## HOLISTIC WATERSHED MANAGEMENT FOR EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND USE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES: OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION FOR LOCAL DECISION MAKERS: PHASE 2 – FDC APPLICATION MODELING (FDC 2A PROJECT)

### SUPPORT FOR SOUTHEAST NEW ENGLAND PROGRAM (SNEP) COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

### TASK 4 TECHNICAL MEMO ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE LAND COVER DATA FOR TAUNTON RIVER SUB-WATERSHED MODELING AND HYDROLOGIC RESPONSE UNIT ANALYSES FEBRUARY 17, 2022

Prepared for:

U.S. EPA Region 1



Prepared by:



Paradigm Environmental Great Lakes Environmental Center



Blanket Purchase Agreement: BPA-68HE0118A0001-0003 Requisition Number: PR-R1-20-00322 Order: 68HE0121F0001

## Table of Contents





## Tables



[Table 6-6. Summary of annual average runoff volume, groundwater \(GW\) recharge, evapotranspiration \(ET\),](#page-48-0)  [total nitrogen \(TN\) load, and total phosphorus \(TP\) load for the 2060 future condition and the Ecodeficit](#page-48-0)  [8.5 Median climate scenario by municipality in Taunton River watershed](#page-48-0) ............................................. 48 [Table 6-7. Summary of annual average runoff volume, groundwater \(GW\) recharge, evapotranspiration \(ET\),](#page-49-0)  [total nitrogen \(TN\) load, and total phosphorus \(TP\) load for the 2060 future condition and the Ecodeficit](#page-49-0)  [8.5 Wet climate scenario by municipality in Taunton River watershed](#page-49-0) .................................................. 49 [Table 6-8. Summary of net increase between the 2060 Future Condition and 2016 Baseline Condition in](#page-50-0)  [annual average runoff volume, groundwater \(GW\) recharge, evapotranspiration \(ET\), total nitrogen \(TN\)](#page-50-0)  [load, and total phosphorus \(TP\) load by municipality in Taunton River watershed](#page-50-0) ................................ 50 [Table 6-9. Summary of net increase between the 2060 Future Condition, Ecodeficit 8.5 Dry and 2016](#page-52-0)  [Baseline Condition in annual average runoff volume, groundwater \(GW\) recharge, evapotranspiration \(ET\),](#page-52-0)  [total nitrogen \(TN\) load, and total phosphorus \(TP\) load by the municipality in Taunton River watershed](#page-52-0) [..........................................................................................................................................................](#page-52-0) 52 [Table 6-10. Summary of net increase between the 2060 Future Condition, Ecodeficit 8.5 Median and 2016](#page-53-0)  [Baseline Condition in annual average runoff volume, groundwater \(GW\) recharge, evapotranspiration \(ET\),](#page-53-0)  [total nitrogen \(TN\) load, and total phosphorus \(TP\) load by the municipality in Taunton River watershed](#page-53-0) [..........................................................................................................................................................](#page-53-0) 53 [Table 6-11.Summary of net increase between the 2060 Future Condition, Ecodeficit 8.5 Wet and 2016](#page-55-0)  [Baseline Condition in annual average runoff volume, groundwater \(GW\) recharge, evapotranspiration \(ET\),](#page-55-0)  [total nitrogen \(TN\) load, and total phosphorus \(TP\) load by the municipality in Taunton River watershed](#page-55-0) [..........................................................................................................................................................](#page-55-0) 55

