

Reaching Out to Landowners and Communities in the Merrimack River Watershed



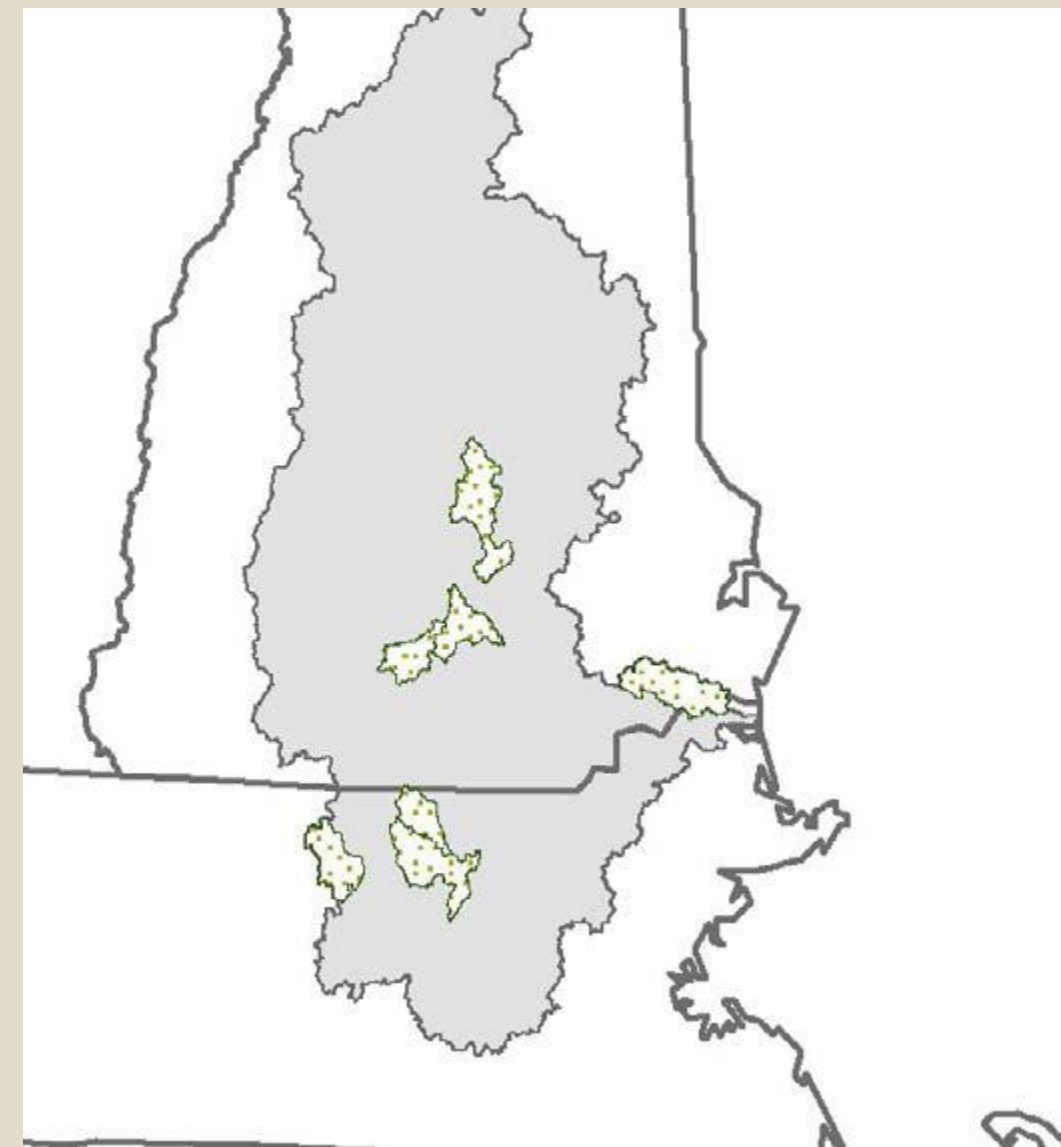
About the Project

The Merrimack River watershed is the most threatened watershed in the nation based on loss of private forested land.

This 3-year project—*Expanding Riparian Forest Buffers in Threatened Urban and Suburban Watersheds: A Precision Stormwater Approach*—aims to protect the waters of the Merrimack River by helping landowners and communities care for the land within the most important subwatersheds.

