



Birch and Meadow Brook Project Cluster

What is this project?

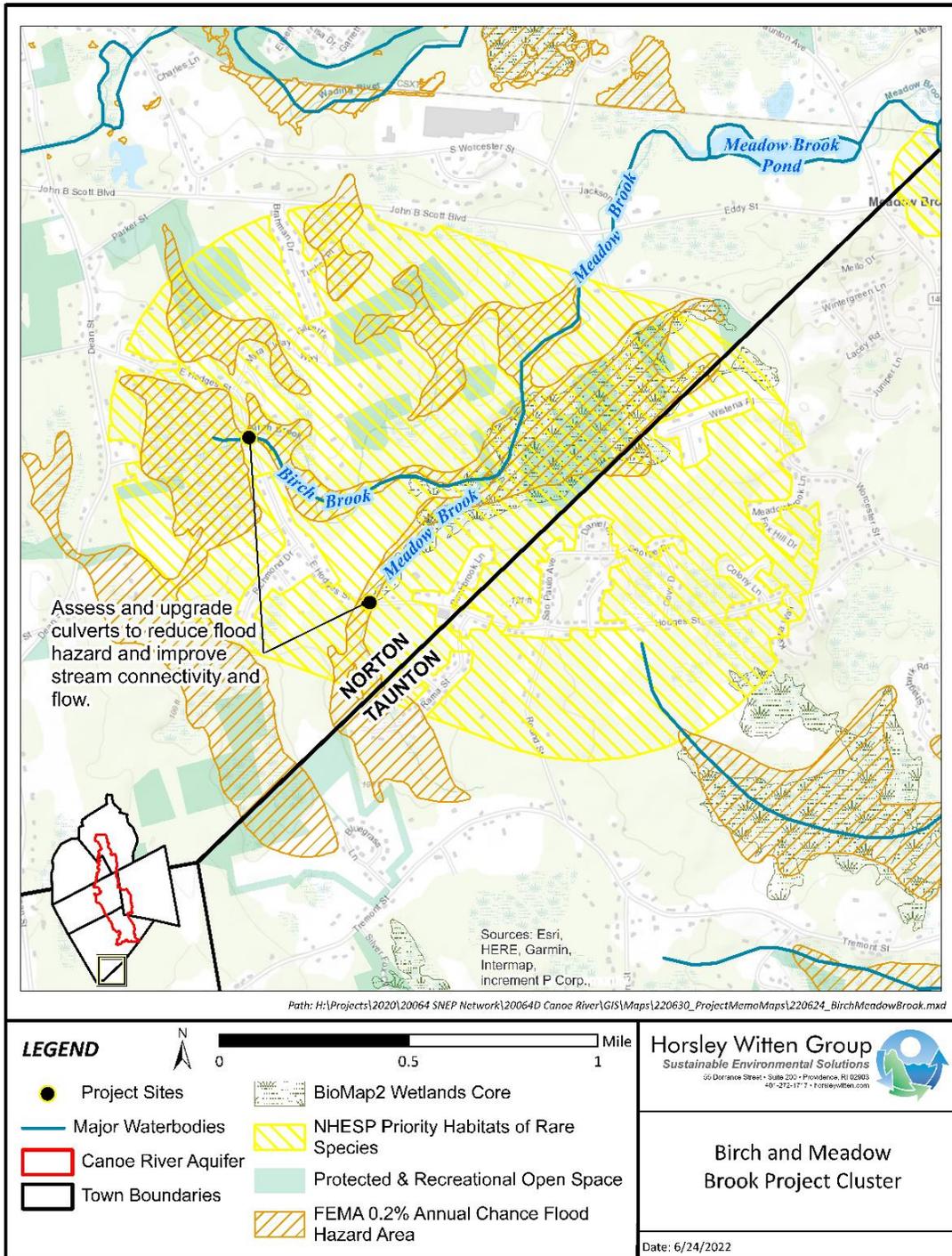
The Birch and Meadow Brook Project Cluster includes two culverts at the Birch and Meadow Brooks in Norton, MA. These culverts should be assessed and upgraded to ensure that enough water flow is present to support the existing high-quality wetlands area, which is critical for wildlife biodiversity. This will likely involve coordination with the downstream private dam owner at Eddy Street to ensure that the dam can manage any changes to water flow.

Why is this project important for the environment and Norton?

- **Restoration of habitat.** Culvert redesign/upgrades can restore stream connectivity for fish and aquatic species, including state-listed rare species. Including wildlife corridor structures in culvert redesigns will benefit rare turtle and salamander dispersal and habitat.
- **Ecological benefits to the region.** Based on findings from The Nature Conservancy's *Resilient and Connected Landscapes* study, this area of Norton has an above average resilience to climate change. Reducing habitat fragmentation and improving stream flow in this particular area will provide species with connected, diverse climatic conditions they will need to persist and adapt to changing regional climates.
- **Improved flood storage.** Restoring how water naturally circulates through the brooks and adjacent wetlands will protect the neighborhood from flooding by enabling the natural waterways to collect and manage rain runoff during storm events.
- **Protection against drought.** Opportunities for protecting open space could be paired with culvert redesign/upgrades. Having more open, undeveloped space for stormwater infiltration benefits groundwater recharge, which helps protect the region against future droughts during low rainfall periods.



Figure 1. Meadow Brook Pond, which is fed by Birch Brook and Meadow Brook (Town of Norton).



If you care about this project, what should you do?

If you are interested in supporting efforts to make this project a reality, we encourage you to reach out to the Conservation Commission in Norton to voice your support. Let your community know that addressing this project should be a priority for the environment and for Norton!

Town of Norton Conservation Commission
 John Thomas, Conservation Director/Stormwater Agent
 70 East Main St., Norton, MA 02766
jthomas@nortonma.us, 508-285-0276