

Protecting Forests in Connecticut for the Future: How are we doing? What will it take?



Eric Hammerling, Executive Director

CFPA's Story Begins in 1895

- 1st Private Nonprofit Conservation Organization in CT
- Forests were in Rough Shape
- No State Parks or Forests
- No Schools of Forestry
- No CT Certified Foresters or Municipal Tree Wardens
- CT Agricultural Experiment Station turned 20



CFPA's 5 Founding Principles



Announced on Arbor Day, 1896



Founding Principle #1

Develop public appreciation of the value of forests, and of the urgent need for preserving and using them rightly.

Founding Principle #2

Disseminate information relating to the science of forestry, the proper use of forests and the care of trees.

Founding Principle #3

Secure the passage and enforcement of laws directed toward the preservation, maintenance and increase of forests in Connecticut and throughout the U.S.



Founding Principle #4

Forward the establishment of state and national parks and reservations, and the introduction of forest management on those and other forest lands.

Founding Principle #5

Introduce and encourage the study of forestry and kindred topics in the schools.

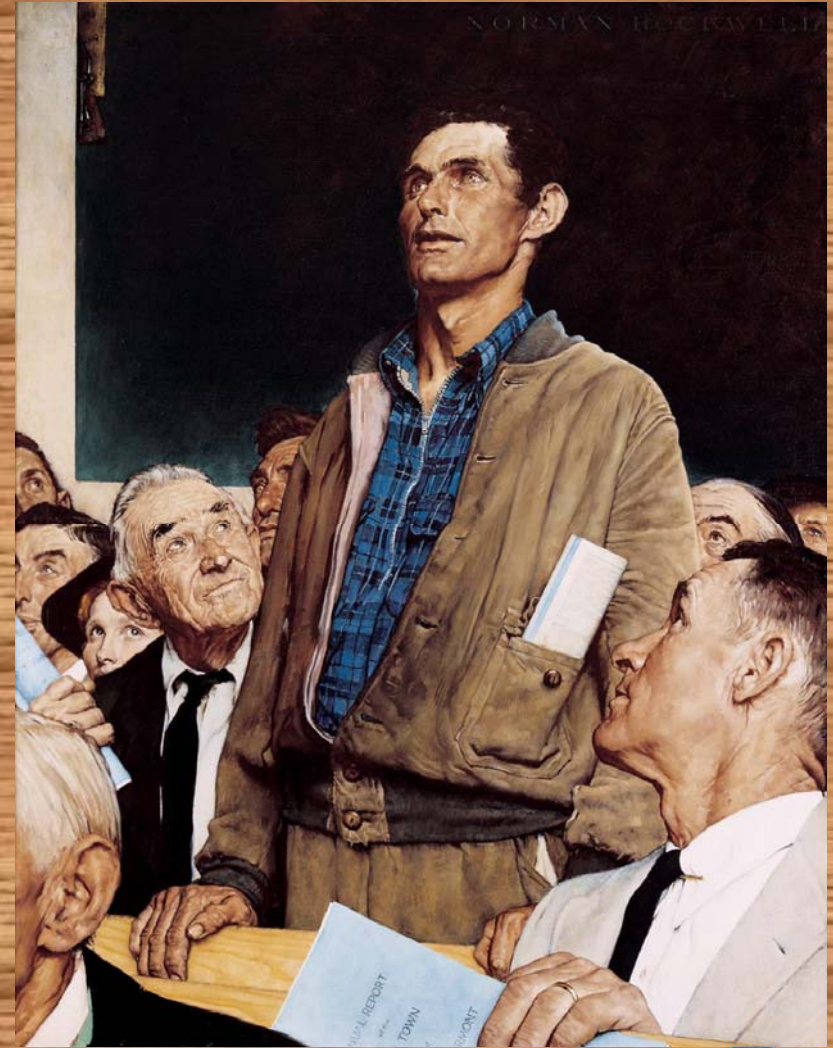
CFPA's Conservation Activities

- Advocate
- Conserve
- Recreate
- Educate



Advocate

- Forest Practices Act
- Public Act 490
- 10 Mill Law Reform
- Landowner Liability Law
- Open Space & Farmland Preservation
- New England Trail Nat'l Scenic Trail designation
- Funding for Conservation and Management of forests, parks, and trails



ADVOCATE



Conserve: State Parks & Forests

- Rocky Neck State Park
 - Harkness Memorial State Park
 - Sleeping Giant State Park
 - Talcott Mountain State Park
 - Gillette Castle State Park
 - Peoples State Forest
 - Hammonasset Beach State Park
 - White Memorial State Forest
 - Penwood State Park
 - Bluff Point State Park
- and many others!



CONSERVE



Conserve: Working Forests & Trails

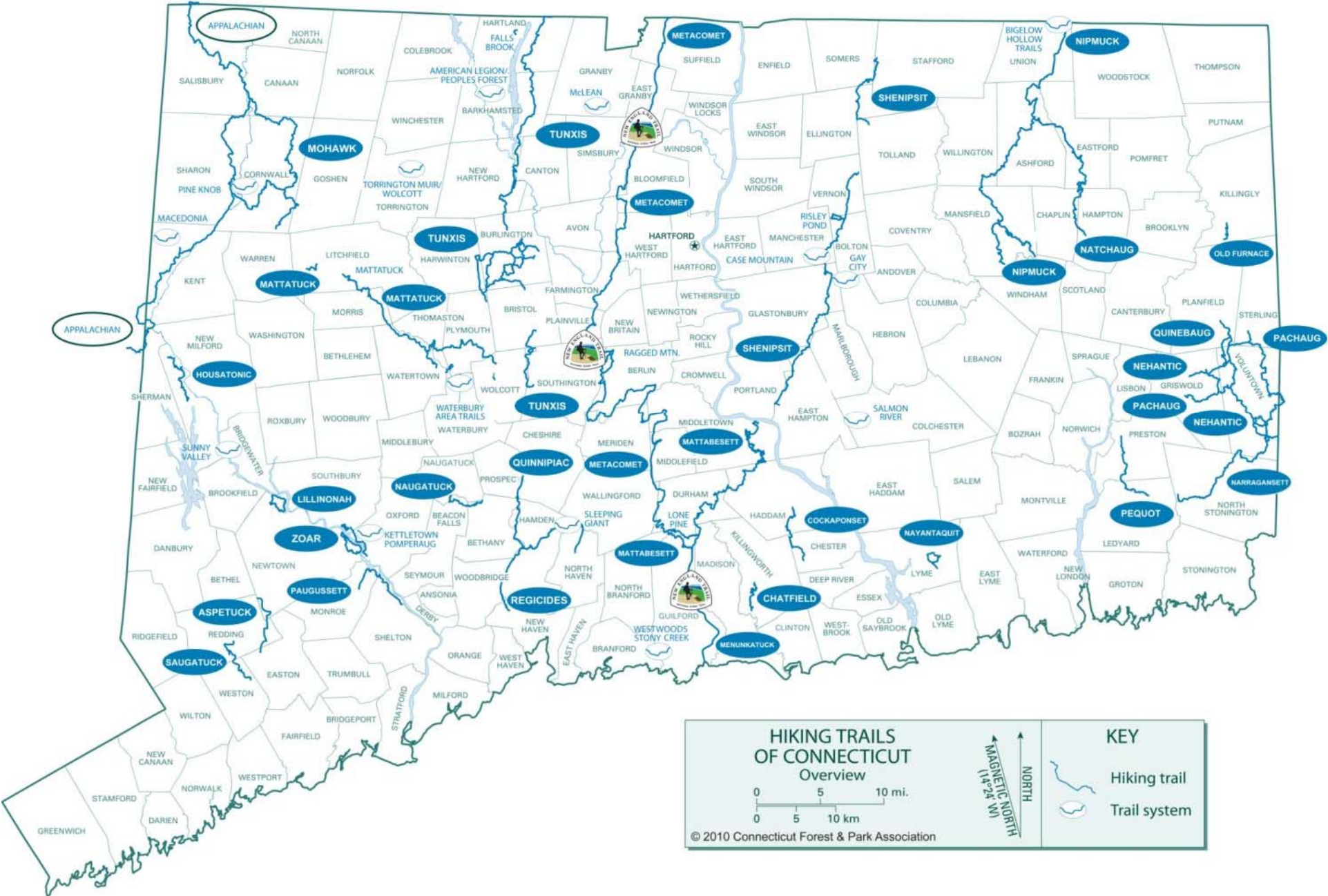


CONSERVE

- 1,824 acres of conservation easements
- 436 acres owned in fee
- 7 miles of trail easements



