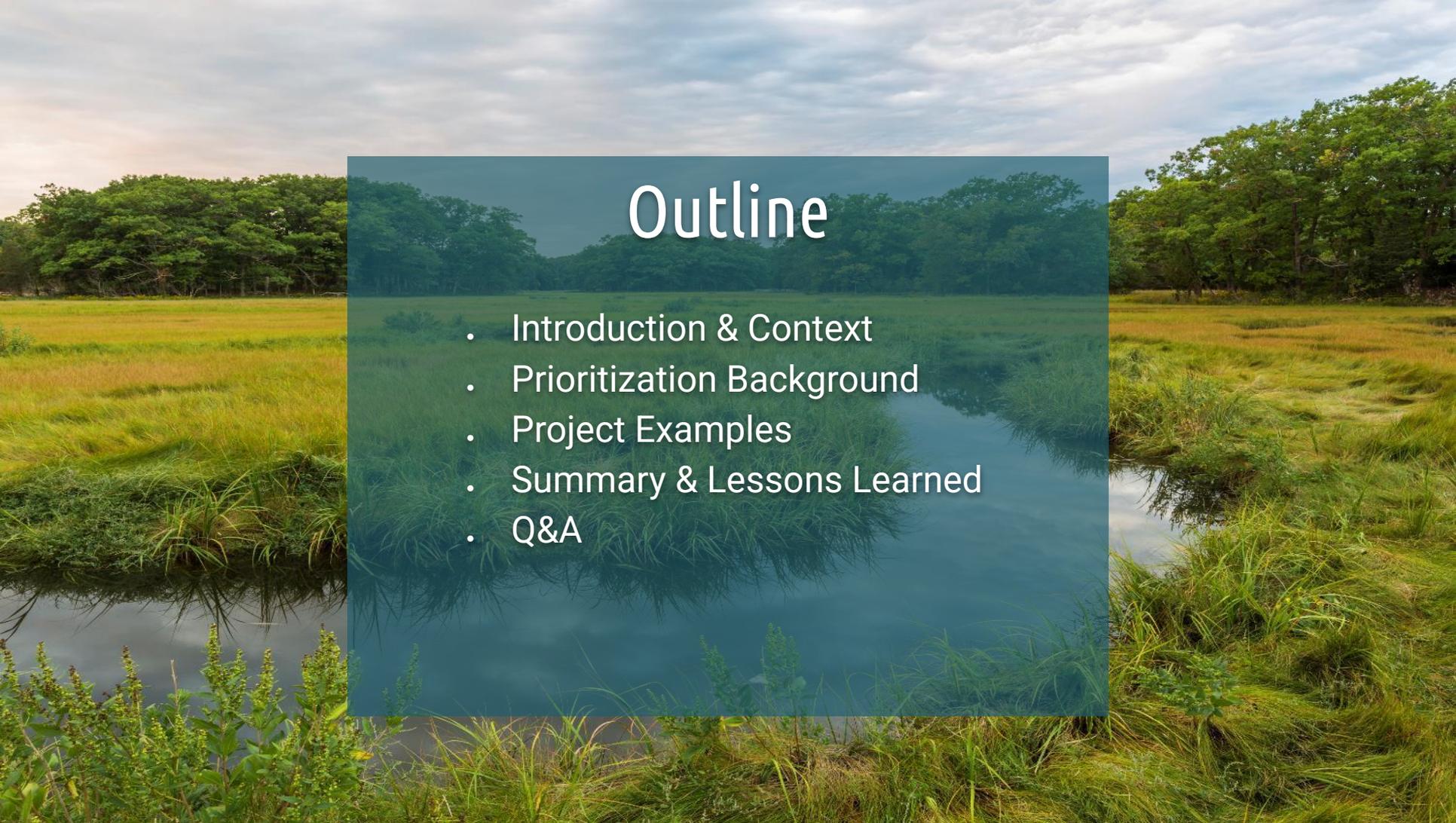




**Greenbelt**  
Essex County's Land Trust

# The Power Place: Guiding Conservation in a Changing Climate

Chris LaPointe | Abby Hardy-Moss



# Outline

- Introduction & Context
- Prioritization Background
- Project Examples
- Summary & Lessons Learned
- Q&A

# About Greenbelt



- Greenbelt protects natural land and working farms across Essex County forever, helping to conserve healthy ecosystems, clean water, local food supplies, scenic landscapes, and free, accessible places for all to benefit from nature.
- In 64 years we've protected over 22,500 acres and opened more than 50 public properties
- Protect land for habitat, agriculture, climate resilience and scenic value



# Greenbelt's Prioritization - Goals

- Identify parcels for protection of critical resources
- Results that allow for quick evaluation and comparison of parcels
- New focus areas: climate resilience & drinking water
- Integrate new data
- Relevant to municipal partners



*Photo credit, Dr. Stephen Young  
Great Marsh, Essex*

# Process – Phase I

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- Funding:

- Foundation grants
- Land Trust Alliance

- Methods research/MPV  
plan review

- Staff committee

- Methods development

- Advisory Panel

## Advisory Panel:

- Jessica Deitrich, The Nature Conservancy
- Andy Finton, The Nature Conservancy
- Tim Simmons, Restoration Ecologist, Retired
- Dr. Marcos Luna, Salem State University
- Dr. Stephen Young, Salem State University
- Dr. Barbara Parmenter, Tufts, Retired
- Wayne Castonguay, Ipswich River Watershed
- Julie Wood, Charles River Watershed Assoc.
- Noah Kellerman, Alprilla Farm
- Jae Silverman, Land for Good
- Nathan L'Etoile, American Farmland Trust



# Process – Phase II

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- Funding:
  - Foundation grants
  - Massachusetts CZM Coastal Resilience Grant
- Municipal pilots
- Data revisions
- Open space planning support
- Staff implementation



