



North Carolina Natural Heritage Program

Introduction to Natural Heritage Program data

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ncnhp.org

ncnhde.natureserve.org



The Natural Heritage Program's primary purpose is to provide assistance in establishing nature preserves.

- Conduct systematic biological surveys
- Identify Natural Heritage Program natural areas and prioritize them for conservation
- Maintain a database of natural heritage elements
- Establish Dedicated Nature Preserves (DNPs) and Registered Heritage Areas (RHAs)
- Share information to facilitate protection of NC's rarest species and their habitats



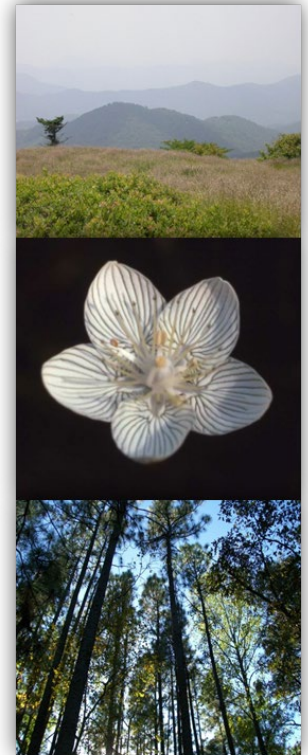
Natural Heritage Program Datasets

Element Occurrences: an area of land or water where a species, high-quality natural community, or animal assemblage is or was

Managed Areas: properties and easements where natural resource conservation is one of the primary management goals or areas of open space where open space is scarce

Natural Areas : terrestrial and aquatic areas that are of special biodiversity significance

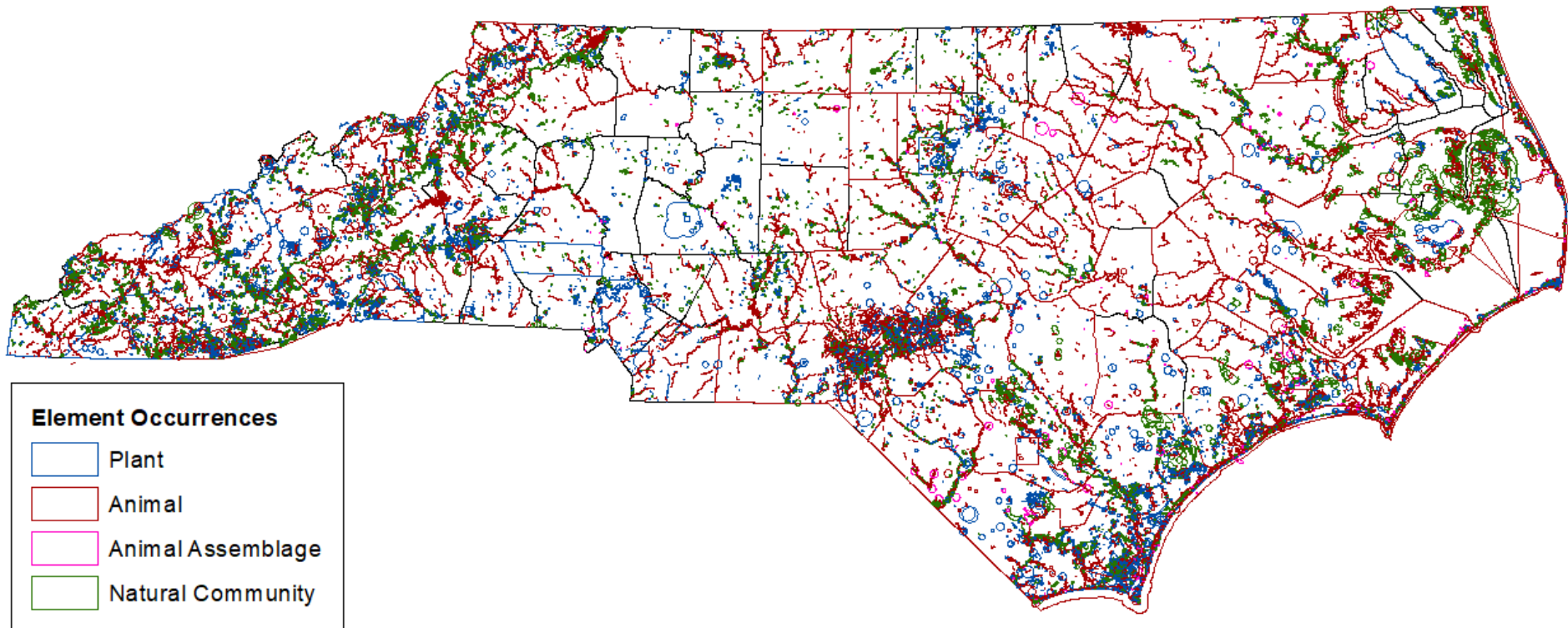
Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment: conservation priorities for aquatic and terrestrial species and habitats, as well as landscape functions and connectivity