Blue-Blazed Hiking Trails Maintained by CFPA Volunteers



HIKING TRAILS OF CONNECTICUT
Overview

0 5 10 mi.
0 5 10 km

MAGNETIC NORTH
14°22' W

KEY

- Hiking trail
- Trail system

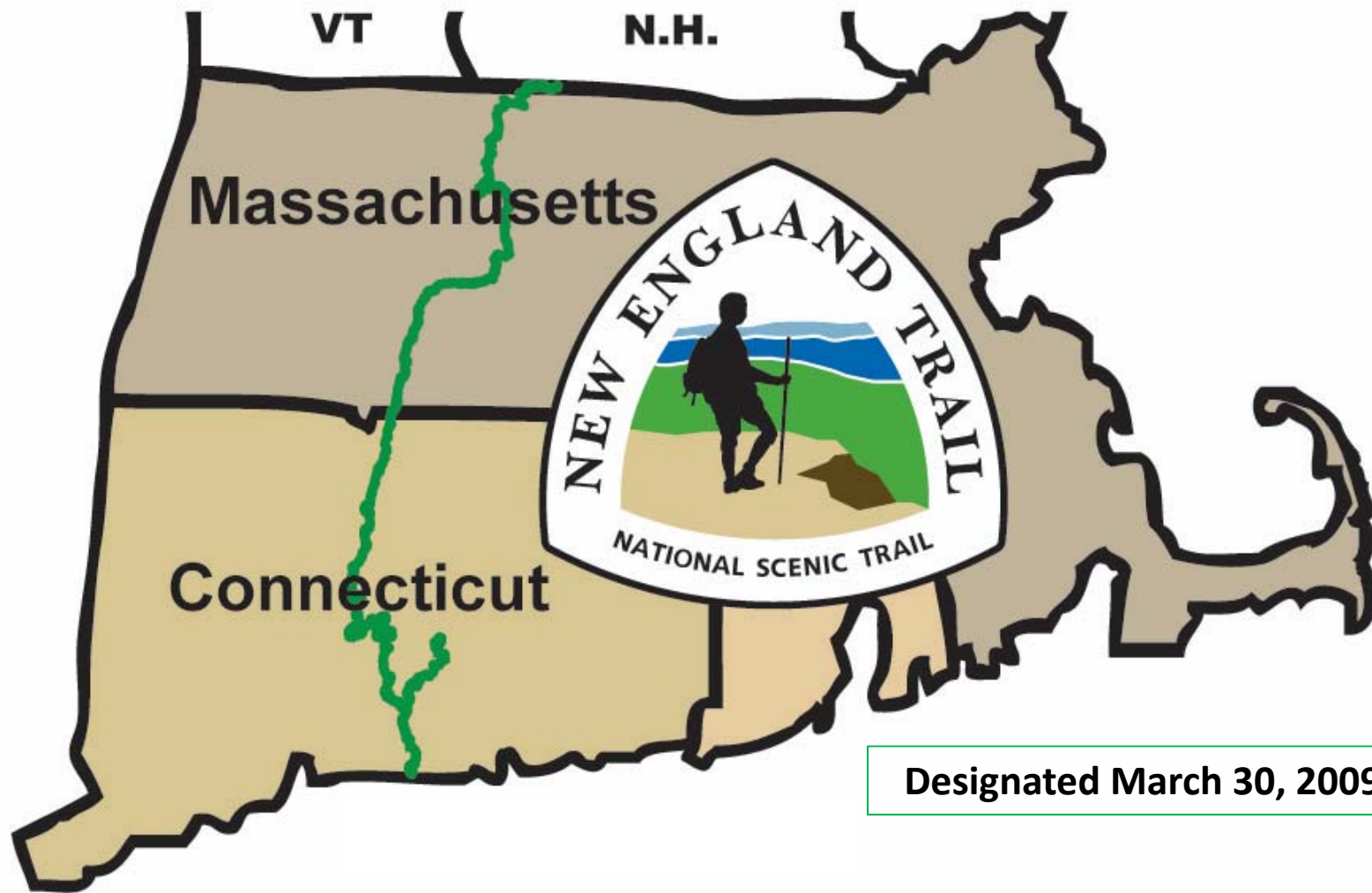
© 2010 Connecticut Forest & Park Association

Trail Stewardship



RECREATE





Designated March 30, 2009

RECREATE





Environmental Education



- CFPA trains educators to use Project Learning Tree and other tools to more effectively use school grounds, facilities, nearby woods, and their classrooms as environmental learning labs.
- CFPA also provides educational programs for forest landowners, forestry professionals, and the general public at CFPA headquarters and at the Goodwin Conservation Education Center in Hampton.

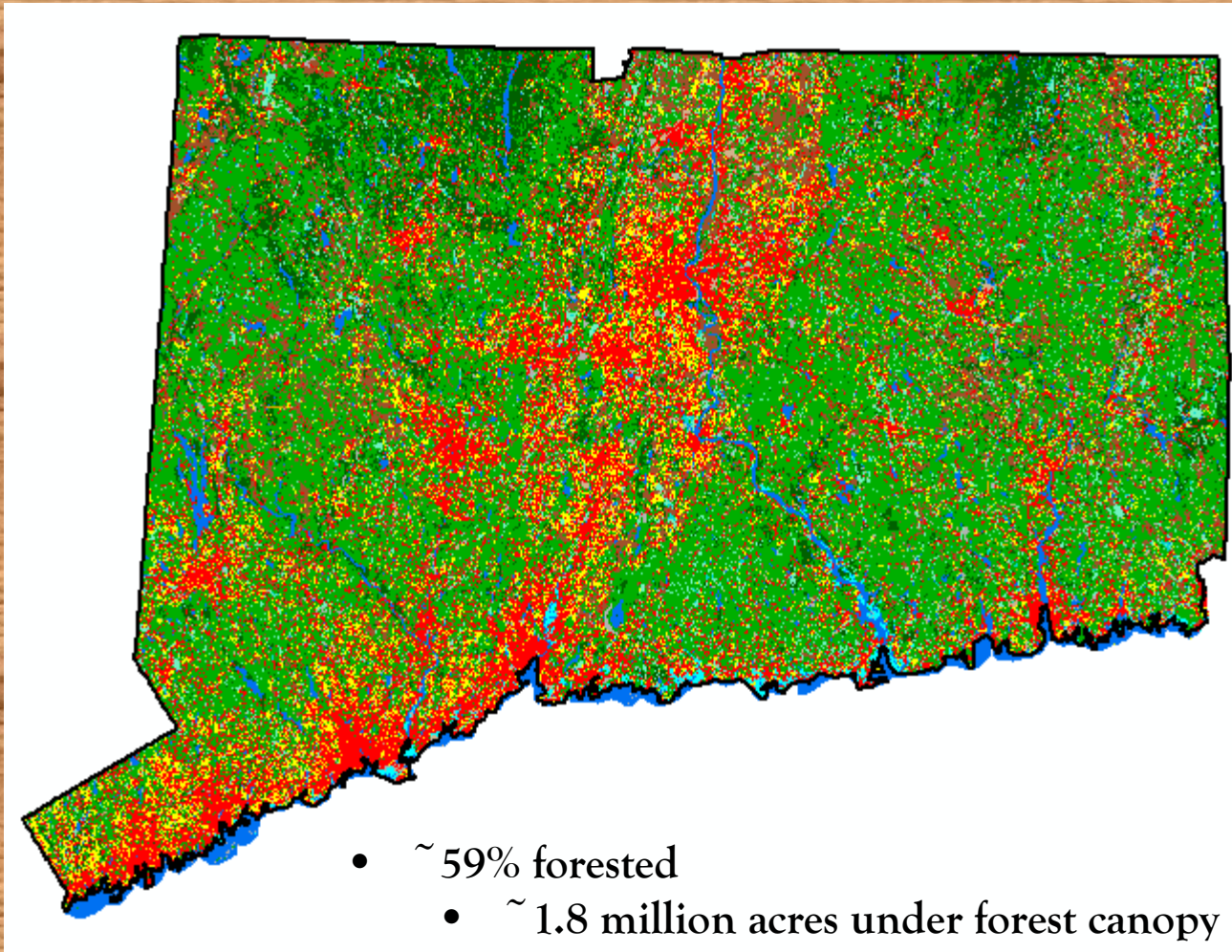
EDUCATE



Thanks for the CFPA info but ...