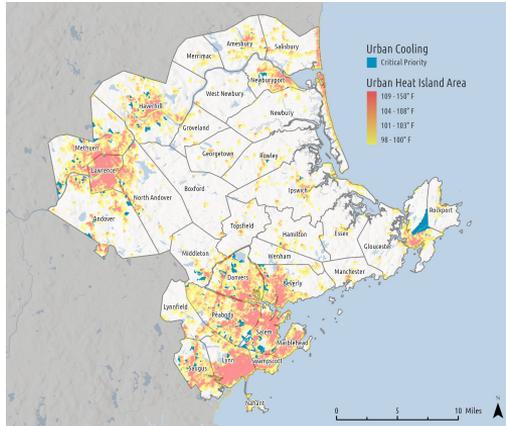
# Municipal Engagement

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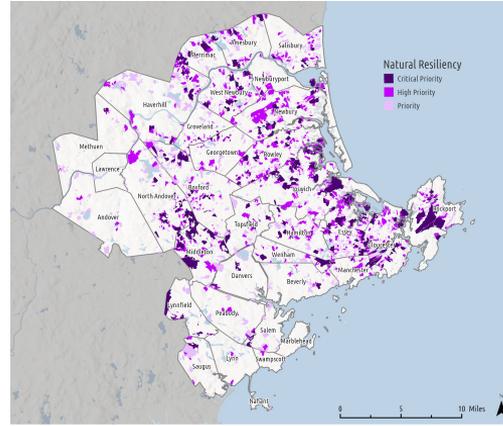
- Review MVP plans
- Pilot results with 2 communities
- Meet with municipal staff and Open Space Committees
- Integrate results into planning documents
- Collaborate with regional planning agency



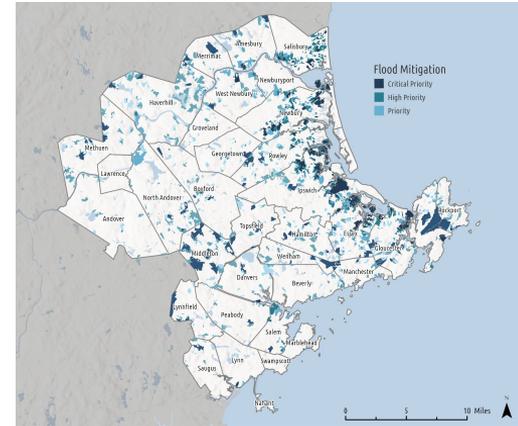
## Urban Cooling



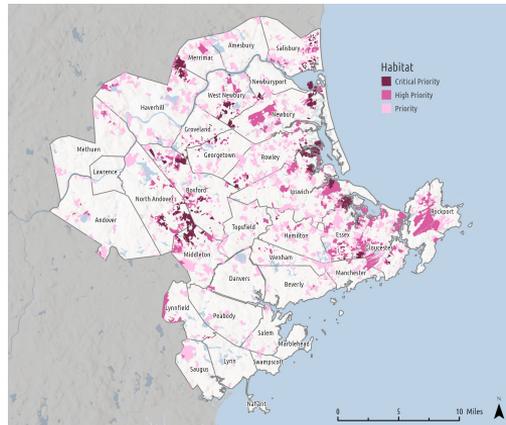
## Natural Resilience



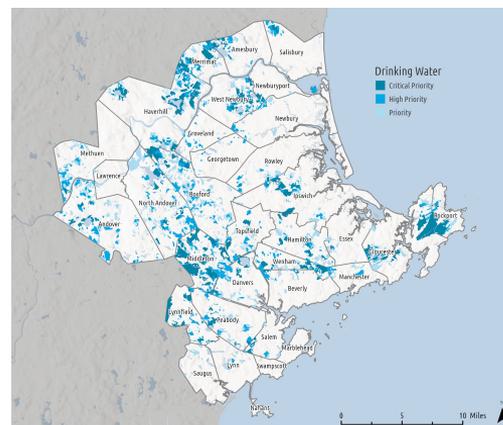
## Flood Mitigation



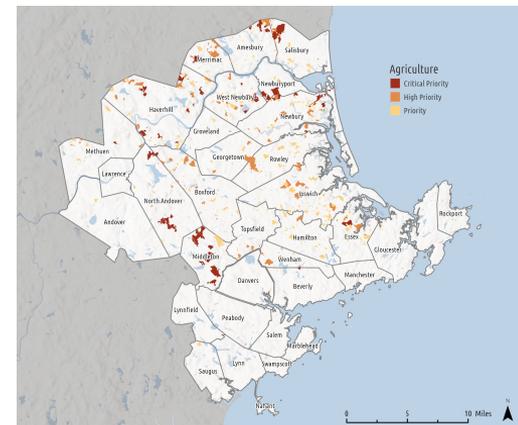
## Habitat



## Drinking Water

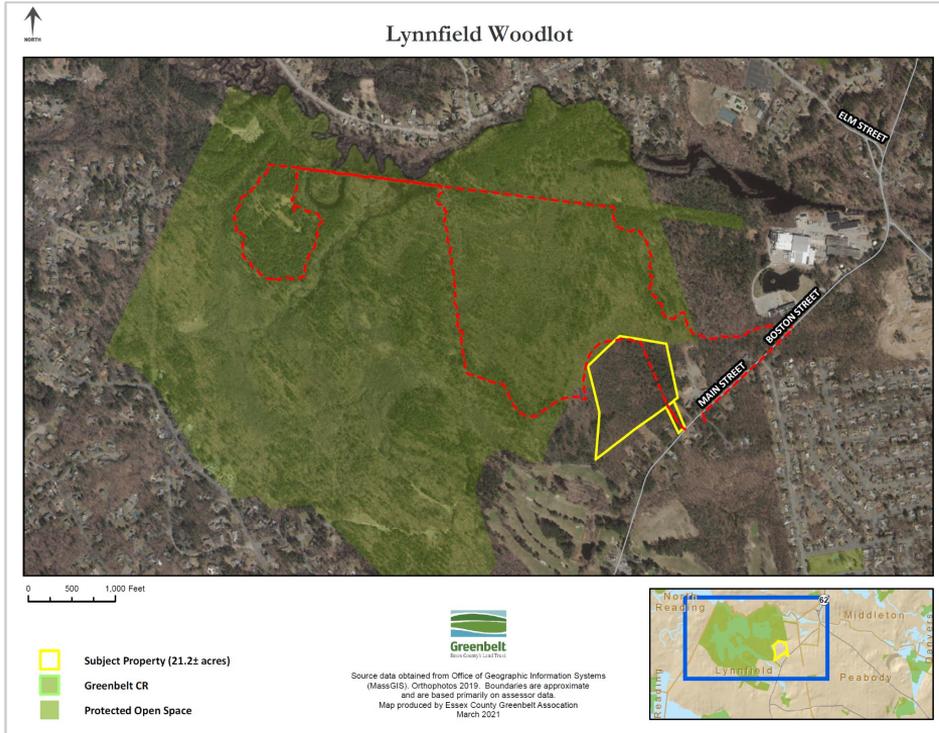


## Agriculture



# Lynnfield Woodlot

- 20 acres
- Expensive
- Town with little recent conservation experience



# Lynnfield Woodlot

## Why is this important to preserve?

- Drinking Water
- Natural Resilience
- Habitat
- Flood Protection
- Trails / Connectivity



