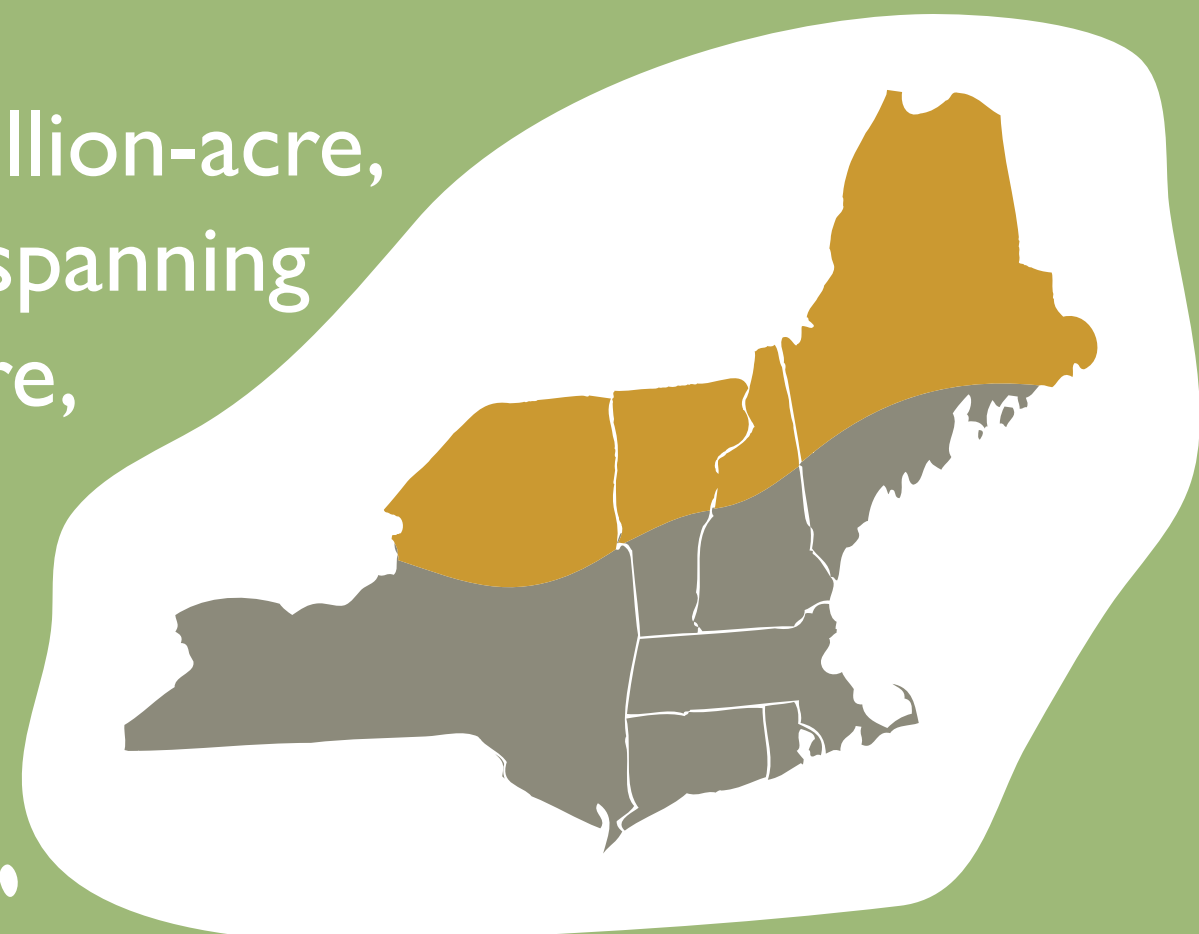


BACKGROUND & AUDIENCES

The Northern Forest is a 30-million-acre, largely intact forest ecosystem spanning northern Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York.