Let's Talk About
Forests!

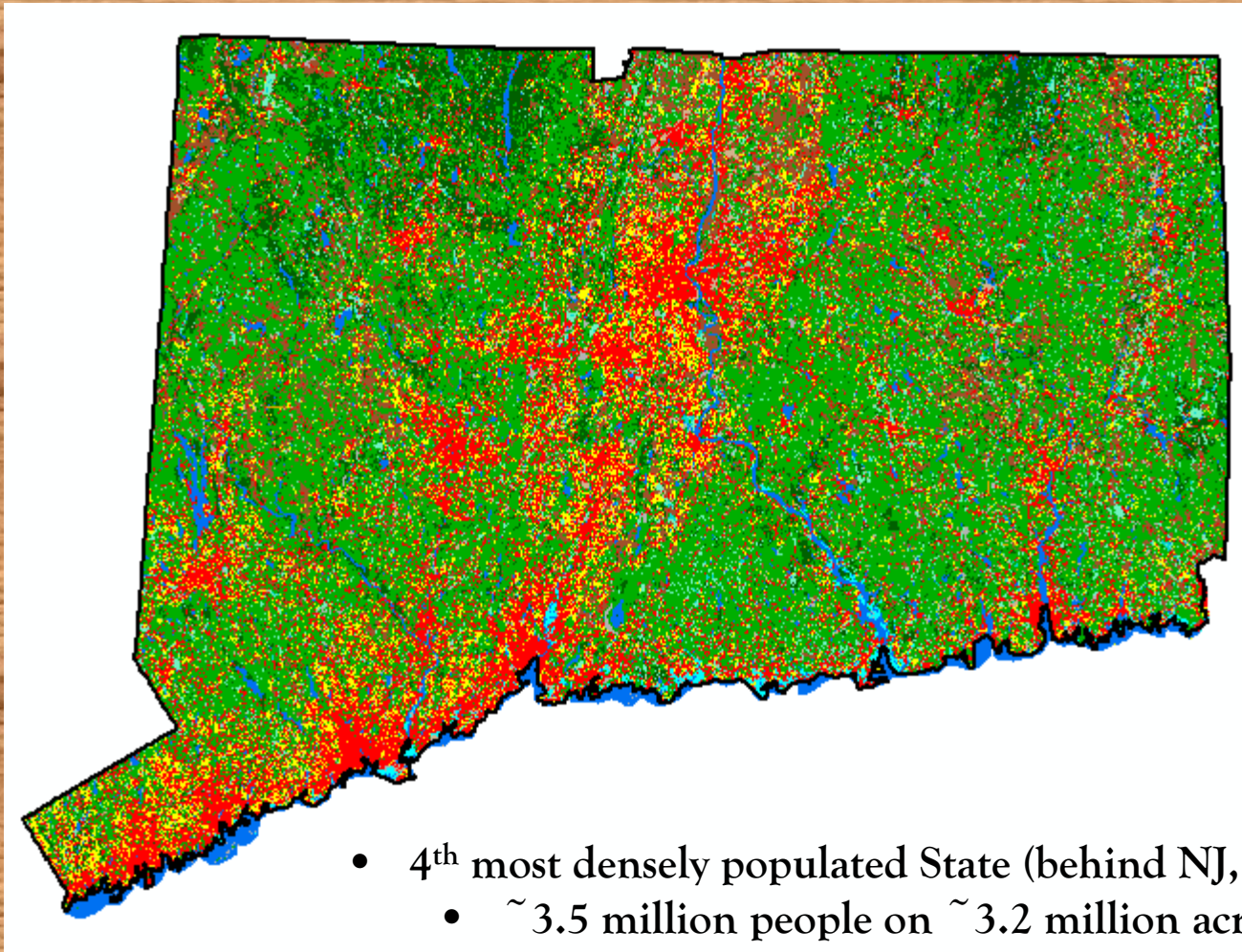
Connecticut's Forests - We're Green!



- ~ 59% forested
 - ~ 1.8 million acres under forest canopy
 - ~ 819 million trees
 - ~ 1/2 an acre of forest for every person
 - ~ 234 trees for every person

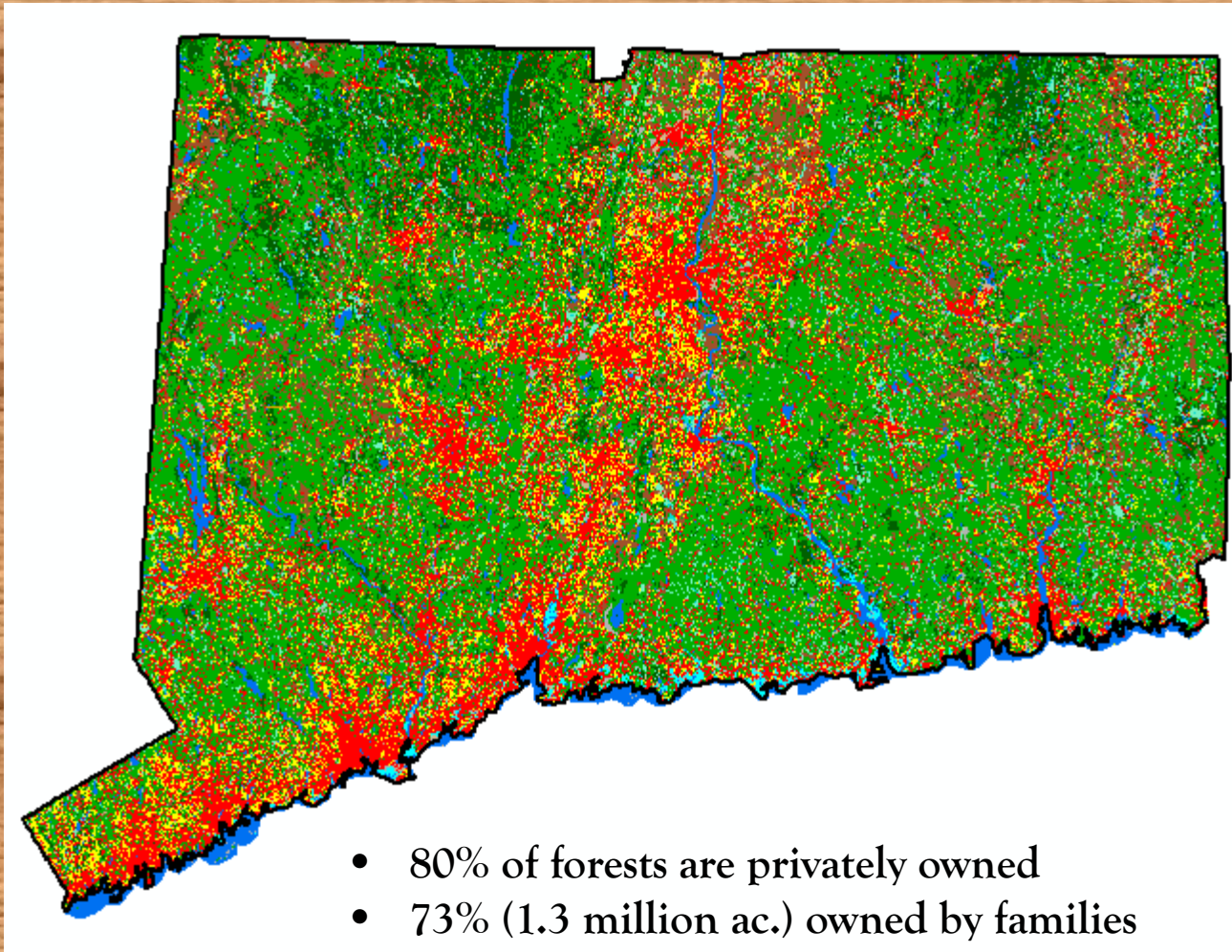


Connecticut - We're Dense!