# Lynnfield Woodlot



Purchase Price: \$2,710,000

Funding Sources:

**MVP Action Grant: \$1,638,750**

Lynnfield Con Com: \$200,000

ARPA: \$571,250

Greenbelt: \$300,000



# Lynnfield Woodlot

## **A conservation acquisition partnership:**

Lynnfield Center Water District

Town of Lynnfield

Ipswich River Watershed Association

Greenbelt



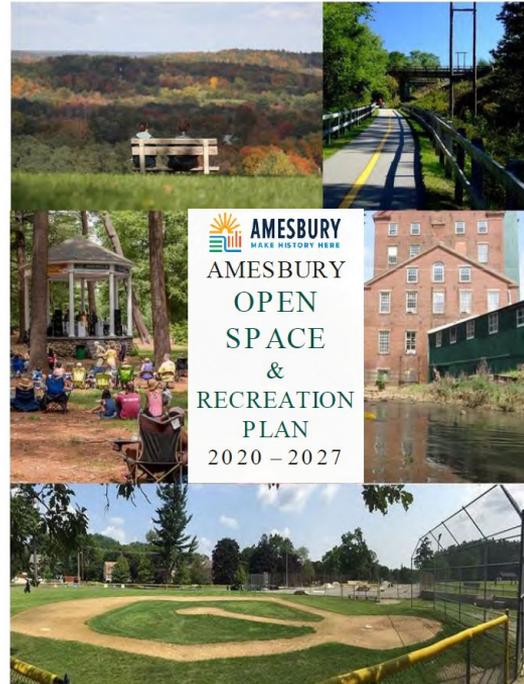
“Now a Greenbelt property known as Lynnfield Woodlot and subject to a conservation restriction held by the Town of Lynnfield, this parcel will provide public access to over 600 acres of protected water supply land within the Ipswich River Watershed. ”

*-Emilie Cademartori, Lynnfield Planning Director*

# Amesbury and Land Planning

## Context:

- 2020: City obtains grant from Commonwealth of MA to develop a comprehensive Open Space and Recreation Plan (used in MA as a planning tool + unlock State grants)
- Open Space, Natural Resources, and Trails Committee works with consultant and public to develop plan
- Technical maps for prioritization and analysis developed using various mapping resources

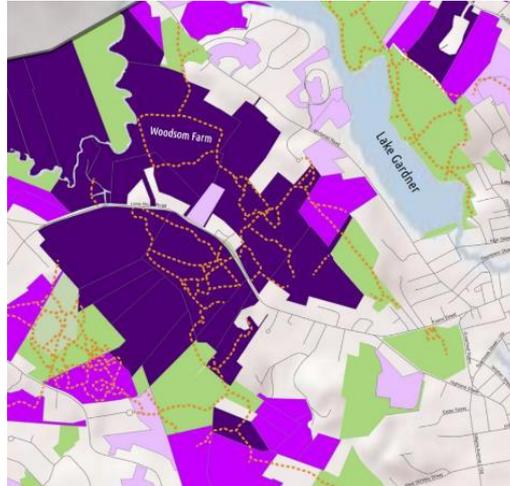


Cover Photos (Clockwise from Top Left): Ken Aspeligh; Amesburytrails.net; Andrew F. Watson; City of Amesbury; and Tom Barrasso.

# Open Space Plan Developments Since Completion

2021: OSR plan and maps used to support analysis leading to permanent protection of several hundred priority acres across multiple parcels into a consolidated area

- Woodsom Farm
- Town Forest
- Tax takings

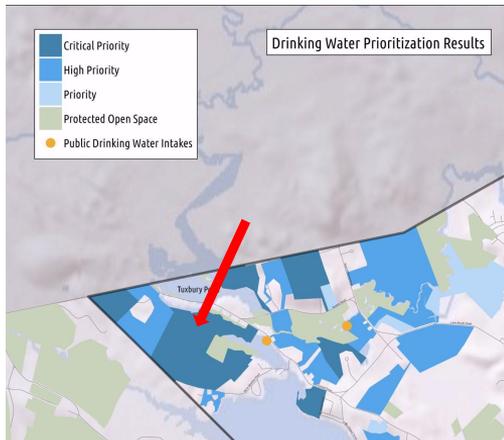
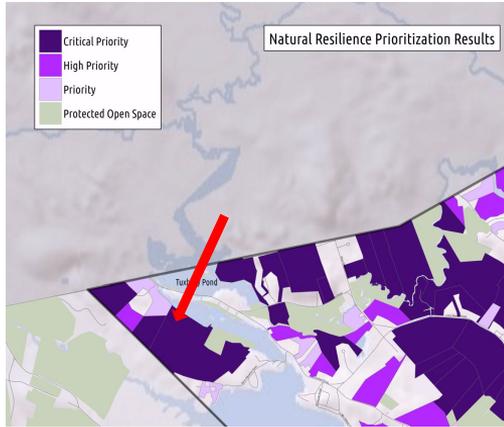


# Solar Zoning Analysis

- Private owner seeking zoning change - overlay commercial solar field on +/-100 acre lot
- Forested with a small hill in the center, sloping down to two bodies of water
- Drinking water resources for city of Amesbury
- Solar array would involve clearing all trees, save a small buffer on the shoreline.
- City Council referred measure to Open Space committee used Greenbelt maps to advise against zoning change.



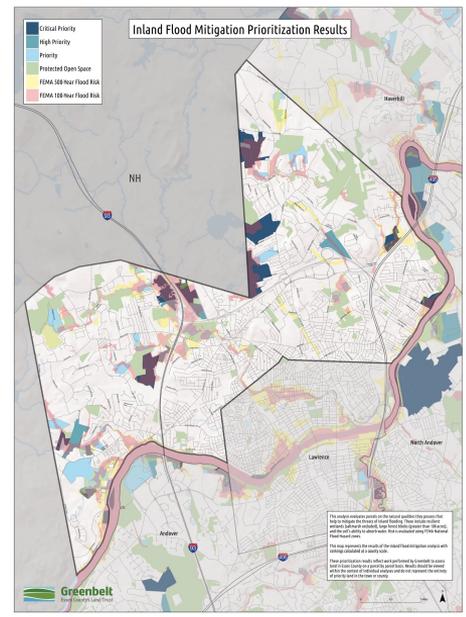
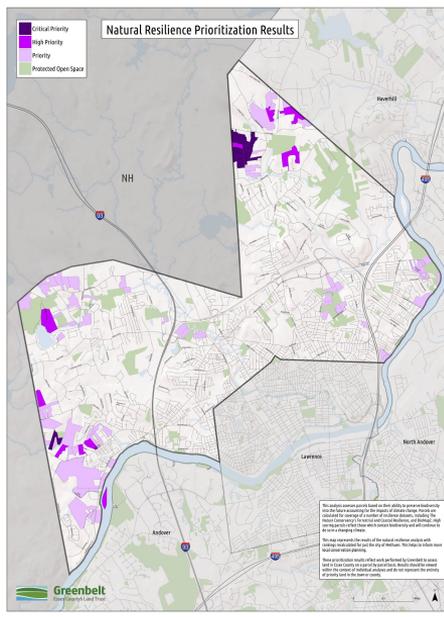
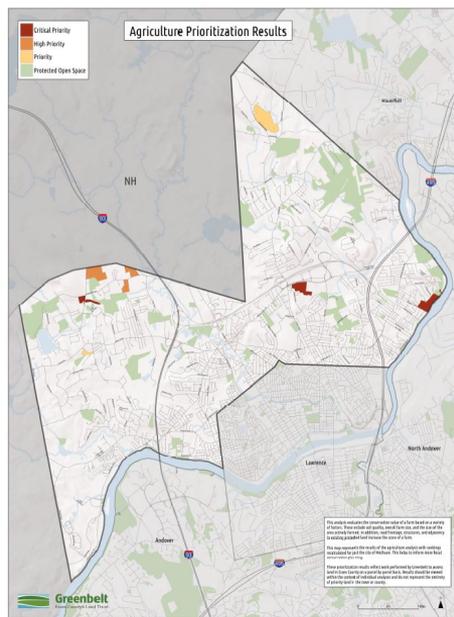
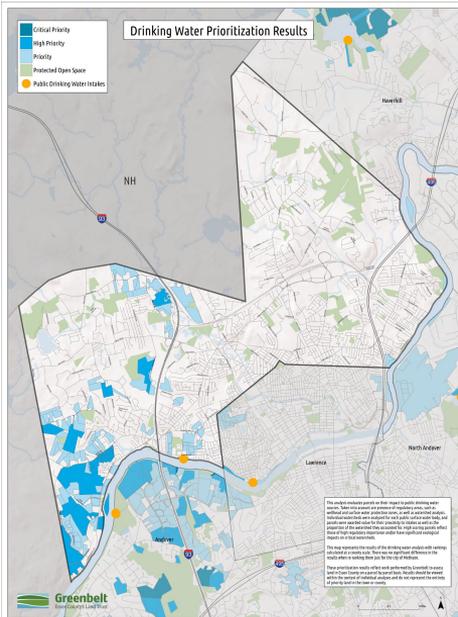
# Analysis of Proposed Single Parcel Solar Zoning Overlay



- Open Space Committee used Greenbelt's prioritization mapping and other data
- **'Critical Priority'** on Natural Resilience, Drinking Water, and Habitat maps from Greenbelt
- **'Priority'** on Inland Flooding map
- Other mapping indicated 8+% loss of tree cover upriver since 2001 in watershed that feeds Powow River (drinking water source)
- Concerned about deforestation on watershed and impact on drinking water quality, Committee sent a 'negative' recommendation back to City Council, which was the eventual outcome

# Methuen

- City used Greenbelt maps in open space plan
- Improved agricultural data
- Updated open space data

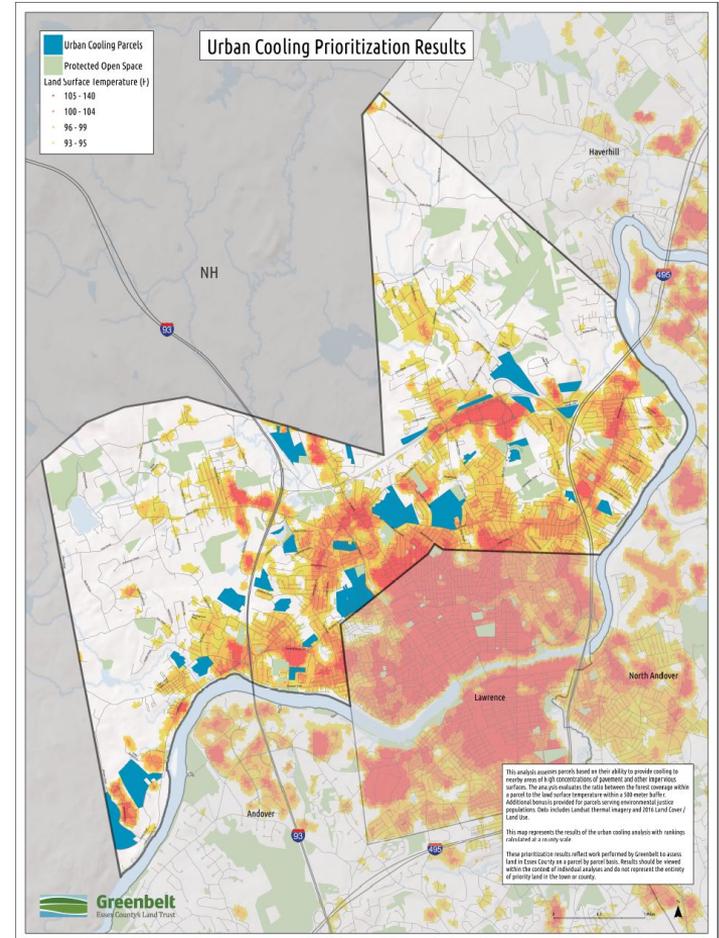


# Methuen

- Greenbelt heat map used by the City to apply for a tree planting grant
- 150 trees planted