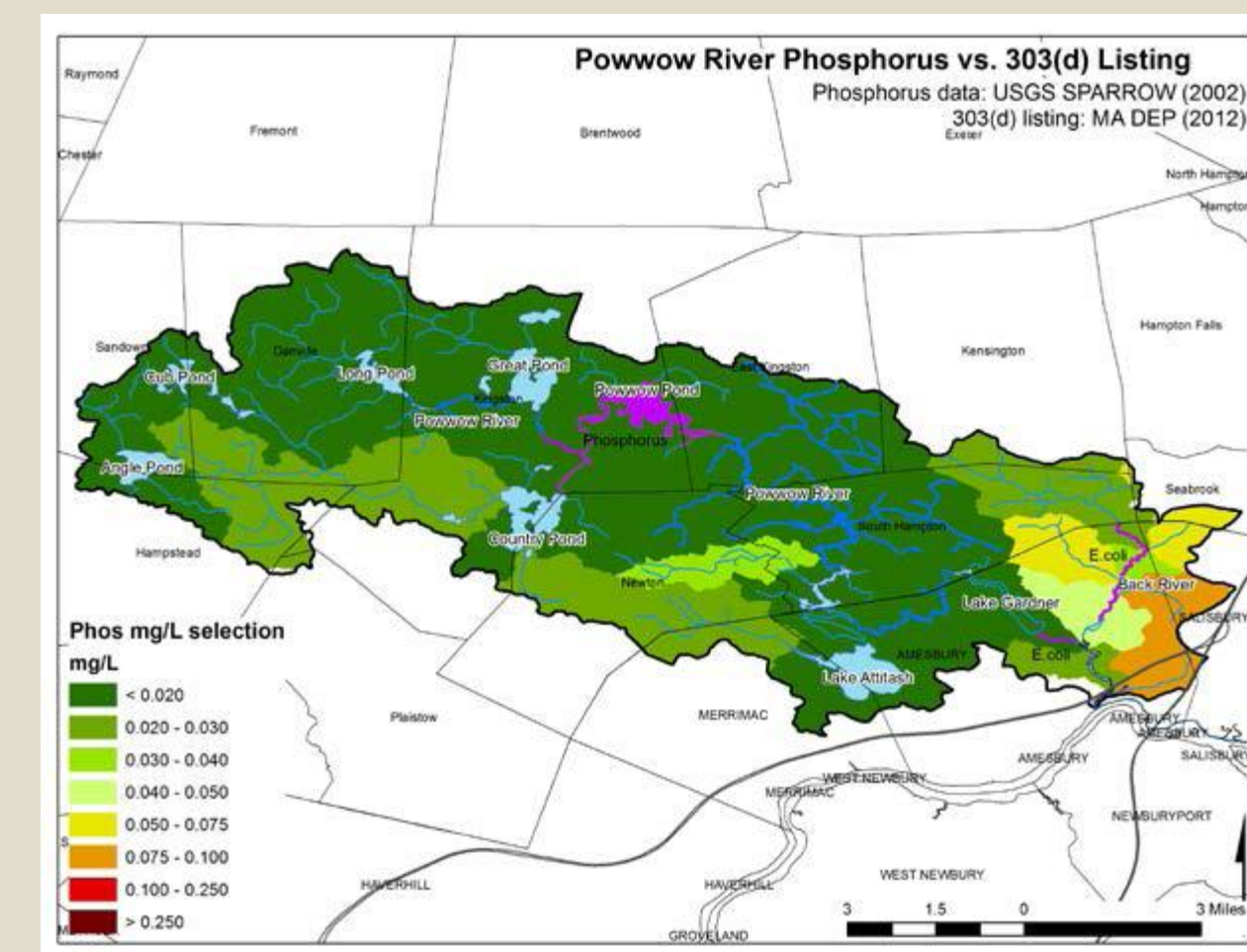
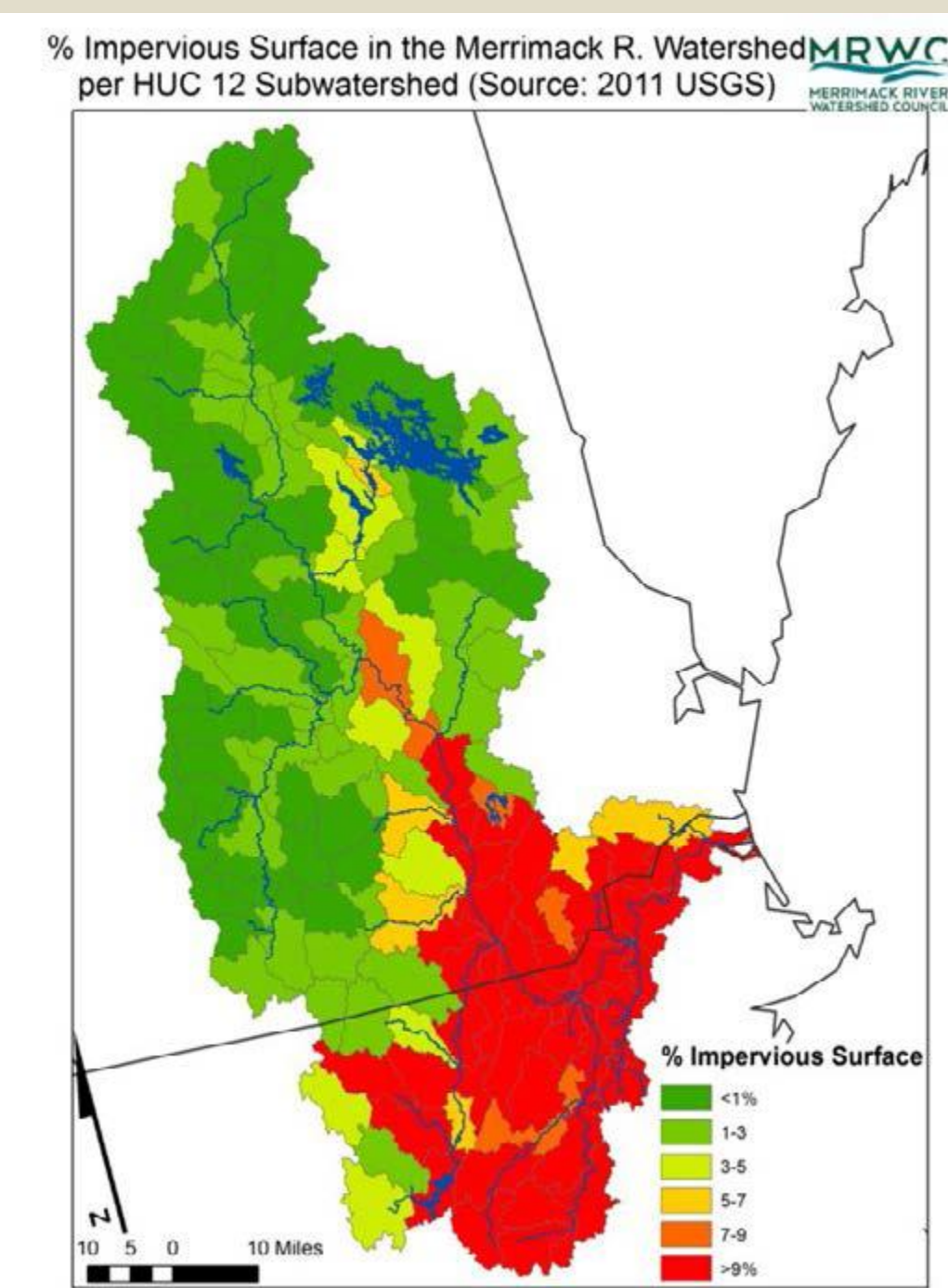
We're focused on 4 subwatersheds in New Hampshire:

- Merrimack River Drainage (Concord Tributaries)
- Lower Piscataquog River
- South Branch Piscataquog River
- Powwow River



The Merrimack River Watershed Council identified the most important subwatersheds through landscape analysis. They looked at:

- Impervious surface percentages by HUC12 watershed and 100-meter buffer
- Projected population increases in the next 10 years
- Index of development threats to forests important to drinking water
- 303(d) water quality impairments
- SPARROW modeling
- Outstanding resource waters
- Forest blocks
- Freshwater resilience
- Cold-water fish ranking
- Numbers of threatened and endangered species
- Regional conservation priorities



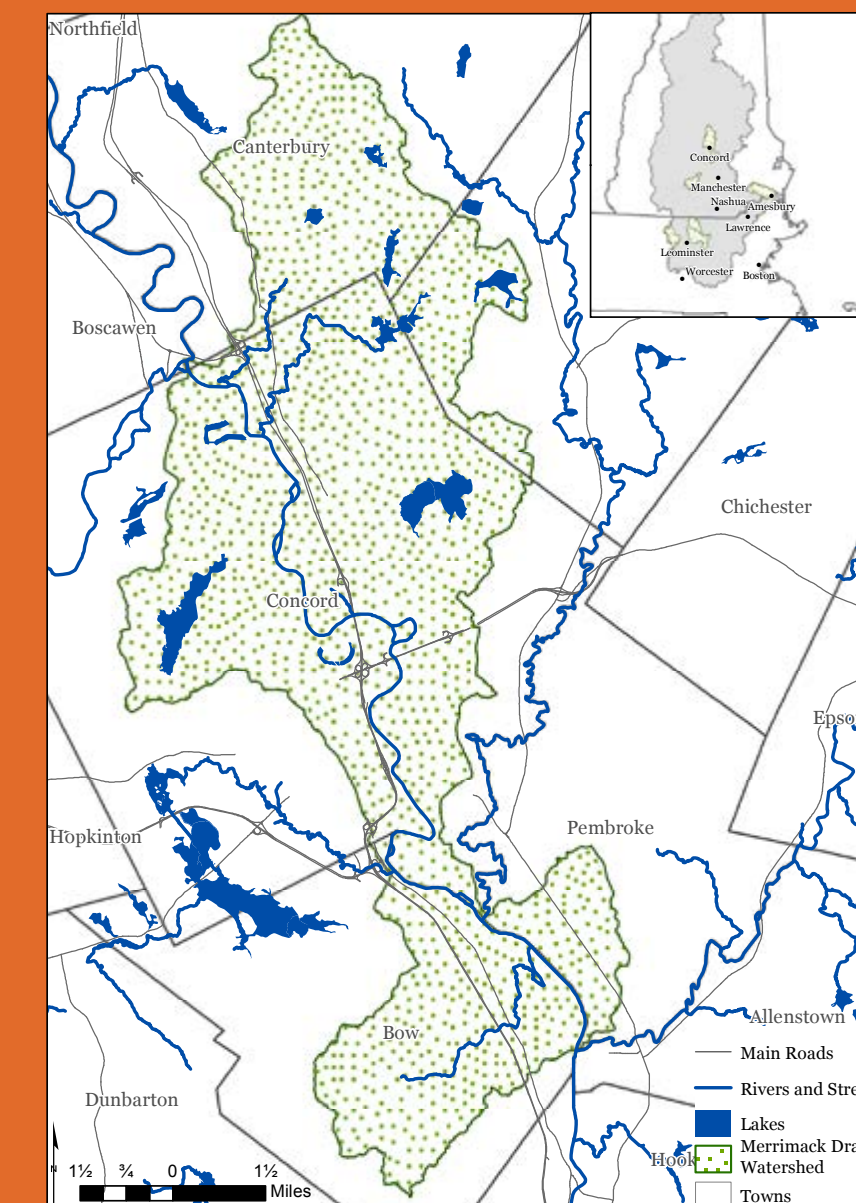
Boots on the Ground

UNH Cooperative Extension Foresters working in the communities of the 4 subwatersheds are conducting targeted outreach to landowners and communities. They provide technical assistance using local information and considering local issues to encourage forest stewardship planning, improve forest management, and protect lands.