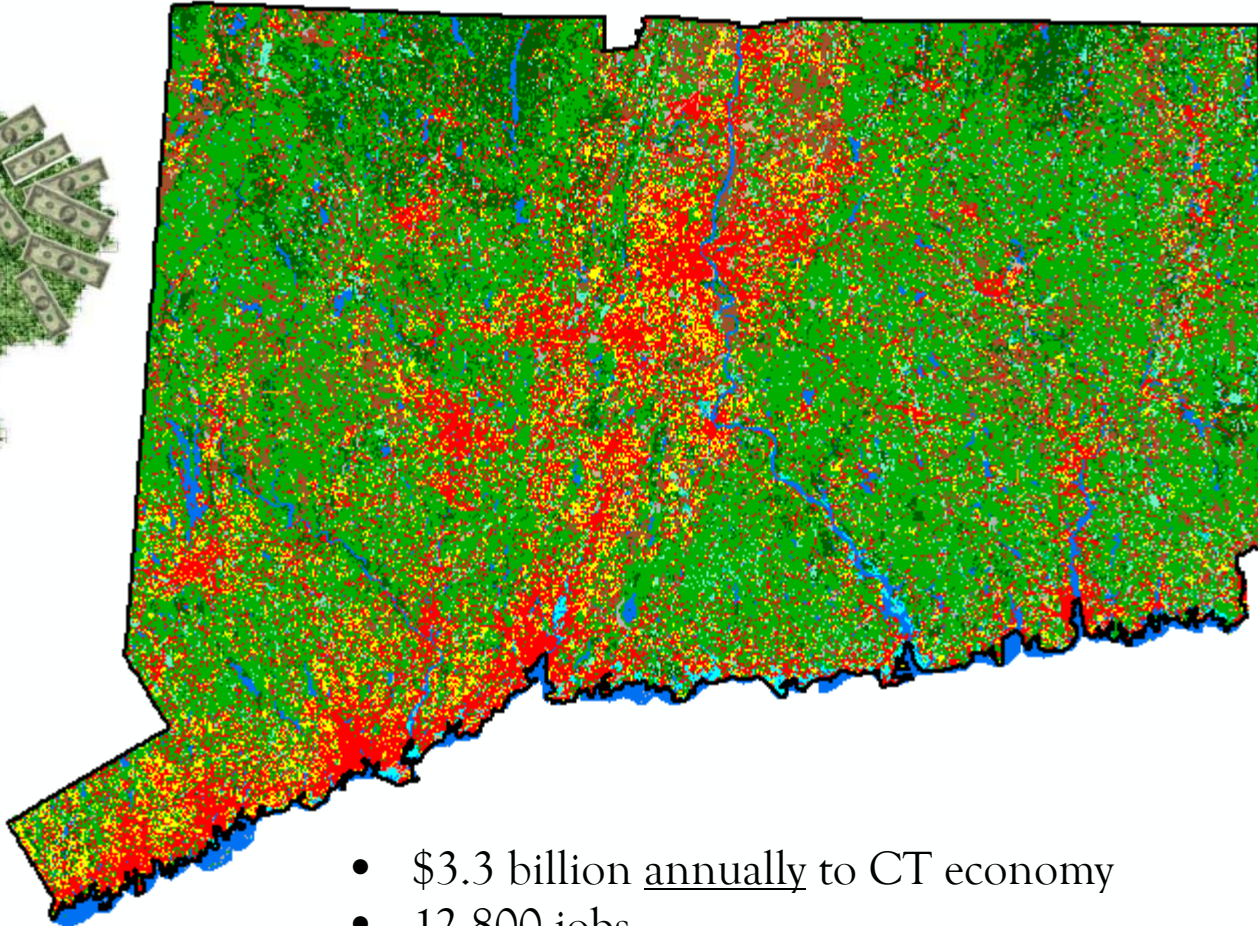
- 4th most densely populated State (behind NJ, RI, MA)
 - ~ 3.5 million people on ~ 3.2 million acres

Connecticut's Forests – We're Mostly Private!



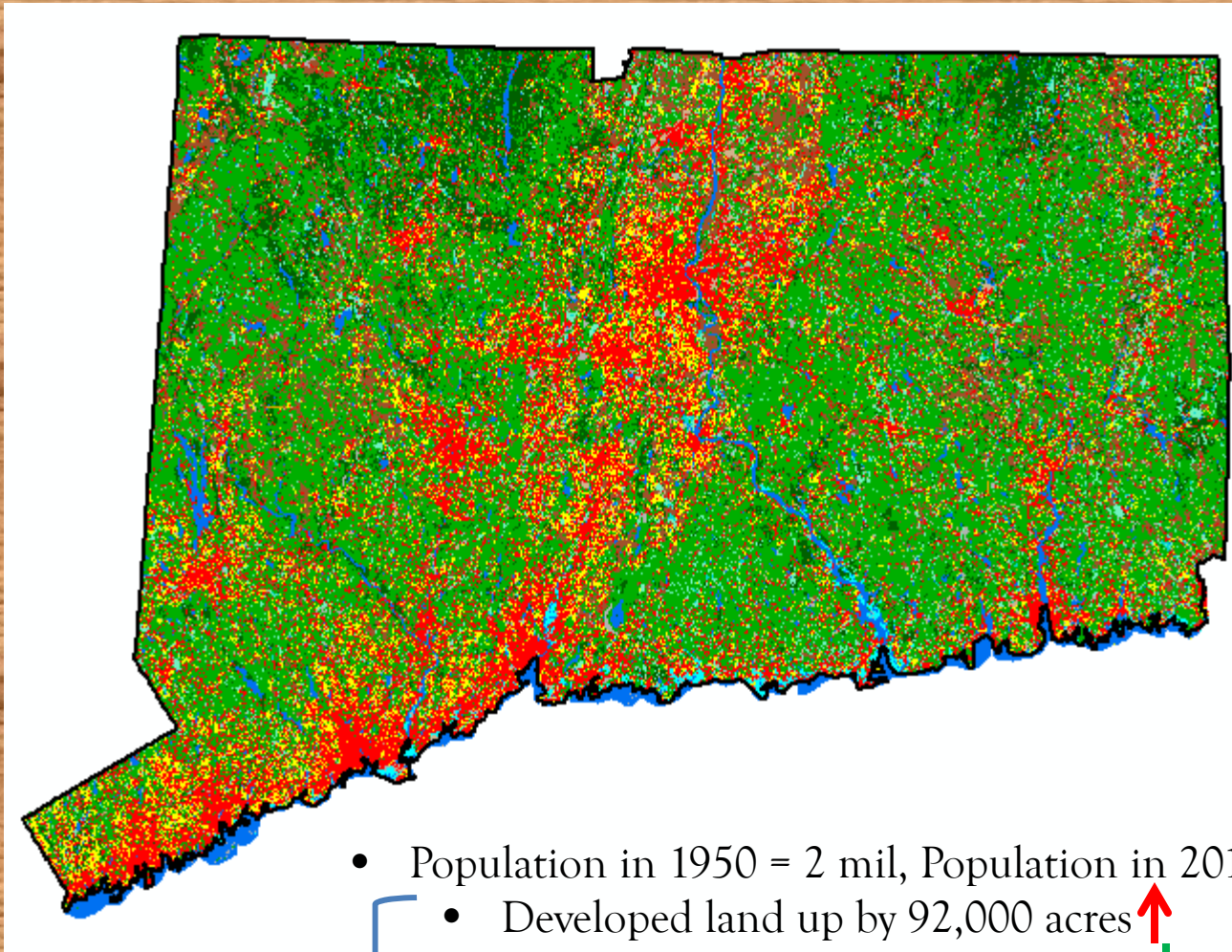
- 80% of forests are privately owned
- 73% (1.3 million ac.) owned by families
 - 140,000 family forest owners
 - 17,000 own ~ 600,000 acres (46% of total)

Connecticut's Forests – We're Valuable!



- \$3.3 billion annually to CT economy
- 12,800 jobs
 - Furniture, Cabinetry, Flooring, etc. is BIG
 - “Leaf peeping” industry is BIGGEST contributor with 25% of sales and ~ 1/3 of jobs

Connecticut's Forests - We're Fragmenting!