## <span id="page-5-0"></span>1. INTRODUCTION

This technical memo presents the data and methodology used to develop the Hydrological Response Units (HRUs) layer for 2060 projected new development conditions within the Taunton River watershed in support of Phase 2 of the EPA's flow duration curve (FDC) project. The future development land use and land cover data sets are reflective of projected watershed conditions in the year 2060 and are used to develop HRUs categories consistent with those used for the Opti-Tool in Phase 1. Two main outcomes of this task are the development of the HRUs layer for the projected 2060 future land use condition based on recent trends used in the New England Landscape Futures (NELF) dataset (Thompson et al., 2017) and comparing the estimates of unattenuated average annual runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), and nutrient (Total Nitrogen [TN] and Total Phosphorus [TP]) load export for both existing and future land use conditions. Three General Circulation Models (GCMs) are selected from Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) 8.5 to represent the greatest increase in both precipitation and temperature, as well as the modeled ecodeficits and ecosurpluses for the Upper Hodges Brook watershed. The unattenuated and uncontrolled flow and pollutant loadings at the HRUs level are also compared for the projected future land use conditions using the projected meteorological data for the selected GCMs in the Taunton River watershed. The flow and loading analyses were performed for the municipal boundaries within the Taunton River watershed.

The following sections describe:

- A data review of the Geographic Information System (GIS) spatial layers for this analysis.
- A methodology for developing a future land use condition HRUs layer using the GIS layers described in the data review section. It includes the mapping rules for the conversion of coarse resolution (30-m) future land cover data to a fine resolution (1-m) land use and land cover data.
- An approach to select three GCMs based on the dry/wet/median conditions of precipitation, temperature, ecodeficit, and ecosurplus in the Taunton River watershed.
- A comparison between the baseline HRUs area distribution developed during Phase 1 of the FDC project and the projected HRUs area distribution at the municipality level within the Taunton River watershed. Also, an average annual runoff volume, GW recharge, ET, and nutrients (TN and TP) load were estimated for the 2016 baseline and 2060 projected land use conditions along with future climate conditions using three GCMs from RCP 8.5 projections. These comparisons show the percent increase in impervious cover (IC) and change in the hydrology and water quality due to the future development and future climate change conditions within each municipality in the Taunton River watershed.

## <span id="page-5-1"></span>2. GIS DATA REVIEW FOR TAUNTON RIVER WATERSHED

The Phase 2 methodology uses previously acquired data from MassGIS (Bureau of Geographic Information) during Phase 1, as well as new sources of future land use - land cover data from the NELF project. The subset of data used for Phase 2 is shown in [Table 2-1.](#page-5-2)



#### <span id="page-5-2"></span>**Table 2-1. Landscape GIS data**



## <span id="page-6-0"></span>2.1. Baseline Land Use Land Cover Data

MassGIS 2016 land use – land cover layer contains a combination of land cover mapping from 2016 aerial imagery and land use derived from standardized assessor parcel information for Massachusetts. It contains both land use and land cover information as separate attributes and can be accessed independently or in a useful combination with one another. For example, it is possible to measure the portions of pervious and impervious surfaces for a commercial parcel[. Figure 2-1](#page-7-0) shows the land use – land cover map for the Taunton River watershed.



<span id="page-7-0"></span>**Figure 2-1. A map showing 2016 land use – land cover for the Taunton River watershed.** 

## <span id="page-8-0"></span>2.2. Future Land Cover Data

NELF is a multi‐institutional project with the overarching goal of building and evaluating scenarios that show how land use choices could shape the landscape over the next 50 years. The NELF project envisions potential trends and impacts of landscape change in New England based on community collaboration and expert analysis (NELF, n.d.). Future land cover data representing historical and projected trends was acquired from the NELF project data repository (available on request at: [https://databasin.org/groups/26ceb6c7ece64b0d9872e118bae80d41/\)](https://databasin.org/groups/26ceb6c7ece64b0d9872e118bae80d41/). These datasets were created with a cellular land-cover change model using satellite imagery from 1990-2010 (Thompson et al., 2017). The historical data represents observed trends over 1990-2010; the statistical relationships of land cover change rate and spatial patterns were then linearly projected to the year 2060 as a baseline business-as-usual scenario [\(Figure 2-2\)](#page-8-1). Major land cover changes over the 1990-2010 period include forest loss to low- and high-density development, as well as new land conservation (Thompson et al., 2017). Over 50 years between 2010 and 2060, the largest changes in land use across all of New England (not just the Taunton River watershed) were a 37% increase in developed area and a 123% increase in conserved area (Thompson et al., 2020). However, the conserved area is concentrated in core forest areas in northern New England (e.g., Maine and Vermont), while the more developed southern areas saw lower land conservation. At 30-m resolution, both of these datasets are consistent with the National Land Cover Databases (NLCD), however, they are limited to land cover projections of seven lumped categories and do not directly estimate the percent imperviousness within the land cover category. Both the Recent Trends 2010 and 2060 datasets, as well as other NELF future scenarios, can be explored on their [web viewer.](https://newenglandlandscapes.org/?map=1&lat=44.0000&lon=-70.0000&zoom=7&leftScenario=rt&rightScenario=cc&leftYear=2010&rightYear=2060)



