

What we do?

Mission

Achieve sustainable landscape-level conservation in Appalachia through partnerships, shared resources, enhanced science-based management capacity, landscape level planning, and support for conservation actions and research as part of a national network.

Goals & Objectives

Goal 1: Create a common conservation vision and well-aligned conservation actions

Objectives:

- a. Develop a common landscape vision for the Appalachians
- b. Set conservation and habitat priorities for the region
- c. Be THE forum working together to align multiple entity visions
- d. Provide guidance for greater partner consistency in future landscape conservation planning efforts
- e. Add value to State Wildlife Action Plans and assist with integration into a larger whole
- f. Sustain future agency and partner funding for conservation
- g. Fully align existing regional conservation investments to maximize partnership impact
- h. Engage regional species-focused and habitat-focused groups
- i. Reach out to other landscape planning entities and coordinate efforts (flyways, App Regional Commission, other LCCs)
- j. Influence energy development to minimize negative impacts
- k. Include large private property owners in landscape planning

Goal 2: Deliver landscape-level, community mapping for regional use

Objectives:

- a. Identify and develop actions to protect the “best of the best” habitats
- b. Provide distribution and condition of aquatic habitat
- c. Manage terrestrial and aquatic resources as one
- d. Describe the what/when/where effects of habitat fragmentation
- e. Project the likely landscape conditions over time, indicating probably future patterns and changes
- f. Project impacts of projected changes in land and water use on restoration potential
- g. Map the potential impacts of energy development on habitat, water and migration corridors
- h. Create a corridor and connectivity framework, including acquisition, easements, habitat restoration targets and goals

- i. Map when/where 2nd home growth and urbanization will occur
- j. Provide likely climate change scenarios and potential impacts to assist partner planning
- k. Incorporate concepts of resiliency into our ecosystem planning and understanding

Goal 3: Support partner decision-making and conservation investments

Objectives:

- a. Provide landscape-level decision support to partners' conservation policy, action, decisions, and investment
- b. Complete a climate change-vulnerability-readiness assessment to assist partners in aligning decisions and investments
- c. Determine the priority decision needs of partners and provide support
- d. Inform current conservation management decisions with up-to-date models - Connect current actions with change models
- e. Assist in proactively aligning management practices with emerging trends
- f. Proactively frame energy development choices and impacts (Marcellus, biomass and wind)
- g. Integrate actions with the field with great focus on ecosystem and habitat; less species focus on refuges
- h. Provide a picture of complex changes and the implications from policy-makers to on the ground managers.
- i. Help reduce the risk and uncertainty of conservation investments by framing actions and investments with higher probability of success

Goal 4: Create a breakthrough conservation dialogue for the AppLCC Region

Objectives:

- a. Address the human dimensions of landscape conservation
- b. Determine value-added messages that connect the public to the environment
- c. Market our accomplishments
- d. Enhance LCC communication with partners
- e. Enhance statewide communication between sister agencies (sharing with other state agencies)
- f. Improve internal state communications (internal sharing)
- g. Demonstrate concrete achievements for investments
- h. Provide success stories to demonstrate value for partner investment and participation
- i. Ensure ongoing opportunities for partner-to-partner sharing and dialogue

- j. Develop robust communities of interest focused on addressing the key issues facing AppLCC
- k. Networking relevant researchers with practitioners
- l. Improved interdisciplinary communication
- m. Serve as a focal point for dissemination of regional information
- n. Communicate relationship between focal species and socioeconomic benefits
- o. Communicate to public and leadership the environmental impacts, relative to climate forcing, of energy extraction and use
- p. Host interdisciplinary discussion groups on regional issues
- q. Enhance website to enable:
 - Posting services
 - Resource data
 - SharePoint
 - Holding webinars
 - Posting results of studies
 - Hosting interdisciplinary blogs on regional issues

Goal 5: Create data and tool sharing strategy

Objectives

- a. Share partner data sets for regional interpretation and data mining
- b. Facilitate resolution (scale) alignment, data consistency, data quality, statistical methods, data repository access, tool compatibility, API availability, tool source code availability
- c. Develop new data and tools, as needed
- d. Integrate GIS layers that cross state boundaries
- e. Create user-friendly database
- f. Establish common language and methods supported and fully embraced by partners and stakeholders
- g. Manage relationship with the Science Centers ensuring greater support for identified needs
- h. Provide science and data support to the existing habitat partnerships and joint ventures
- i. Develop tools to assess water supply and demand in the context of population growth, land use changes, and climate variability.
- j. Identify the most effective monitoring techniques across a large spatial scale
- k. Synthesize and disseminate partner research and implementation efforts

