Decision Support Tools for Conservation Design in the North Atlantic

Scott Schwenk
Science Coordinator, North Atlantic LCC

Restore America’s Estuaries 7th National Summit
November 5, 2014
22 established in 2010 by DOI
Regional
Self-directed partnerships
Goal: landscapes that sustain natural resources
The North Atlantic LCC - Partnership

- 7 U.S. federal agencies,
- 1 Canadian federal agency
- 14 state agencies
- 1 tribal representative
- 6 non-governmental organizations
North Atlantic LCC

Mission:
provides a **partnership** in which the conservation community works together **to address** increasing land use pressures and widespread resource **threats** and uncertainties **amplified by a rapidly changing climate**
by jointly developing and delivering scientific **information and tools** needed to prioritize and guide **more effective conservation** actions towards common goals
LCC Science Projects

- Over 20 completed or ongoing science projects providing foundational data, assessments and decision support for terrestrial, aquatic and coastal systems

- [http://www.northatlanticlcc.org/projects](http://www.northatlanticlcc.org/projects)
Examples of Decision Support Projects Related to Coastal and Estuarine Restoration

- Hurricane Sandy Resiliency Projects: Tidal Marshes and Beaches in face of storms and sea level rise
- Aquatic Connectivity and Flood Resiliency for Road-Stream Crossings
History: Aquatic Decision Support tool for Watersheds and Estuaries

- 2012 LCC Science Needs Process, included ACFHP and other partners
- High priority: better understand distribution, threats, and status of aquatic and coastal species
- 2012 RFP
Project History, part 2

- Review panel selected Decision Support Tool project led by Downstream Strategies
- Project began in 2013
- Multiple species: also includes tool for winter flounder
- Potential for river herring tool being evaluated
Why Brook Trout in the Chesapeake?

• Nation’s largest estuary at 64,000 square miles
  – 150 major rivers and streams
  – Portions of 6 states (MD, VA, PA, NY, DE, WV) and Washington, D.C.

• Nation’s most productive estuary
  – 500 million pounds of seafood harvested annually
  – Estuary health depends on upstream and upland conditions

• Brook trout as indicator of high quality headwater aquatic habitat
Project Team

• Oversight and Coordination

North Atlantic LCC
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Julie Devers, Callie McMunigal, Meredith Bartron

Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership – Emily Greene (former rep.)

Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture – Steve Perry

• Tool Development:

Downstream Strategies

North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative