

Forest Assessments, Stakeholder Input & CT Forest Roundtables

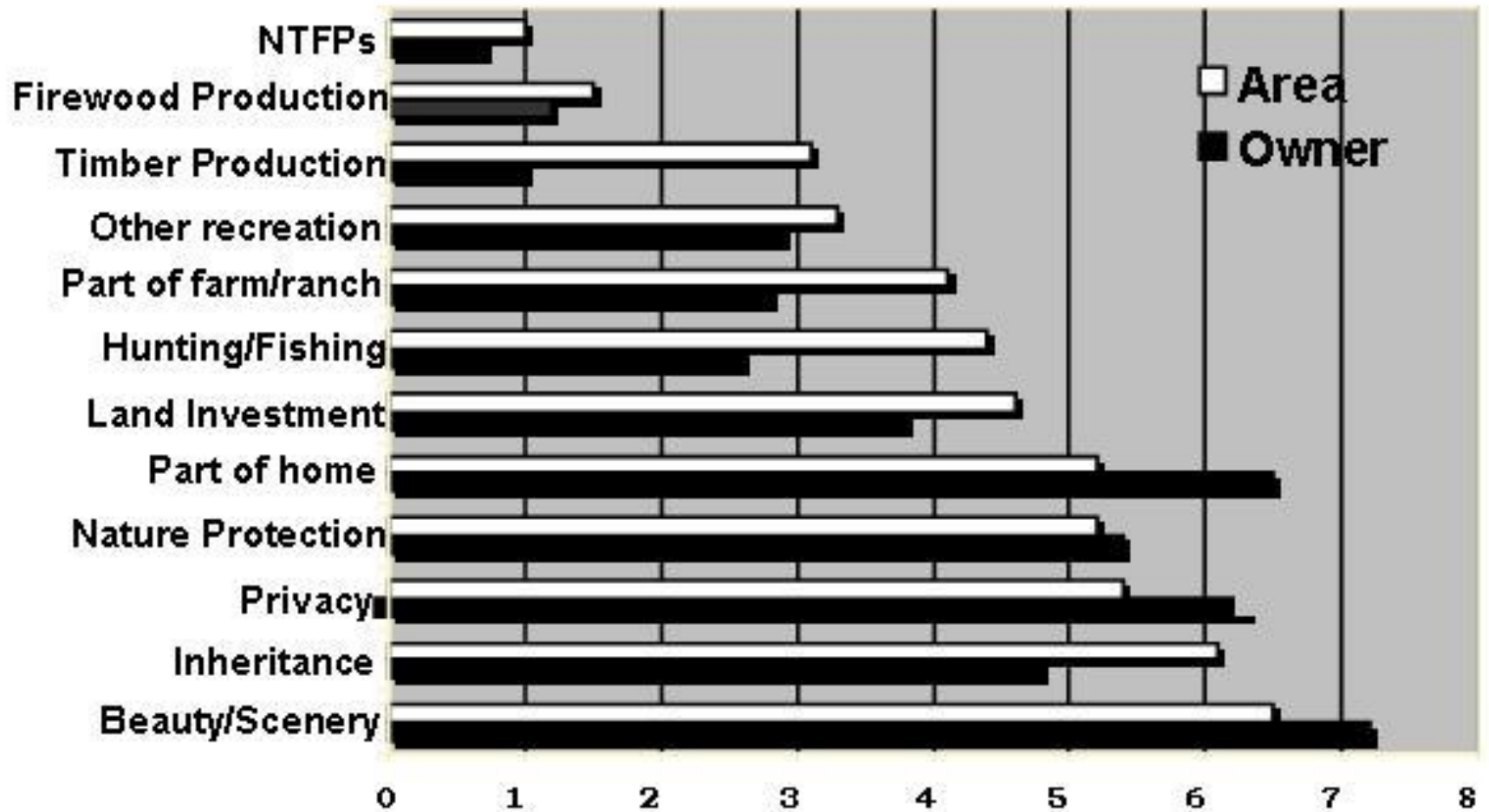
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Local Forest Roundtables
February 2010

