

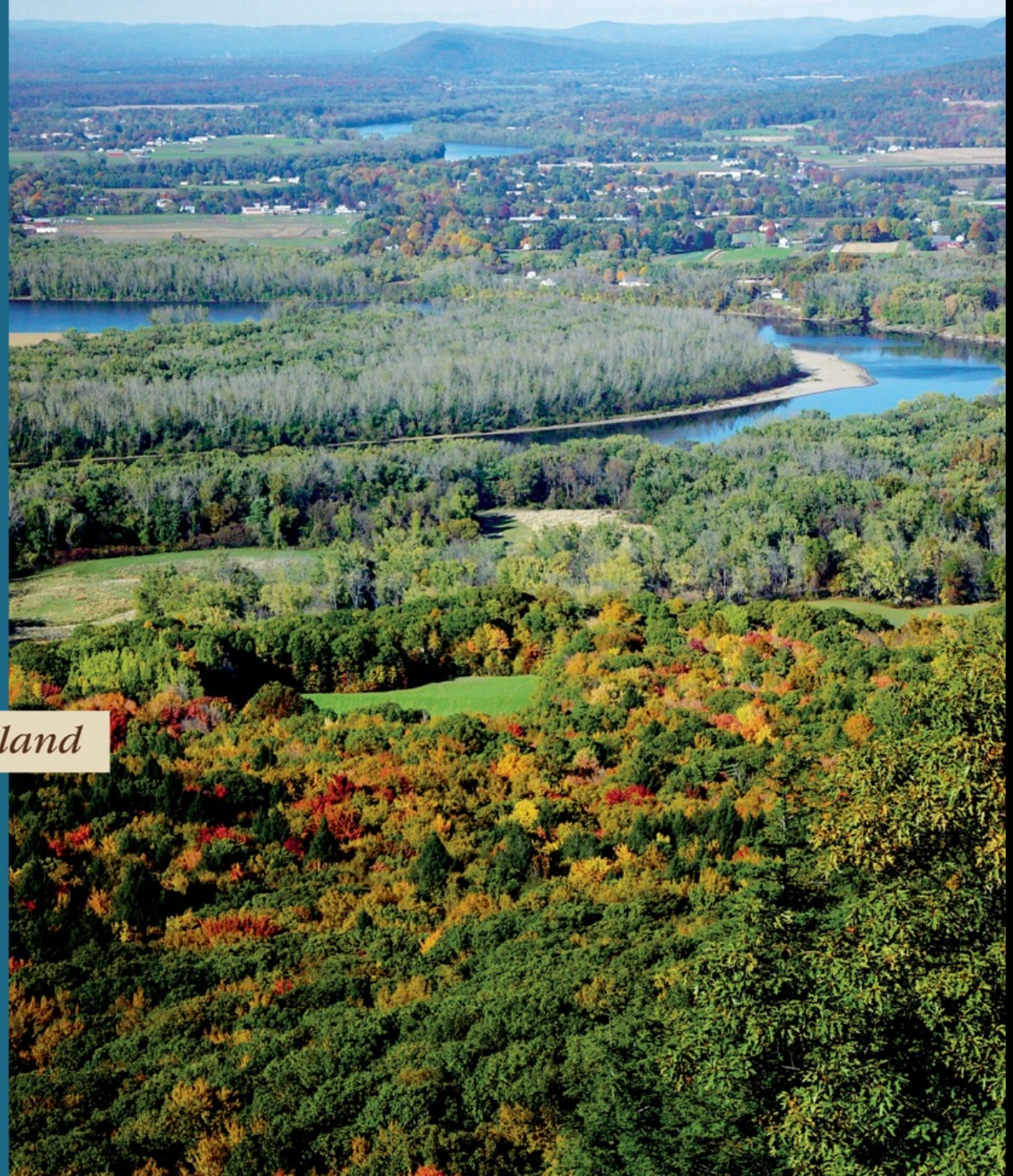
Testimony on H.687
House Committee on Environment and Energy
Elizabeth Thompson, Williston
February 2, 2024

