

2.5 Create a Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory

10 Points

15 Points

Action Updates

This action has been revised for the **current certification cycle**. A version of this action from the prior program year is [available for comparison](#). Edits are highlighted in yellow. (Last update 2020)

Objective

Plan for and implement projects to protect and enhance natural resources and habitats.

Complementary Action:

- [Develop an Open Space Plan](#)

What to Do

If you collaborate with other municipalities or other stakeholders to implement this Action, please describe the partnership in the “partners” box of your submission. Please also consult this [guidance document](#) to help your municipality earn points for actions pursued in partnership. Regional collaboration and other forms of partnership are highly encouraged.

1. Develop a natural resources and wildlife (NRW) inventory. Inventories must be town wide and can be completed with help from regional or local partners. Detailed wildlife inventories are not required, but are encouraged. **(10 points)**. Your maps may include data from local, regional, state or national sources but should if possible include information pertaining to the following major categories (all data layers are available on [CT ECO](#) unless otherwise noted):
 - Base Map (examples: roads, imagery)
 - Land Cover (note, this layer is not yet on CT ECO but is available on the [UConn CLEAR](#) website)
 - Soils (examples: farmland soils, inland wetland/hydric soils, soils suitable for septic systems)
 - Water Resources (examples: hydrography, watersheds, water quality classifications, impaired waters, aquifer protection areas)
 - Unique and Fragile Lands (examples: Natural Diversity Database areas, critical habitat areas)
 - Elevation (examples: contours, elevation)
 - Wildlife (note: there is no statewide data layer currently available)
 - Committed Open Space* (note, there is a partial statewide data layer on CT ECO but is circa 2010)

See also Action 2.4, Develop an Open Space Plan, which requires an open space inventory and also needs natural resource information for prioritization of open space acquisitions.

Submit: A copy of your NRW inventory. Include all mapping and provide a description of what your

inventory includes. If your map is online, you may include the web address in addition to a PDF. Potential sources of data include:

- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "[GIS Data](#)"
 - CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "[Natural Diversity Data Base Maps](#)"
 - [CT Environmental Conditions Online](#)
 - University of Connecticut, "[Map and Geographic Information Catalog](#)"
 - CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "[Endangered Species Maps](#)"
 - Your Council of Government or Local Conservation District(s)
2. Integrate your NRW inventory into municipal planning documents and/or decision-making processes. If relevant, include such documents. **(5 Points)**

Submit: A description of how you integrated your natural resources and wildlife inventory into municipal planning documents and decision-making processes.

Credit for Past Action

For spring certification, count back from February 1st of the current year. For fall certification, count back from August 1st of the current year. For further clarification on determining if your prior work is eligible to earn points, [click here](#).

- Must include proof of update for the NRW inventory within the past 10 years.

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from the planning department could be helpful in implementing this action.

In addition, the planning and zoning, conservation, and/or land use commissions, local council of governments, local conservation districts, and local land trusts could help implement this action.

Funding

For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the [Sustainable CT Grants Portal](#), which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the [Sustainable CT Resources for Certification](#) page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- [Urban Act Grant Program](#)
- [Municipal Grant Program \(MGP\)](#)
- [2020 Sustainable CT Community Match Fund](#)

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- [Aquifer Protection Area Interactive Map](#)
- [Connecticut Environmental Conditions Online](#)
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "[Natural Resources](#)"
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "[Endangered Species Maps](#)"
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "[GIS Data](#)"
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "[Natural Diversity Data Base Maps](#)"
- University of Connecticut, "[Map and Geographic Information Catalog](#)"
- New Hampshire Citizen Planner, "[Natural Resources Inventories: A Guide for New Hampshire Communities and Conservation Groups](#)"
- US Environmental Protection Agency, [EnviroAtlas](#)

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, [Bureau of Natural Resources](#)
- [Connecticut Conservation Districts](#)

Why This Matters

Natural resources and habitats are vital to environmental and human health and wellness, and do not pay attention to municipal boundaries. The first step to maximizing those benefits is understanding what and where the resources are located.

To plan for their protection, or prioritize development in a way that minimizes harm, your community must identify and acknowledge its varied and rich natural resources and habitat types.

Benefits

A comprehensive review of the natural resources and habitat types located within your borders can help shape all municipal planning and development activities.

Keeping the inventory updated will provide the most accurate picture possible to the towns and residents.

CT Success Stories

- [2018 Glastonbury - Thorough Inventory](#)
- Norfolk, CT: ["Natural Resource Inventory"](#)