

Funding Trends and Research Gaps

Lydia Roe ✦ Dec. 12, 2024

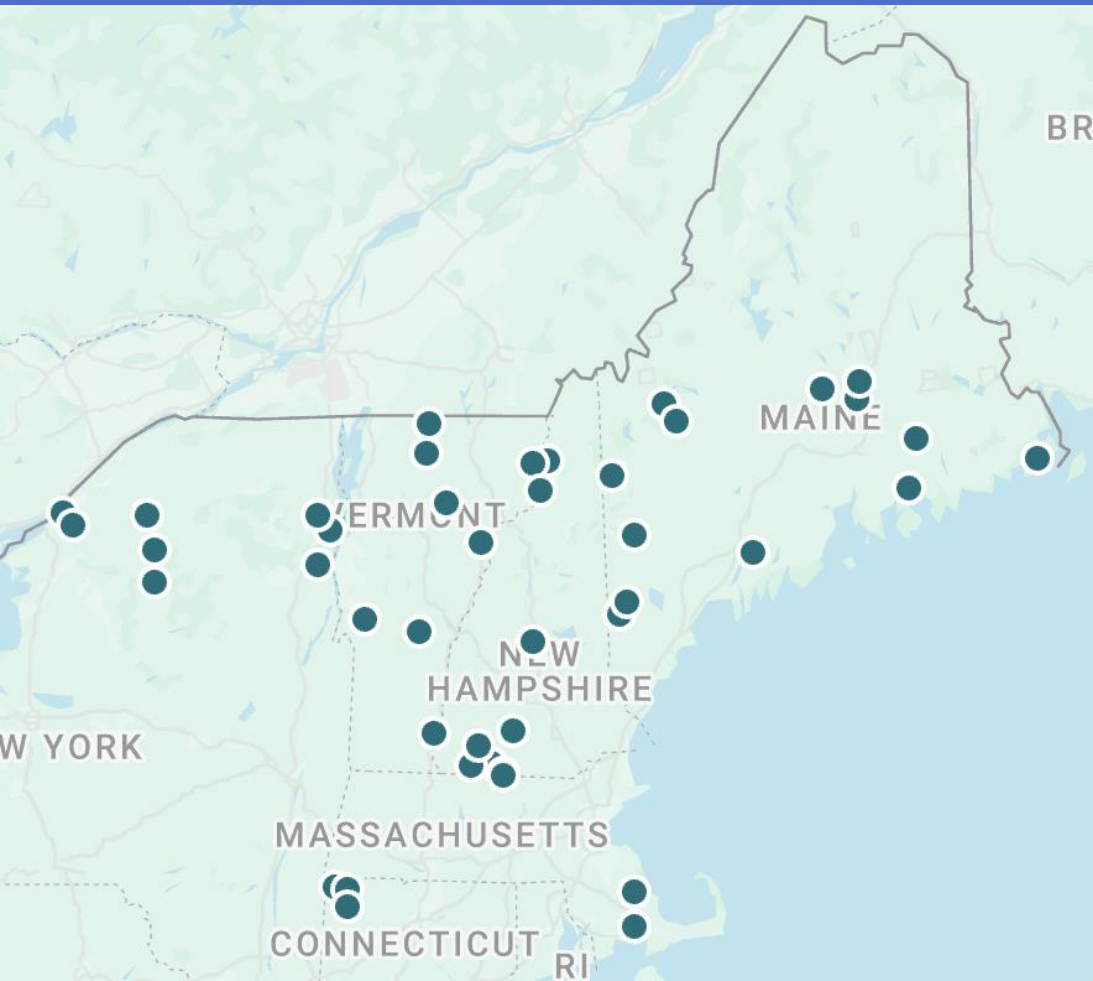
Insights from regional researchers on the current terrain of northeastern forest ecology science



Why do this research?



Northeast Wilderness Trust (NEWT)



NEWT:

- protects over 82,000 acres and is expanding their *ecology program* on these acres
- is curious how their forever-wild lands can best add to scientific knowledge
- has a forest ecology focus

Participants

Carol Adair, Alison Adams, John Campbell, Charles Canham, Natalie Cleavitt, Nicholas Cranmer, Andy Cutko, Tony D'Amato, Molly Docherty, Martin Dovciak, Mark Ducey, Robert Fahey, Ed Faison, Shawn Fraver, Laura Green, Peter Groffman, Ali Kosiba, Stacy McNulty, Rem Moll, Andrew Ouimette, Neil Pederson, Audrey Barker Plotkin, Jen Pontius, Larissa Robinov, Kathleen Savage, Christian Schorn, Jonathan Thompson, Steve Tulowiecki, Elisabeth Ward, Jay Wason, Jess Wikle, Christopher Williams, Xiangtao Xu

Category	Number of Participants
State	
NH	7
VT	6
NY	6
ME	6
CT	4
MA	4
RI	0
Type of Employment	
Higher Ed	23
Public	7
Non-profit	3
Primary Employment Focus	
Teaching/Research	14
Research	12
Land Management	5
Administrative	2

Questions asked:

- What is your current research focus? And what are you hoping to tackle in the near future?
- What do you think are important current gaps in what we know about forests and forest ecology in the Northeast?
- What are the reasons behind those gaps?
- Who funds your work?
- What kinds of topics are funders most interested in these days? Have these changed over the time you have been applying for funding?
- What do you view as important gaps in current funding available to you and your colleagues?



Acer capitalus

Results: Funding Trends

“You can’t promise to deliver much on a three-to-five year [grant] when the questions are 20-40 year questions.”

Lack of funds for: logistical extras (2), data management, cross-comparison, validation (2), time-sensitive data (4)

- Gap in long-term funding (9)
- Inflexibility of funds (8)
- Gap in funding for ecology/conservation/biodiversity-oriented research (7)
- Focus on carbon (6)
- Focus on climate change (6)
- Gap in funds for monitoring (4)

We have to “scrap around and find little bits of money, and you might find \$2,000 from a land trust, and you might find, maybe, \$5,000 if you’re lucky, or only a thousand from some little nonprofit. And those are really important pieces of funding, but it’s really hard to build a program on something like that.”

“I’m exaggerating a bit, but it’s sort of unthinkable nowadays to write a proposal that doesn’t mention or focus on climate change.... I think the pendulum – I can’t say it’s swung too far, because climate change is a real problem, but there are other things.”

“The giant, massive gap for funding is to try to get good, solid data on plants but also other organism groups as well.”

Results: Knowledge Gaps

“I think we don’t even know what we’re losing, because we don’t know what’s there. Or, we don’t know what is coming back. There are some success stories and we’re missing those as well.”

for instance.



Category	Subcategories	Subcategory Number of Responses	Category Number of Responses
Disturbances and Stressors	Interaction of disturbances	6	16
	Pests/pathogens	6	
	Invasive plants	2	
	Fire	1	
	Wind	1	
Lesser-Known Species	Fungi (including lichens)	9	14
	General	3	
	Beetles	2	
Other/Miscellaneous	[See report for list]	-	9
Carbon Sequestration	General	3	8
	Soil carbon	3	
	Old growth	2	
Synthesis/Applicability	Integrating data & research	3	7
	Translation to managers	4	
Trees-Other Biodiversity Interactions	-	-	7
Human-Ecological-Landscape	-	-	6
Monitoring	-	-	6

Thanks for your attention!



Any questions?