1986 - 2006

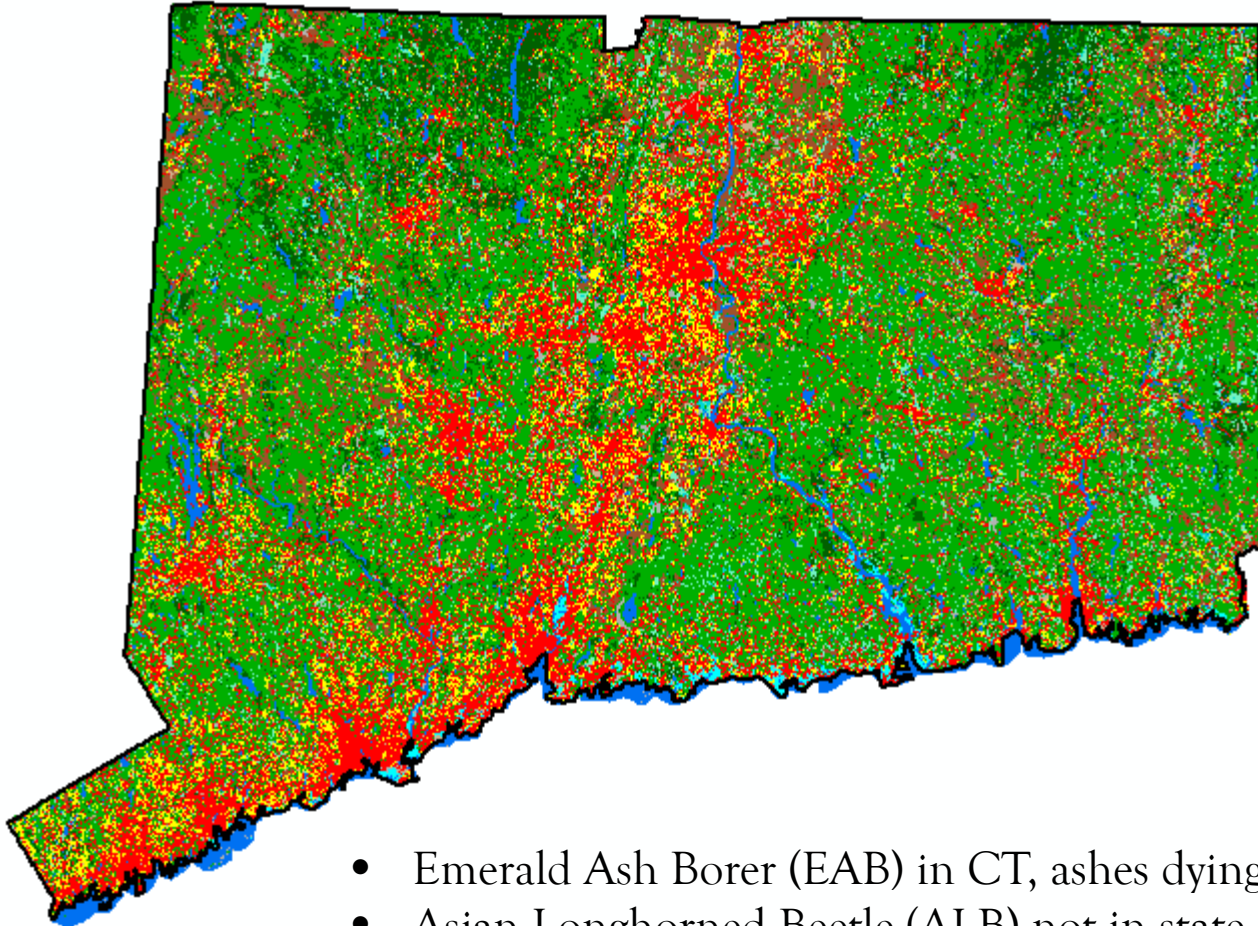
- Population in 1950 = 2 mil, Population in 2015 = 3.5 mil
- Developed land up by 92,000 acres ↑
- Forest land down by 118,000 acres ↓
- Core forest down by 169,000 acres ↓
- More edge = more edge-related issues



Connecticut's Forests - We're Being Invaded!



EAB, Not to scale



ALB, Not to scale

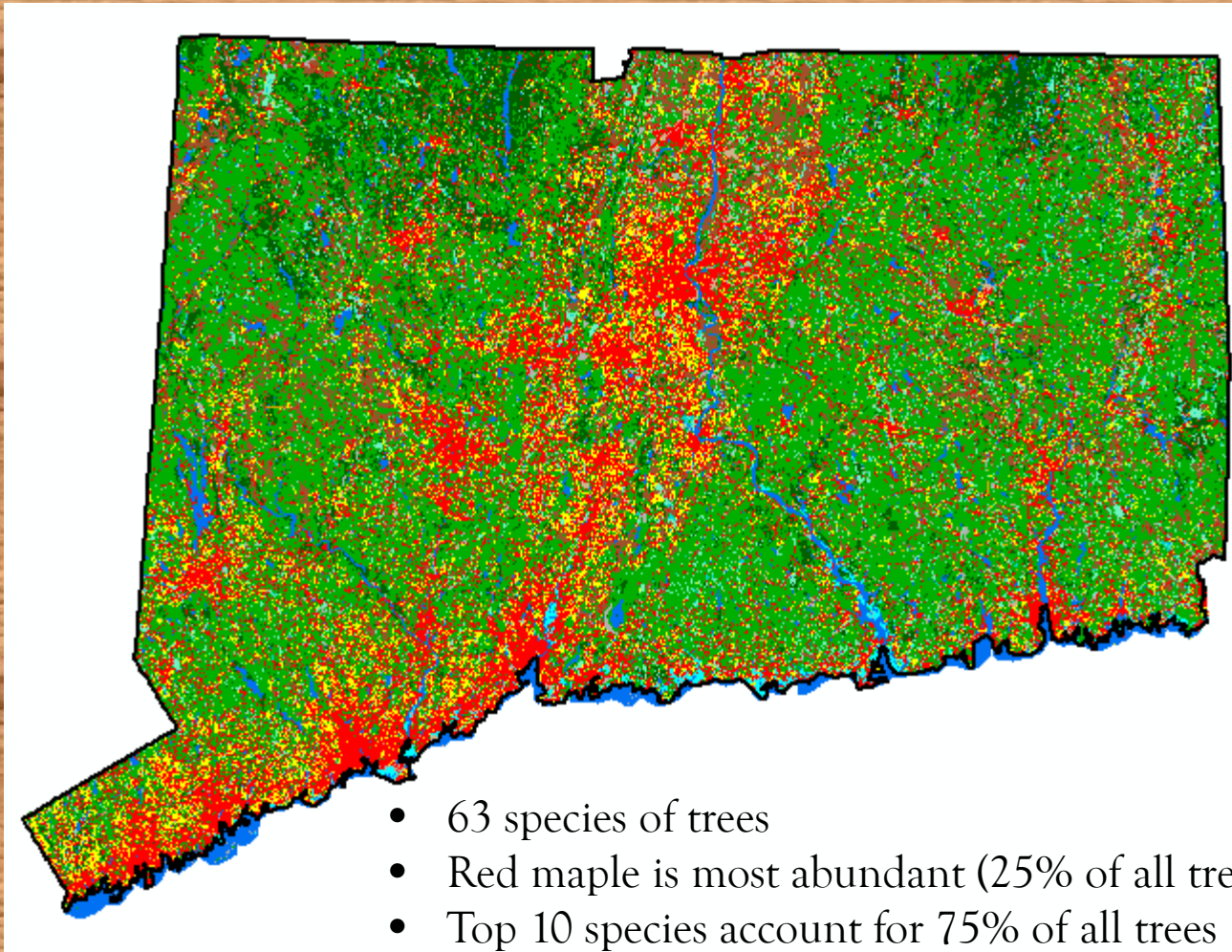


Japanese Barberry

- Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) in CT, ashes dying in west CT
- Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB) not in state, but close
 - Worcester removed over 25,000 trees
- Hemlock Woolly Adelgid with hemlock scale and looper
- Japanese barberry, oriental bittersweet, burning bush, and many others fixtures on landscape.

