year.

The Duck Stamp Fund, which receives revenue from stamps purchased by hunters, is used to acquire wetlands. We do not have records for this post-2005, although the 2005 number according to TPL was \$1,090 so it is unlikely to be a major funding source.

Farmland

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board also provided a record of state farmland-specific conservation spending for the years 2004-2014 (which should not be double-counted with previous totals).

The American Farmland Trust has provided a set of numbers for farmland preservation specifically. The Farmland Information Center at AFT tracks PACE (purchase of agricultural conservation easement) spending in states. The primary PACE program in Vermont is the Farmland Conservation Program. The American Farmland Trust's numbers do not precisely match the VHCB numbers, perhaps due to methodology differences in collecting data.

Local

TPL's LandVote database tracks all conservation ballot measures, but only two measures were passed through ballot vote in Vermont from 2004-2014. Most conservation measures in Vermont are instead passed through town meetings and so are not reflected in LandVote's records. We reached out to several conservation organizations in the hopes of piecing together an estimate from their records. Siobhan Smith and Chris Moore at the Vermont Land Trust shared records of town contributions to VLT conservation projects, Caitrin Maloney and Kristen Sharpless at the Stowe Land Trust shared similar records for SLT acquisition projects, and Sarah Erb at the Trust for Public Land shared similar records for TPL projects in Vermont. In lieu of a comprehensive statewide picture of local-level conservation funding, these town contributions are presented here, as trends in these funding streams may be indicative of local-level trends across Vermont.

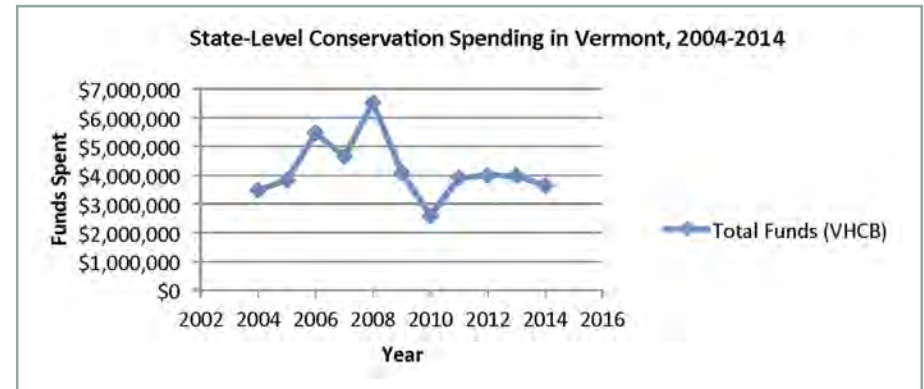


Figure 11-10. Data provided by Gus Seelig and Larry Mires at Vermont Housing and Conservation Board.

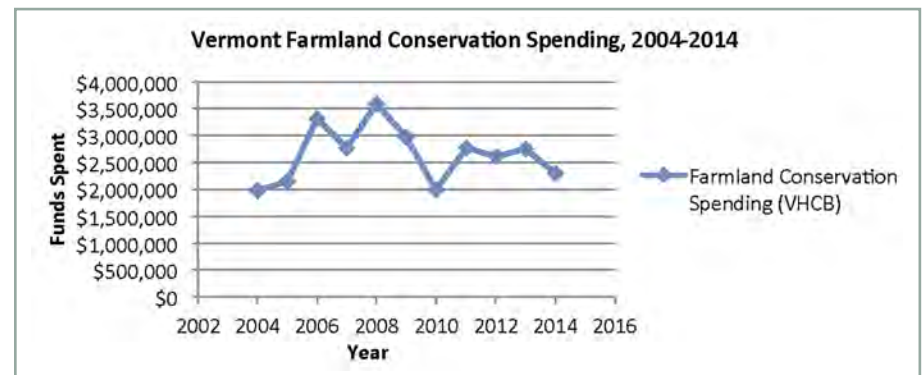


Figure 11-11. Data provided by Gus Seelig and Larry Mires at Vermont Housing and Conservation Board.

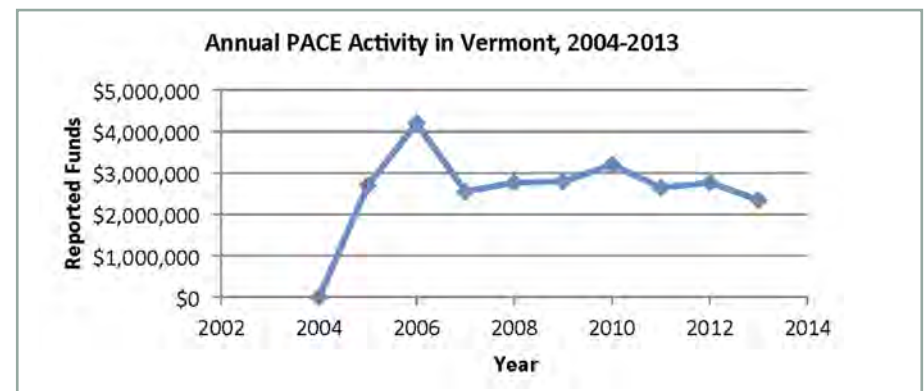


Figure 11-12. Data provided by Jennifer Dempsey, American Farmland Trust.