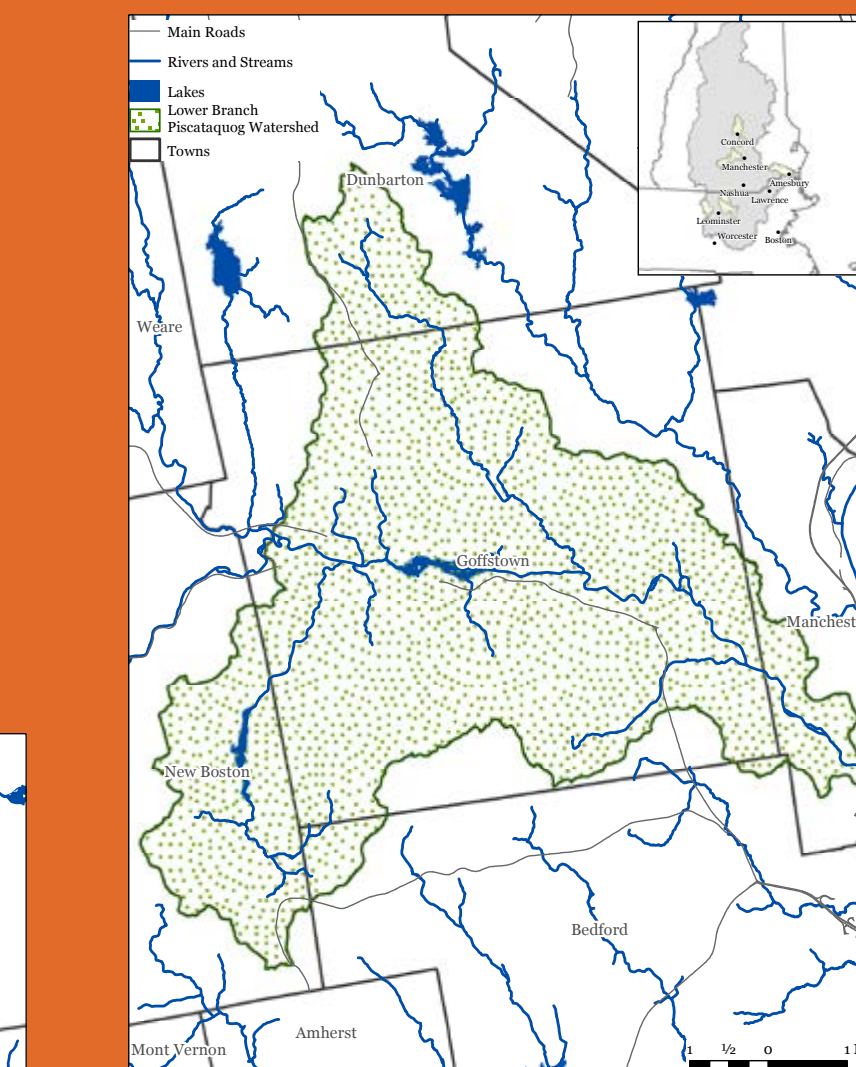
Tim Fleury, Merrimack County Extension Forester

Targeting the Merrimack River Drainage (Concord tributaries) watershed: Canterbury, Loudon, Concord, Pembroke and Bow



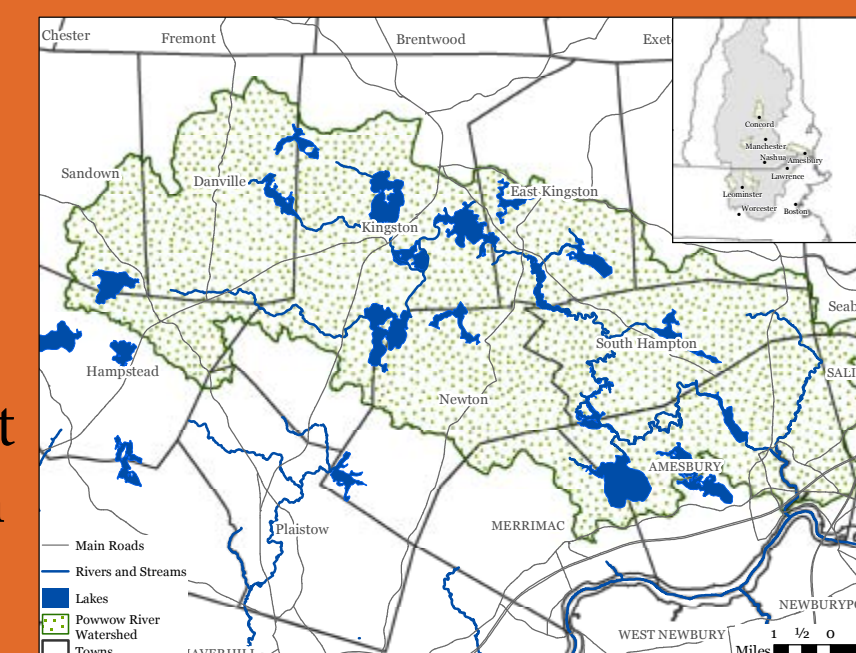
Jon Nute, Hillsborough County Extension Forester

Targeting the Lower Piscataquog and South Branch Piscataquog watersheds: Dunbarton, New Boston, Goffstown, Franconstown, Lyndeborough, Mont Vernon, Manchester and Bedford



Fred Borman, Rockingham County Extension Forester

Targeting the Powwow watershed: Sandown, Danville, Hampstead, Plaistow, Kingston, East Kingston, Newton, South Hampton and Seabrook



Key Messages

Using the data gathered by the Merrimack River Watershed Council during their landscape analysis, we created watershed-specific outreach materials for landowners. We focused on these categories:

- Actions of landowners
- Useful resources
- Help is available
- Watershed information, by the numbers
- General information about the watershed

Call to Action

Your Woods Keep Our Water Clean

How trees help rivers

- Trees and forests keep water clean and provide essential habitat for animals.
- Trees filter pollutants to prevent them from entering streams and rivers.
- Trees along rivers shade the water, maintaining cool waterways.
- Trees and forests are critical in controlling erosion.
- Forests reduce catastrophic flooding.

So what can you do to help?

Keep Your Shoreline Planted!

5 Actions for Homeowners

1. Use natural landscaping in your yard.
2. Minimize your use of fertilizers and pesticides.
3. Properly dispose of household chemical wastes.
4. Call the Education Center with questions.
5. Plant native trees and shrubs along riverbanks, 100 feet or greater in best!

5 Actions for Woodlot Owners

1. Call your county extension forester for help.
2. Set goals and develop a plan for your land.
3. Use best practices for managing your land.
4. Look for invasive plants and insects.
5. Plant native trees and shrubs along riverbanks, 100 feet or greater in best!

We Can Help!

Take advantage of free technical assistance and opportunities to benefit your land! Contact the organizations below for assistance.

Additional Resources

- **Good Forestry in the Granite State** www.goodforestry.org
- **Look Up the Rate**, a project of the N.H. Department of Environmental Services www.nh.gov
- **NH.org: Managing Insects and Diseases** www.nh.gov

Contact these organizations:

UNH Cooperative Extension-Hillsborough County
603.661.0009 / jeff@unh.edu / www.unh.edu

Piscataquog Land Conservancy
603.887.3331 / www.plcnh.org

UNH Cooperative Extension Education Center
877.396.6706 / www.unh.edu

Natural Resources Conservation Service-Hillsborough County
603.673.3409 / www.hillsborough.us

Landowners are encouraged to act to help protect the Merrimack River.

1. Call your county extension forester for help
2. Set goals and develop a plan for your land
3. Use best practices for managing your land
4. Look for invasive plants and insects
5. Plant native trees and shrubs along riverbanks, 100 feet or greater is best!

Data-Rich Information

South Branch Piscataquog River

ranked as the most important in the Merrimack River watershed for protecting water quality and wildlife

20,070

total acres of land

82% forested land

1% impervious cover

5,794

acres of protected land

Rated as most important in the Merrimack watershed for:

- endangered species
- cold water fish
- forests providing clean water
- threatened forests
- projected population growth

Already impaired for pathogens and nitrogen

11 number of known endangered (E) or threatened (T) species

Animals

- Blunt-nosed minnow (E), Eastern brook stickleback (E), Brook stickleback (E), Small wood thrush (E), Northern hooded warbler (E), Spotted towhee (E), Common junco (E), Field sparrow (E)

Plants

- Scudweed (E), Canada's largest goldenrod (E), Canada's largest goldenrod (E), Little bluestem (E)

Information about the Merrimack River

The Merrimack River watershed is 2.2 million acres across New Hampshire and Massachusetts. The watershed is highly developed and is home to 2.6 million people. Less than 20 percent of the land is permanently forested and the population is expected to continue to grow, making it the most threatened watershed in the nation in terms of projected loss of forest land, according to the U.S. Forest Service.

Information about the project

This project aims to protect the riparian of the Merrimack River by helping homeowners, landowners and communities care for the land along the tributaries of the Merrimack River in a subwatershed of the Merrimack River Watershed Council, UNH Cooperative Extension, and other partners, and is funded by the U.S. Forest Service.

Data from the landscape analysis helps to make the case for protecting the watershed:

- Total acres of land, including forested and impervious cover
- Numbers of known endangered and threatened plant and animal species found in the towns of the subwatershed
- Total acres of protected land

For more information, contact Karen Bennett and Alicia Carlson at (603) 862-3883 or forest.info@unh.edu.

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