The Forest Roundtables are partially funded by the USDA Forest Service and the DEP Forestry Division through an agreement with the Connecticut Forest and Park Association

Overview

- Forest Assessments are not new – began in 1878
- Public participation – provides sense of important values
- 2010 CT Forest Assessment
 - Builds on 2004 Forest Resource Plan
 - Focuses on Forest Legacy areas and changes in acquisition strategy & policies
- GIS Technology and Spatial/Time Perspectives
 - Integration of change over time with change over space
 - Land-use & ecosystem dynamics – past & future

Critical Understanding of Owner Values



Recognition & Measurement of Public Values

- Key reason for stakeholder input
- Increasingly viewed as the source of values
- And measurable goals & objectives
- The CT Forest Roundtables are means to
 - Reconnect with 2003 stakeholder input & revalidate the visions
 - Broaden value perspectives and add new dimensions
 - More visions, statements of principle
 - Creative new overlay maps

2010 Forest Assessment

✓ **Conserve Working Forest Lands**

Conserving and managing working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses

✓ **Protect Forests From Harm**

Protect forests from threats, including catastrophic storms, flooding, insect or disease outbreak, & invasive species.

✓ **Enhance Public Benefits from Trees and Forests**

Air and water quality, soil conservation, biological diversity, carbon storage, and forest products, forestry-related jobs, production of renewable energy, & wildlife

Pungent List of Public Benefits

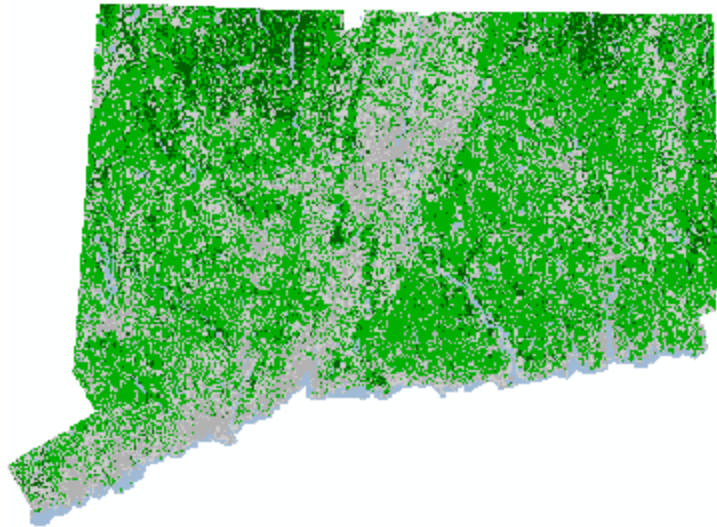
- **Development Risk**
- **Fragmentation**
- **Wildfire risk**
- **Forest Health Risk**
- **Fish and Wildlife Habitat**
- **Water Quality and Supply**
- **Economic Potential**
- **Green Infrastructure**

Expand Assessment requirements to meet Forest Legacy Program requirements

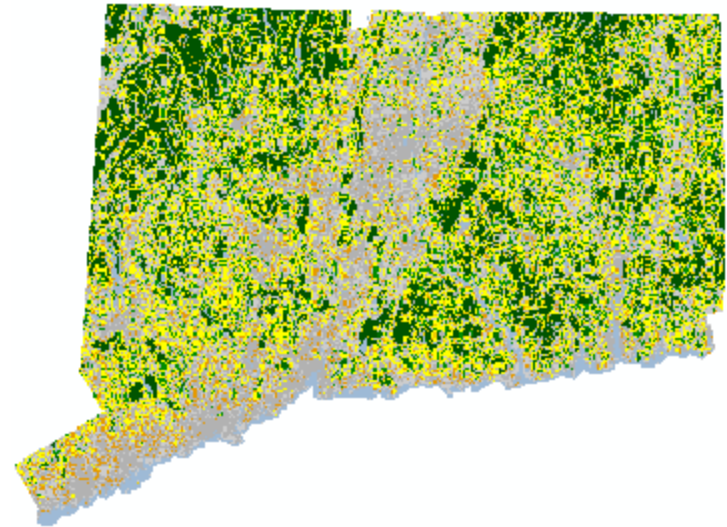
- Aesthetic and Scenic resources
- Public recreation opportunities
- Threatened and endangered species
- Forest products & forest mgt. opportunities
- Cultural resources
- Outstanding geological features
- Protected land in the State
- Historic uses of the Forest
- Multi-state boundaries are important