<span id="page-8-1"></span>**Figure 2-2. A historical land use trend for the year 2010 (left) and projected future land use trend for the year 2060 (right) for the Taunton River watershed.**

### <span id="page-9-0"></span>2.3. Municipalities

MassGIS 2020 municipal boundaries were created by MassGIS by adjusting older USGS topo map town boundaries to connect the survey points of a community. In many areas, boundary creation was simply a matter of "connecting the dots" from one boundary point to the next. Where boundaries follow a stream/river or road right-of-way (ROW) the boundary was approximately delineated using the 2001 Aerial [Imagery](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-2001-2003-aerial-imagery) as a base. [Figure 2-3](#page-9-1) shows the municipal boundaries within the Taunton River watershed.



<span id="page-9-1"></span>

<span id="page-10-0"></span>MassGIS 2021 buildings dataset consists of 2-dimensional roof outlines ("roof-prints") for all buildings larger than 150 square feet for all of Massachusetts. In 2019, MassGIS refreshed the data to a baseline of 2016 and continues to update features using newer aerial imagery that allows MassGIS staff to remove, modify and add structures to keep up with more current ground conditions. In March 2021, the layer was updated with 2017 and 2018 structure review edits along with the first data edits compiled atop spring 2019 imagery. In July 2021, MassGIS completed the statewide update based on 2019 imagery. [Figure 2-4](#page-10-1) shows the building boundaries within the Taunton River watershed.



<span id="page-10-1"></span>**Figure 2-4. A map showing the building footprints in the Taunton River watershed.**

<span id="page-11-0"></span>Baseline HRUs layer representing the land use, land cover, soil, and slope characteristics in the Taunton River watershed was developed during Phase 1 of the FDC project. Each HRU represents areas of similar physical characteristics attributable to core processes identified through GIS overlays. The baseline HRUs layer for the Taunton River watershed combines spatial information into a single raster layer with 36 unique categories. The unit-area HRUs time series for the baseline conditions were developed using the most recent 20-year period of observed meteorological boundary conditions and calibrating the rainfall-runoff response on each HRU along with reach routing processes in the LSPC model under Phase 1 of the FDC project.

[Figure 2-5](#page-12-0) shows the spatial overlay process used to develop the baseline HRUs categories. During the HRUs development process, raw spatial data were reclassified into relevant categories. [Table 2-2](#page-13-0) shows the reclassification of Mass GIS 2016 land use and land cover data to derive the modeled land use categories in the Opti-Tool. [Table 2-3](#page-14-0) shows the reclassification of the Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database and the State Soil Geographic (STATSGO2) database to derive the modeled Hydrologic Soil Group (HSG) categories in the Opti-Tool. [Table 2-4](#page-14-1) shows the reclassification of the percent slope attribute to derive the modeled slope categories in the Opti-Tool. [Table 2-5](#page-14-2) shows the final 36 HRUs categories developed for the Taunton River watershed. [Figure 2-6](#page-16-0) shows the spatial location of the baseline HRUs in the Taunton River watershed.



