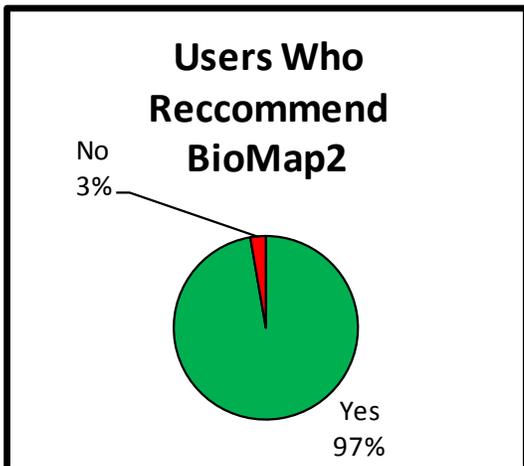
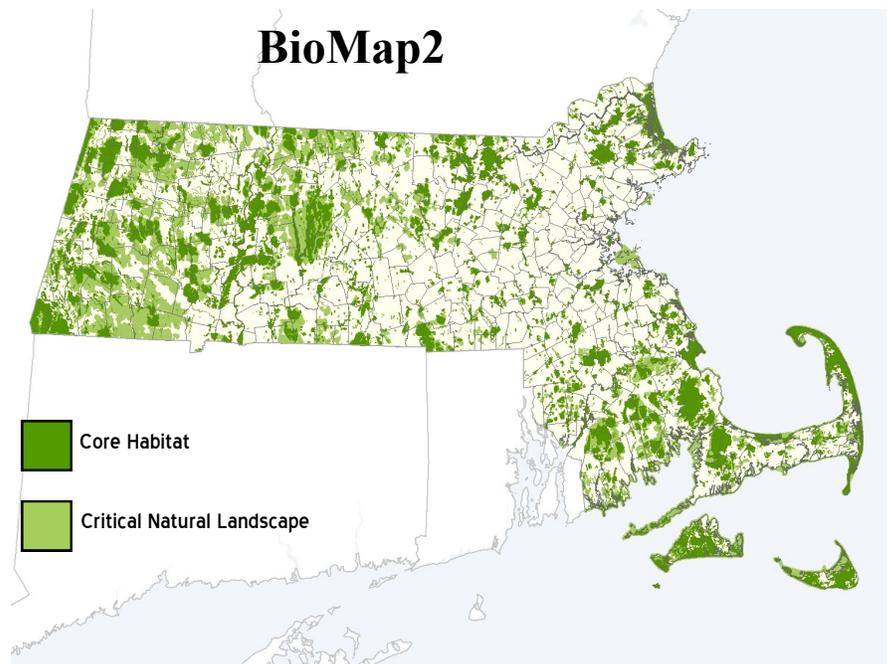


BioMap2 User Survey—Executive Summary May 2013

The Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game, through the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife’s Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP), and The Nature Conservancy’s Massachusetts Program developed [BioMap2](#) to guide the protection of the state’s biodiversity in the context of climate change. BioMap2 was published in 2010 and enhanced the original BioMap and Living Waters projects of 2001 and 2003 respectively. A technical report was released in 2011 and detailed “Town Reports” were released in 2013 for Massachusetts’ 351 cities and towns.

By 2013, BioMap2 had been in circulation for over two years and Town Reports were just being released. The Nature Conservancy decided that this was the appropriate time to poll BioMap2 users to see if BioMap2 is making a difference and how. The Nature Conservancy conducted a survey of BioMap2 users, distributed through a variety of mediums, in order to reach a broad range of BioMap2 users.

161 people responded to the survey, representing a wide variety of organizations and agencies. The survey showed widespread and effective applications of BioMap2, detailed any barriers to using the data, and provided recommendations for improving usability.