CT Core Forest Areas Key Legacy

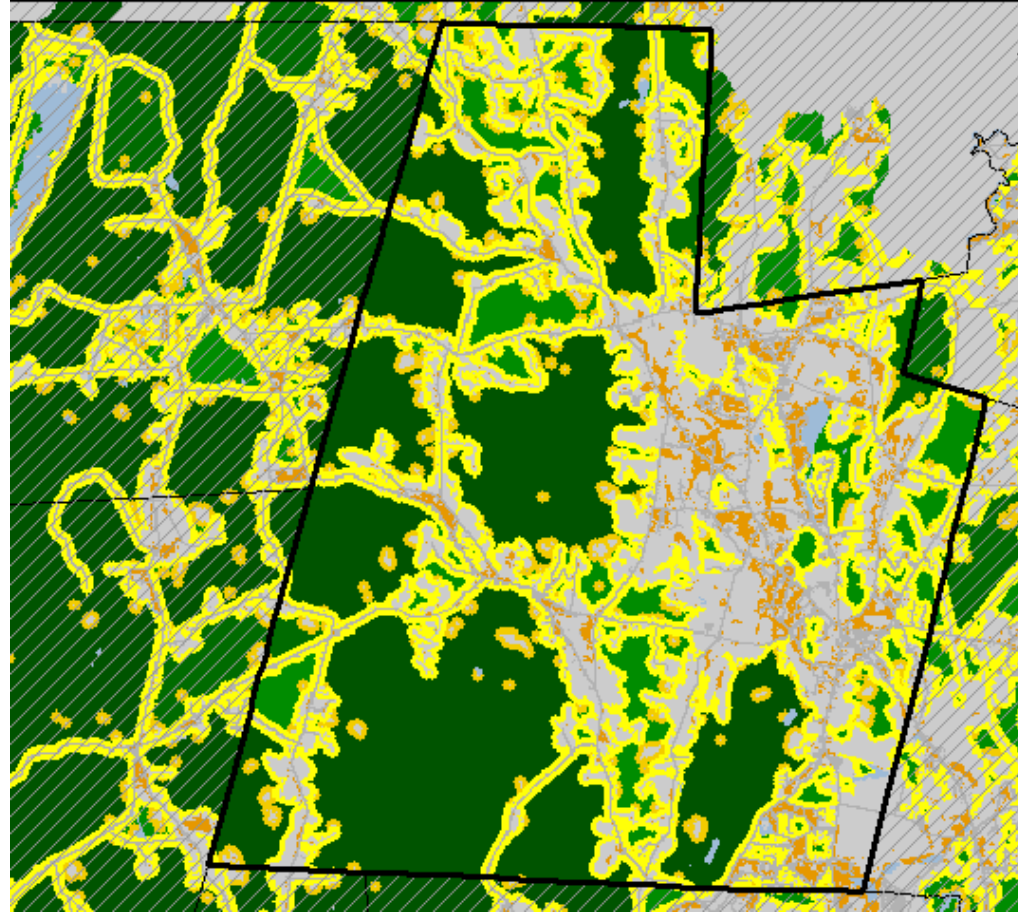
1985 – 16% of Connecticut's forest was patch or perforated; 42% was core forest



2006 – 21% of Connecticut's forest was patch or perforated; only 36% was core forest



Granby – Bigger ownerships are forest & woods



Consider 10 current Visions & Principles

In the future,

1. *All Connecticut forest policies will emanate from the undeniable fact that all forests, public and private, provide critically essential public benefits*

And some principles will guide us toward the future

Principles

- All forests, urban, suburban, and rural, provide some combination of essential public benefits.
- These benefits have real value that should be but often are not recognized in the marketplace.
- Private forest owners, who are not compensated or incentivized to continue or enhance their production, provide the vast majority of these public benefits.
- Ensuring a future supply of these essential benefits will require financial compensation to those who produce them.
- Policies will use the best available science.

2. Connecticut will increase the amount of protected forest with an emphasis on the core forest area.

Principles

- In the future, Connecticut Forests will be 65% of the state's land area with 42% core forest. (some numbers)
- Develop a CT Forest Land Preservation program to aid in achieving this specific goal.
- Increase public awareness of opportunities to protect forestland, emphasizing public benefit.
- CT tax deductions for gifts of below-value sale of conservation easements that preclude development of private forestlands.

3. Connecticut's forests will contain healthy and sustainable populations of native plants and animals

Principles

- A diversity of habitats are necessary to maintain a diversity of wildlife and native plants, so forests will be managed to obtain stands from grasslands, to shrublands, to mature forest.
- Locally over-abundant species that damage ecosystems, such as deer, should be managed for population size and dynamics
- Prompt control of alien pests shall be so!

4. Public agencies will manage Connecticut's public forestlands to enhance public benefits.

Principles

- Connecticut's State Forestland should continue to serve as demonstration areas for sound forest management.
- Management of State Forests should continue according to their original intent for current and future generations.
- Management of State Forests should continue to provide a variety of products, services, and habitats.
- Utilize the best scientific information to make informed decisions
- Management of Municipally owned forestland should follow the same principles as State Forestland.
- Publicly owned forestland should be provided adequate funding and resources for proper management. Optimally, a ratio of one forester to 10,000 acres should be used.
- Create a funding mechanism to ensure that revenues generated from publicly owned forests be used for management of those lands.

5. Owners of Connecticut's private forestlands have defined goals of ownership, which are consistent with the public benefits of their forests, and they work toward their goals to derive personal value from their forests

Principles

- Utilize the best scientific information to make informed decisions
- Public programs should maximize the number of owners and acres on which realization of owner goals and conservation of public benefits are aligned

Five More Visions, But No Principles

6. Connecticut's forests support a viable forest products industry that provides marketable products from renewable and diverse forest resources
7. Connecticut's forests are managed with scientific information flowing from a dialogue among scientists, forest owners and managers, and outreach specialists
8. Connecticut's forests support a broad spectrum of recreational activities that attract users to Connecticut's forests
9. Connecticut's forests are understood and appreciated as exciting places to learn about nature
10. The people of Connecticut live in and around healthy urban ecosystems that include forest resources, which they understand and value

Roundtable Process

Looking for levels of agreement

■ I agree!

■ I am not comfortable; I don't understand; I won't say "no", but not "yes" either

■ I disagree; or I am not comfortable agreeing with these folks because we disagreed before, etc. so "No!"

Next Steps

- ✓ **Straw poll** – do you have high levels of agreement on Visions?
- ✓ **Disagreement** – could your table hone on a Vision or Principle that can be improved?
- ✓ **Discuss the Vision or Principle** – try out improvements; keep going until high level of agreement reached
- ✓ **But avoid wordsmithing/fine tuning** that is better done later by 1 or 2 people

If your table agrees on Visions

Examples:

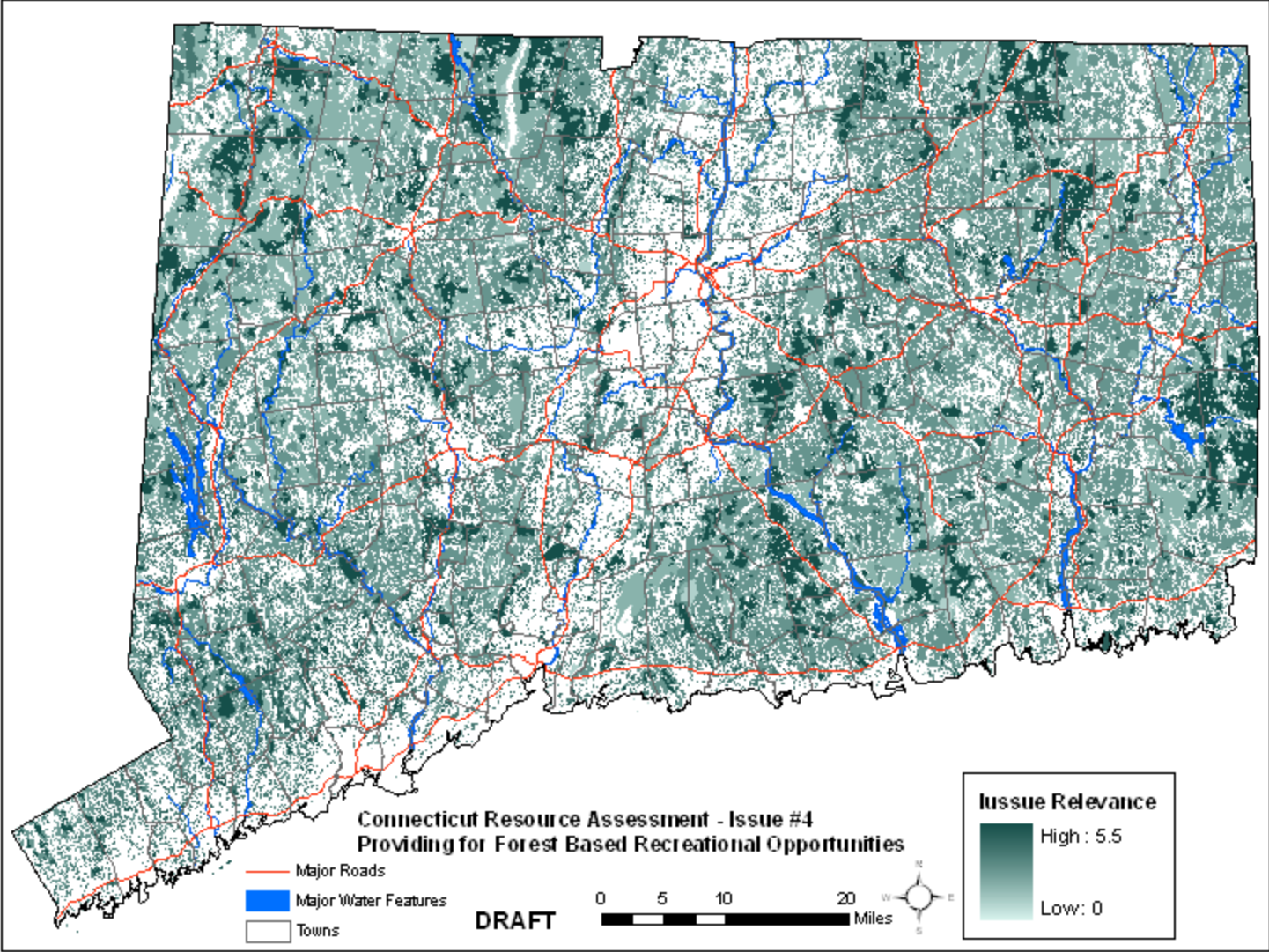
- *Develop a principle* that will help guide policy and management toward the future Vision
- *Principles* – A clear statement of a standard or rule that can guide future policy and management toward the desired visions.
- *Sustainable forestry* as defined by ?
- *Property and tenure rights* – who pays, who benefits?
- *Markets for values* that currently not bought and sold
- *Public payments for public values produced by private owners*

