

Grant Number: Northeast Regional Conservation Needs Grant 2007-02

Grant Title: Northeast Regional Connectivity Assessment Project

Grant Receipt: The Nature Conservancy

Grant Contact Name: Colin Apse, Deputy Director, Eastern U.S. Freshwater Program,  
[capse@tnc.org](mailto:capse@tnc.org)

Date: October 31, 2011

Project Abstract and Timeline:

Work under this grant focused on developing region-wide spatial data, tools, and protocols to prioritize fish barrier mitigation projects to more efficiently conserve and restore anadromous fish, coldwater species, and other species of greatest conservation need. The project was organized around a Northeast Connectivity Workgroup which met routinely through web conferences and included state resource agency personnel from throughout the Northeast NEAFWA states. This Workgroup informed TNC in collaborative development of region-wide protocols, tools and new datasets that are already proving useful to state agency staff in their work on barrier mitigation.

The project completed a unified, error-checked dataset on dams, major waterfalls, and key anadromous fish habitat for all the NEAFWA states. Connectivity assessment metrics were calculated for all barriers within the NEAFWA region, based on Workgroup-proposed weighting schemes, and finalized in conjunction with the workgroup. A aquatic connectivity assessment results spreadsheet for the region was created based on these weightings. In addition, the Northeast Connectivity Assessment Tool (NCAT) was created in Excel to allow recalculation of results based on different geographic areas or new weighting parameters. The Final Report, which was reviewed in draft by the workgroup, was completed with a set of appendices. All results and reports have been distributed to NEAFWA through WMI, and are considered complete by TNC.

# NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONSERVATION NEED GRANT QUARTERLY REPORT

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Report #- 14 (Quarter ending September 30, 2011)

Were planned goals/objectives achieved last quarter? Yes

Regional Conservation Need Addressed: Development of Habitat Conservation Initiatives at a Landscape Scale.

Progress Achieved: (For each Goal/Objective, list Planned and Actual Accomplishments)

- *Completed as Planned:* 1 Final Virtual Meeting on August 11<sup>th</sup> which included: 1) review draft final report, including landscape scale management plan; 2) review of draft final results; and 3) discussion of product distribution
- *Completed as Planned:* Processing of the last rounds of data edits by Workgroup participants
- *Completed as Planned:* Calculation of over 60 ecological metrics for each dam in the NEAFWA region using final scoring and weighting procedures
- *Completed as Planned:* Finalization of the NEAFWA Connectivity dam, waterfall, and anadromous fish database.
- *Completed as Planned:* Submission of final report and appendices, results spreadsheet, and connectivity tool (NCAT) to WMI and NEAFWA on September 1, 2011.
- *Completed as Planned:* Outreach to NEAFWA via presentation at NEAFWA Technical Committee Meeting to discuss concerns with data and results distribution, future updates, and public announcements.

Difficulties Encountered:

- Still have unresolved issues with regards to:
  - Final “boilerplate” language from NEAFWA/WMI that needs to be included in the final report
  - Distribution of NE database due to dam safety concerns in MA and NJ;
  - A joint press release from NEAFWA and TNC on completion of the project & its utility
  - Of there will be any future updates to the dataset and they will be handled
  - Where data will be housed long-term (note that <http://rcngrants.org/node/8> has an out of date project team, assuming this is where results may be posted)
  - Whether TNC should play any role in future results distribution

Activities Anticipated Next Quarter:

- Although no longer funded, TNC will volunteer time to work with NEAFWA and WMI on the remaining issues outlined above.

Costs:

Are you within the approved budget plan? Yes

Are you within approved budget categories? Yes

Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colin Hesse". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'C' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'e'.

Date: October 31, 2011