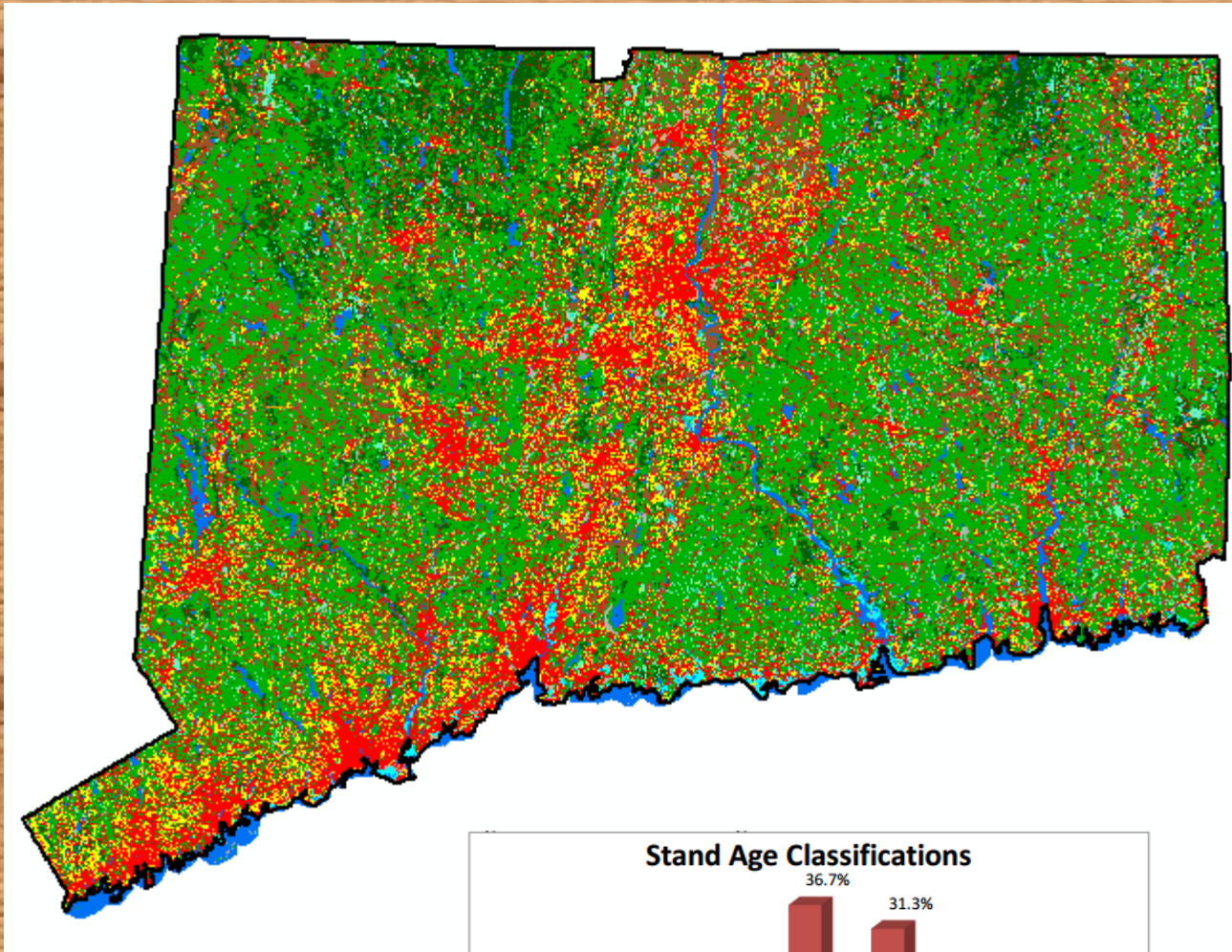


Connecticut's Forests - We're Diverse!

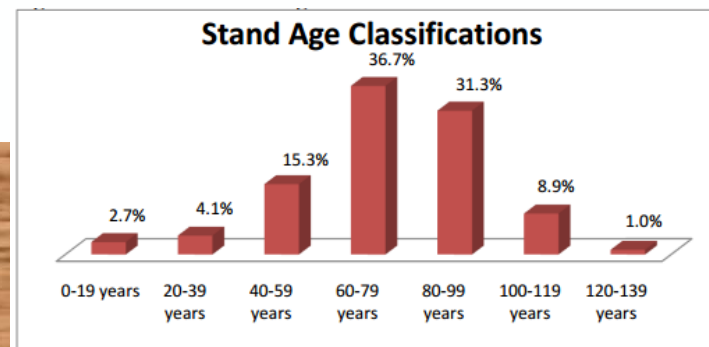


- 63 species of trees
- Red maple is most abundant (25% of all trees)
- Top 10 species account for 75% of all trees

Connecticut's Forests – We're Growing Older!



- 78% of trees are more than 60 years old!



Source: 2008 Forest Inventory and Analysis Data



Is CT Overdue for Our Next Big Storm?

- The hurricane of 1938 was a Category III storm that destroyed over 100,000 public shade trees, every mature white pine stand east of the Connecticut River, and almost one-fifth of the timber in the state. Nearly 55,000 acres of forest were flattened and salt damage was observed 45 miles inland.
- Historical records suggest that severe hurricanes strike Connecticut every 100-150 years.
- However, between the years 250 and 1150 A.D. when oceans were warmer than they are now. The average rate of severe hurricane strikes was approximately one every 40 years.

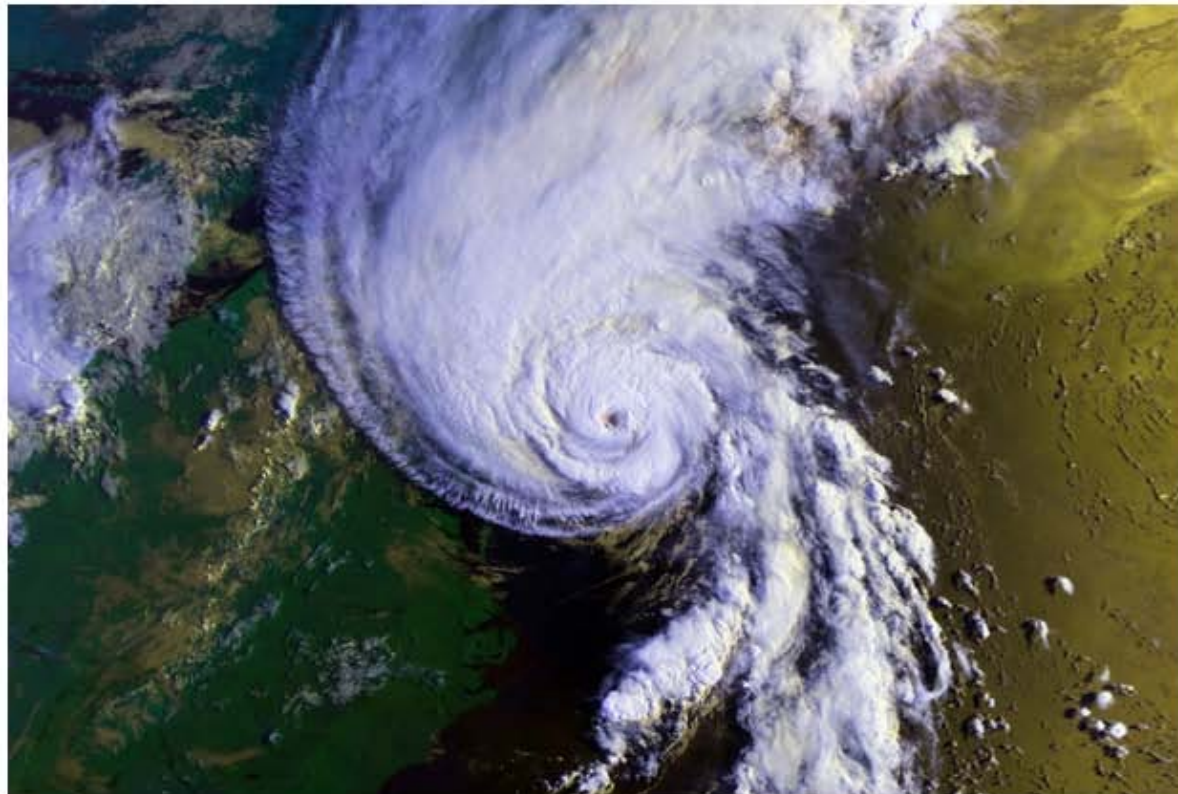


Evidence of extreme hurricane activity may forebode stormier future for Northeast