**These are not survey grade data nor are a substitute for land or biological survey data - they are an aid to conservation planning only*

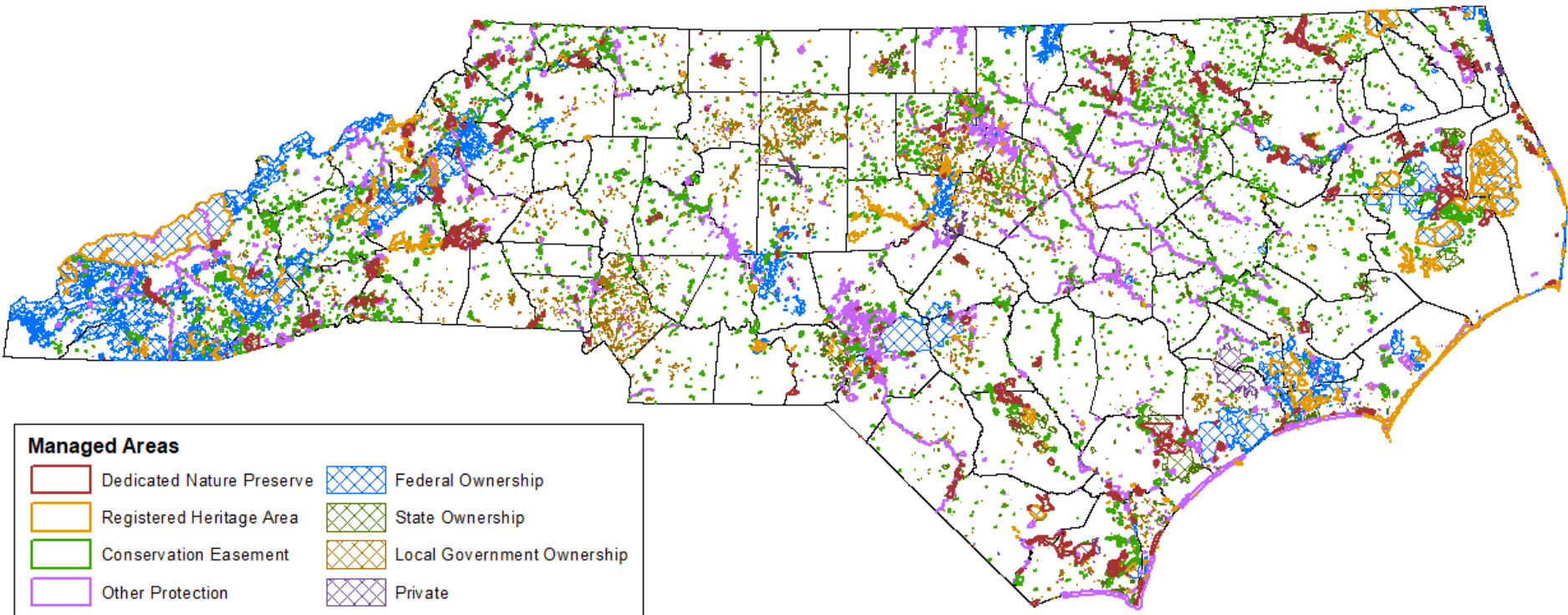
Element Occurrences

- Locations where an Element was observed or historically present
- Mapped feature includes locational uncertainty
- Compiled from a variety of sources
- Not publicly available



Managed Areas

- Properties and easements where natural resource conservation is one of the primary management goals
- Primarily parcel or easement boundaries
- Variety of data sources
- Publicly available



Natural Areas

- Terrestrial and aquatic areas that are of special biodiversity significance
- Unit of conservation concern – targets of conservation action
- Boundaries are based on field observation and are ecological
- Surveyed with landowner permission only
- Contains at least one Element Occurrence
- No regulatory nexus or inherent legal protection
- Significant Natural Heritage Area is a legacy name that is no longer used
- Publicly available



