

# Land Conservation 2017 Year In Review:

## Highlights in the Watersheds and Looking Ahead



Chris LaPointe, Essex County Greenbelt Association

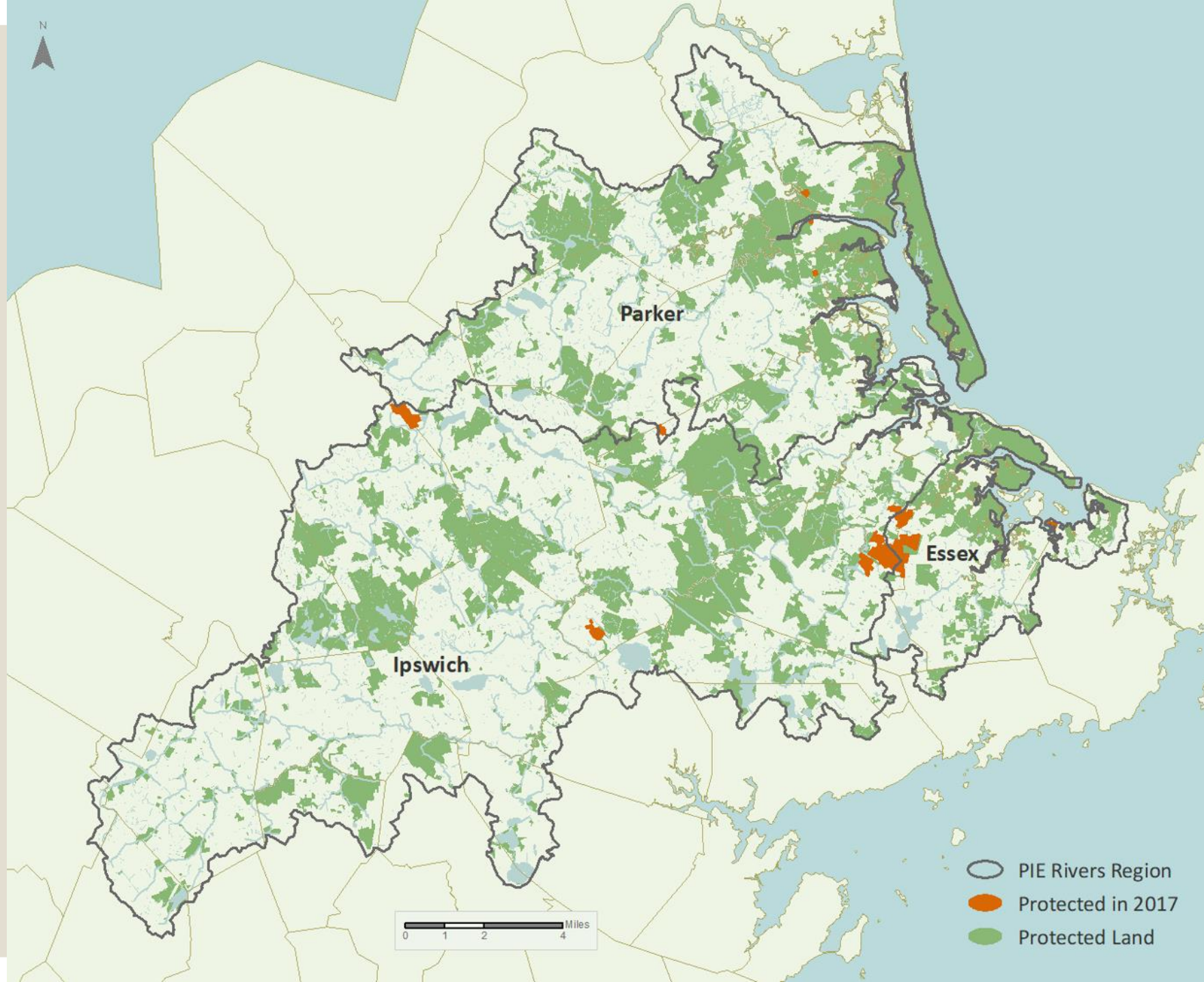


## **2017 – A Landmark year for conservation**

### **Nearly \$12 Million in projects, 900+ acres**

- Sagamore Hill Conservation Area, Hamilton, Ipswich, Essex (525 ac)
- Pony Express Farm, Ipswich (128 ac)
- Shaw Field, Topsfield (48 ac)
- Donibristle, Topsfield (46 ac)
- Leonhard Farm, North Andover and Boxford (116 ac)
- Old Rowley Road, Newbury (5 ac)
- Noyes Saltmarsh, Newbury (7 ac)
- Rough Meadows Addition, Rowley (4 ac)
- Dike Marsh, Essex (29 ac)
- Willowdale Circle, Ipswich (11 ac)
- Belcher St., Essex (3.3 ac)