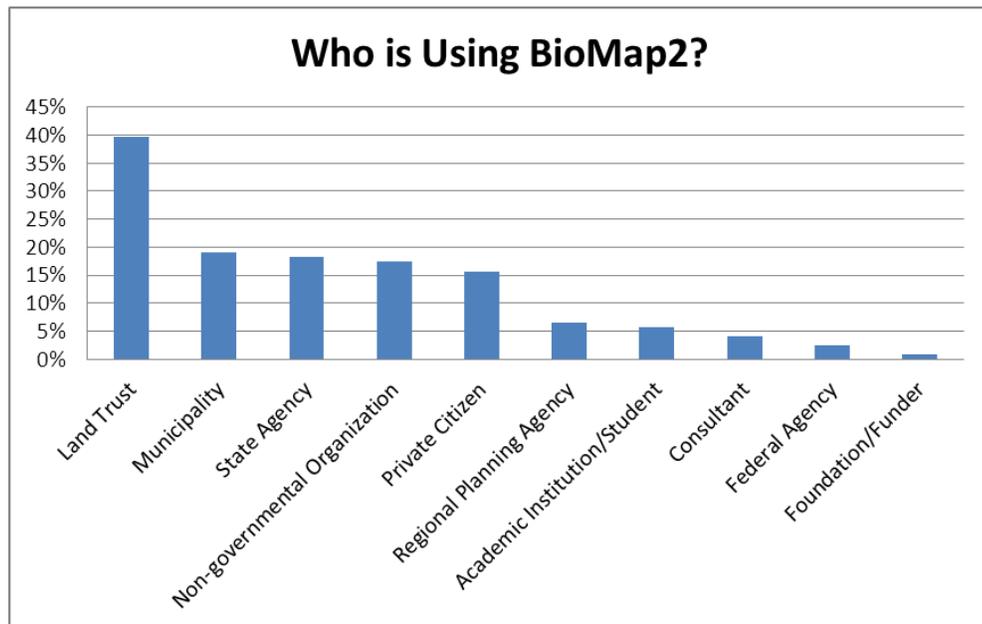


One respondent said that the best part about BioMap2 is that it’s a, “one-stop shop to know what areas are important.”

People don’t just use BioMap2 they recommend it to their peers.

BioMap2 Users

Primary BioMap2 users were land trusts, cities and towns, state agencies, and NGOs; and private citizens accounted for 16% of users.

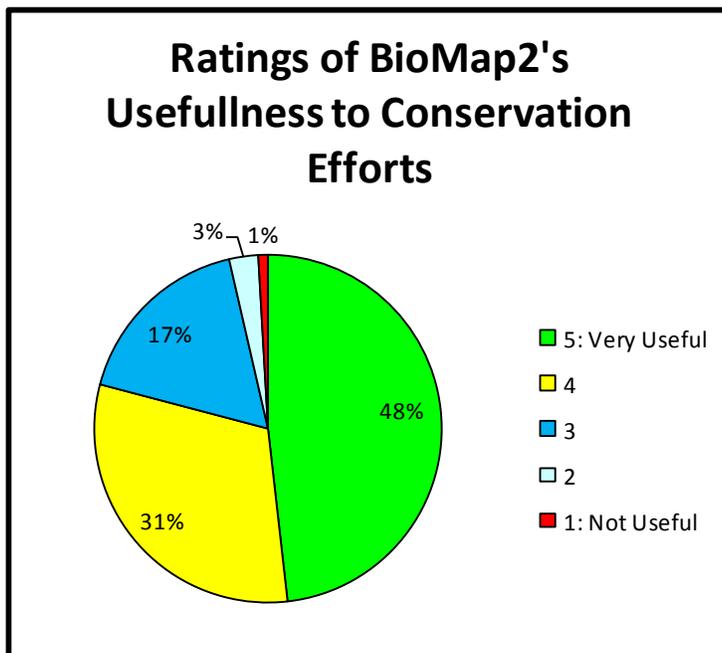


The survey results showed that the most common users of BioMap2 are **land trusts at 40% of respondents**, followed by municipalities (19%), state agencies (18%), and non-governmental organizations (17%).

“It (BioMap2) has helped us to develop narratives of our landscape and its functioning that help to reshape the community’s image of itself, helps us to articulate why some lands are more critical to preserve than others, and has leveraged funding for the preservation and management of those places. ***It is a big deal.***” (The Greater Worcester Land Trust)

High Ratings for BioMap2

96% of survey respondents scored the usefulness of BioMap2 as 3 or higher on a scale of 1 to 5, with 48% defining BioMap2 to be very useful to their work (5 out of 5).

