



APPALACHIAN  
MOUNTAINS  
JOINT VENTURE



## FOCAL LANDSCAPE INITIATIVE



The Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture (AMJV) partnership is focused on preserving, managing, and restoring diverse, healthy forest habitats in the region to benefit not only birds, but the diversity of Appalachian plants and wildlife.

The Focal Landscape approach **strategically targets capacity and resources** to high-priority regions, **maximizing conservation impacts** and making concrete steps toward improving habitat for priority species.

The goal of this approach is to support our partners' ability to:

- Focus limited capacity and resources in strategic locations, working across public and private lands.
- Enhance the diversity and health of habitat in the landscape using a holistic approach that considers the entire system, versus individual species or habitat types, over a long time-span (e.g. 10-20+ years).
- Integrate forest restoration efforts with bird conservation objectives.
- Enhance forest health and structure to benefit a diversity of wildlife.

# THE PROCESS

This is a “bottom-up” effort, with partners leading the development of individual focal landscapes across the AMJV geography and AMJV staff supporting and advising these efforts as needed. We are treating each landscape as a holistic system and leaning heavily on partners to identify the overarching objectives for each landscape, including priorities that are not bird-centric.



**Each focal landscape is developed based on the following criteria:**

## LOCAL PARTNER EXPERTISE AND INPUT

Existing partners working in the focal landscape, especially private and industry sector; funding prospects; needs of stakeholders; non-bird priorities.

## IMPORTANCE TO PRIORITY BIRDS

Concentration and trends of priority species; identification of priority species habitat or focal areas; current research; connectivity to wintering grounds; existing conservation plans.

## CONTAINS A MIX OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDS

## EXTENT/CONDITION OF FOREST

Representative of types and conditions across the Appalachians; ability to achieve long-term desired conditions given initial forest composition; forest connectivity and level of fragmentation.

## LAND USES AND THREATS

What are major threats to birds and their habitat; what are drivers of threats; climate vulnerability/resiliency of the landscape.

## CHANCE OF SUCCESS AND BARRIERS TO CONSERVATION

Ability to establish long-term framework for operating in landscapes; ability to monitor and evaluate results; public attitudes towards management; commodity interests and influence (e.g., forest products market).





# FOCAL LANDSCAPES IN ACTION

*Greenbrier Focal Landscape  
West Virginia*



## CURRENT PARTNERS

WV Division of Natural Resources, WV Division of Forestry, National Wild Turkey Federation, Monongahela National Forest, The Nature Conservancy, Natural Resources Conservation Service, West Virginia University

## SHARED PRIORITIES

- Minimize invasive species impacts
- Manage forests for improved health, resilience, and composition
- Enhance riparian forest health
- Restore high elevation spruce/fir forest
- Protect cave/karst systems
- Improve aquatic habitat and water quality

## CURRENT PROJECTS

### *Private Landowner Engagement*

Wildlife Management Institute and National Wild Turkey Federation are leading the development of an outreach strategy to motivate landowners to create a mixed mosaic of forest habitat that supports species of greatest conservation need. An Outreach Forester is being hired to implement this outreach strategy and engage landowners programs for Cerulean Warblers, Golden-winged Warblers, and pollinator habitat.

### *Appalachian Ecosystem Restoration Initiative*

This partnership between the US Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and more than 20 non-profit organizations has led to projects including restoring red spruce forests, mined lands, watersheds and aquatic habitat, fire-adapted oak-hickory forests, and early successional habitat on private and public land.

## NEXT STEPS

As current partners work toward the successful completion of the two NFWF-funded projects, steps are also being taken to engage additional stakeholders in the focal landscape. The development of an implementation strategy for the focal landscape is a priority. The strategy will include broad long-term goals, as well as more specific, short-term goals to guide initial efforts, and a monitoring plan to track progress toward our goals.

## INCREASED FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### *NFWF Central Appalachian Habitat Stewardship Program*

The Greenbrier watershed is within a targeted geography of the program, receiving higher priority for funding. With the support of the AMJV, Greenbrier Focal Area partners have received two grants through this new funding initiative.