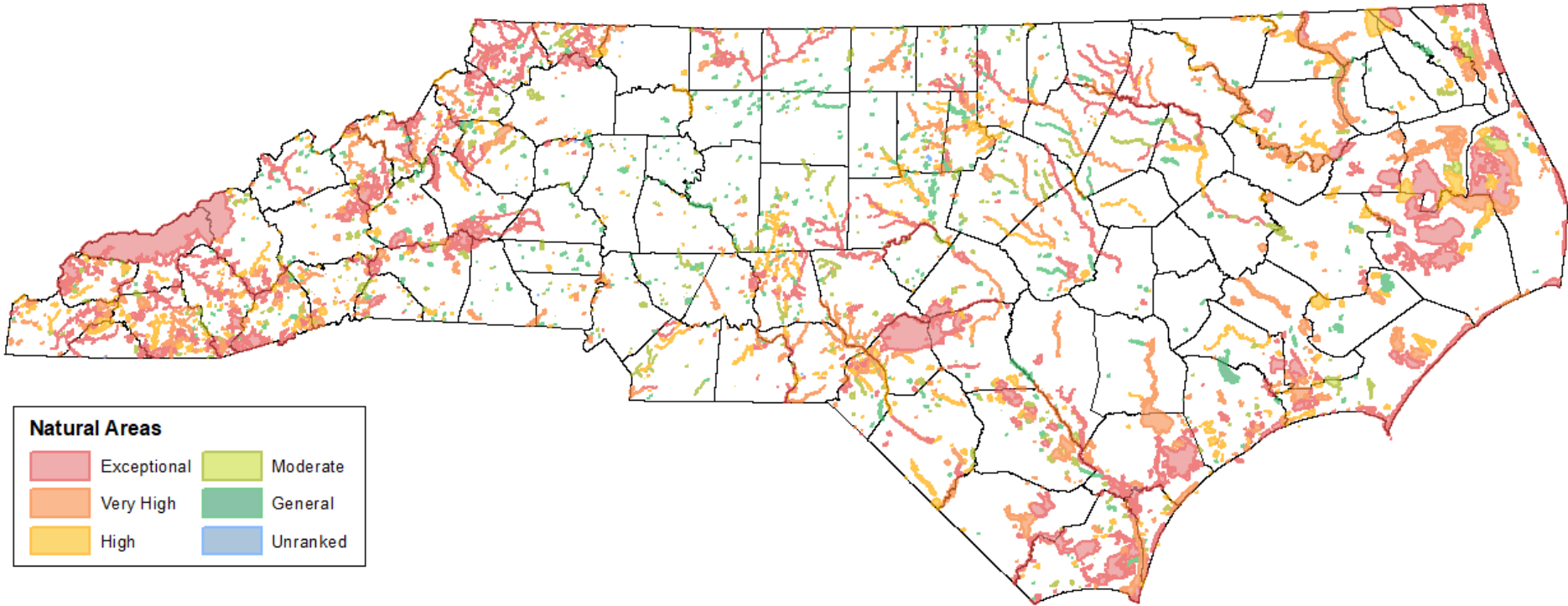


Prioritizing Natural Areas

Significance Ratings:

- Collective value (C-value)
 - Based on the number and imperilment of all the Elements present
 - Count of the number of Elements in the natural area weighted by their rarity
 - C1 (Exceptional) – C5 (General)
- Representational value (R-value)
 - Natural areas that represent the best examples of each tracked Element in N.C.
 - R1 (Exceptional) – R5 (General)