<span id="page-12-0"></span>Figure 2-5. Baseline HRUs spatial overlay process (from top to bottom: land use - land cover, soil, and slope layers).

#### <span id="page-13-0"></span>**Table 2-2. Land use – land cover reclassification**



#### <span id="page-14-0"></span>**Table 2-3. Soil – HSG reclassification**



### <span id="page-14-1"></span>**Table 2-4. Percent slope reclassification**



#### <span id="page-14-2"></span>**Table 2-5. Summary of final HRU categories**







<span id="page-16-0"></span>**Figure 2-6. A map showing the 2016 baseline HRU raster layer for the Taunton River watershed.**

# <span id="page-17-0"></span>3. DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURE HRU LAYER BASED ON PROJECTED LAND COVER DATA

To simulate future hydrological conditions within the Taunton River watershed, the NELF projected 2060 land cover datasets were analyzed and processed to update the 2016 baseline HRUs layer. The baseline HRUs were built with high-resolution (1-m) impervious cover data across the Taunton River watershed. However, the projected 2060 land cover data is at 30-m; this coarser-resolution also does not provide the percent imperviousness associated with the given land use classification, needed to develop HRUs. Additionally, the land use classification is much coarser and does not differentiate between commercial, industrial, residential, and open space but instead is lumped into just two developed categories: high-density and low-density development. The methodology to develop a 1-m resolution future HRU layer consistent with the baseline HRUs layer includes five main steps:

- 1. Compare the land cover change between the recent trends 2010 and 2060 NELF datasets and preserve the spatial footprints for the developed areas presented in the 2060 NELF dataset for developing the future HRUs layer for the Taunton River watershed.
- 2. Establish mapping rules between the major land use categories used in the Opti-Tool and the land use categories used in the NELF dataset. These rules define how to disaggregate the two developed land use (high-density and low-density) classifications from the NELF dataset into 7 major developed land use (commercial, industrial, high-density residential, medium-density residential, low-density residential, open land, and transportation) classifications for the Opti-Tool.
- 3. Estimate the percent imperviousness rules for the 7 major developed land use categories established in step 2 by using the MassGIS 2016 land use – land cover dataset for the Taunton River watershed. These rules are assumed to remain the same at different spatial extents. For example, the percent imperviousness for commercial land use remains the same for future development areas regardless of where they are located in the watershed. The projected future commercial areas in any municipal boundary will have the same percent imperviousness as it is overall in the Taunton River watershed based on the MassGIS 2016 land use - land cover dataset.
- 4. Estimate the area distribution rules between the 7 major developed land use categories (i.e., commercial, industrial, high-density residential, medium-density residential, low-density residential, open space, and transportation) by the municipality within the Taunton River watershed. Apply these rules to new development areas to break down the two developed NELF categories (high-density and low-density) into 7 developed Opti-Tool categories at the municipal level. These rules are derived at the municipality level and remain the same within the given municipal boundary but can vary from one municipality to another. It is assumed that area distribution between developed land use categories follows the same trend for the projected 2060 future land use – land cover classification.
- 5. Identify the undeveloped areas from the baseline HRUs layer that are subject to future development based on an overlay with the 2060 NELF dataset and apply the rules established in steps 3 and 4 at the municipality level. Apply the peppered raster method developed in Phase 1 of the FDC project to convert one-to-many HRUs categories using the probabilistic raster reclassification algorithm. For example, if there are 100 acres of forest category within a given municipality that is subject to highdensity development, then those acres are split into paved commercial, paved industrial, paved highdensity residential, paved transportation, and developed open space based on the established area distribution rules of those developed categories within the same municipal boundary. The underlying soil (i.e., HSG) and slope classifications remain the same as in the baseline HRUs layer.

The following sections provide more detail on the process of developing the future HRUs raster layer and summarize the change in the baseline HRUs due to the projected future development in the Taunton River watershed.