Wildlands and Woodlands



Farmlands and Communities

Broadening the Vision for New England

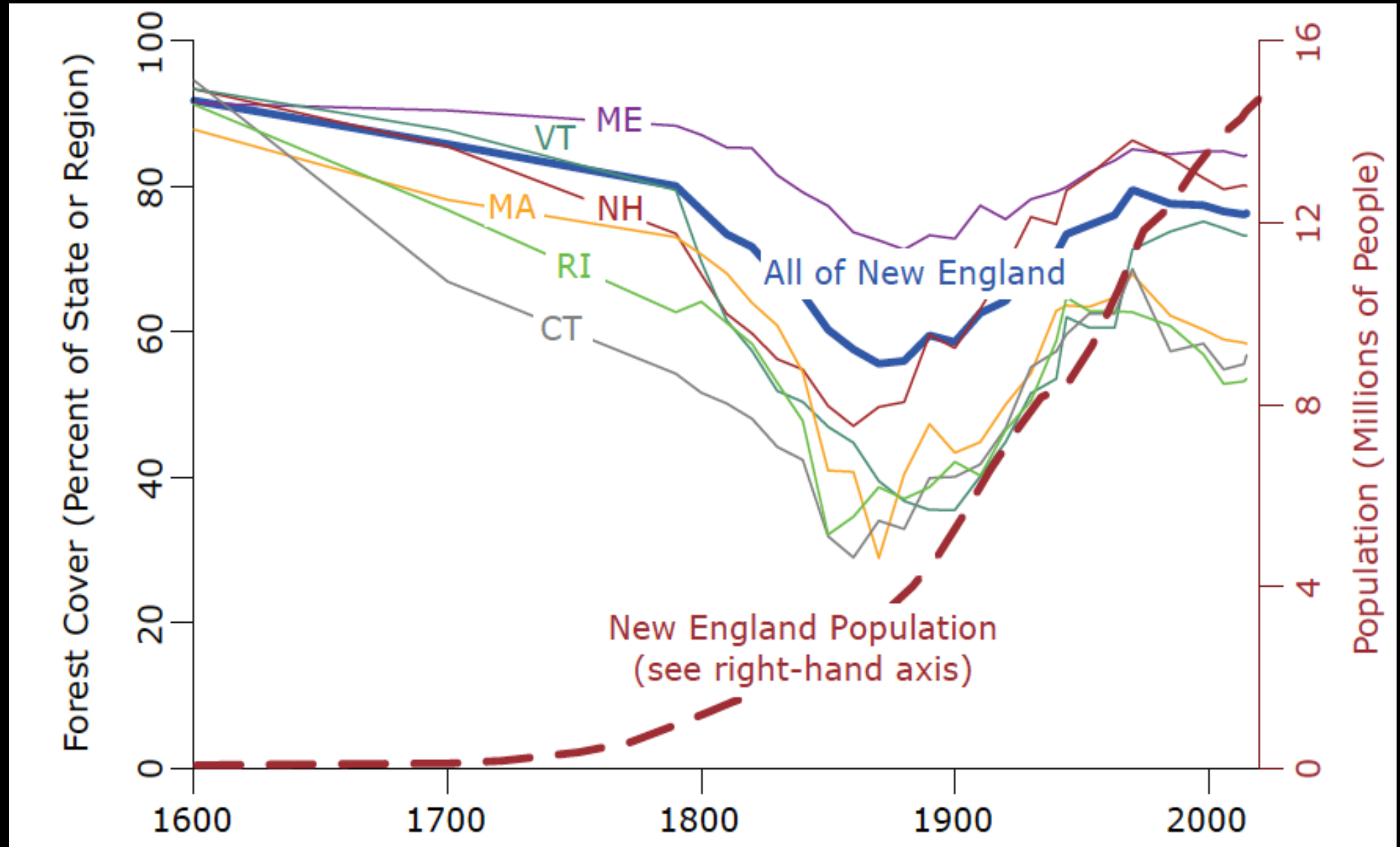


1880's

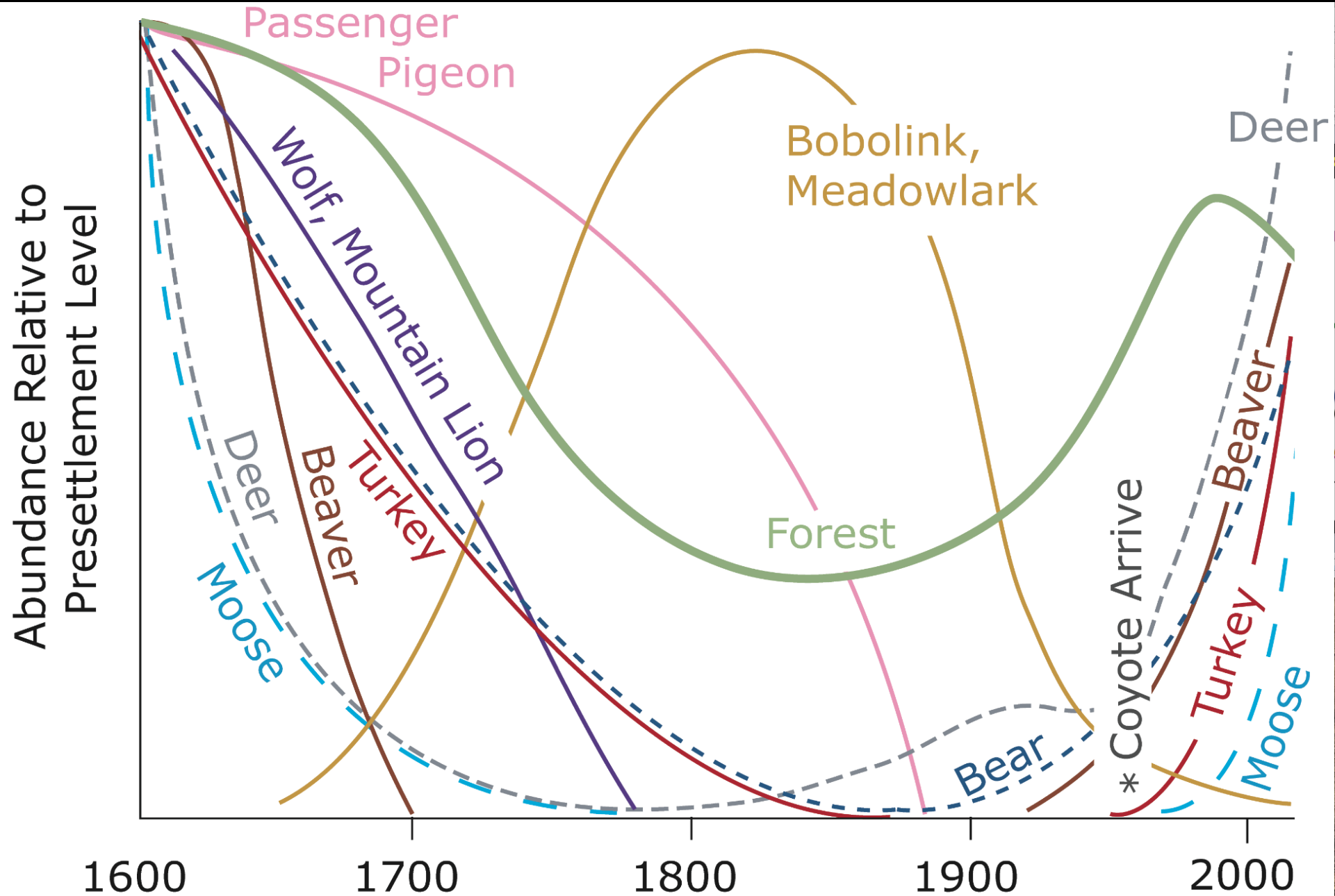
Today

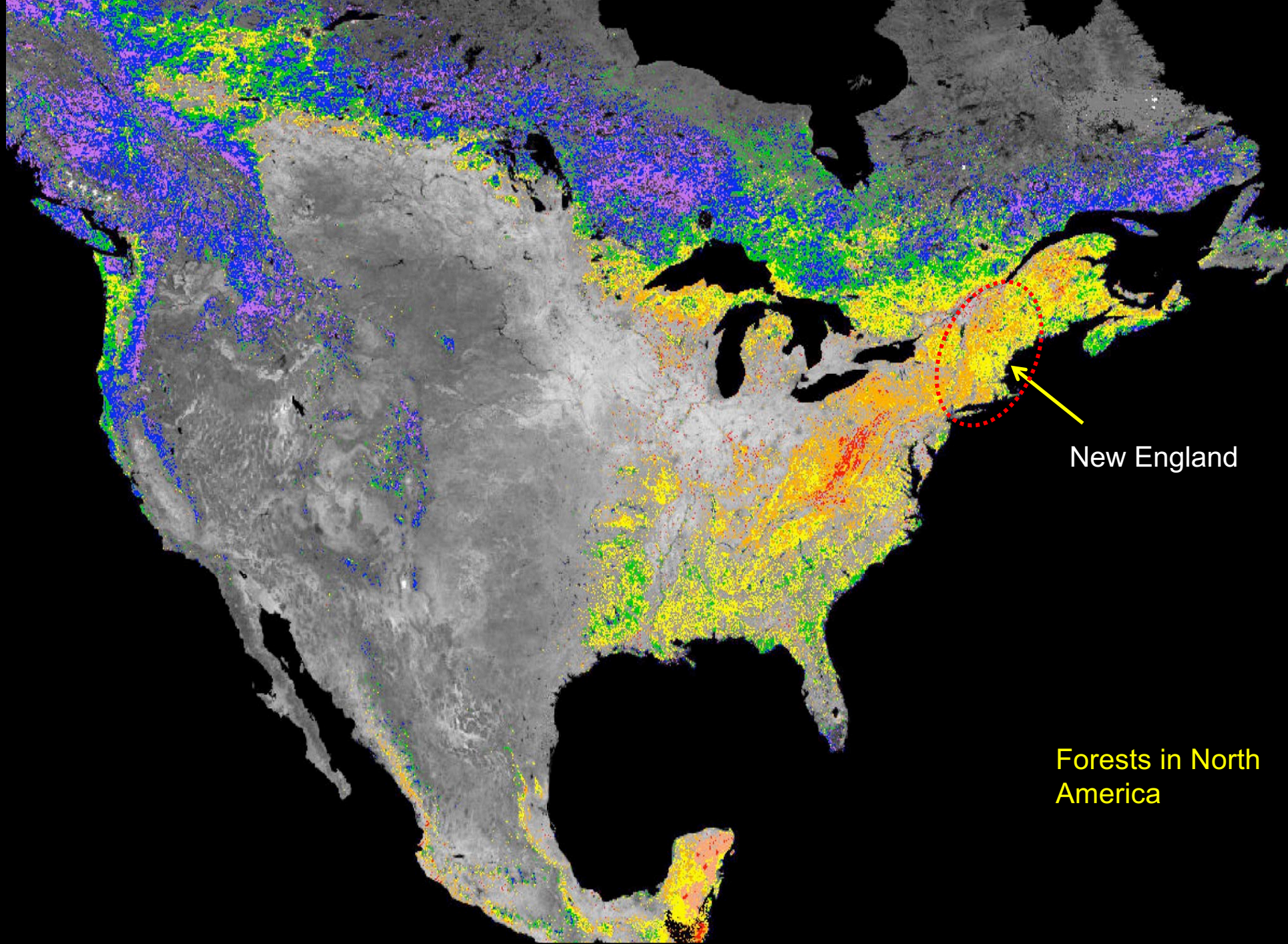
Swift River -- Petersham, Massachusetts

New England – “A Great Environmental Story”