Natural Areas

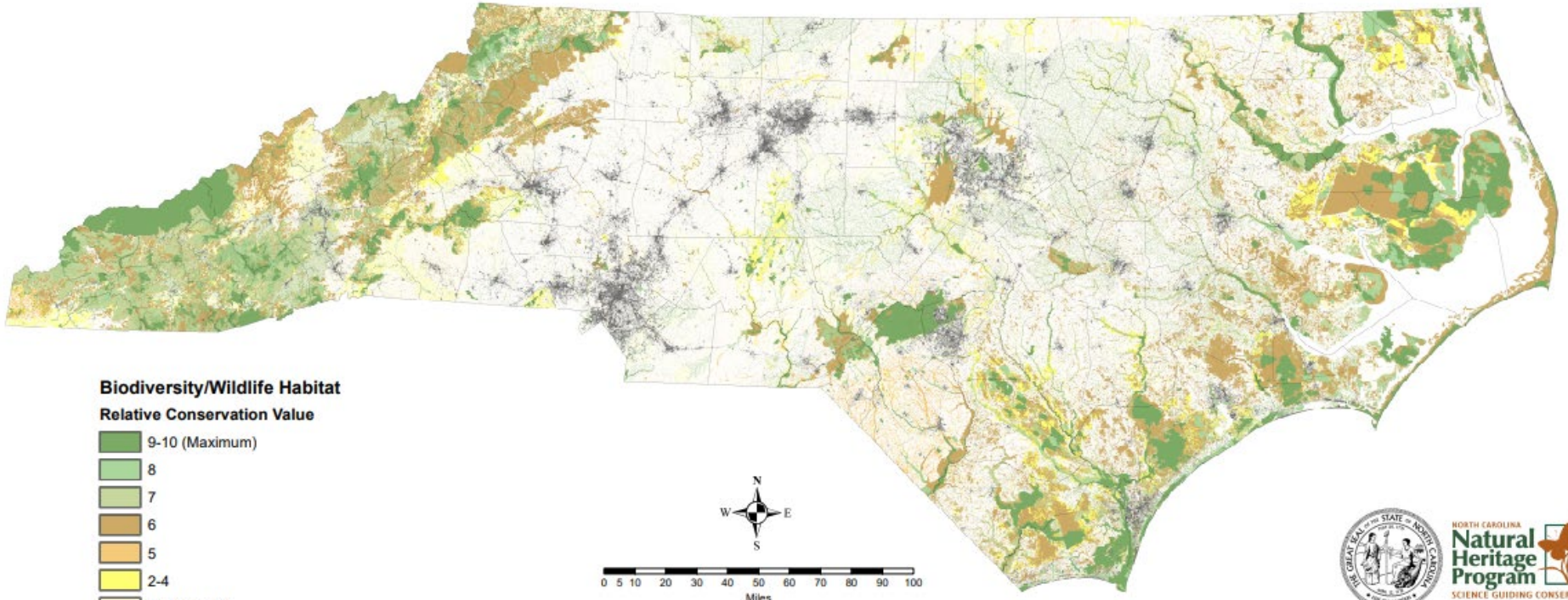


Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment

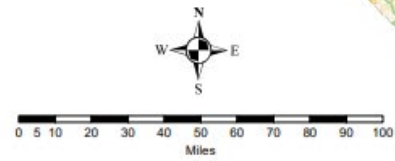
- Part of the N.C. Conservation Planning Tool (CPT)
- Model that identifies core wildlife habitats and connectors, and land and water resources important for ecosystem health
- Help coordinate and guide conservation efforts and inform planning decisions
- Element Occurrences and Natural Areas are among the data inputs



North Carolina Conservation Planning Tool Biodiversity/Wildlife Habitat Assessment



- Biodiversity/Wildlife Habitat
Relative Conservation Value**
- 9-10 (Maximum)
 - 8
 - 7
 - 6
 - 5
 - 2-4
 - 1 (Moderate)
 - 0 (Unrated)
 - Impervious surface >20%



Credit: North Carolina Conservation Planning Tool (CPT) – Biodiversity/Wildlife Habitat Assessment. May 2021.
North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Raleigh, NC.

May 2021

Category Name	Value	Individual Input Layers
NHP	10	Natural Heritage Natural Areas – Exceptional and Very High Site Rating
NHP	8	Natural Heritage Natural Areas – High and Moderate Site Rating
NHP	6	Natural Heritage Natural Areas - General Site Rating
NHP	5	Element Occurrences – High Ranking
NHP	4	Element Occurrences – Other
Wetlands	7	Coastal Region Evaluation of Wetland Significance (CREWS) – Exceptional
Wetlands	6	Coastal Region Evaluation of Wetland Significance (CREWS) – Substantial
Wetlands	5	National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)
Wetlands	2	Coastal Region Evaluation of Wetland Significance (CREWS) – Beneficial
Guilds	1-10	Landscape Habitat Indicator Guilds
DWR	10	Outstanding Resource Waters (ORW)
DWR	9	Stream BioClassification – Excellent
DWR	8	High Quality Waters (HQW)
DWR	7	Stream BioClassification – Good
DWR	1	All other streams
FishHabitat	9	Wild Brook Trout
FishHabitat	8	Anadromous Fish Spawning Areas (AFSA)
FishNursery	8	Fish Nursery Areas (FNA)
Watersheds	7	Stream buffer tributaries to Threatened & Endangered Species
Watersheds	3	Priority Watersheds
Marine	8	Oyster Sanctuaries
Marine	6	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation
Hardbottom	8	Open Shellfish /Shellbottom
Hardbottom	7	Hard Bottom
Hardbottom	5	Closed Shellfish /Shellbottom
IBA	6	Important Bird Area (IBA)
Impervious	-1	Impervious Surface above 20%

Moderate									Maximum
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Natural Heritage Data Explorer