## <span id="page-18-0"></span>3.1. Land Cover Change Between 2010 and 2060 NELF Dataset

Within the Taunton River watershed, both low- and high-density development increased between the NELF 2010 and 2060 recent trend datasets [\(Table 3-1\)](#page-18-2). This is generally due to the conversion of unprotected forest areas to developed areas. However, the recent trends underpinning the NELF datasets also indicate an increase in the conserved forest. The baseline HRUs developed under Phase 1 of the FDC project use higher resolution MassGIS 2016 land use – land cover data, so NELF 2060 projected future dataset was overlayed with the baseline HRUs layer to identify the areas subject to projected future development.



#### <span id="page-18-2"></span>**Table 3-1. NELF recent trend 2010 and 2060 land cover comparison**

## <span id="page-18-1"></span>3.2. Mapping Between Opti-Tool and NELF Land Use Classification

[Table 3-2](#page-18-3) shows a mapping table between NELF, Continuous Change Detection and Classification (CCDC), and National Land Cover Dataset (NLCD) datasets. These datasets were used in the NELF project and where CCDC data was not available, NLCD data was used to fill the gaps. The CCDC and NLCD maps were reclassified to a common legend consisting of High-Density Development, Low-Density Development, Forest, Agriculture, Water, and a composite "Other" class for developing the NELF datasets (Thompson et al., 2017). Based on the land use description shown in [Table 3-2,](#page-18-3) new mapping rules were developed to disaggregate the NELF classification into the Opti-Tool land use classification as shown in [Table 3-3.](#page-21-1) These mapping rules are assumed to remain the same across any municipal boundary within the Taunton River watershed.



#### <span id="page-18-3"></span>**Table 3-2. Reclassification Scheme for CCDC and NLCD Data for NELF Land Cover (Thompson et al., 2017)**





**NELF** 





#### <span id="page-21-1"></span>**Table 3-3. Mapping table between NELF and Opti-Tool land use classification**



## <span id="page-21-0"></span>3.3. Percent Imperviousness for Developed Land Use Classification

Using the MassGIS 2016 land use – land cover dataset, the percent imperviousness was estimated for the 7 developed land use categories used in the Opti-Tool [\(Table 3-4\)](#page-22-1). As well as the total percentage of IC, the percent of IC from buildings (i.e., roof-area) was calculated for each developed land use classification. These rules were developed at the Taunton River watershed scale and are assumed to hold at any spatial scale within the Taunton River watershed. For example, the projected future commercial land use in any municipality within the Taunton River watershed will have 67.4% paved areas and 23.8% of paved areas will be the building rooftops.

21



#### <span id="page-22-1"></span>**Table 3-4. Summary of percent imperviousness for developed land use classification**

## <span id="page-22-0"></span>3.4. Developed Land Use Distribution by Municipality in Taunton River Watershed

For each municipality within the Taunton River watershed, the breakdown of developed land use area was calculated from the MassGIS 2016 land use – land cover data. This will allow conversion between the NELF and Opti-Tool classes (as shown in [Table 3-3\)](#page-21-1). [Table 3-5](#page-22-2) summarizes high-density developed areas into commercial, industrial, high-density residential, and transportation categories. [Table 3-6](#page-23-0) summarizes the breakdown of low-density developed areas into low-density residential, medium-density residential, open space, and transportation categories. These rules were developed at the municipality level that allows different development patterns across different municipalities based on the baseline development trends. It was assumed that the area distribution between the developed land use categories shown in [Table 3-5](#page-22-2) and [Table 3-6](#page-23-0) holds for the projected future development within the same municipal boundary.