Photo credit, City of Methuen

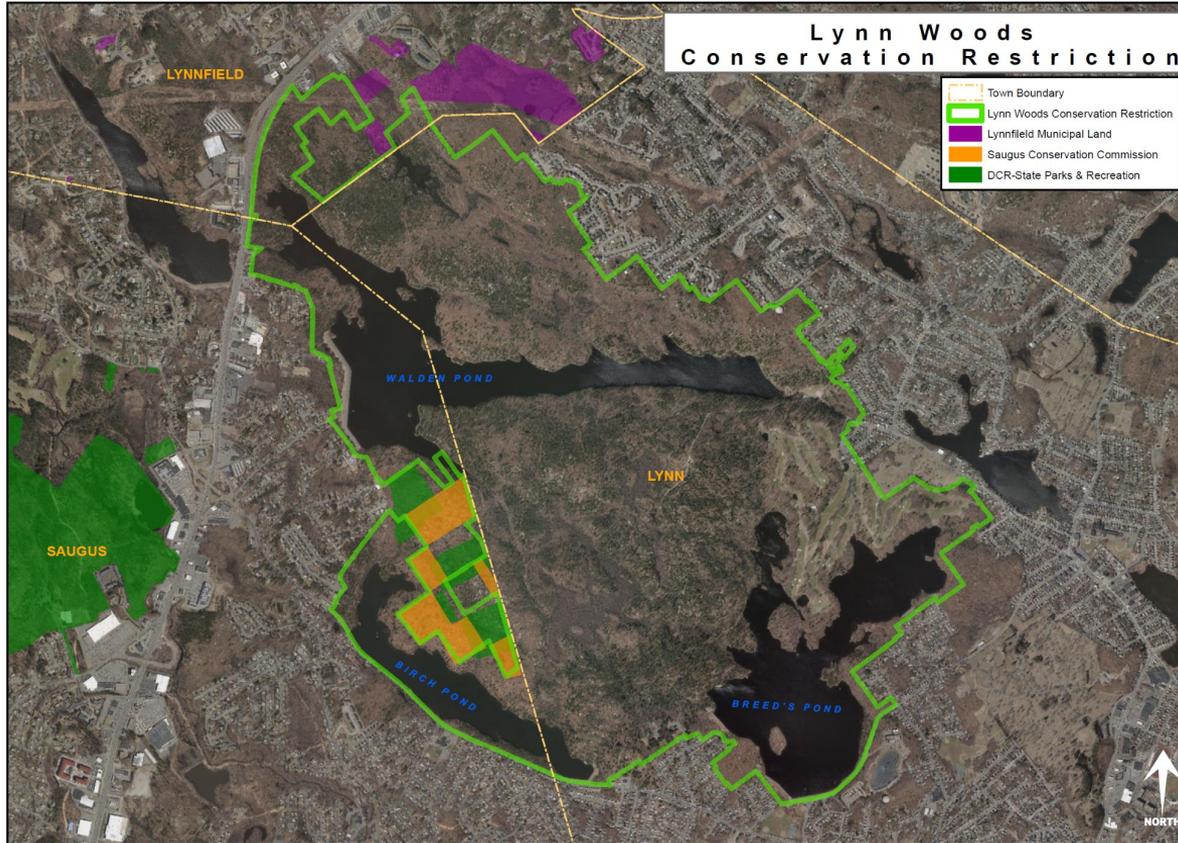


# Methuen

- Greenbelt created parcel map with our heat data for city grant application
- Assisted with making the case
- City received a \$990,000 MassWorks grant to remove failing wall and transportation infrastructure at 2 sites



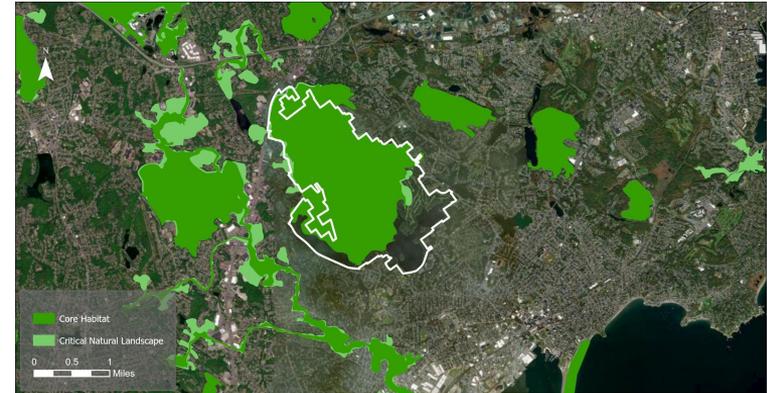
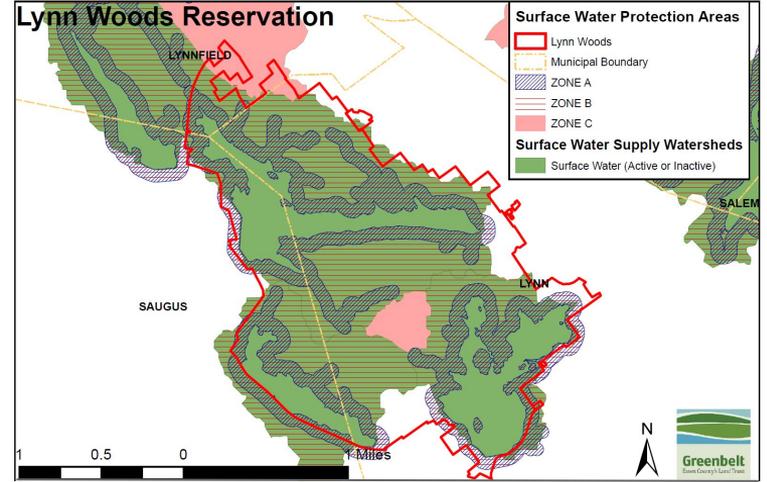
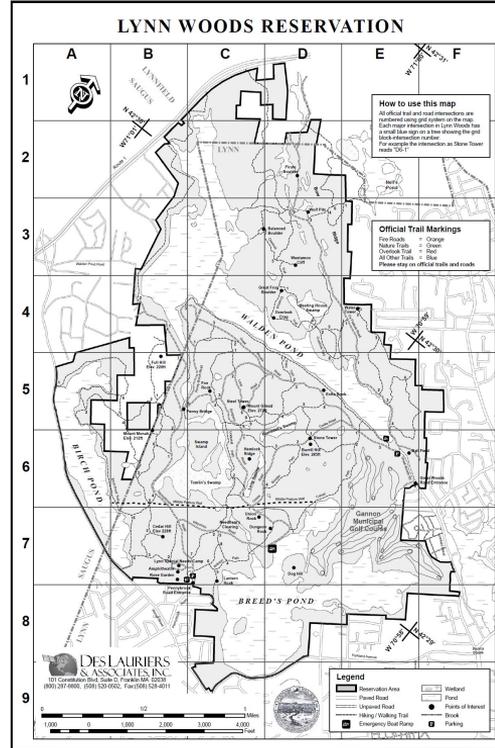
# Lynn Woods



