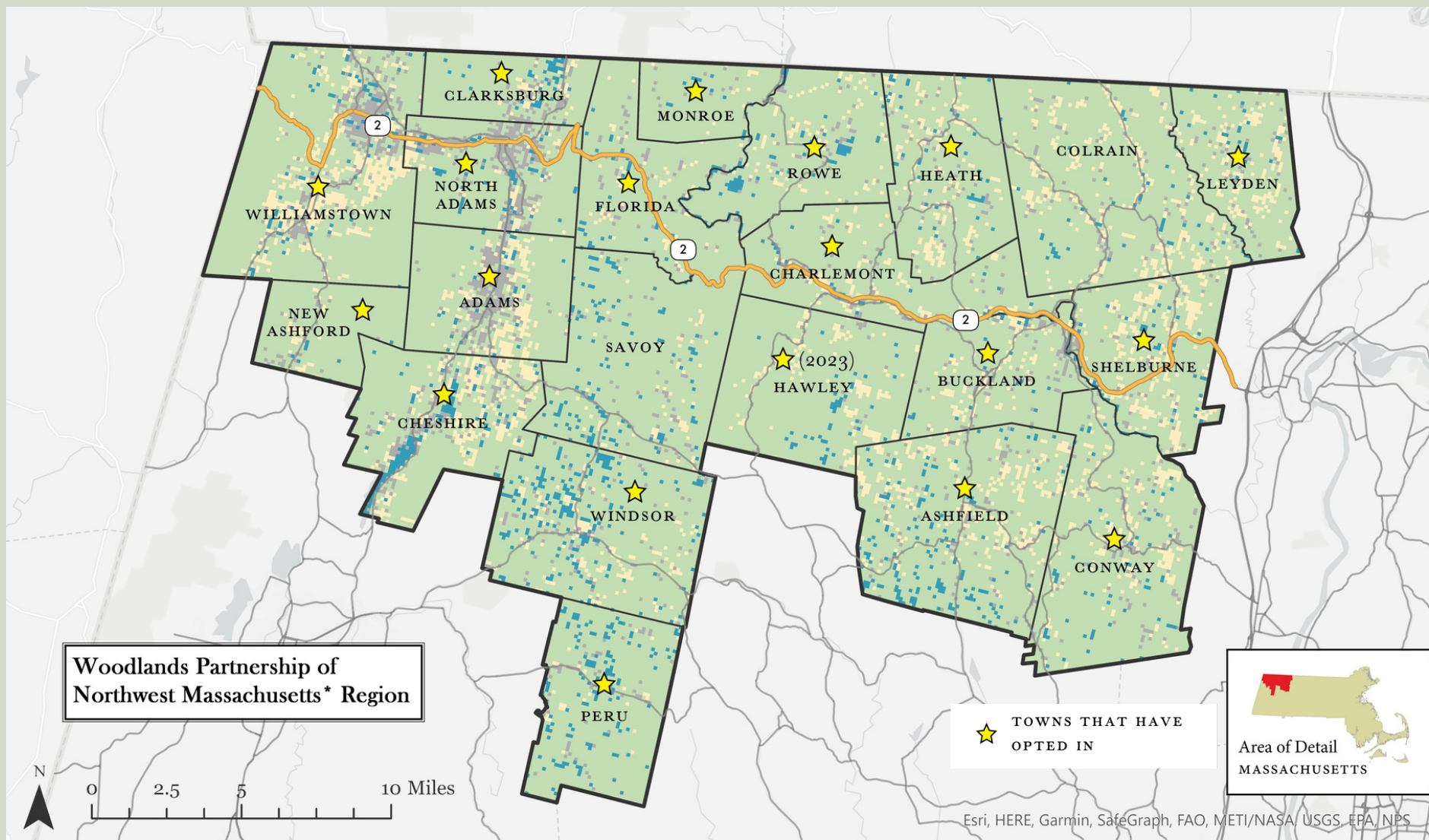


WOODLANDS PARTNERSHIP OF NORTHWEST MASSACHUSETTS



The Woodlands Partnership Board is comprised of representatives from the 21-town region as well as from Berkshire Natural Resources Council, Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, Deerfield River Watershed Association, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Franklin County Community Development Corporation, Franklin Land Trust, Franklin Regional Council of Governments, Hoosic River Watershed Association, Lever, Inc., Massachusetts Society of Foresters, Massachusetts Forest Alliance, Ohketeau Cultural Center, University of Massachusetts Amherst, and the U.S. Forest Service. New England Forestry Foundation serves as Administrative Agent for the Partnership. To learn more visit: WoodlandsPartnership.org



FOREST CONSERVATION

Conserve forestland while keeping it in private ownership to protect the region's rural character and the role forests play in providing clean water and air, flood control, carbon sequestration and storage, habitat, and forest products, with land already in Chapter 61 prioritized so that town tax revenue is not affected

NATURAL-RESOURCE BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Increase economic development and expand employment with sustainable forest products, outdoor recreation, and natural resource and tourism-based businesses.



MUNICIPAL FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The annual Woodlands Partnership Implementation grants provide up to \$25,000 for participating municipalities and \$75,000 for regional initiatives - as of October 2023, over \$1,000,000 has been awarded. In addition, we advocate for Payment-In-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILOT) reform at the policy level to address inequities with state funding in the region.

PROJECTS & AWARDS:

a sampling, as of November 2023

- The Forest Legacy Program - the Partnership Region was successfully admitted into the eligibility area for this competitive grant program that conserves working forests for wildlife, forest products, recreation, and other public benefits.
- \$60,000 U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry three-year project to restore floodplain forest and riparian buffers (*sites in Conway, Williamstown, Shelburne Falls, TBD*)
- \$60,000 matching state EOEEA Woodlands Partnership regional grant that includes funding of climate resilience stewardship plans for a half dozen municipally-owned forests.
- \$100,000 USFS State & Private Forestry three-year grant that includes establishment of demonstration sites at town forests where education and outreach events can be hosted and climate-informed forestry practices can be piloted and studied including research plots; creation of online resources or a “Virtual Forest Center” connecting municipal officials and diverse forest owners to stewardship assistance, as a precursor to a physical Forest Center; Forest Center space needs /programmatic planning in 2024; Reaching out to under-represented Indigenous communities and stakeholders to invite their participation in the Partnership, incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into programs and focus on diversity, equity, inclusion and justice issues.
- \$100,000 State Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness 2-year grant to Town of Rowe, Mass Audubon and multiple partners, including NEFF and Mass Woodlands Institute for planning and launch of Virtual Forest Center website with web designer; funding for the Ohketeau Center of Ashfield to implement a Community Liaison Model to recruit scholars, Indigenous ecologists, foresters, culture bearers, and Tribal historians to assist in implementing plans, focus groups, and workshops in consultation with grant partners including the Woodlands Partnership.
- \$540,000 Congressionally Directed Spending: Action on Forest Climate Resilience focused on implementing stewardship practices to promote climate resilience and store more carbon in the forest within member towns: Practices to be applied on privately-owned and municipal forests in which a climate-informed stewardship plan approved by Dept. of Conservation & Recreation has been prepared by a licensed, trained forester working with owners to accomplish their goals.
- \$75,000 EOEEA Woodlands Partnership regional grant to further develop and administer funded climate-smart forestry practices on the ground.
- The annual Woodlands Partnership Implementation grants provide up to \$25,000 for participating municipalities and \$75,000 for regional initiatives - as of October 2023, over \$1,000,000 has been awarded. Projects include the purchase of land, emergency vehicles, stewardship plans, trail connection and signage, expansion of a wood processing center, and support for local business entrepreneurs.