#### <span id="page-22-2"></span>**Table 3-5. Summary of high-density development land use area distribution by municipality in the Taunton River watershed**



#### <span id="page-23-0"></span>**Table 3-6. Summary of low-density development land use area distribution by municipality in Taunton River watershed**





## <span id="page-25-0"></span>3.5. Future HRU Layer for Taunton River Watershed

Based on the relationships established between the MassGIS 2016 baseline and NELF future datasets, the future mapped HRU area distribution is estimated for each municipality based on the change from baseline undeveloped areas (e.g., agriculture and forest) to the developed areas in the projected NELF data. The spatial overlay process shown i[n Figure 3-1](#page-26-0) illustrates how the relevant layers are aligned. Any areas that are undeveloped in the projected future NELF data layer maintain their baseline HRU values; areas that are undeveloped in the baseline but subject to development in the future layer are reclassified to the appropriate class from the baseline HRU layer. As an example, parcels of unprotected forest within a municipality boundary that are subject to projected future development are converted to developed parcels; the percentage distribution rules for the detailed developed land use categories [\(Table 3-5](#page-22-2) and [Table 3-6\)](#page-23-0) and the corresponding imperviousness rules [\(Table 3-4\)](#page-22-1) are used to predict the future HRUs. [Table 3-7](#page-27-0) summarizes the change in each HRU category between the baseline and future HRUs; [Figure 3-2](#page-28-0) shows the spatial distribution of future HRUs. [Figure 3-3](#page-29-0) shows the comparison between coarse resolution 2060 NELF classification and high resolution 2060 Future HRUs for the Upper Hodges Brook sub-watershed.



<span id="page-26-0"></span>**Figure 3-1. Mapped future HRU spatial overlay process (from top to bottom: NELF 2060 land cover, baseline HRUs, municipalities, and final future HRU layer).**



#### <span id="page-27-0"></span>**Table 3-7. Comparison of HRU area distribution between the MassGIS 2016 baseline and NELF 2060 future conditions in Taunton River watershed**



<span id="page-28-0"></span>**Figure 3-2. A map showing the 2060 future HRU raster layer for the Taunton River watershed.**



<span id="page-29-0"></span>**Figure 3-3. A map showing the comparison between the 30-m resolution 2060 future NELF layer (left) and 1-m resolution 2060 future HRU layer (right) for the Upper Hodges Brook sub-watershed.**

## <span id="page-30-0"></span>4. SELECTION OF FUTURE CLIMATE CONDITIONS

To simulate future climate conditions, meteorological time series from three GCMs are selected from those used in FDC Phase 1 [\(Table 4-1\)](#page-30-2) (Paradigm Environmental and Great Lakes Environmental Center, 2021). The GCMs for use in Phase 2 were selected to represent the greatest increase in both precipitation and temperature, as well as the modeled ecodeficits and ecosurpluses for the Upper Hodges Brook watershed from FDC Phase 1 [\(Figure 4-1](#page-30-1) and [Table 4-2\)](#page-31-2). As shown in [Table 4-1,](#page-30-2) these climate projections are from Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) 8.5, which represents a scenario in which carbon emissions continue to climb at historical rates (in contrast, RCP 4.5 predicts a stabilization of carbon emissions by 2100). Using these models in conjunction with the projected future land cover conditions should provide "bookends" within which to evaluate innovative stormwater control measures and protective ordinances. The downscaled meteorological data for the selected GCMs will be used to drive the LSPC hydrology model in FDC Phase 2.



<span id="page-30-2"></span>**Table 4-1. FDC Phase 1 selected models from ensemble results for future climate projections (2079-2099)**

1: Dry, Median, and Wet correspond to the 20th, 50th, and 80th percentile hydrological responses. Models chosen for FDC Phase 2 are highlighted in **yellow**.



<span id="page-30-1"></span>



#### <span id="page-31-2"></span>**Table 4-2. Summary of ecosurpluses and ecodeficits (millions of gallons per year) within the Upper Hodges Brook watershed for RCP 4.5 and 8.5 scenarios**

# <span id="page-31-0"></span>5. COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND FUTURE CONDITIONS IN TAUNTON RIVER WATERSHED

This section compares the results between the 2016 baseline, projected 2060 future land use – land cover conditions, and the three selected future climate scenarios. These comparisons include future estimates of IC (assuming conventional development patterns) and estimates of unattenuated average annual run-off volume, groundwater recharge, evapotranspiration, and nutrients (TN and TP) load export for both existing and future land cover and climate conditions for each municipality within the Taunton River watershed.