Wildlife Dynamics in the New England Landscape





New England

Forests in North
America



Black bear, *Ursus americanus*
Trail cam photo: Marty Wall



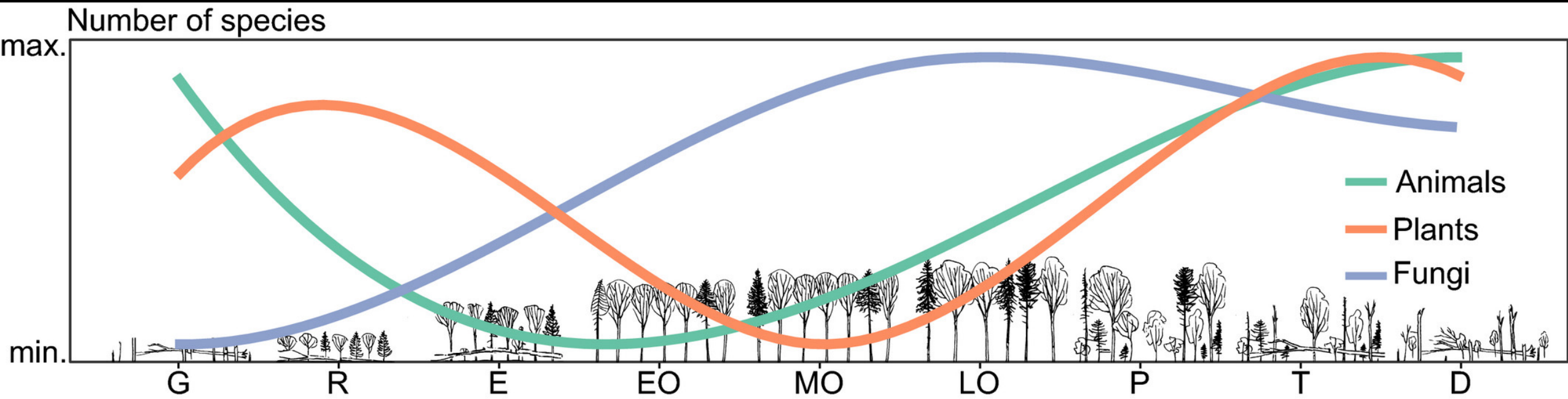
64°F / 18°C



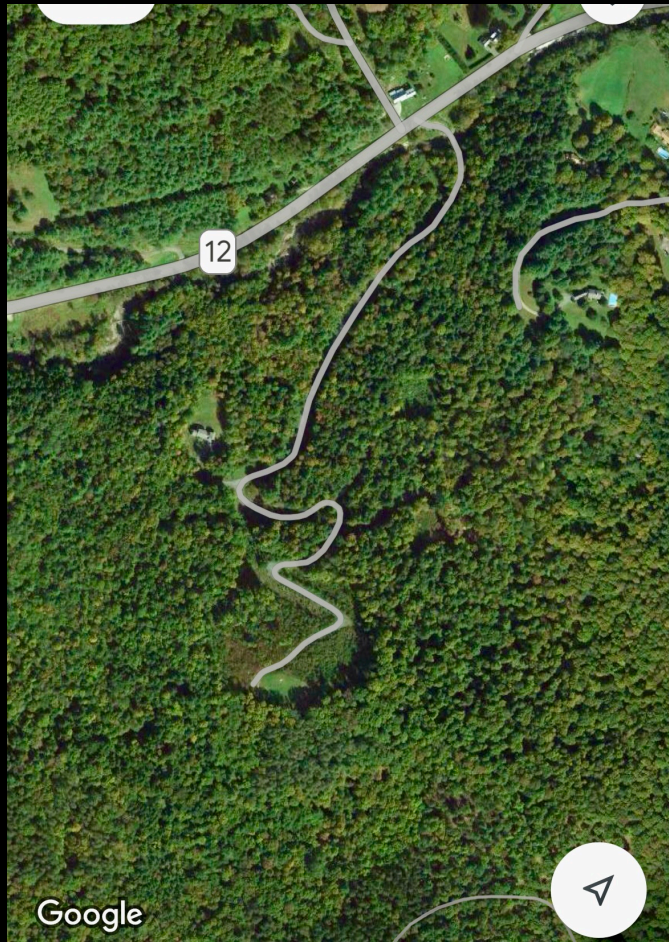
05/21/2012 18:53



Photo: Shelby Perry







Tier 2

NRB: Road rule 2000 feet

H.687: 500 buffer

Suggestions

Combination approach:

- Multiple roads 2000'
- Single roads: 800' rule?
- Buffer provision as in H.687

Tier 3

NRB: Need definition and mapping: RPCs

H.687: Critical resource area: >2000' elevation, shallow soils, steep slopes, habitat connectors, prime ag soils

Suggestions

ANR lead the process

Use VCD as appropriate

Data are evolving

Potential features to include:

- All lands above 2500'
- Within lands above 2000': headwaters, shallow soils, steep slopes
- High-priority connectors and certain forest blocks
- Riparian and river corridors not addressed elsewhere
- Wetlands not addressed elsewhere
- RTE species
- Rare and uncommon natural communities
- Old Forests
- Potential Old Forests, per ANR identification