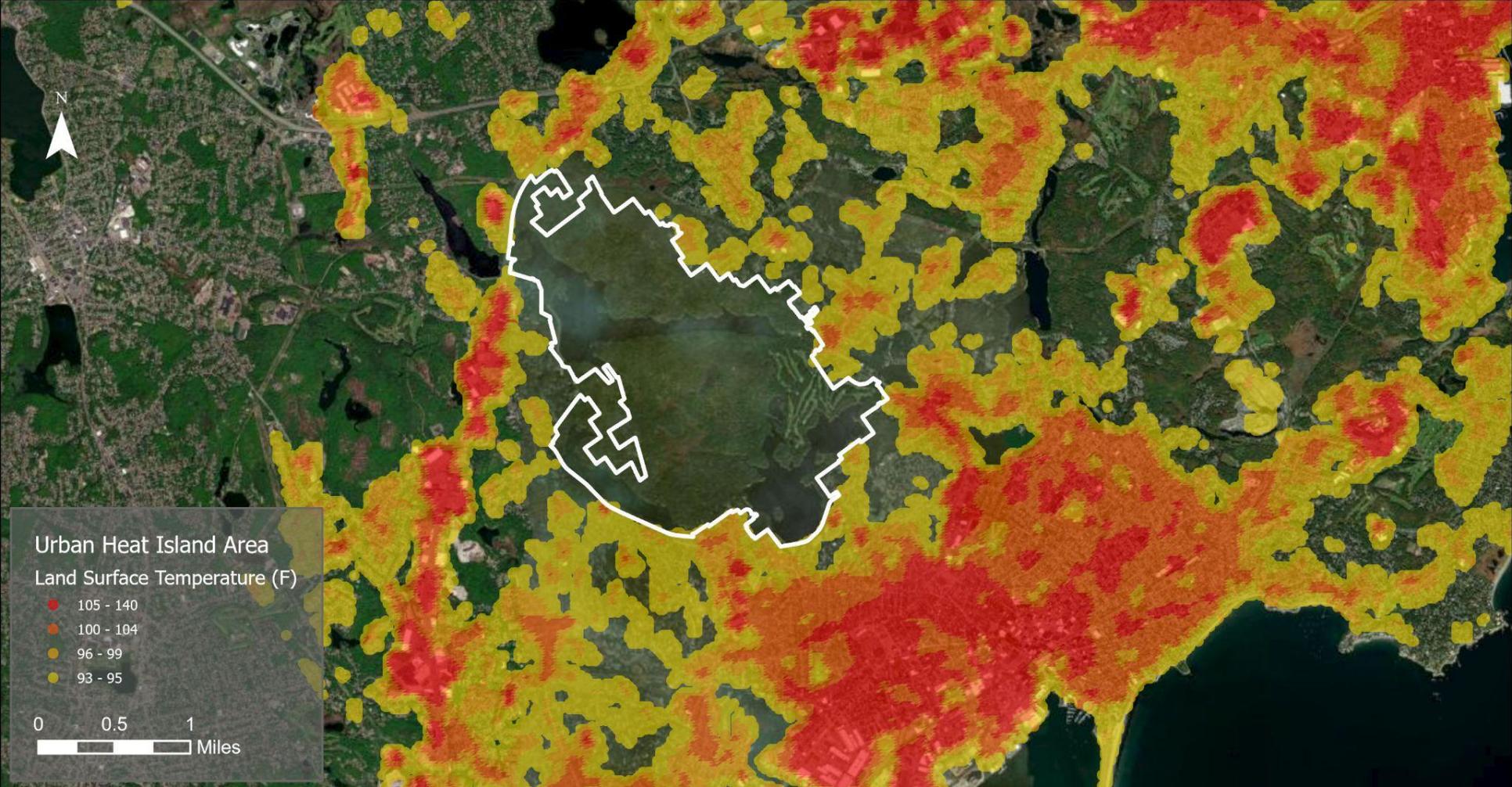
Map for illustrative purposes only. Boundaries are approximate and based on most currently-available assessor's data. 2019 Orthophotos 1:5,000. All data other than Greenbelt properties from MassGIS and DCR. Map by Greenbelt, dated 8.24.23