## <span id="page-31-1"></span>5.1. Impervious Cover by Municipality in the Taunton River Watershed

The change in impervious areas between the 2016 baseline and 2060 future conditions for 7 major land use categories, transportation (TRANS), commercial (COM), industrial (IND), high-density residential (HDR), medium-density residential (MDR), low-density residential (LDR), and open land (OPEN), are summarized by the municipality i[n Table 5-1.](#page-31-3) The change in IC reflects the increase in impervious cover due to the NELF 2060 projected future development in the Taunton River watershed. The impervious cover area for each municipality for the 2016 baseline and 2060 future conditions is given in the appendix [\(Table 6-1](#page-41-2) and [Table](#page-42-0)  [6-2,](#page-42-0) respectively).



#### <span id="page-31-3"></span>**Table 5-1. Summary of increase in impervious cover by municipality in Taunton River watershed**



Land cover classes: TRANS – transportation, COM – commercial, IND – industrial, HDR – high-density residential, MDR – medium-density residential, LDR – low-density residential, OPEN – open land

## <span id="page-33-0"></span>5.2. Surface Runoff, Groundwater Recharge, Evapotranspiration, and Nutrient Loads in the Taunton River Watershed

Hydrology and water quality were calibrated for the modeled HRU categories during Phase 1 of the FDC project. The pollutant build-up and wash-off parameters from the Opti-Tool SWMM models were used as a starting point and were adjusted to calibrate the long-term annual average loading rates reported in the Opti-Tool. The model was simulated for 20 years (Oct 2000 – Sep 2020) and annual average loading rates from the model prediction were compared against the pollutant export rates for the similar HRU type in the Opti-Tool. [Table 5-2](#page-33-1) presents the summary of unit-area annual average runoff, groundwater recharge (GW), evapotranspiration (ET), and nutrients (TN and TP) loading rates by HRU from the calibrated watershed model in Phase 1 of the FDC project. [Table 5-3](#page-34-0) to [Table 5-5](#page-36-0) presents the same summaries for the Ecodeficit 8.5 Dry, Median, and Wet climate change scenarios (Oct 2079 – Sep 2099), respectively.

<span id="page-33-1"></span>





<span id="page-34-0"></span>**Table 5-3. Summary of unit-acre based annual average (Oct 2079 – Sep 2099) runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load for the modeled HRU types in the Wading River watershed (Ecodeficit 8.5 Dry)**





<span id="page-35-0"></span>**Table 5-4. Summary of unit-acre based annual average (Oct 2079 – Sep 2099) runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load for the modeled HRU types in the Wading River watershed (Ecodeficit 8.5 Median)**





#### <span id="page-36-0"></span>**Table 5-5. Summary of unit-acre based annual average (Oct 2079 – Sep 2099) runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load for the modeled HRU types in the Wading River watershed (Ecodeficit 8.5 Wet)**