Or Develop a set of Map Overlays for a Vision and Principles

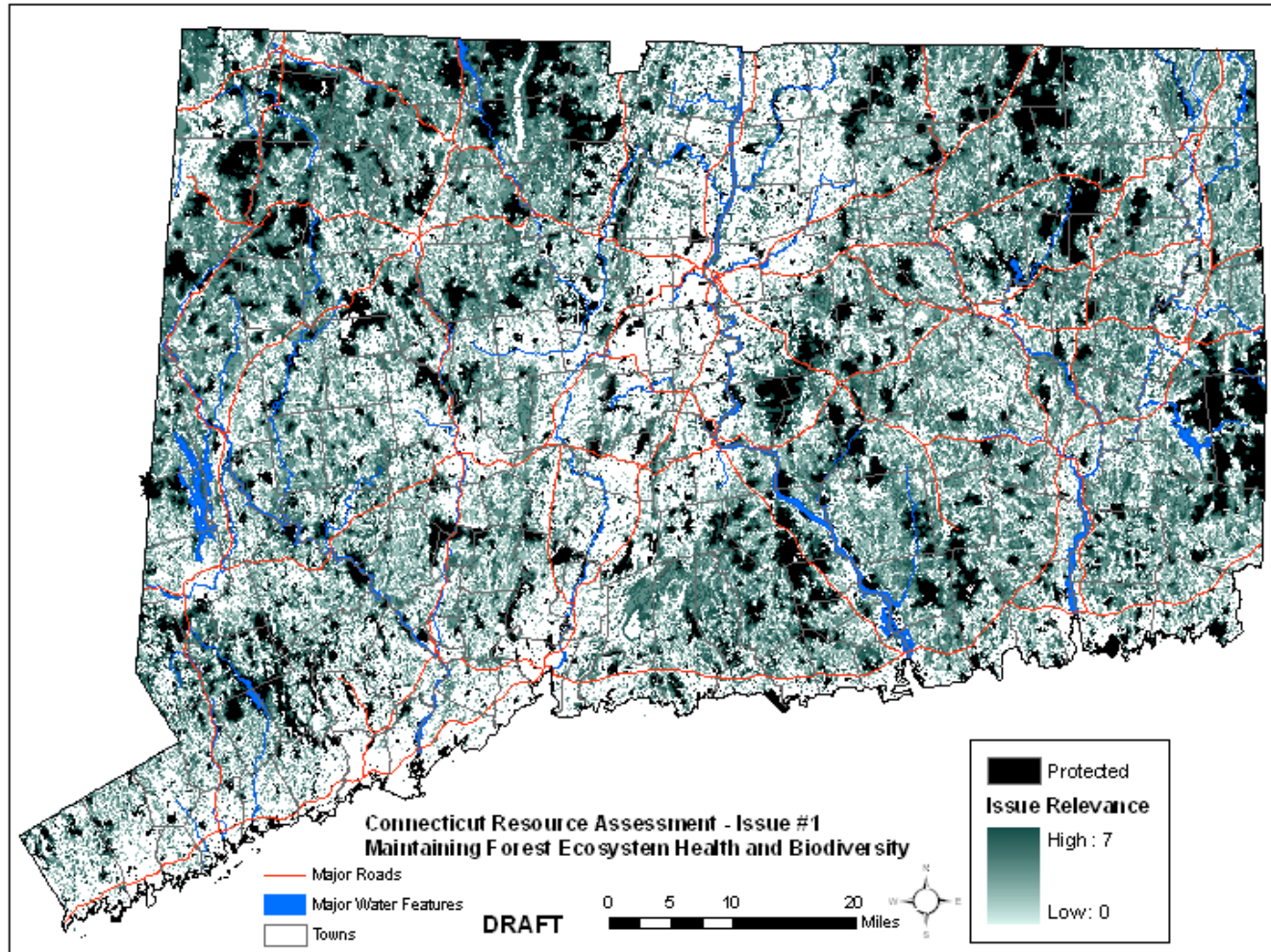
- Given possible maps of CT geographic traits, what overlays help identify potential state of a vision?
- Where are opportunities for moving forward on an issue?
 - E.g., Where are large private tracts where fee or conservation easement acquisition could protect working forests in perpetuity?