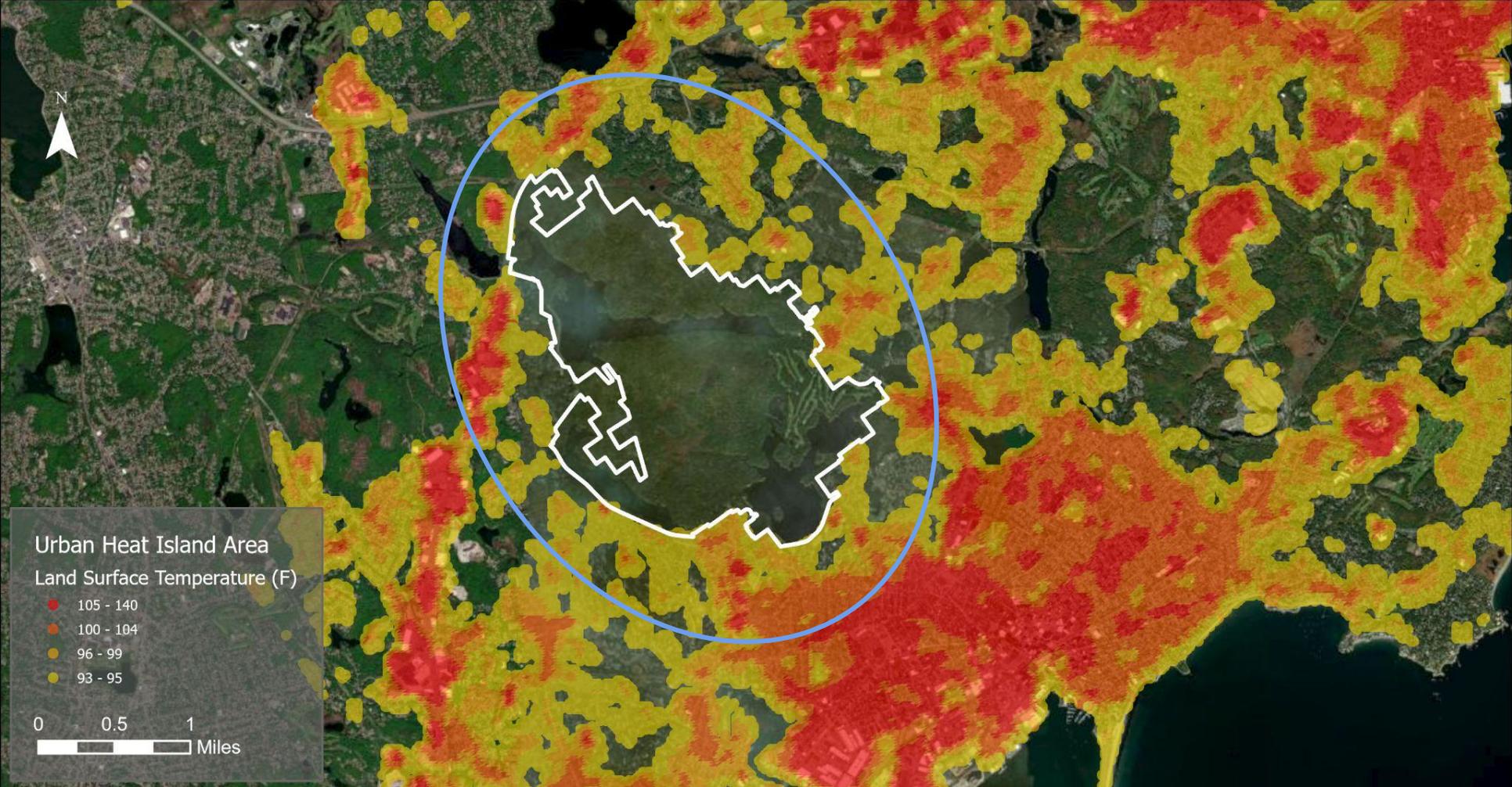
# Why is it important to preserve?

- Drinking Water
- Habitat
- Flood Protection
- Trails / Connectivity
- Urban Cooling