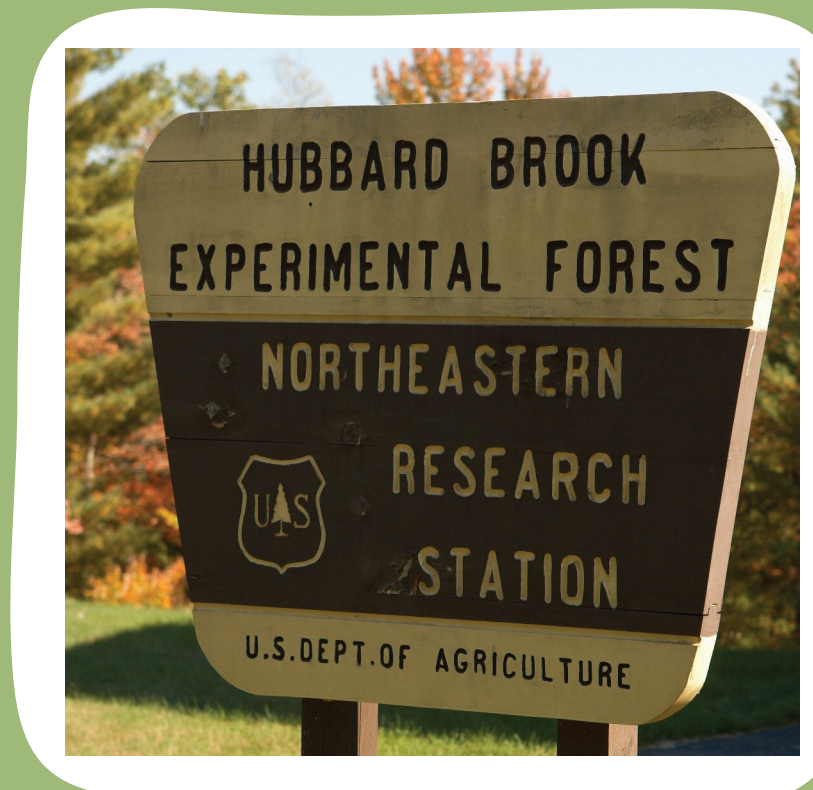


The region is home to more than 2 million people, many in rural communities.

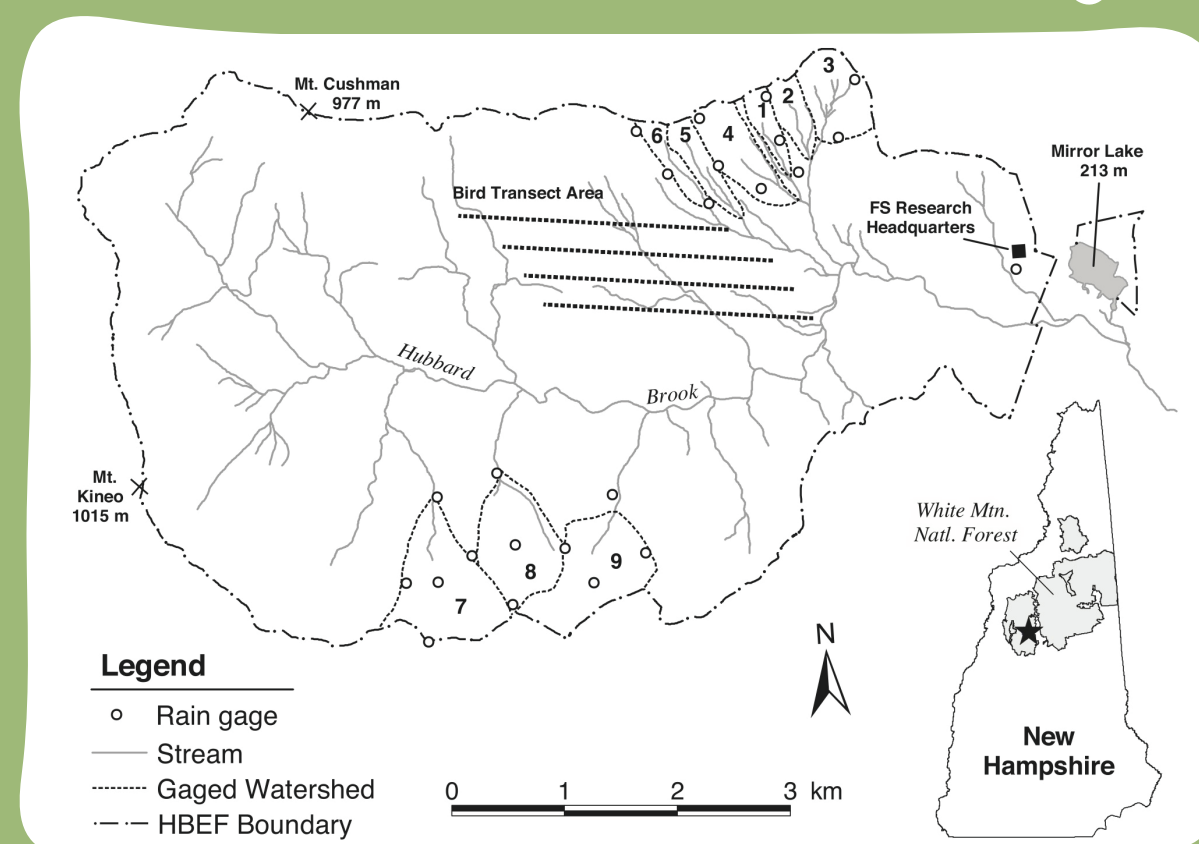


Local citizens face critical land use and management decisions in the wake of unprecedented environmental and economic changes.