We also reached out to the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions, which does not track municipal funding but has connections to many towns in Vermont. The chair of the Association, Jake Brown, reached out to member towns on our behalf and we received input from several individual town commissions (town contacts listed in parentheses).

The Vermont towns in our sample vary widely in how much municipal funding is spent on conservation.

- The town of **Greensboro** appropriates money annually for land conservation, usually \$2,000 per year (Clive Gray).
- The town of **Richmond** has a conservation fund that derives revenue from a one-cent increase on the tax rate, raising approximately \$44,400 a year; the town has spent \$175,424 out of the fund since its establishment in 2005 (Brad Elliot).
- The town of **Monkton** also relied on a tax-supported fund for several years (derived from a two-cent addition to the property tax), which raised approximately \$30,000 - \$35,000 annually between 2007 and 2014; in 2014 the funding source was changed and the town approved a flat \$10,000 addition to the fund (John McNerney).
- The town of **West Windsor** appropriates about \$5,000 each year to its conservation fund (Ted Siegler).
- The town of **Plainfield** established a \$5,000 conservation fund in 2001 and has voted to add \$2,500 annually since then (Jan Waterman).
- The town of **Georgia** started its conservation fund in 2004 with 0.5% of the grand list per year, and later supported the fund with a flat \$12,000 item in the town budget; this fund has been used to purchase a \$20,000 parcel and has contributed to Vermont Land Trust efforts to conserve several farm parcels with amounts ranging from \$5,000 - \$10,000 (Ken Minck).

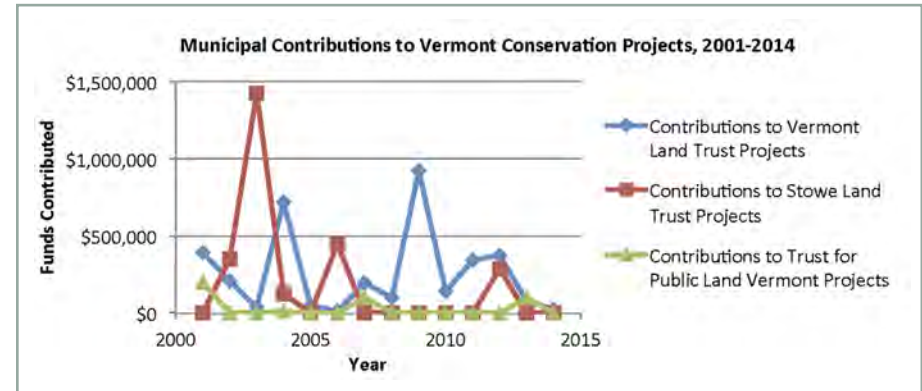


Figure 11-13. This should not be considered a comprehensive statewide picture, but may be indicative of larger trends.

12. Data Sources

Federal Funding Streams

The estimates of **federal-level totals** used in this report include funds from the following pools: LWCF federal appropriations for shared and individual projects including Umbagog and Conte (see note below about Conte funding in state-specific totals), LWCF stateside grants for acquisition and combination projects, Highlands Conservation Act funding (CT only), appropriations for the Forest Legacy Program, Community Forest Program grants, North American Wetlands Conservation Act grants, Migratory Bird Conservation Fund spending, the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program spending, National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program spending, and the Wildlife Restoration Program/Pittman-Robertson Act (land conservation spending only). Exact data sources and details follow.

LWCF Federal funds and **Forest Legacy funds** data are from federal appropriations records provided by Bruce Clendenning at the Appalachian Mountain Club. Data for all projects nation-wide were provided; we identified only those relevant to New England states and calculated yearly totals for each state (and for shared project areas).

Note on shared Conte funds: The federal appropriations records list the shared funds for the Silvio O. Conte NWR as the total appropriations shared by multiple states. We do not have information on how these appropriations were divided among the states. However, additional information on individual state spending of shared LWCF funds for the Conte refuge was provided in a spreadsheet by Kim Lutz at the Nature Conservancy. (These are not quite the same measurements as the appropriations records, as funds appropriated in one year may be spent in another.) For the regional totals including the Conte funds, we used the shared appropriations funding data in order to maintain consistency with the other federal LWCF data included. However, in order to estimate federal funding total trends for individual states, we used the state spending from shared Conte funds data provided by Kim Lutz, as these data were available in a state-by-state breakdown.

