

# The Connecticut Young Forest Initiative

Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Wildlife Division



Photo by Kelly Boland

Shrubland and young forest were once more common on the landscape in Connecticut and throughout the Northeast. These areas were created through natural disturbances like fire, flooding, beaver activity and storms, as well as human activities such as agriculture and logging. As young forest and shrubland have been developed or matured into older forest, the wildlife species that depend on them have declined. The list includes over fifty species of greatest conservation need in Connecticut such as eastern box turtle, blue-winged warbler, and eastern towhee. Because we control flooding and fires, and no longer widely practice timber harvesting or agriculture, sometimes active management is needed to create and maintain these important habitats.

Our native woods rabbit, the New England cottontail (NEC), has been at the center of young forest conservation for a number of years. Focus areas for restoration and management were established based on known NEC locations and landscape characteristics. More recently, we've expanded our efforts

into focus areas for American woodcock and other young forest species.

Because so much of Connecticut is privately owned, conservation of young forest wildlife would be impossible without the involvement of private and municipal landowners. The CT DEEP Wildlife Division, US Fish & Wildlife Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Wildlife Management Institute work together to develop habitat plans for high-quality projects on private and municipal lands. Funding may be available for suitable projects.



*American woodcock by Paul Fusco*

*New England cottontail by Lisa Wahle*

To learn more about creating habitat for NECs, woodcock, and other young forest species, please contact a resource professional listed below.

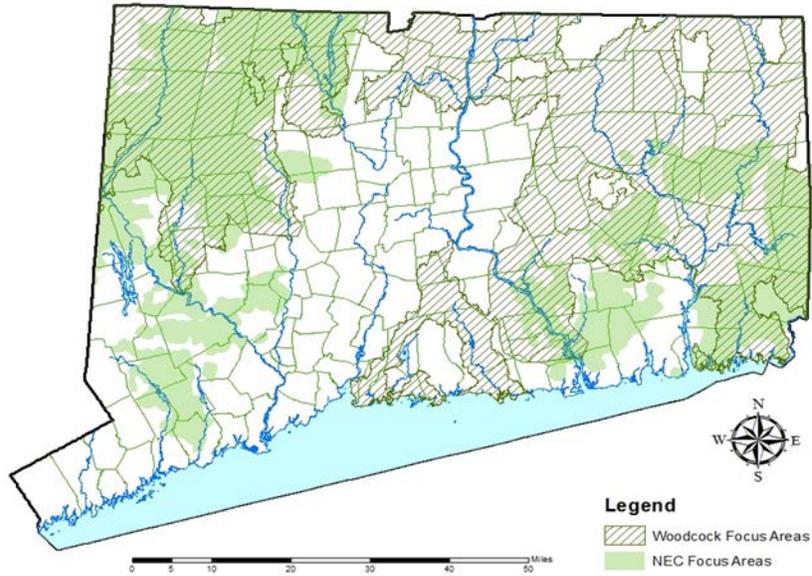
- Lisa Wahle, Project Biologist, [lisa.wahle@ct.gov](mailto:lisa.wahle@ct.gov) 860-424-4138
- Josh Miller, Project Forester, [joshua.miller@ct.gov](mailto:joshua.miller@ct.gov), 860-424-4044

Contractors to the Wildlife Management Institute at CT DEEP, Marlborough, CT

To learn more about the importance of young forest go to:

[www.youngforest.org](http://www.youngforest.org)  
[www.newenglandcottontail.org](http://www.newenglandcottontail.org)  
[www.ct.gov/deep/youngforest](http://www.ct.gov/deep/youngforest)

### New England Cottontail & American Woodcock Focus Areas



## Additional Landowner Technical Assistance



To support the diversity of wildlife throughout Connecticut, the CT DEEP Wildlife Division can provide some additional technical assistance for private and municipal landowners to manage and enhance wildlife habitat. This assistance includes web-based and printed information, presentations, articles and workshops. Our efforts are focused on young forest, grassland, meadow and other early successional habitats. For more information please contact the CT DEEP Wildlife Division Habitat Program at 860-295-9523 or email: [deep.wildlife@ct.gov](mailto:deep.wildlife@ct.gov).



Photo by Judy Wilson