



Working Together to Sustain Wildlife and Healthy Ecosystems



Stretching from New York to Alabama, the Central Appalachian Region is characterized by its mountainous geography rich in natural beauty and unique culture. The region provides important benefits for millions of people living in the Eastern United States — from drinking water to spectacular wild lands and associated recreational opportunities. Today however, a range of monumental conservation challenges confronts the Appalachians. This includes the loss and fragmentation of natural habitats; disruptions in natural disturbance regimes; and expanding major land-use changes that are occurring on a grand scale. Climate change will further exacerbate these challenges. The magnitude of these landscape-level changes requires a shift from traditional local and single-species conservation approaches toward a more comprehensive scale to protect species, habitats, and ecosystems. **The Appalachian Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC)** serves as a catalyst for conservation collaboration by providing the tools, products, and data resource managers and partners need to address the environmental threats that are beyond the scope of any one agency.

*Vision: Ecological Integrity. Environmental Benefits.
Sustainable Wildlife Populations.*

CATALYST FOR COLLABORATION

The Appalachian LCC is among a national network of 22 LCCs that brings conservation scientists and managers together to identify shared areas of interest, develop the products necessary for action, and help coordinate conservation delivery. To respond to major stressors and emerging threats within the region, the Appalachian LCC funds research focusing on primary science needs determined by the conservation community. By identifying, prioritizing, and supporting fundamental scientific research through coordination and strategic investment of scarce resources, the LCC is fostering the development and use of vital information and decision-support tools to help target the right conservation actions in the most strategic places.

GUIDING THE WAY FORWARD

The conservation community recognizes it is essential for natural resource management agencies, researchers, conservation organizations, and industries and communities to work together and understand the impacts of these stressors to determine how best to address the major environmental issues across large regions and jurisdictional boundaries. To that end, a Steering Committee composed of representatives from federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations, Tribes, and key members of regional partnerships (such as Bird Joint Ventures and Fish Habitat Partnerships) guides fiscal oversight and strategic direction for the Cooperative. The Appalachian LCC works to connect efforts, identify gaps, and avoid duplication through



CHEAT MOUNTAIN SALAMANDER, PHOTO BY USFWS

improved conservation planning and design. Partner agencies and organizations coordinate with each other while working within their existing authorities and jurisdictions. This networked approach to conservation — holistic, collaborative, adaptive, and grounded in science — is focused on the singular goal of ensuring the long-term sustainability of the region's land, water, wildlife, and cultural resources.

Evaluating Progress and Staying Relevant

The Appalachian LCC is guided by a 5-year Work Plan that helps the Cooperative move forward and evaluate progress as an organization and decision-making body in addressing large-scale environmental and climate impacts. The Plan reflects the Cooperative's conservation priorities, identifies key conservation targets to measure achievement, and presents opportunities for collaborative and coordinated conservation efforts and planning. The four main goals of the Work Plan are:

GOAL 1: *Create and deliver a landscape-level data sharing strategy and scalable toolsets*

GOAL 2: *Deliver landscape-level conservation plans for regional use*

GOAL 3: *Create an on-going facilitated process to promote engagement and dialogue across the Appalachian LCC region*

GOAL 4: *Assess and align conservation goals and actions that reflect the Cooperative Members' common and shared vision*

Through a "Science Needs Portfolio" developed and annually revised by researchers and managers from across the region, the Appalachian LCC identifies science information needs and allocates research funding to effectively address conservation challenges and opportunities across the landscape. A group of over 150 invited researchers and managers representing a diverse cross-section of expertise and affiliations were assembled to initially identify the most pressing science information needs of the region. The "Science Needs Portfolio" serves as a guiding framework, critical to help facilitate and support conservation planning, delivery, and applied research as well as monitoring efforts across the Appalachian LCC. It also compiles recommendations based on on-going or emergent needs and reflects completion of previously funded projects. The "Portfolio" is structured around a broad group of thematic areas that include Aquatic; Cave and Karst Ecosystems; Wetlands; Forests; Open or Grasslands; Human Dominated or Working Lands; Human Dimensions; and Climate Change.

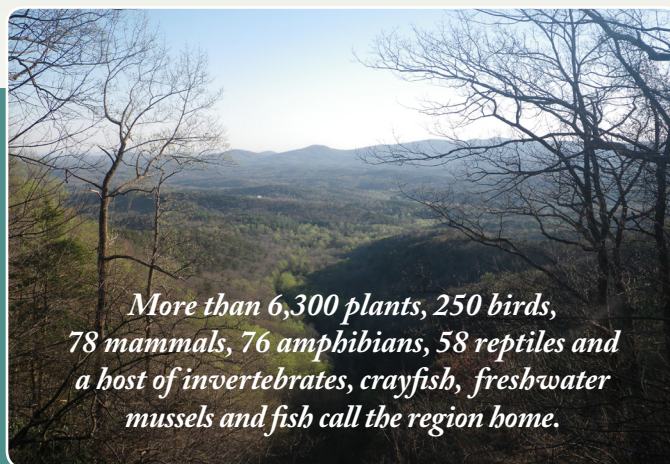
What's at Stake?

The Appalachians are the largest continuous biodiversity "hotspot" area in the continental United States. More than 6,300 plants, 250 birds, 78 mammals, 76 amphibians, 58 reptiles and a host of invertebrates, crayfish, freshwater mussels and fish call the region home. For many threatened and endangered species, as well as numerous species of salamanders and mussels found nowhere else in the world, the Appalachians may well prove to be a natural stronghold for plants and animals to withstand impacts from climate change. The region also provides a wealth of ecological services, from forest products to fertile soils to drinking water

for major metropolitan areas, and is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts, hunters, and nature lovers. This varied landscape — with long broad ridges, steep slopes, deep gorges, and wide intermountain valleys — supports a broad range of habitats and human activities.



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To learn more about the Appalachian LCC, visit <http://applcc.org>

For information on the national network of LCCs, visit <http://lccnetwork.org>

Contact the Cooperative at: communications@applcc.org

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LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION COOPERATIVES