**Let's look at some map overlays Joel Stocker
made for 2010 Forest Assessment**

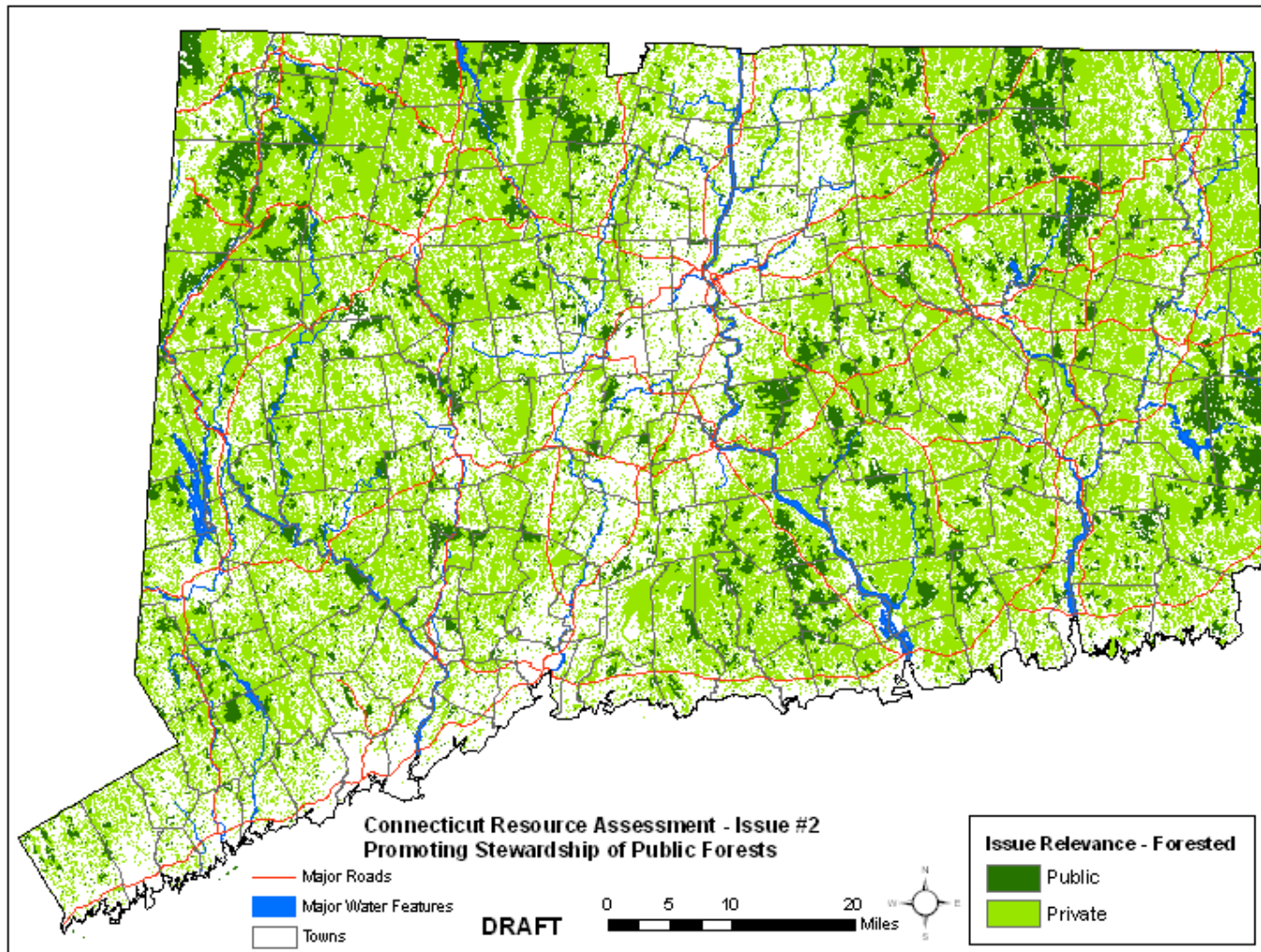
Providing More Forest-Based Recreation Opportunities