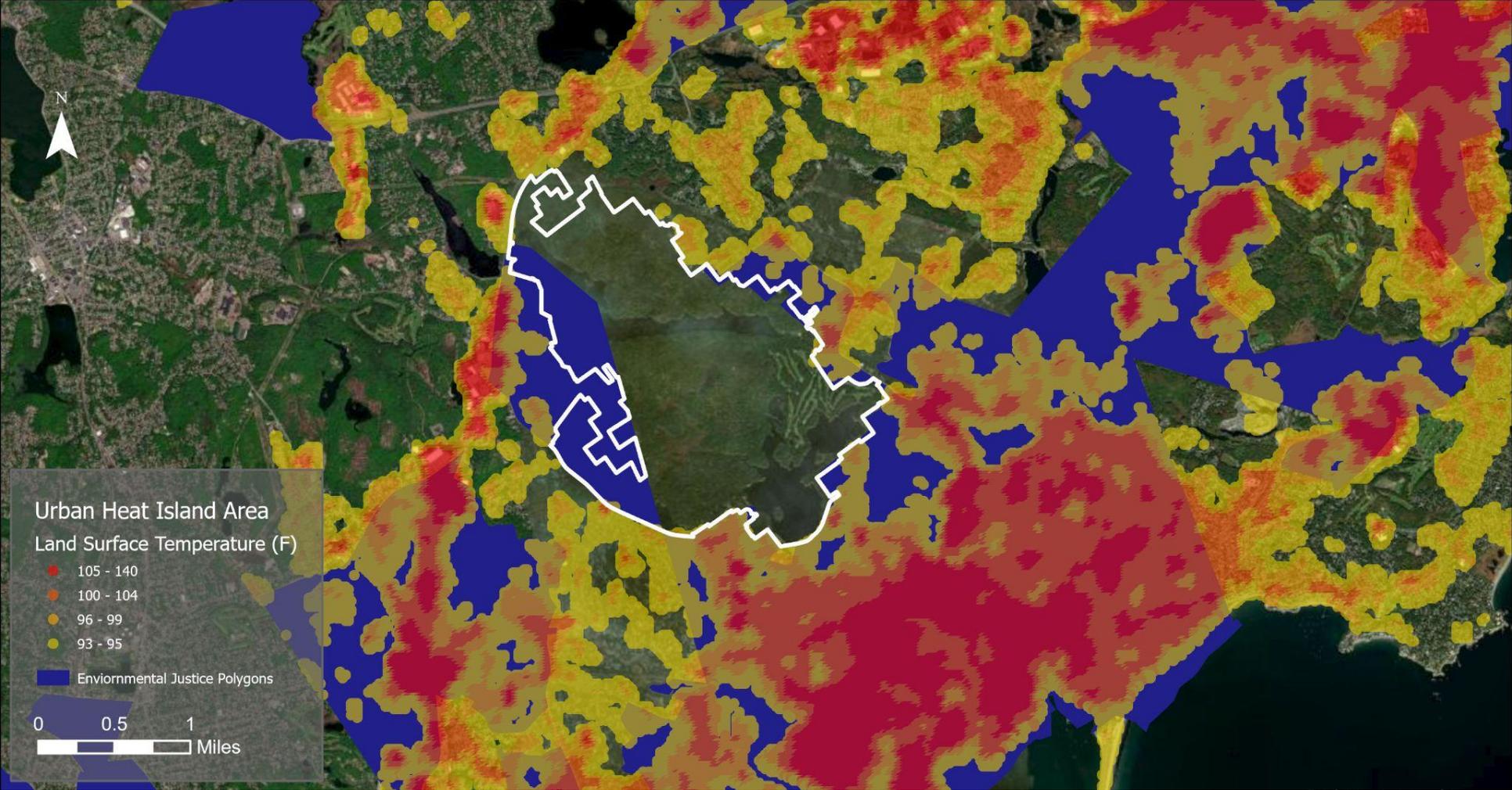


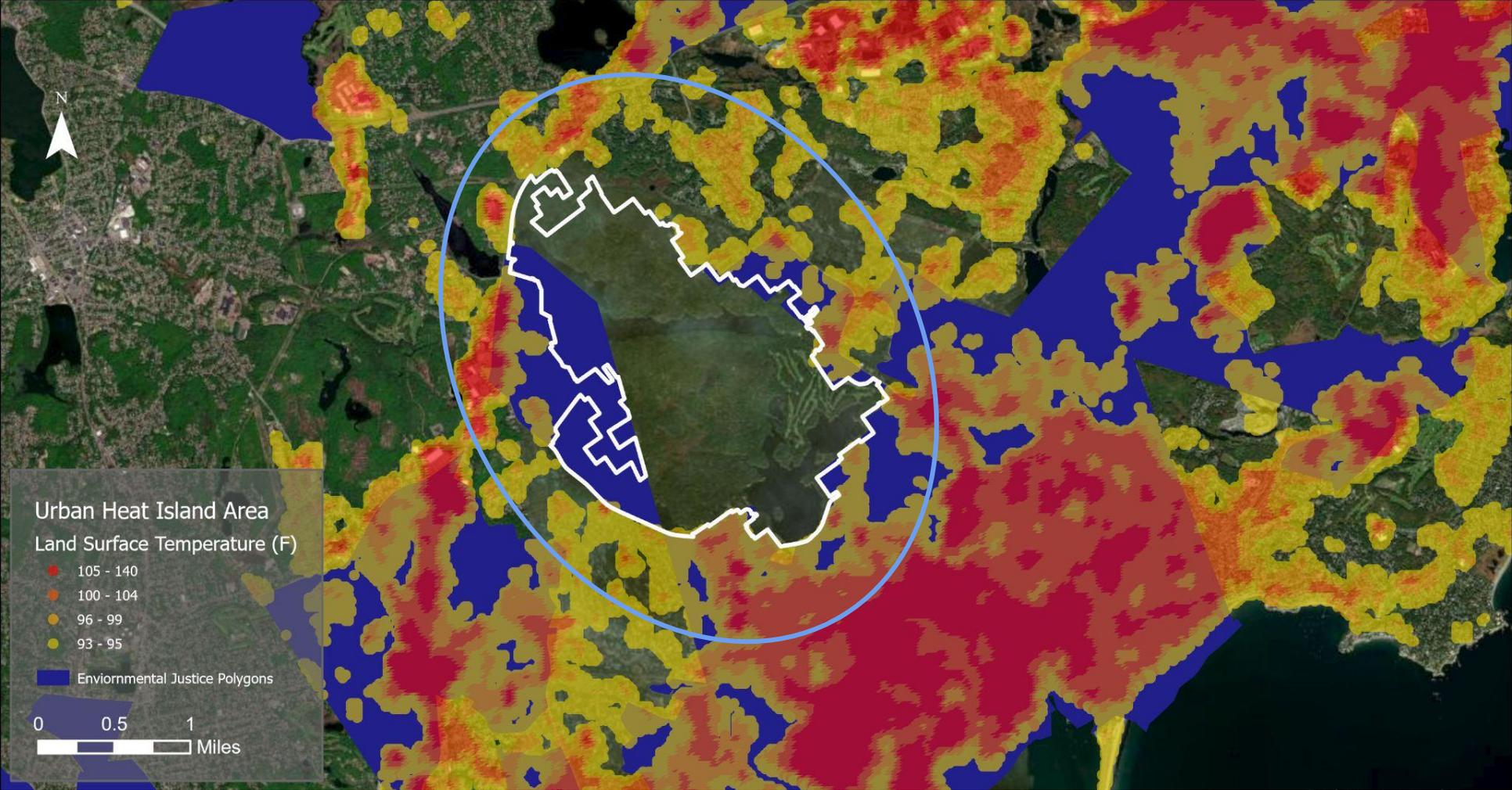
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■ Environmental Justice Polygons

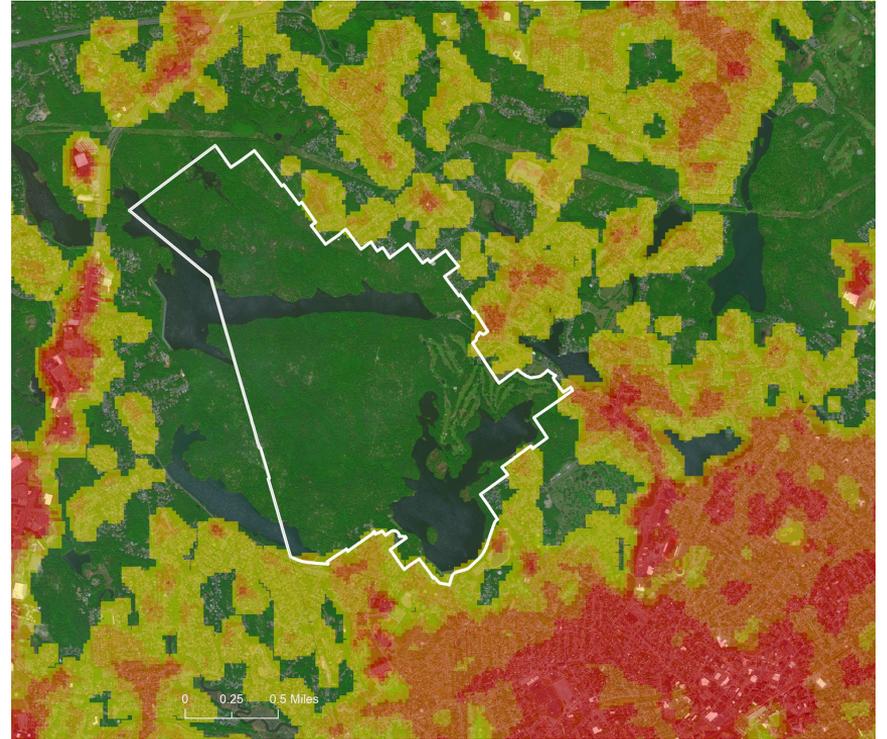
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# Lynn Woods

As Kate Bowditch, former President of Greenbelt notes: "In addition to all the benefits of its trails and water supplies, **Lynn Woods is nature's air conditioner for the neighborhoods of Lynn**...and its permanent protection will mean those benefits will be there for future generations, who may need Lynn Woods even more than we do now"



# Lynn Woods

**A conservation partnership:**  
City of Lynn  
Friends of Lynn Woods  
Dept. of Conservation & Recreation  
Greenbelt



# Lessons Learned & Summary

- Science translators for partners
- Inform local decision making
- Power of innovative engagement
- Directing organizational resources
- Takeaways from sharing data
- Funding benefits

# Thank you! Questions?



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