

Public Conservation Funding in New England

Recent Trends in Government Spending on Land Protection

Massachusetts Overview

FEDERAL

Massachusetts receives federal LWCF funds for the Cape Cod National Seashore as well as the multi-state Silvio O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife Refuge, and is also a regular recipient of Forest Legacy Program funds to preserve working forests. The state frequently attracts federal conservation dollars from non-LWCF sources as well. Along with Maine, Massachusetts was a primary recipient of North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants in the region from 2004-2014. During that same period, approximately 82% of the Wildlife Restoration Program (Pittman-Robertson Act) spending on land protection projects in New England took place in Massachusetts.

ATTRACTING FEDERAL FUNDS WITH STATE INVESTMENT

Part of Massachusetts' attraction could be due to the state's strong record of state-level conservation spending. The state consistently led the region in total state-level spending by a substantial margin. Massachusetts has a large number of state programs that involve land conservation in some way, including:

- Agricultural Preservation Restriction Program
- Drinking Water Supply Protection Grant Program
- Conservation Partnership Grants
- Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity (LAND) Program
- Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Program

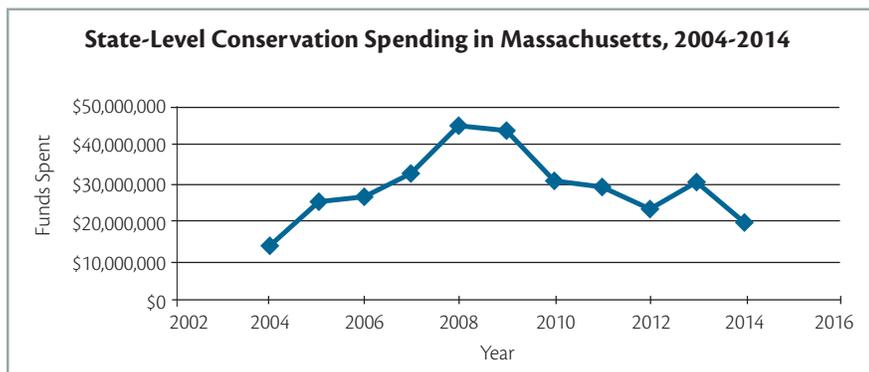
Most of these programs are funded by environmental bond bills passed by the state. From 2004-2014, the estimated per capita state spending on conservation in Massachusetts was \$50.10 for the full period, or approximately \$4.55 per Massachusetts resident per year.

LOCAL SPENDING

Conservation funding at the local level in Massachusetts stands out among the New England states due to Massachusetts' Community Preservation Act, which allows municipalities to collect a small surcharge on local property taxes to finance open space and recreation, historical preservation efforts, and affordable housing. As of 2015, 160 municipalities in Massachusetts had voluntarily adopted the CPA.



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

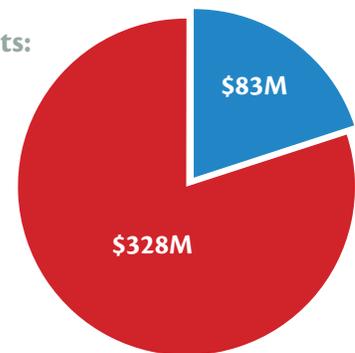


Data from Bob O'Connor at the MA Office of Energy and Environmental Protection



◀ Sunflowers in Sunderland, Massachusetts (Photo: Clarisse Hart)

Massachusetts:
\$411 M



In the graph above, estimated federal contributions are represented in blue, state contributions in red. Contributions are summed for the period 2004-2014 and rounded to nearest million (M). Please see the full report for details about calculating estimates and data sources.

Regional Overview

FEDERAL

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is the main source of federal funding for conservation in New England, contributing approximately 55-78% of the region's federal funding each year from 2004-2014. In late 2015, LWCF was allowed to expire for the first time in its 50-year history, and was later reauthorized for only three years. The protection of this program is crucial to the continued effort of conserving the New England Landscape.

LWCF IN ACTION

LWCF supports the Forest Legacy Program, which has helped protect over 1 million acres of land in New England. LWCF also provides funding for regionally significant projects like the four-state Silvio O. Conte National Fish & Wildlife Refuge.

OTHER SOURCES OF FEDERAL FUNDING

- Community Forest Program
- North American Wetlands Conservation Act
- Migratory Bird Conservation Fund
- Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund
- Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program
- National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program
- Wildlife Restoration Program/Pittman-Robertson Act



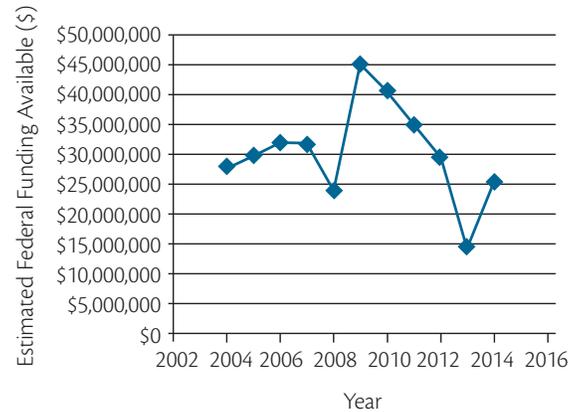
STATE

Funding for state-level land conservation programs varies widely by state in New England. Massachusetts led the region from 2004-2014 in total state-level conservation spending, while Vermont and Rhode Island invested the most per capita. In several New England states, like Connecticut and New Hampshire, conservation programs have been underfunded or undermined in recent years. In every year from 2004-2014, Connecticut's state spending on conservation was well below the estimated average the state needs to stay on track to meet its goal of 21% of the state's acreage conserved by 2023. In 2014 Connecticut's Community Investment Act was partially diverted to the state's general fund for the 2016-2017 budget. New Hampshire's LCHIP funding was also diverted to other purposes on multiple occasions between 2004 and 2014, 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.

LOCAL

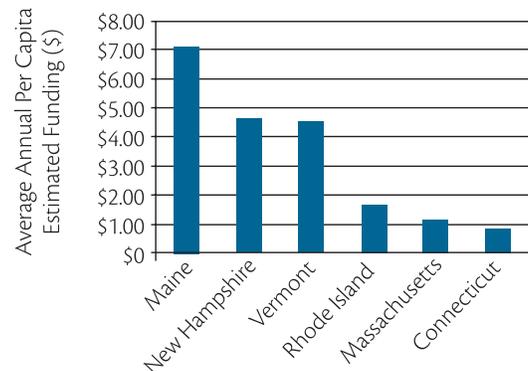
Local funds help communities preserve open space and recreation lands, and often provide critical match funding for larger conservation projects. The Massachusetts Community Preservation Act (CPA) is an innovative example of strong support at the local level, allowing towns to raise money through a surcharge on local property taxes.

Estimated New England Federal Funding Total, 2004-2014



Per capita calculations based on 2010 U.S. Census. Please refer to the full report for additional information and data sources.

Estimated Per Capita Federal Contributions for Land Conservation in New England States, 2004-2014



Estimated total federal contributions for conservation (defined here as land protection through acquisition or easement) in New England. 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. Please refer to the full report for additional information and data sources.

To learn more and download the full Public Conservation Funding in New England report, visit www.wildlandsandwoodlands.org/public-funding-report. The Wildlands and Woodlands (W&W) Initiative is a collaborative effort to protect 70 percent of New England in forests over the next 50 years. Achieving the W&W goal will require considerable investment from both public and private sources and continuing innovations in conservation finance.



Wildlands & Woodlands
A Vision for the New England Landscape