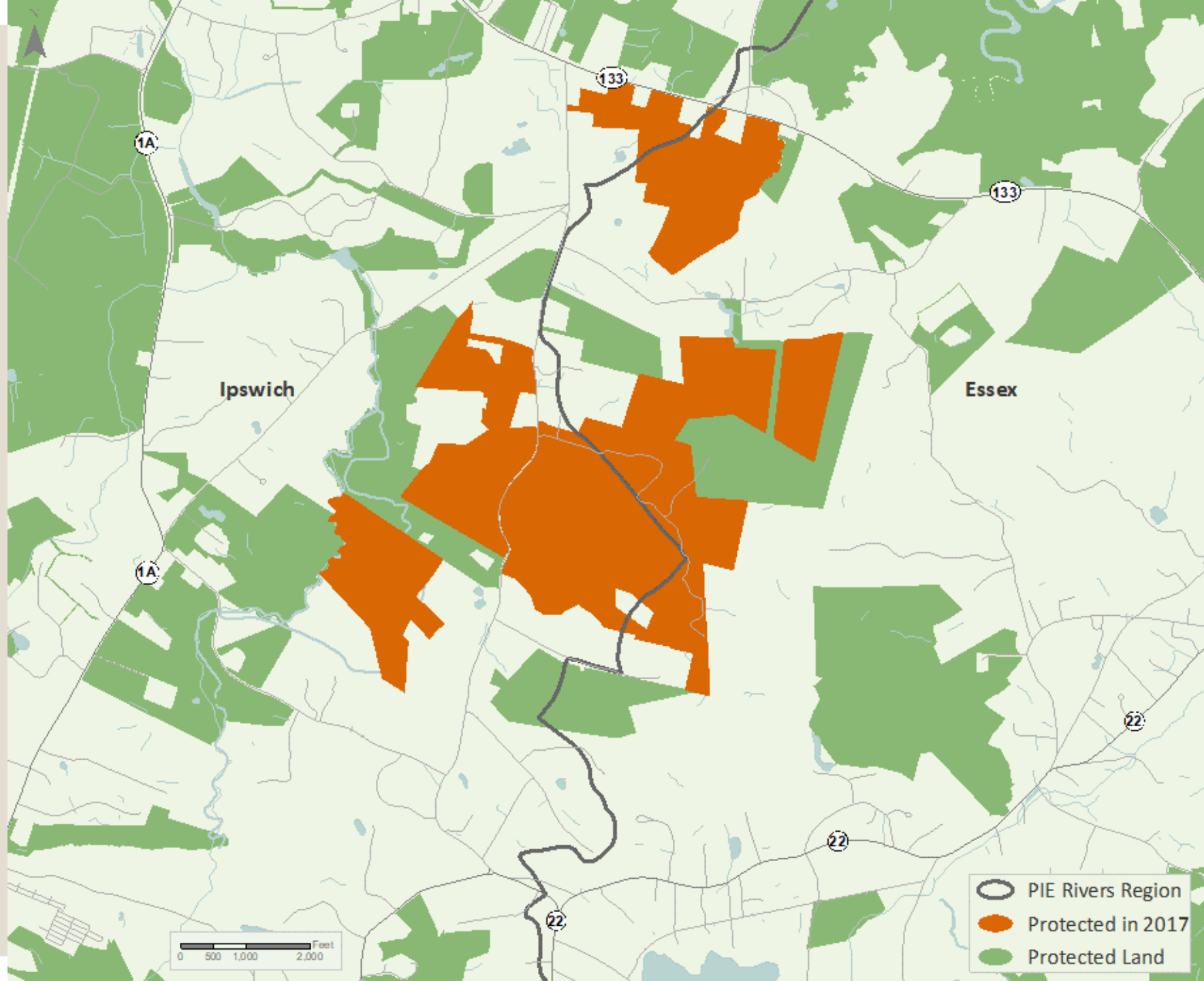
# Sagamore Hill Conservation Area





# Castle Neck River Reservation/ WMA







# Shaw Field

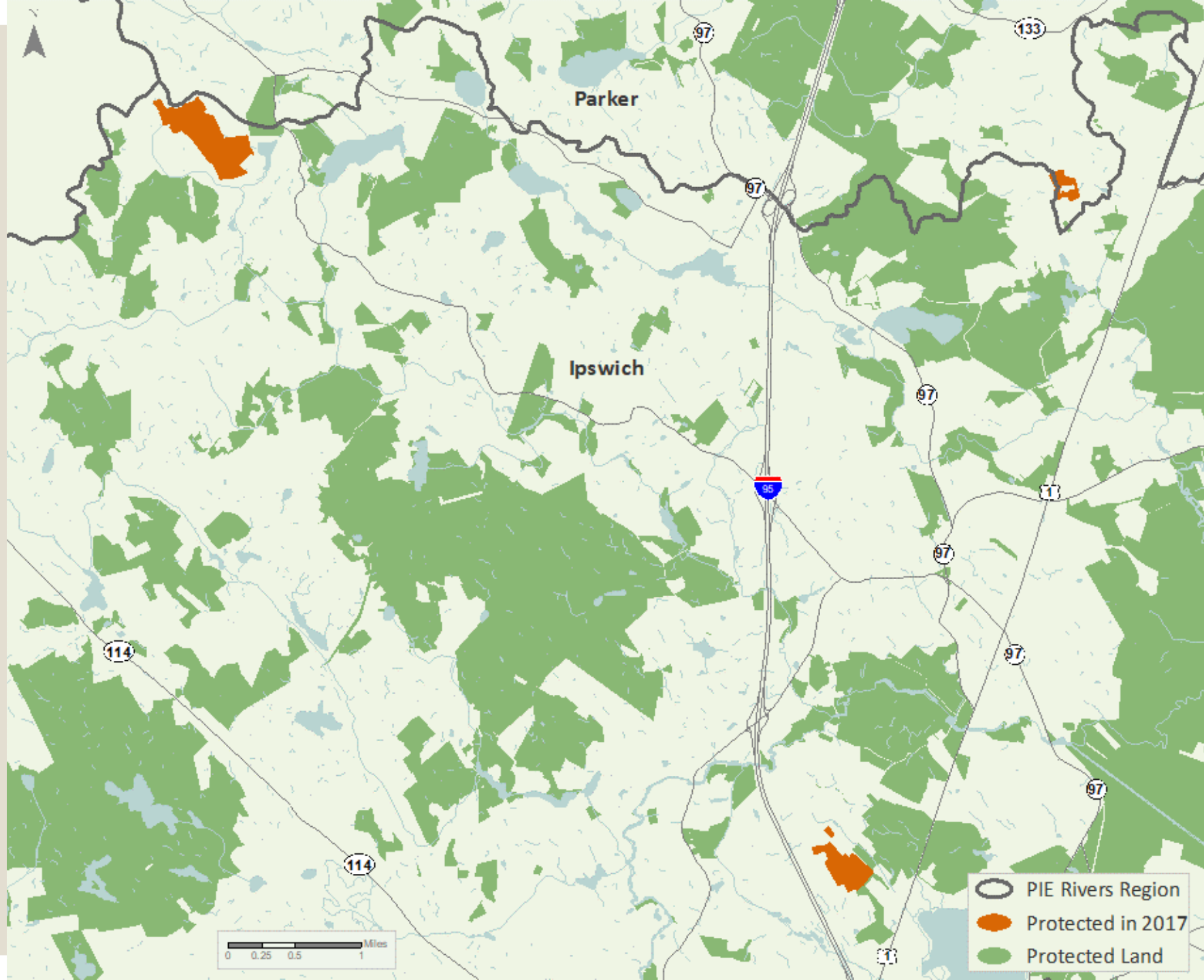




# Donibristle



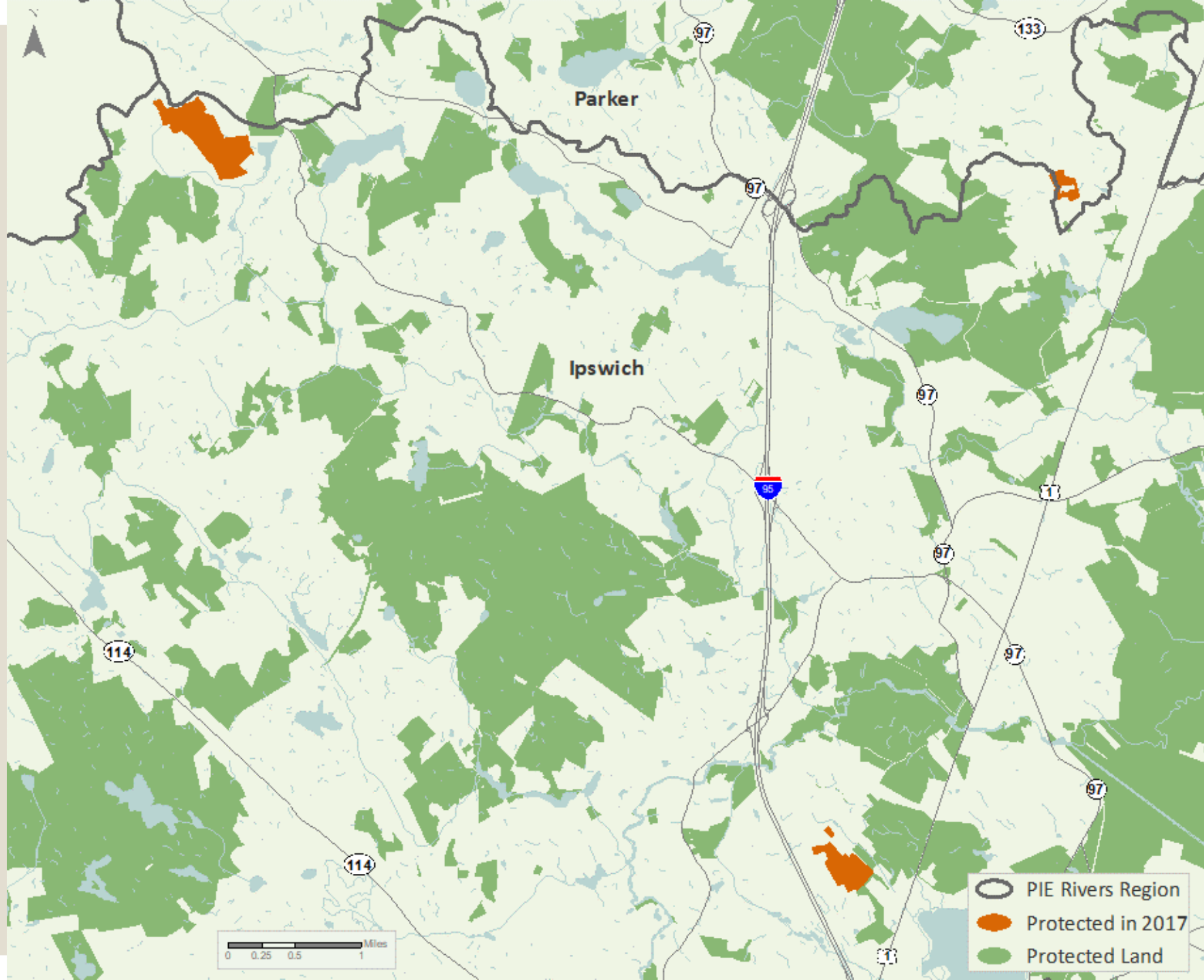




# Leonhard Farm







# Rowley and Newbury

## The Trustees:

- Old Rowley Road, Newbury (5 ac)

## Department of Fish and Game:

- Noyes Saltmarsh, Newbury (7 ac)

## MassAudubon:

- Rough Meadows Addition, (4 ac) Rowley





# Looking Forward...

Reasons for both optimism and concern.





## In the “Concern” Column...

- Federal Tax Legislation
  - Will reduce incentive for many taxpayers to make charitable donations.
  - Impact on land and CR donations not yet known
  
- Federal Headwinds
  - LWCF, Antiquities Act, etc.
  - New Farm Bill in 2018



## In the “Concern” Column...

At the local level:

- Stressed budgets
- Concerns about tax revenues
- Land Trust community working on updated economic benefits study
- Need to continue to make the case for conservation.



## In the “Concern” Column...

At the state level:

- Overall conservation funding levels have declined, though support for conservation remains.
- Some declining funding has been “stretched” by funding projects in out years, makes project timing a challenge.
- Competition for funding has increased (only 63% of LAND Grants funded this year).

## Not perfect, but a glimmer of hope...

### State funding

- Conservation Land Tax Credit Cap Increase
- Next Environmental Bond - 2018

### Community Preservation Act Match – All-time low 17%

- But...legislation moving to bolster the match



## Reasons to be optimistic...

- Voters across the country continue to support open space funding.
- \$2 Billion created by local and state conservation measures in 2017 (88% passage).
- Support cuts across party lines nationwide.





# Questions?

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