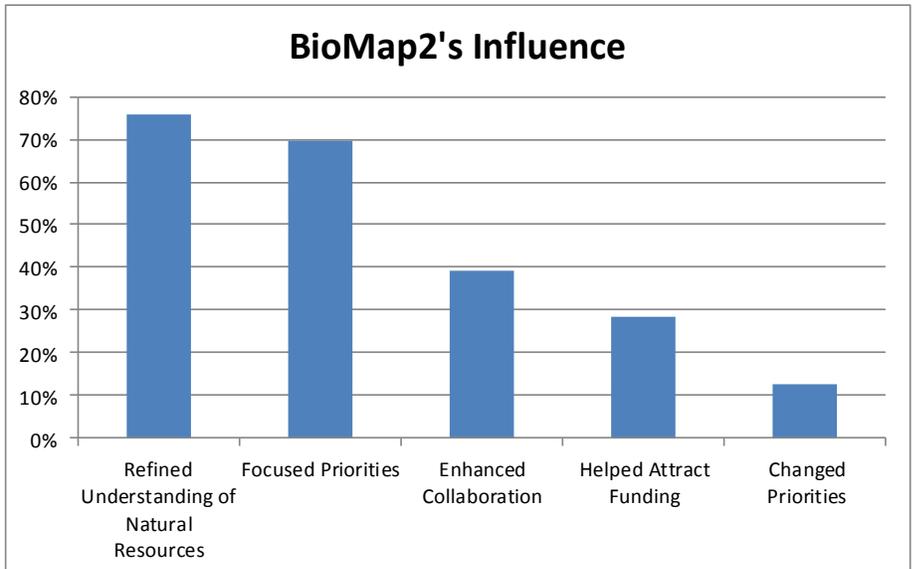


Survey respondent said that what they like best about BioMap2, “is the diversity/breadth of information available.”

BioMap2's Influence

One respondent said, "BioMap2 is the only comprehensive information knowledge base that guides land owners about the importance of their property."

70% of respondents said that BioMap2 helped them focus their priorities.



BioMap2 has helped bring together different organizations and agencies around a common goal/agenda. **39% of survey respondents said BioMap2 has enhanced their collaboration with other organizations.**

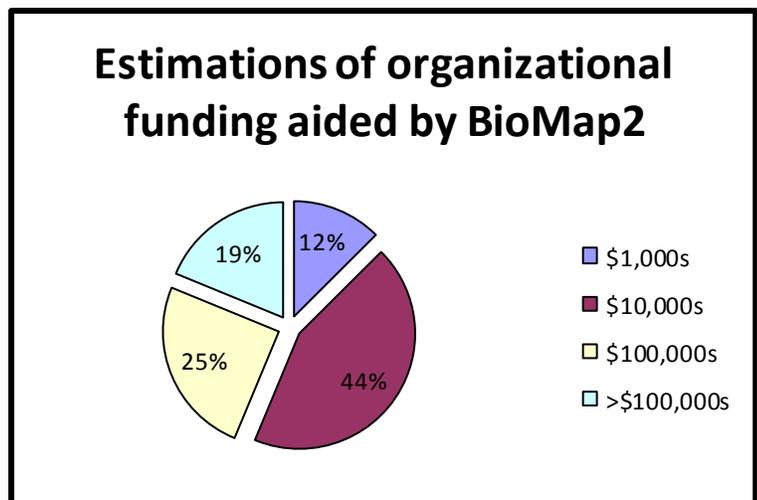
The Greater Worcester Land Trust said, "As conservation organizations are drawn to areas of conservation concern, BioMap2 encourages collaboration by making the data widely available. It has enhanced our collaborations with our partners by being able to easily reference data on species and habitat of conservation concern."

76% of survey respondents said BioMap2 refined their understanding of their area's natural resources. BioMap2 is used repeatedly as a communication and outreach tool to influence decision makers such as town boards and the general public who are not otherwise aware of conservation priorities in their municipality.

Funding Thanks to BioMap2

29% of respondents said that BioMap2 helped them attract funding. Of the survey respondents who attracted funding, 44% attracted \$100,000 or more.

One respondent said, "we have used BioMap2 to provide habitat data for state and private foundation grants. BioMap2 provides confidence to funders that their grants will be used to protect the best possible habitat with the most benefit to rare/endangered species."





Uses of BioMap2

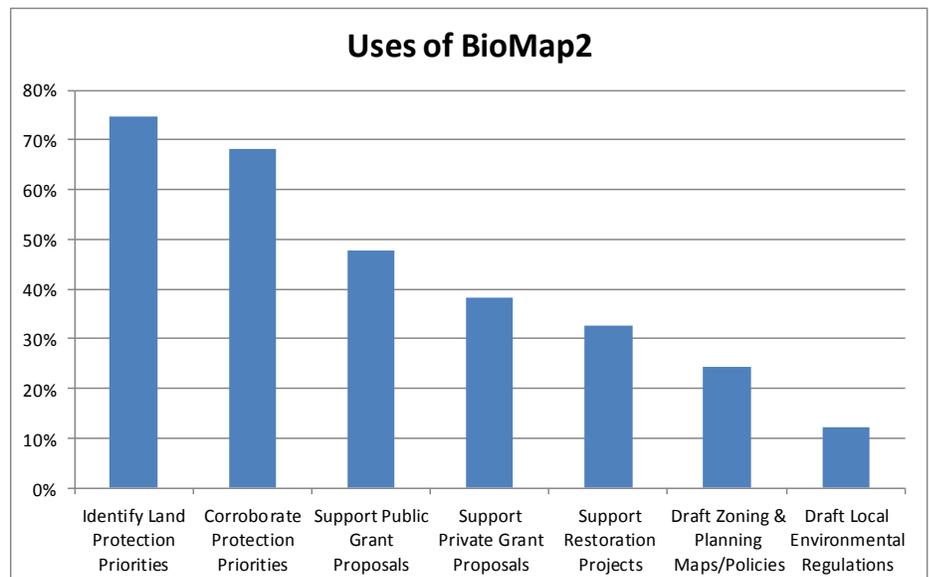
BioMap2 has influenced a variety of decisions including prioritizing land protection, supporting ecological restoration projects, garnering grant funding, and guiding local planning. **75% of respondents use BioMap2 to identify new land protection priorities.**