Goal and Objective Measures

- a. Contributes to overlapping goals and objectives of partners (# of partners listing goal in their short-term plans)
- b. Partners value and are willing to contribute toward achievement
- c. Integrates into things partners are already doing
- d. Supports local/ground level efforts AND is relevant to state and regional resource management decisions
- e. Regional significance
- f. Costs
- g. Likelihood of success
- h. Application to impending decisions and policies
- i. Interdisciplinary and/or landscape approach
- j. Provide data that can be immediately applied to conservation across the LCC area
- k. Other:
 - o Help balance/produce a proper blend of short-term wins, medium-term projects and long-term landscape needs
 - o Leverages the benefits of working across borders
 - o Address cost/benefits and demonstrate value
 - o Provides the science and action that supports good conservation decisions and policy
 - o Uniquely answers critical questions

Why we do it?

Vision

Create a science and management partnership to protect the valued resources and biological diversity of the Appalachian region, sustain the benefits provided by healthy and resilient ecosystems to human communities, and help natural systems adapt to large landscape-level stressors and those stressors that may be magnified by the changing climate.

Our Unique Role

- Deliver landscape-level breakthroughs via a science and management partnership
- Leverage multiple partnership skillsets and expertise to integrate across disciplines and landscapes

Guiding Principles (guiding behaviors and effort)

- Focus on the landscape-level priorities and avoid species-specific projects
- Create realistic assessments of workload – balancing short-term and long-term efforts

- Develop partnership comfort with uncertainty and imperfect information learn/adapt/revise
- Advance patience in developing landscape approaches and building successful partnerships
- Effective communication of goals, projects, and results among partners and stakeholders
- Include all conservation land managers efforts, including private sector and private property owners
- Strive to generate trust in AppLCC and its work products through inclusiveness, reviewed science and transparency
- Understand the attitudes, values and beliefs of stakeholders, partners and public sectors

Values

- Promote a boundary-less approach, while respecting partner jurisdictions
- Enable/support/foster broader thinking about conservation delivery and science
Keep the focus on the landscape and avoid species-specific projects
- Partner with all like-minded entities (Inclusiveness – include all land managers with a common conservation focus)
- Implement systematic conservation planning, informed by Appalachian goals, and inclusive of stakeholder input
- Enhance trust and confidence that outcomes are accurate by inviting different interests to collaborate on LCC efforts
- Avoid duplication by aligning efforts with existing regional initiatives (e.g. JVs, App Regional Commission, multi-state SWG efforts).

Competencies

- Collective skills, knowledge, and resources that cut across the full spectrum of landscape conservation challenges
- Proactive provisioning of information and frameworks for maximizing conservation actions
- Effective sharing of data and tools with all engaged partners
- Address the human dimensions of landscape conservation by connecting the public to the environment to messages that resonate

How we do it?

Business Processes

- a. Website
- b. Funding
- c. Data Architecture and Sharing
- d. Project Prioritization and Selection
- e. Community Effectiveness
- f. Community Engagement

AppLCC Operational Measures

1. Increases in partnership-directed funding and resource levels
2. Full partnership participation and integration of efforts
3. Use of products by decision makers
4. Number of populations or habitats with downward trend halted or reversed
5. Landscape area enhanced through cooperative efforts
6. Acres and miles evaluated for priority efforts
7. Satisfaction of cooperators
8. Socioeconomic measures of communities trending positively
9. Developed products being used
10. Number of cooperators contributing data and tools

Criteria (prioritizing effort)

- Addresses partnership's Immediate needs
- Leverages existing investments of partners and partnership
- Focuses on measurable progress with a high probability of success
- Impacts landscape-scale effort, beyond individual partners' focus or ability
- Partnership's willingness to contribute time, talent, treasure or exert influence and support
- Benefits multiple partners, groups and agencies
- Leverages multiple funding sources
- Proactive

Hot Topics to Address

- Which exotic/invasive/disease battles are worth fighting?
- Understanding the unique role of mineral rights - If we don't own them, we can't preserve the land
- Be sensitive to coal's unique role in the region
- Address energy's impact in the region
- Water: Quality, quantity, aquatic species and aquatic habitat
- Increase our influence with private individuals
- Identify and encourage best land use practices for private landowners