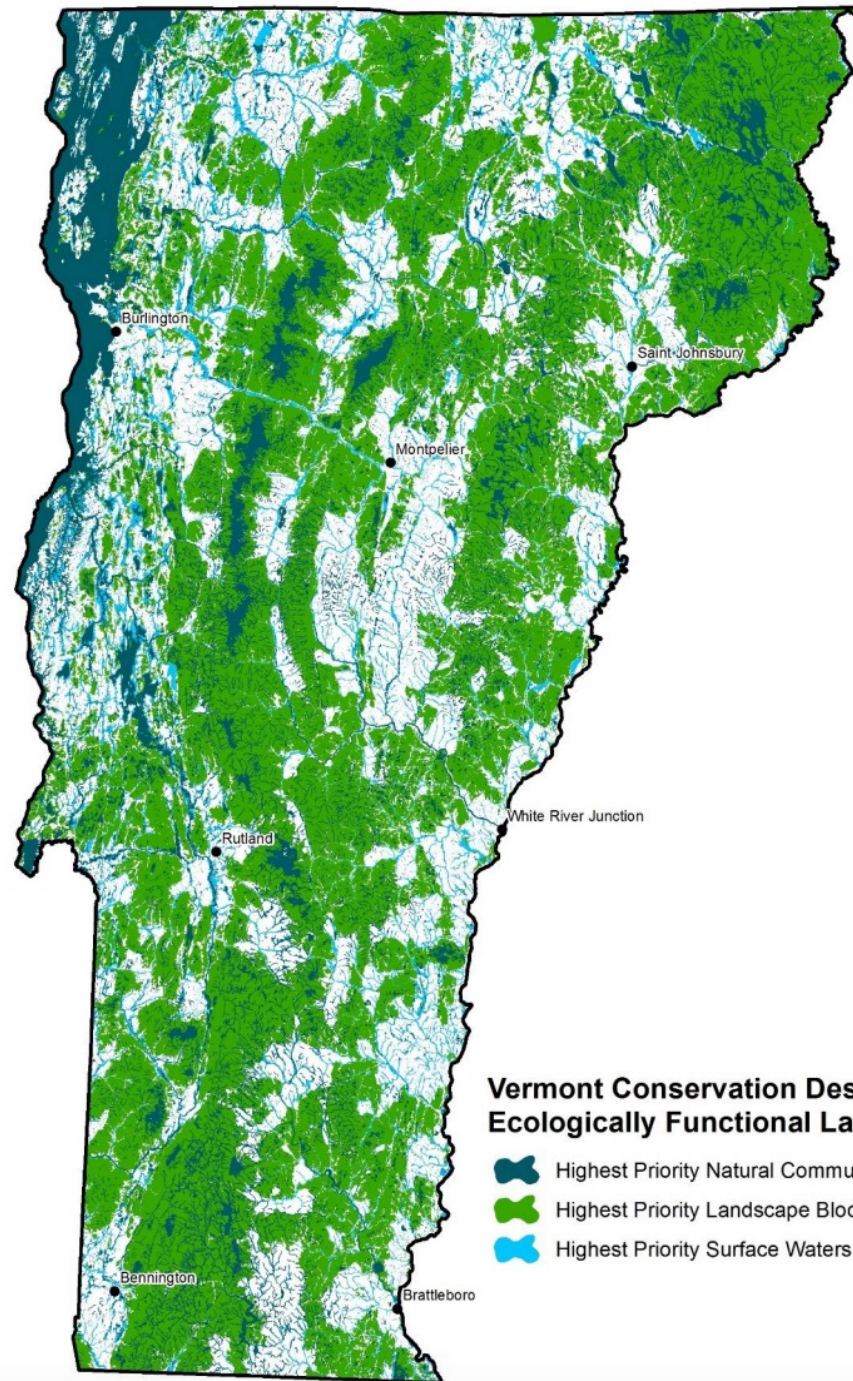
VERMONT CONSERVATION DESIGN

MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING AN ECOLOGICALLY FUNCTIONAL LANDSCAPE



*Summary Report for
Landscapes, Natural Communities, Habitats, and Species*

February 2018



**Vermont Conservation Design
Ecologically Functional Landscape**

-  Highest Priority Natural Community & Habitat Features
-  Highest Priority Landscape Blocks
-  Highest Priority Surface Waters and Riparian Areas