BioMap2 supports local planning and policy. 24% of respondents said that they use BioMap2 to draft zoning, development, or planning maps and policies. Respondents also use BioMap2 to draft local environmental bylaws and/or regulations (12% of respondents).

“We use BioMap2 in developing Open Space and Recreation Plans, refining zoning and development regulations, and establishing regional and local growth policies.” (Northern Middlesex Council of Governments)

75% of respondents use BioMap2 to identify new land protection priorities.

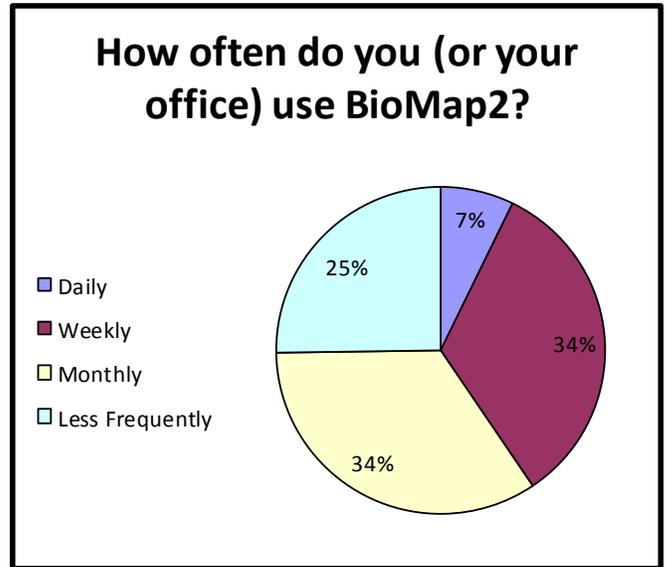
Respondents use BioMap2 in development of conservation plans and maps.



Frequency of Use



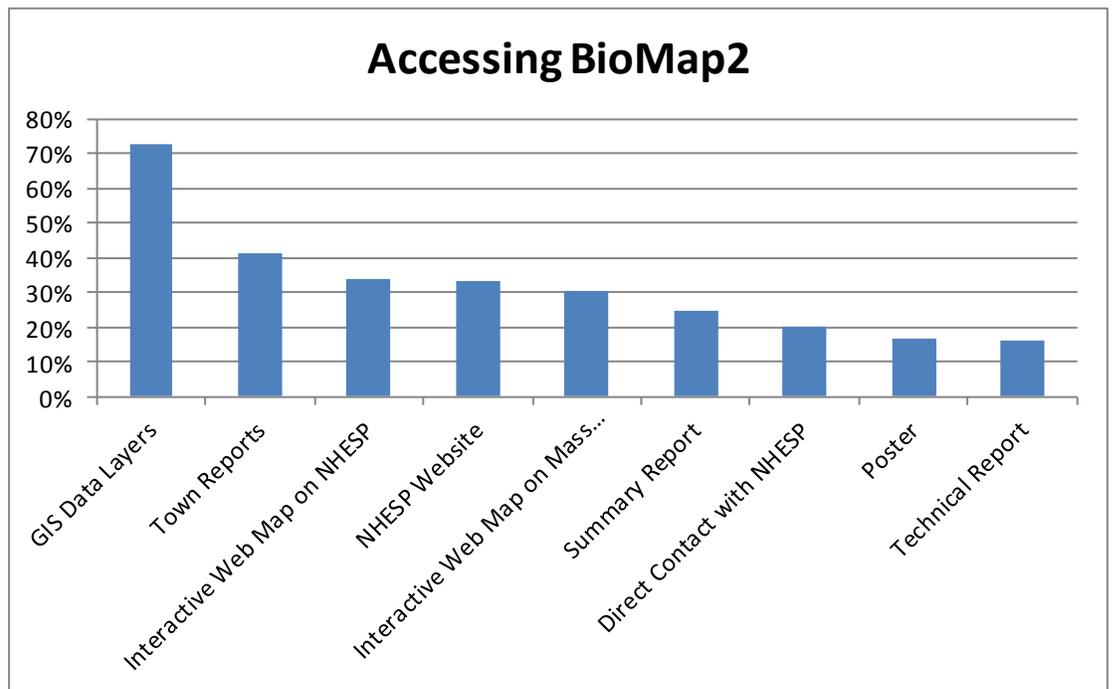
BioMap2 data is used on a regular basis. 41% of respondents say that they or their office use BioMap2 at least once a week. An additional 34% of respondents use BioMap2 monthly.