In the heart of the Northern Forest lies the Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, a long term ecological research (LTER) site managed by the USDA Forest Service.



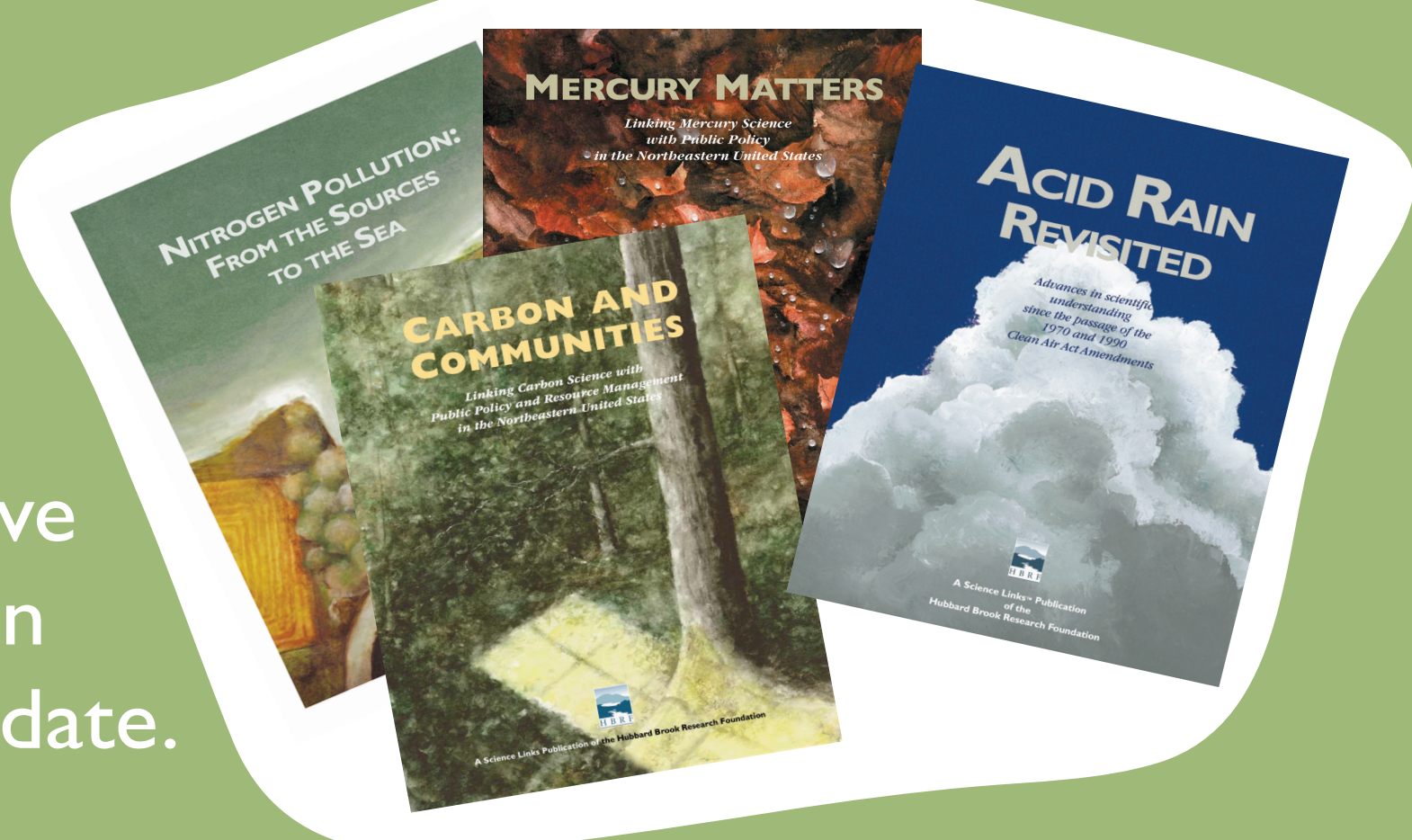
Here, researchers from all over the world study the structure and function of the forest ecosystem.



Implications for:

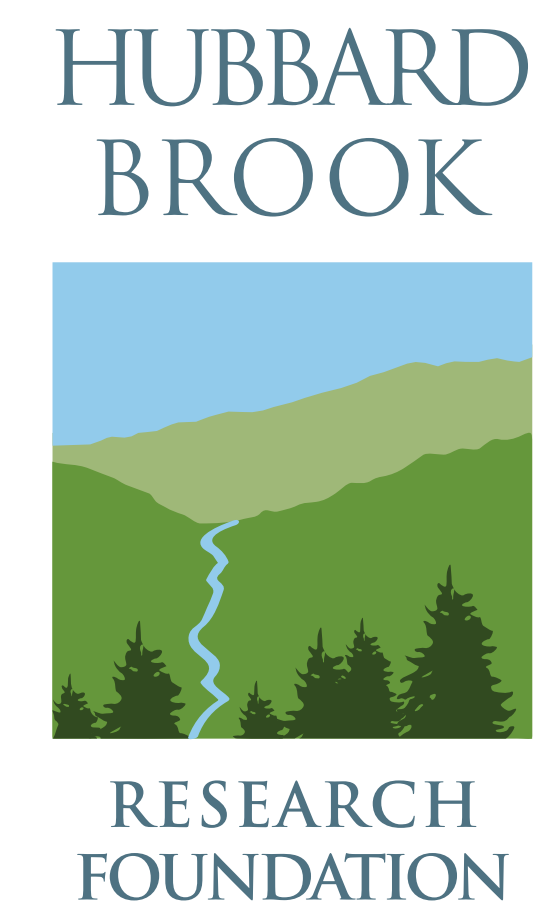
- climate change
- pollution
- forest harvesting
- bio-energy
- wildlife
- invasive pests & pathogens

While Hubbard Brook scientists have a long track record of engagement with policymakers, they have had limited interaction with local citizens to date.



Forest Science Dialogues

DRL #1322871

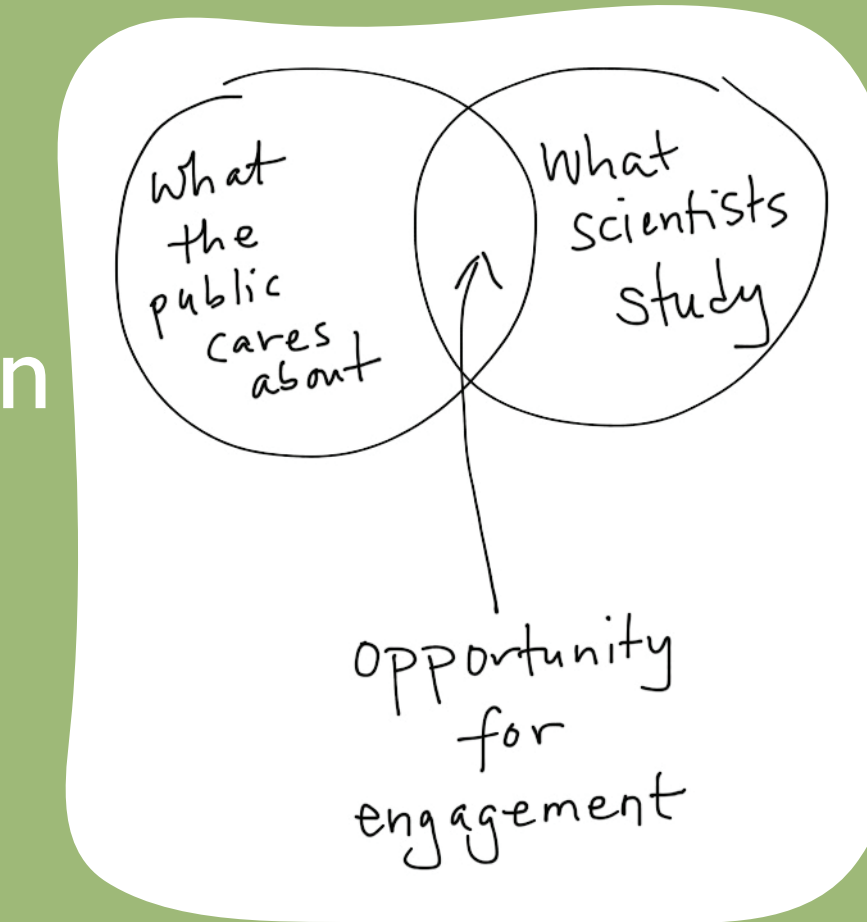


A pathways project to develop and test mechanisms for dialogue-based engagement between ecosystem scientists and local citizens in the rural Northeast.