<https://ncnhde.natureserve.org/>

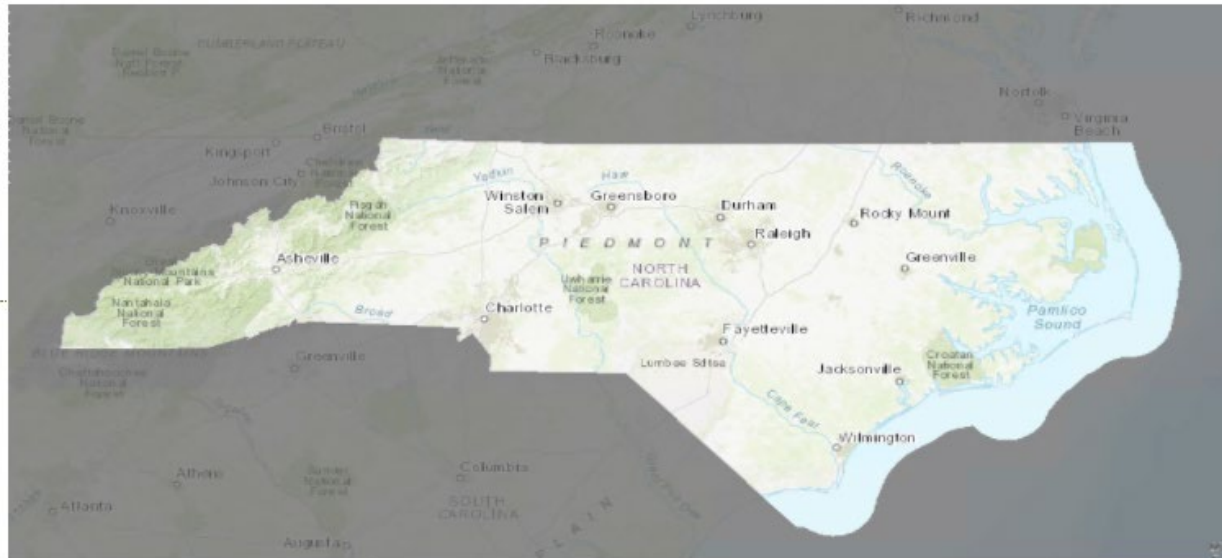


Home	Map	Species/Community Search	Terms & Conditions	Data Download	Requests	Help
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Welcome to the

North Carolina Natural Heritage Data Explorer

Interactive maps of Natural Heritage resources for North Carolina.



Natural Heritage Data Explorer

<https://ncnhde.natureserve.org/>



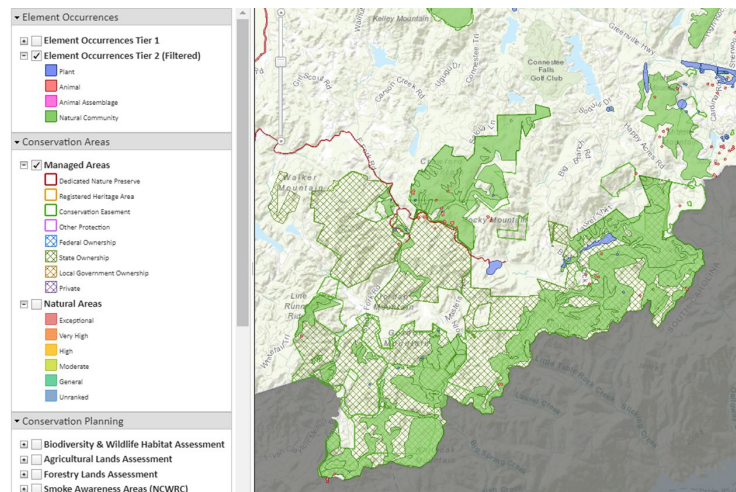
Roy Cooper, Governor
Susi Hamilton, Secretary
Walter Clark, Director, Land and Water Stewardship

NCNHDE-10367

October 1, 2019

Misty Buchanan
North Carolina Natural Heritage Program
1651 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1651
RE: Test Headwaters State Forest

Dear Misty Buchanan:



...ates the opportunity to provide
...erenced above.

...s for rare species, important natural
...s within the proposed project
...nted Occurrences' tables and map.

...cies and natural communities that
...y boundary. The proximity of these
...entially be present in the project area
...on/managed areas within a one-mile

...rea or indicated within a one-mile
...the US Fish and Wildlife Service
...in North Carolina is found here:
...de=37.

...or the purposes of conservation
...ended for use as the primary criteria
...atabase may not be published
...must be credited as an information

- Map viewer
- Project review tool
- Data downloads

If you would like to learn more, please visit <https://www.ncnhp.org/events> and sign up for training.

Questions?

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