“I use BioMap2 almost daily in my ecological management planning work. It is effective for depicting the landscape context of existing conserved lands and potential acquisitions, as well as for detailing the various conservation values that may be provided by a specific property. BioMap2 is a powerful tool for setting ecological management and land acquisition priorities.” (Mass Audubon)

Utilizing BioMap2

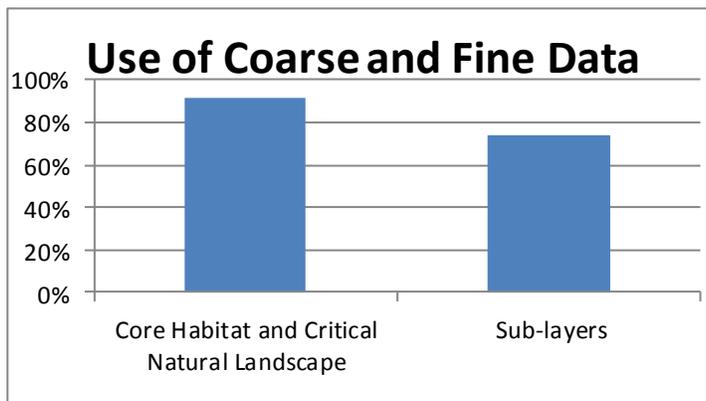
The most common medium for accessing BioMap2 data (73% of respondents) was through direct download of data through MassGIS.



Accessing BioMap2 data through online mapping tools was common among survey respondents with 34% saying they use the interactive web map on the NHESP website and 31% saying they use the interactive web map on MassGIS OLIVER. Town reports are very popular and important to utilizing BioMap2 with 42% of respondents accessing BioMap2 data through them.

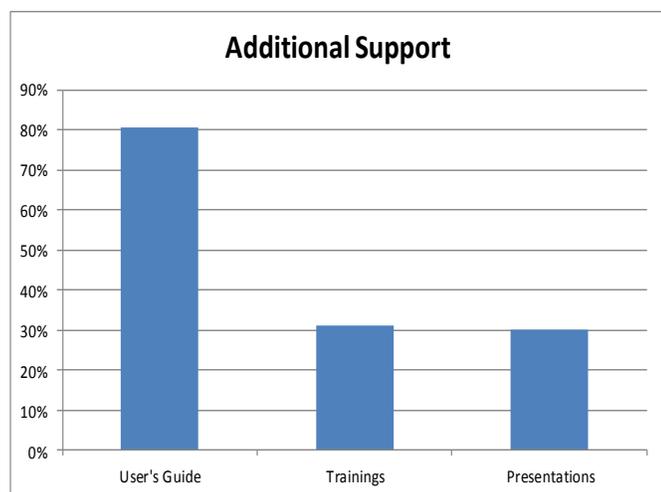
Scale of Data

BioMap2 Users are delving deep into the data with 97% of respondents using both coarse and fine scale data.



For the coarse-scale data, users are utilizing both the Critical Natural Landscapes and Core Habitat layers. For the fine-scale data, the most common sublayers that survey respondents used were Priority Natural Communities (87%), Species of Conservation Concern (83%), and Wetland Cores (81%). 75% of users also applied Forest Core and Vernal Pool Core data.

Usability of BioMap2



Survey respondents provided valuable feedback on the usability of BioMap2. 80% felt that the available materials provided all the information needed to effectively apply BioMap2, and 65% found no barriers to its use. 80% of those who responded supported the development of a BioMap2 user's guide, and 30% supported both additional trainings and presentations.



Thank you to all of those who responded to the BioMap2 User Survey. Your input has been invaluable and will assist The Nature Conservancy and the MA Natural Heritage Program in assisting users in the effective application of BioMap2. This report was prepared by Julia King, TNC Intern, Northeastern University. For more information contact [The Nature Conservancy](#) at (617) 532-8300 and [NHESP](#) at (508) 389-6360.