The Washington Post

By **Angela Fritz** February 11   Follow @angelafrtiz



Hurricane Bob was the strongest storm on record to make landfall in the Northeast. It came ashore in southern New England as a category 2 in 1991. (NOAA)



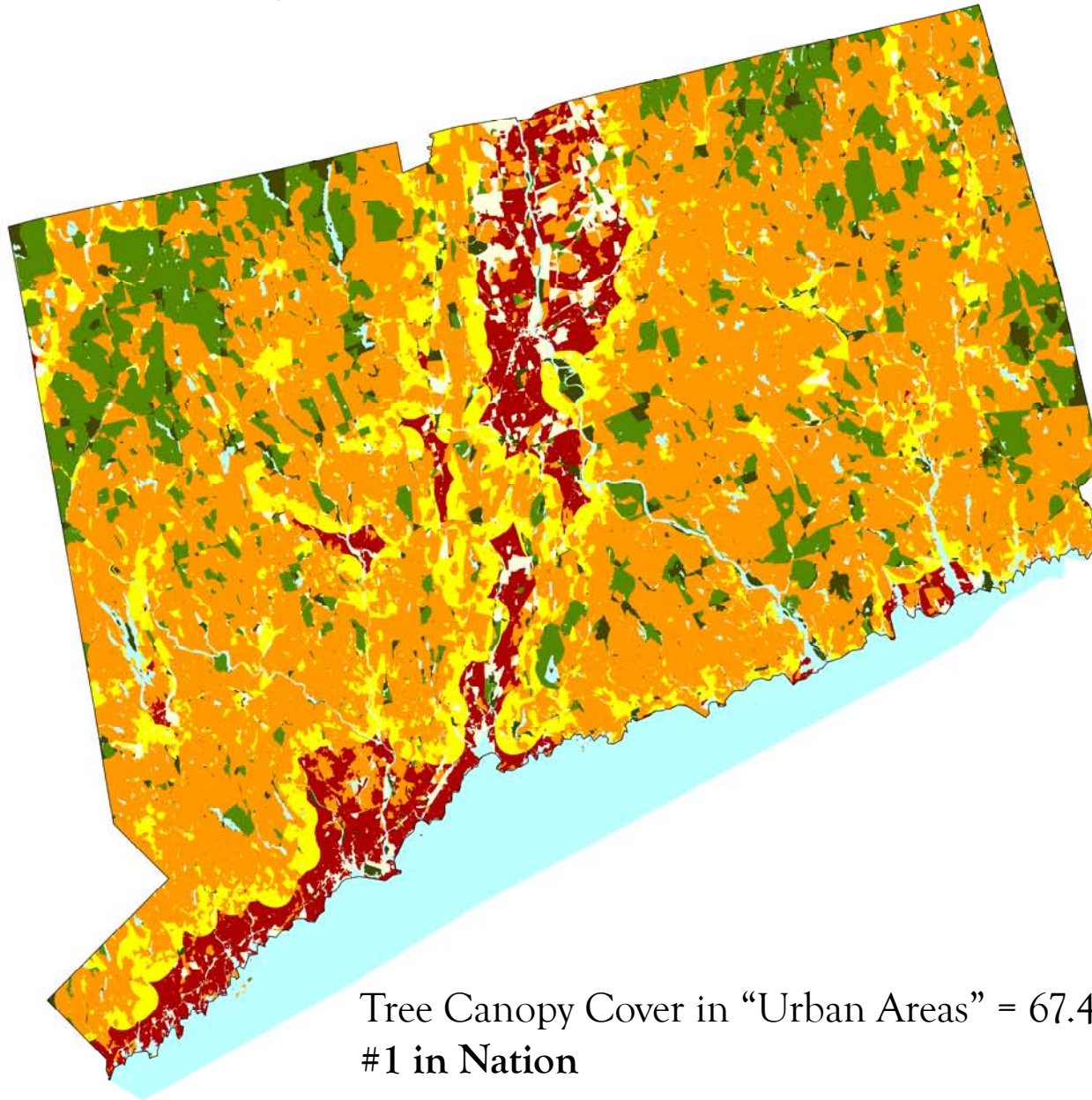
Audience Participation Required

WOOO!

EEEE!

This is WUI!

Connecticut Wildland Urban Interface



- WUI**
 - Intermix
 - Interface
- Non-WUI Vegetated**
 - Very Low Density Housing
 - No Housing
- Non-Vegetated or Agriculture**
 - Medium and High Density Housing
 - Low and Very Low Density Housing
- Water

Tree Canopy Cover in “Urban Areas” = 67.4%
#1 in Nation



How Much Connecticut Forest Land is “Protected”?

P.A. 490 484,000+ acres

10 Mill 14,000+ acres

State Forests 250,000+ acres

Open Space 250,000+ acres
(land trusts,
h₂O co.'s, & towns)

Roughly 1 million acres



What Do You Call “protected”?

- P.A. 490 is for 25+ acres and is temporary (tax benefit very important)
- 10 Mill is long but temporary (100 yrs long)
- State lands can be given away by Legislature
- Some Water Company lands can be sold
- Land trusts struggle with stewardship
- Many towns do not put easements on town land
- It takes lots of \$\$ to protect forest permanently

Despite Existing Protection Tools ...

- We are losing an average of 6,000 acres/forest and 8,500 acres/core forest every year.
- Is this an acceptable rate of loss?
- Every 3 years, we will drop another 1% of Connecticut's forest cover. From 59% to 58% ...
- Every 2 years, we will drop another 1% of Connecticut's core forest. From 46% to 45% ...
- This is “death by a thousand cuts.”

Statewide Forest Issues

- DEEP Open Space Grants have helped protect ~30,000 acres and should be better funded.
- DEEP Forestry has 12 front-line field staff to manage state lands, enforce Forest Practices Act, and give advice to 140,000 forest landowners.
 - 8 are eligible to retire.
- UConn Extension has 2 foresters with many hats.
- CT Ag Experiment Station is understaffed too.
- Conveyance Act gives Legislators a chance every year to Swap, Sell, or Give Away State Lands.

Local/Urban Forest Issues

- Most town budgets leave very little room for managing public trees
 - Many towns focus only on removals for public safety vs. plantings for the future.
 - Many towns are glad to have utility companies prune and remove “town trees”
- Many towns don’t involve tree warden expertise in planning and zoning.

Private Landowner Forest Issues

- Private Landowners own 80% of forest lands in Connecticut, but inadequate support exists for them
- 80% want to keep woodlands as woodlands
- 50% would either sell their land if offered a reasonable price or are likely to sell land in next few years
- Only 8% have forest management plans
 - But 83% of landowners with plans are implementing them
- 82% are over 50, 27% over 70, “silver tsunami” is underway
- Conservation orgs trying to fill some of these gaps
- Need incentives beyond P.A. 490 and acquisition

In Summary ...

