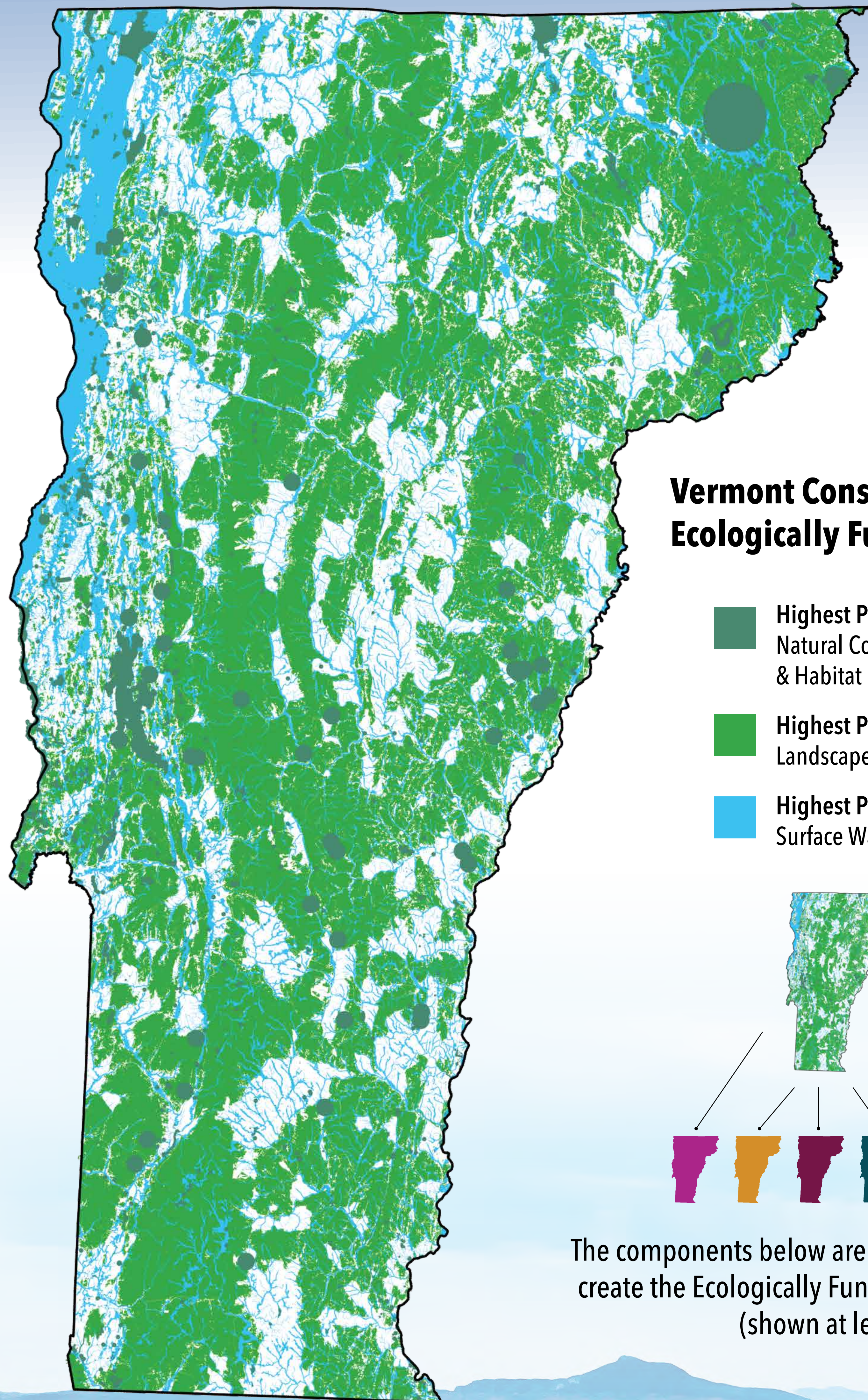


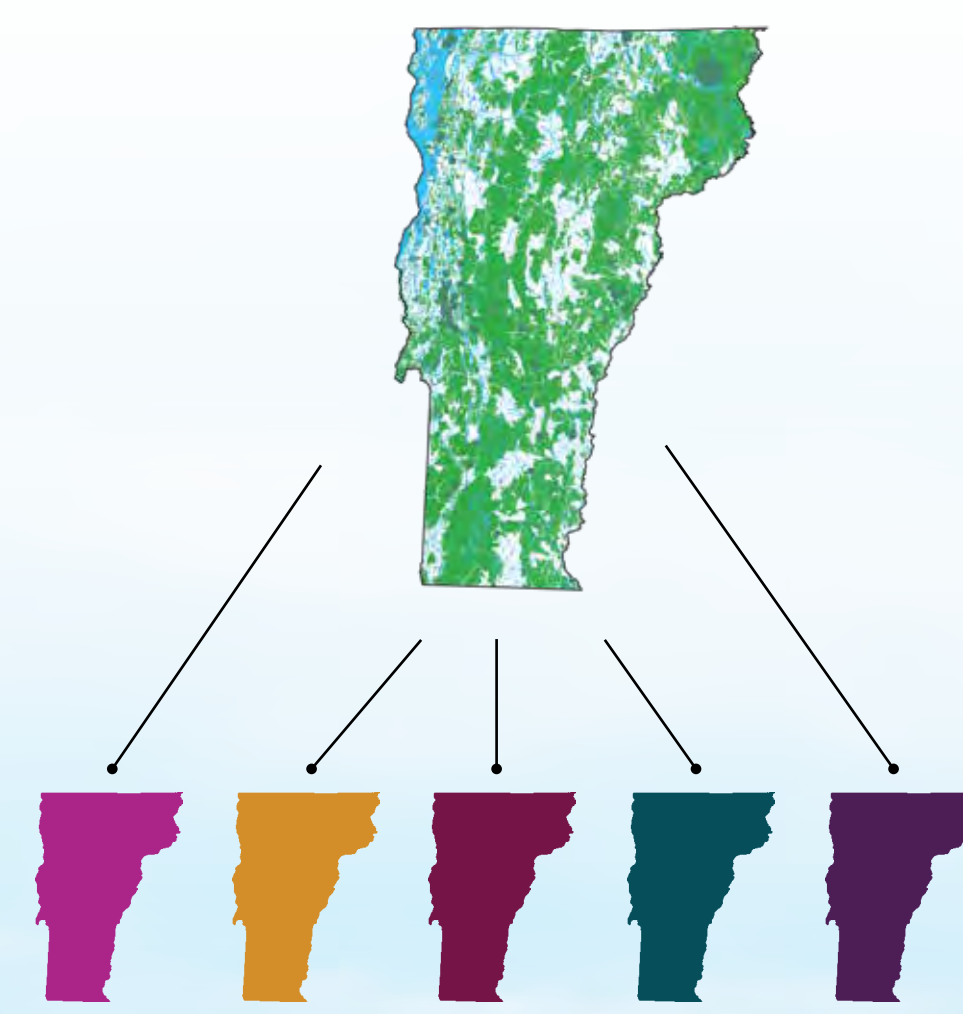
VERMONT CONSERVATION DESIGN

A science-based vision to sustain Vermont's valued natural areas, forests, waters, wildlife, and plants for future generations.



Vermont Conservation Design Ecologically Functional Landscape

- Highest Priority Natural Community & Habitat Features
- Highest Priority Landscape Blocks
- Highest Priority Surface Waters & Riparian Areas



The components below are added together to create the Ecologically Functional Landscape (shown at left).

VERMONT CONSERVATION DESIGN maintains nature and the benefits it provides. An ecologically functional landscape sustains our clean air and water, stores carbon to slow climate change, and protects us against severe floods. It allows plants and animals to move and adapt to climate change. It supports numerous social and economic values, including outdoor recreation, the forest products economy, and the natural beauty that draws people to Vermont. Find out more by visiting the BioFinder website and interactive map at www.BioFinder.vt.gov



INTERIOR FOREST

Highest Priority

The largest forest blocks in each biophysical region. These are areas of contiguous forest and other natural communities and habitats (such as wetlands, ponds, and cliffs) that are unfragmented by roads, development, or agriculture.

CONNECTING FOREST

Highest Priority

The network of forest blocks that together provide terrestrial connectivity at the regional scale (across Vermont and to adjacent states and Québec) and connectivity with surface waters and areas of geological diversity.

GEOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Highest Priority

A set of forest blocks that reflect the full diversity of Vermont's bedrock, soils, elevations, and landforms (features such as slopes, ridges, flats, and coves). Diversity in the physical landscape is linked to biological diversity, and places that contribute to physical diversity will be important for biological diversity even as the climate changes.

SURFACE WATERS & RIPARIAN AREAS

Highest Priority

The network of all lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams, their associated riparian zones, valley bottoms, and river corridors in which geophysical processes occur.

NATURAL COMMUNITIES, HABITATS & SPECIES

Highest Priority

All the mapped community and species scale components: Natural Communities, Aquatic Habitats, Vernal Pools, Wetlands, Wildlife Road Crossings, and Rare, Threatened & Endangered Species.