New England Cottontail in New Hampshire

OVERVIEW

Over the past several decades, the New England Cottontail rabbit (NEC) population and habitat have been in serious decline. Since 1960, the NEC's historic range has declined 86%. As a result of declining numbers and habitat, the NEC was listed as a federal candidate species under the Federal Endangered Species Act in 2006. In both New Hampshire and Maine, the NEC is listed as an "endangered" species by state law. The NEC requires at least 25 acres of continuous early successional habitat within a larger landscape. Key features of prime habitat include dispersal corridors, shrub wetlands, and smaller parcels containing dense thickets. Landscape fragmentation, loss of habitat from succession, infestations of invasive plants, and alterations of hydrology are the most common resource concerns affecting NEC.

Photo by Anne Schnell

GET INVOLVED

In a special initiative to recover NEC, NRCS is providing **financial and technical** support for private landowners through the **Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)**. The goal is to create and enhance habitat with the following list of conservation practices:

- **Brush management**
- **Early Successional Habitat Management**
- **Tree and Shrub Planting**
- **Invasive Plant Control**

Several other practices are available for private landowners interested in enrolling in this initiative. Contact your local field office (see reverse) for more information.

LAND PROTECTION—Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

Wetlands Reserve Easements (WRE), part of ACEP, offer landowners the opportunity to restore and permanently protect the wetlands and associated uplands on their property. The program focuses on lands that have been utilized for agriculture or forestry and stand to benefit from wetland restoration efforts. NRCS will purchase an easement on the property as well as provide **100% of the technical and financial support** needed to complete the restoration. WRE can help private landowners in by:

- **Restoring wetlands and riparian areas**
- **Protecting rare wildlife and plant communities**
- **Improving water quality**
- **Relocating forest trails**

Helping People Help The Land

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

New England Cottontail Habitat

New England Cottontail habitat consists of dense cover and young forest, as seen in the photos below.

The following towns are a focus for management: Derry, Dover, Durham, Madbury, Rollinsford, Londonderry, Lee, Litchfield, Hudson, and Pelham.

Please contact your local NRCS office for more information.

For more information,
Call or stop by your area NRCS office,
Or visit http://www.nh.nrcs.usda.gov

USDA-NRCS Offices

Epping Field Service Center
Knightly Plaza
629 Calef Highway, Suite 203
Epping, NH 03042
603-679-1587

Milford Field Service Center
Chappell Professional Ctr., #468, Rte. 13 South,
Milford, NH 03055
603-673-2409

Wetlands Reserve Easements

New Hampshire State Office
2 Madbury Rd.
Durham, NH 03824
603-868-7581