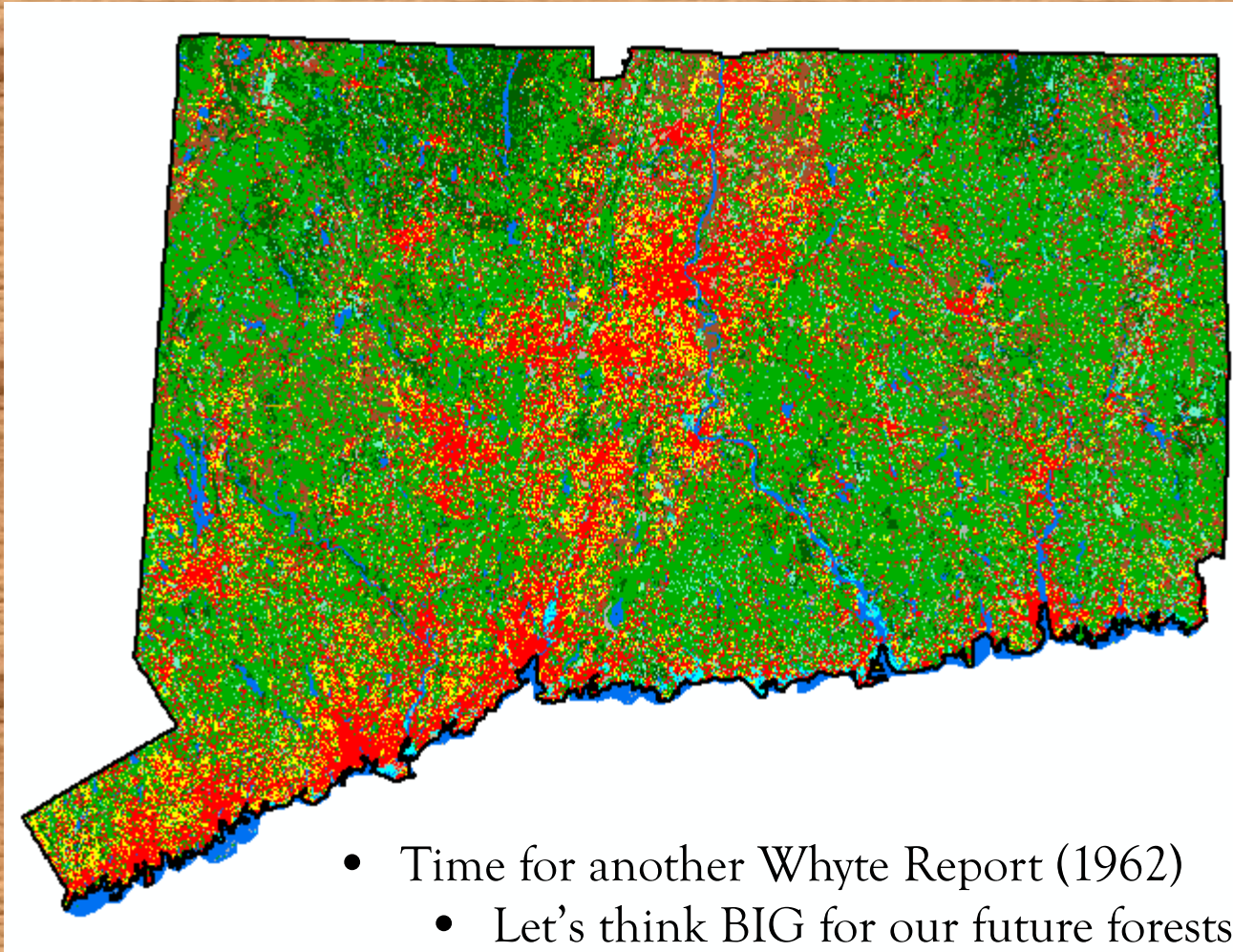
Positives

- We're Green
- We're Diverse
- We're Forest Dwellers
- We're Mostly Private
- We're Valuable
- Some Forest is Protected
- Institutions exist
- Interest exists
- Private capacity exists

Challenges

- Forests/Landowners aging
- We're Overdue for Storm
- Forest Fragmentation ↑
- Invasives ↑
- Public Investment ↓
- Institutional Capacity ↓↓

Connecticut's Forests – Let's Stay Green!



- Time for another Whyte Report (1962)
 - Let's think BIG for our future forests!
- Let's better fund and staff the institutions and organizations that assist and incentivize private forest landowners and stewardship

We Need to Invest in our Forests!

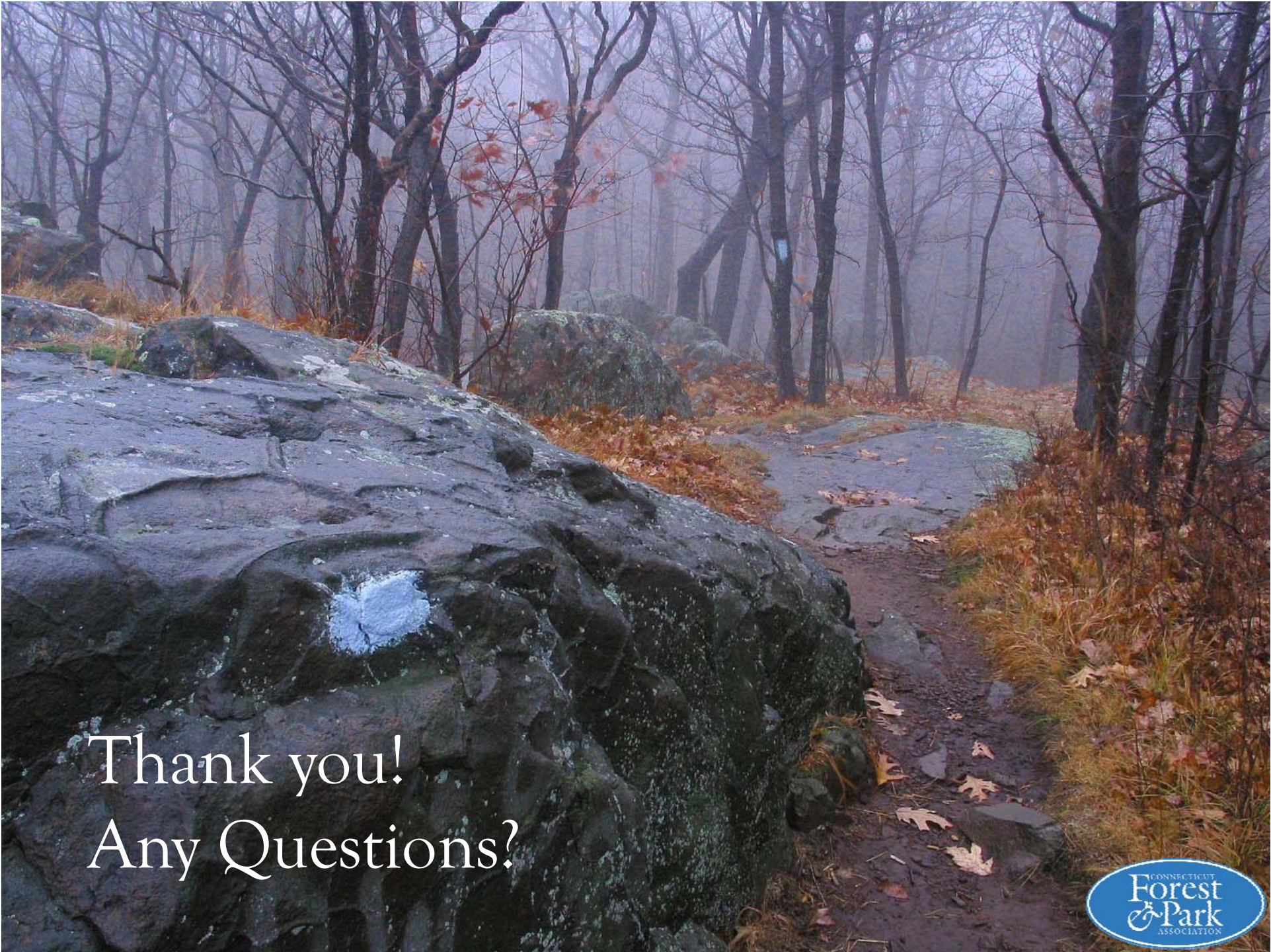
It's really this simple.



Sources for today's talk

- *Connecticut's Changing Landscape*, UConn-CLEAR Forest Fragmentation Analysis Project, 1985 - 2006.
- *Connecticut's Forest Resource Assessment and Strategy*, CT DEEP, 2010.
- *Forests of Connecticut Resource Update, 2013*, USDA Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program, October 2014.
- *State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet, 2015 Connecticut*, USDA Forest Service and CT DEEP.
- *The Economic Importance of Connecticut's Forest Based Economy 2015*, North East State Foresters Association.
- *The Green Plan Guiding Land Acquisition and Planning in Connecticut*, 2007-2012.
- *Understanding Connecticut Woodland Owners: A Report on the Attitudes, Values and Challenges of Connecticut's Family Woodland Owners*. Mary Tyrrell, Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, March 2015.





Thank you!
Any Questions?