Note on shared Umbagog funds: On one occasion (2011), an appropriation for the Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge was shared between Maine and New Hampshire. Since we do not have information on how this appropriation was divided, this amount is included in both state estimates but corrected for in the regional total.

LWCF Stateside grant funds data are all from the National Park Service. Records for 2000-2012 are available in an online database accessible here: <http://waso-lwcf.ncrc.nps.gov/public/index.cfm>. This database includes a project list by county (with amounts and years listed) as well as summary reports. The following description is provided by the National Park Service for the different grant categories:

“Grant types include Planning (P) grants to States to develop the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Acquisition(A) grants for the acquisition of lands or interests in land, Development or Redevelopment (D or R) to enhance projects with new or rebuilt recreation facilities, or Combination (C) which includes both acquisition and site development.”

We downloaded the full project list for each New England state, then imported the list into Microsoft Access, and then selected only the projects that were approved after 1/1/2000 and categorized as type “A” or “C”. Grant amounts were then summed to arrive at a total for each year in each state. The online database did not include records for 2013 and 2014 at the time that we conducted this research. Joel Lynch at the National Park Service provided data for these years through email correspondence.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund data came from annual reports published by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Reports of awards for each year can be found here: <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/index.html#grants>. This fund is used for both acquisition and planning projects (indicated in reports); only acquisition projects are listed here.

Highlands Conservation Act funds data came from two sources. Total Highlands spending records (shared among CT, NY, NJ, and PA) were included in the LWCF federal appropriations records provided by Bruce Clendenning. Records for the Connecticut-specific portion of these funds were provided by Mark Zakutansky at the Appalachian Mountain Club.

North American Wetlands Conservation Act funds data were obtained from online records made available by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service: http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/US/Connecticut_Std.shtm. Standard Grant projects are searchable by location and by year. One NAWCA grant for Vermont was also shared with New York; the full amount is included in our Vermont totals because we do not have information on how this grant was divided.

Migratory Bird Conservation Fund data were obtained from annual reports published by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. These reports are available online at the following link under the heading “Migratory Bird Conservation Commission”: <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/realty/archives.html>

Each annual report contains both a summarized list of projects contracted that year, and a data table for projects acquired that year. The reports explain the distinction between these lists and tables as follows:

“The acreage appearing in the Approvals and Summary of Land Acquisitions sections of this report will not appear in Tables One or Two until after the tracts are acquired and the funds are actually expended. Also, a newly approved refuge will not appear on Table One until a tract is acquired.”

To calculate the yearly totals for each state, we referred to the numbers in the data tables rather than the approval lists, so as to only include projects where funds were actually expended.

Community Forest Program funds data are available online from the U.S. Forest Service. The first round of grants was in 2012.

The 2012 grant listings are available here: http://www.fs.fed.us/cooperativeforestry/library/fy12_cfp_funded_projects.pdf

The 2013 grant listings are available here: http://www.fs.fed.us/cooperativeforestry/library/fy13_cfp_funded_projects.pdf

The 2014 grant listings are available here: <http://www.fs.fed.us/news/releases/us-forest-service-announces-support-community-forests>

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program spending data were provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land for projects in New England states.

National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant Program spending data were provided by Shelley Dibona at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Data includes funds actually spent (not just awarded) on land acquisition each year from 2004-2014 through fee title or easements.

Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson Act) spending data were provided by Shelley Dibona at the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Data includes funds actually spent (not just awarded) on land acquisition each year from 2004-2014 through fee title or easements. Funds spent through this program on non-acquisition projects, such as hunter education or habitat enhancement, are not included.

Natural Resources Conservation Service Programs: We were in contact with Eric Barnes at the national NRCS office as well as several representatives from individual state offices, but were not able to obtain comprehensive data for land acquisition funds for each year from 2004-2014. For this reason, these funds are not included in our estimated state and regional yearly totals.

State Funding Streams

Connecticut:

Records for the *Recreation & Natural Heritage Trust Program*, the *Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Program*, and the *Farmland Protection Program* were provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

We also referenced Connecticut’s 2007 Green Plan, which can be found here: http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/open_space/green_plan.PDF

Maine:

Records for the *Land for Maine’s Future Program*, the *Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund*, and the *Maine Natural Resource Conservation Program* were provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

Massachusetts:

Total yearly estimates of state-level spending on conservation in Massachusetts, 2004-2014, were provided by Bob O’Connor at the State Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

New Hampshire:

The TPL report “New England Statewide Land Conservation Programs” contains expenditures data for the *Land and Community Heritage Investment Program* through 2011. Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land provided LCHIP data for 2014. Dijit Taylor, LCHIP Executive Director, gave us updated information for LCHIP spending in 2012 and 2013. Records for the *Water Supply Land Protection Grant Program*, and the *Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund* were provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land. Data for occasional appropriations by the Land Management Bureau of the state Department of Resources and Economic Development are available on TPL’s Conservation Almanac.