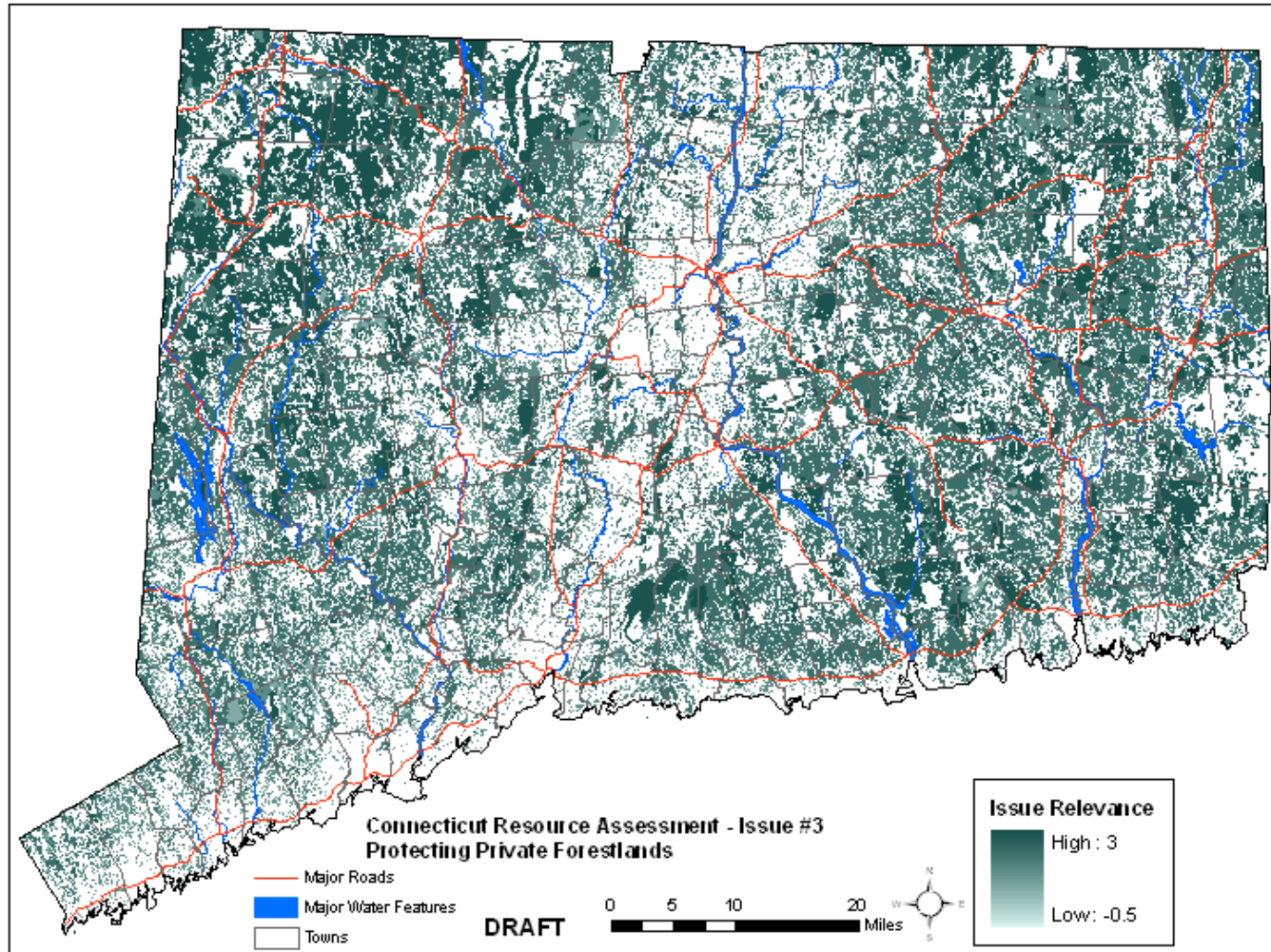
Maintaining Forest Ecosystem Health & Diversity



Promoting Stewardship of Public Forests



Protecting Private Forestlands



- 10:15 -11:00 Assessment of levels of agreement
- Work on improving agreement on statements with disagreement or ambiguity
 - Decide on table priorities for further work
 - improve vision; new vision; principles; design map overlays
- 11-1:00 Break, Large-scale process/sharing; continue work on priority table tasks; **Lunch**
- 1:00-2:40 Large-scale process/sharing; continue work on priority table tasks
- 2:40-3:30 Final sharing of accomplishments
- List Big Picture Issues for CT
 - Evaluate roundtable & suggest improvements
- 3:30 Adjourn for the day