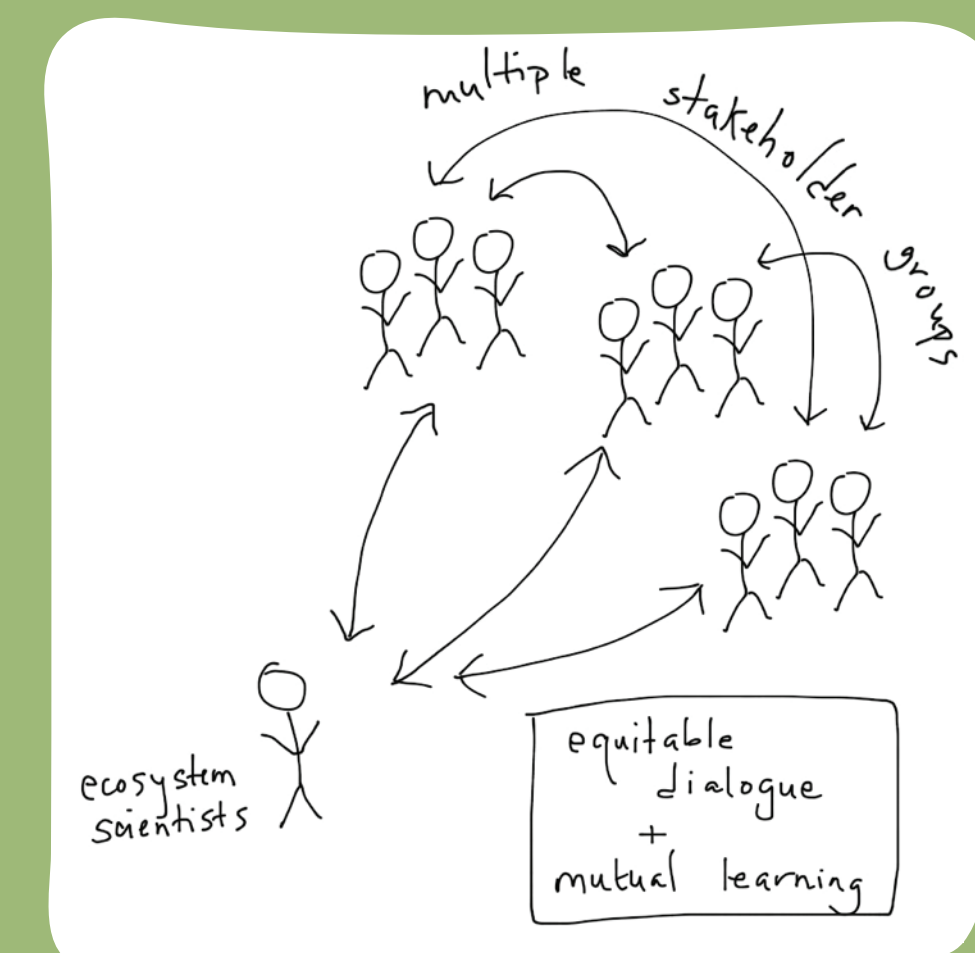


GOALS

To bridge the gap between the scientists who study the Northern Forest and the people who live in and depend on this ecosystem.



To support mutual learning through dialogue:



- For ecosystem scientists to increase their knowledge, understanding, and awareness of the perspectives, values, and needs of local citizens.
- For local citizens to increase their knowledge, understanding, and awareness of the science of the surrounding environment.

To work with scientists and local community leaders to co-design and test mechanisms for Public Engagement with Science (PES) that are scalable and reproducible at other research sites.

LEADERSHIP & PARTNERS

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METHODS



QUESTIONS & CHALLENGES

We seek to address the practical challenges of the Public Engagement with Science (PES) framework:

- How do the theoretical ideals of mutual learning and equitable dialogue translate into practice?
- What infrastructure is needed to support the outcomes of community-based dialogue activities? What is practical?
- How will the learning goals of this project influence decision making and the future directions of forest-based research? How can we support these processes? How can they be determined via evaluation?

We also seek to develop the *interface model*: organizations that support scientists in public engagement and broader impacts work, and support the development of research sites as community settings for informal science education.