Rhode Island:

Yearly totals of conservation spending at the state level in Rhode Island were provided by Jennifer Plowden at the Trust for Public Land.

Vermont:

Gus Seelig and Larry Mires at the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board provided a spreadsheet of all VHCB acquisitions in our target range of years, formatted as a series of yearly totals. These records also specified which funds were spent on farmland conservation, allowing us to examine those funds separately as well.

Conservation Tax Incentives

The Land Trust Alliance provides general overview information about states with tax incentives in place to encourage conservation, available here: <http://www.conservationtaxcenter.org/article/Conservation-Easements/Laws-and-Regulations-/State-Tax-Credits-for-Donation-of-a-Conservation-Easement/1616>

Based on this list, we reached out to Connecticut and Massachusetts contacts for more information. We obtained a table of yearly donation information from the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services (included in the body of this report). Additional information on the Massachusetts tax incentive was provided by the TPL report “New England Statewide Land Conservation Programs” and through personal correspondence with Bob O’Connor and Thomas C. Anderson at the Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

Local Funding Streams

Data for local voter-approved conservation measures passed in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island came from the LandVote database produced by the Trust for Public Land. For each of these states, we included only measures that had been successfully approved. Maine and Rhode Island also had statewide voter-approved bonds listed in the LandVote database, but we did not include these because these funds had already been included in state-level funding estimates. Funds approved in individual municipalities were summed to produce a local-level total for each state. Local conservation measures in New Hampshire and Vermont are passed through town meetings, which the LandVote database does not track, rather than by voter-approved measures. We obtained records of local conservation measures in New Hampshire from Matt Leahy at the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, although the Society stopped tracking this information after 2010.

Our picture of local conservation funding in Vermont is incomplete. Siobhan Smith and Chris Moore at Vermont Land Trust provided records of municipal contributions to VLT projects from 2001-2014. Caitrin Maloney and Kristen Sharpless at Stowe Land Trust did the same for Stowe Land Trust acquisition projects, and Sarah Erb at the Trust for Public Land did the same for TPL projects in Vermont. We also contacted Jake Brown at the Association for Vermont Conservation Commissions, who reached out to member conservation commissions. As a result, we received information about conservation funds in the following Vermont towns: Greensboro (provided by Clive Gray), Richmond (provided by Brad Elliot), West Windsor (provided by Ted Siegler), Monkton (provided by John McNerney), Plainfield (provided by Jan Waterman), and Georgia (provided by Ken Minck).

Farmland Conservation Funding Streams

State-level PACE programs data were provided by Jennifer Dempsey at the American Farmland Trust.



Curtis Homestead Conservation Area in Leeds, Maine (Photo: Jane Davis)

13. Additional Resources

New England Statewide Land Conservation Programs, produced by the Trust for Public Land. September 2014.

New England Food Policy: Building a Sustainable Food System, produced by the American Farmland Trust, The

Conservation Law Foundation, and the Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group. March 2014. Available here: http://www.clf.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/1.New_England_Food_Policy_FULL.pdf

Conservation Almanac, The Trust for Public Land. <http://www.conservationalmnac.org/>

LandVote Database, The Trust for Public Land. www.landvote.org/

The Community Preservation Coalition: www.communitypreservation.org

United States Census, 2010. Used for all per capita calculations. Population data available here: http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

14. Methodology Notes

American Farmland Trust:

“AFT conducts an annual survey of state-level Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement programs and a less frequent survey of independent local programs. We e-mail a questionnaire to program managers each spring and request information about program administration (e.g., current contact information and staffing levels), land protection activity to date, and funding (funds spent to date, funds available in the current fiscal year and funding sources). Programs managers provide data as of December 31 of the preceding calendar year. We publish the information in a fact sheet, use it to create talking points, and make the information available on the state page of AFT’s Farmland Information Center website.” (Jennifer Dempsey, Director, Farmland Information Center)

Trust for Public Land:

“We collect information about federal, state, and local government spending at the parcel level. We also focus on completed projects that have conserved land in fee or easement (due to the permanency of these tools). That is, we work diligently to make sure things like leases are not included, nor projects that were awarded funding but have not closed. This is why our spending numbers are sometimes different from those reported by government agencies.” (Jennifer Plowden, Trust for Public Land)



Meadow view in Redding, Connecticut (Photo: Highstead)