Units:  $MG -$  million gallons,  $lb -$  pounds,  $ac -$  acre,  $yr -$  year

The unit-acre unattenuated values were applied to the baseline and future development HRUs areas to estimate the net change in hydrology and water quality for the Taunton River watershed. As expected, with the same historic climate data and increased IC from the 2060 land use, runoff and pollutant loads increased, while groundwater recharge and evapotranspiration decreased [\(Figure 5-1,](#page-38-1) blue). The selected future climate scenarios had increased precipitation and temperature compared to the baseline. Of the future scenarios, the 2060 land use Ecodeficit 8.5 Dry combination had the smallest change in the runoff, TN, and TP compared to the 2016 baseline with historic climate, but the greatest decrease in groundwater recharge [\(Figure 5-1,](#page-38-1) orange). While the Ecodeficit 8.5 Dry scenario has a 5% increase in annual average precipitation, it also has a 16% increase in annual average temperature [\(Figure 4-1\)](#page-30-1). The increase in temperature increased ET by 18MG/yr compared to the 2016 baseline with historic climate and drove the reduced runoff and groundwater recharge, and subsequently the lower changes in TN and TP. At the other extreme, the Ecodeficit 8.5 Wet scenario had the greatest changes in runoff, groundwater recharge, and TN [\(Figure 5-1,](#page-38-1) red). The 8% increase in temperature for this scenario did lead to a lower reduction in ET compared to the 2060 land use-historic climate scenario, however, the 10% increase in precipitation still drove the increases in the other parameters. Results for the Ecodeficit 8.5 Median climate scenario fell between the Wet and Dry extremes with a consistent pattern across all of the parameters [\(Figure 5-1,](#page-38-1) green).

The trends seen at the Taunton River watershed scale are also reflected at the municipality level (annual average runoff and loadings and the change between baseline and future conditions by the municipality are shown in the appendix [\(Table 6-3](#page-44-1) through [Table 6-11\)](#page-55-0). As an example [\(Table 6-8\)](#page-50-0), IC in the Taunton Municipality increased by nearly 3,000 acres. This led to an increase in runoff of nearly 3,600 million gallons/year and an additional 38,000 pounds and 4,500 pounds of TN and TP per year on average for the 2060 land use-historic climate scenario. Correspondingly, groundwater recharge and evapotranspiration decreased by 1,300 and 2,300 million gallons/year.



<span id="page-38-1"></span>**Figure 5-1. Comparison of changes in hydrology (runoff, groundwater recharge GW, and evapotranspiration ET) and water quality parameters (total nitrogen TN and total phosphorous TP) between the baseline and future land use/climate conditions across the entire Taunton River watershed.**

## <span id="page-38-0"></span>5.3. Summary

Through the methodology detailed in this technical memo, a new HRUs layer was created that represents potential future development conditions in the Taunton River watershed. This new configuration of HRUs reflects increased development due to the conversion of unprotected forest areas into land uses with greater impervious cover [\(Table 5-6\)](#page-39-0). The loss of vegetative cover (forests) shifts the water balance towards higher runoff. As impervious surfaces increase, baseflows may fall due to more water being conveyed immediately to receiving waters with fewer opportunities for infiltration and evapotranspiration. When the future distribution of HRUs is applied to the unattenuated modeling results from FDC Phase 1 (e.g., using historic climate data), net increases in runoff (35,674 million gallons/year) and nutrient loadings (383,765 lbs and 42,545 lbs of TN and TP per year on average) are observed across the entire Taunton River watershed while groundwater recharge and evapotranspiration decreased by 11,734 and 24,240 million gallons per year, respectively [\(Table 5-7\)](#page-40-0). Simulating future climate conditions increases the variability of these results, with differences between the scenarios being driven by the amount of increase in precipitation and temperature compared to the historic climate data.

A standard water tower can hold 1 million gallons of water and a typical large dump truck can carry about 28,000 pounds. Using the 2060 land use and historic climate results as an example, these numbers can be

visualized as 11.7 thousand water towers of groundwater recharge as the annual loss, 13.7 large dump trucks of TN and 1.5 large dump trucks of TP as the average annual increase in nutrients load in the entire Taunton River watershed.

The outputs of this technical memo are the building blocks to model future land use scenarios and optimize innovative stormwater control measures and protective ordinances that will be established in collaboration with local stakeholders and practitioners.

<span id="page-39-0"></span>



**Table 5-7. Summary of changes between baseline land use and historic climate model results and the future land use and climate scenarios for annual average Taunton River watershed**

<span id="page-40-0"></span>

Units:  $MG -$  million gallons,  $lb -$  pounds,  $yr -$  year

## <span id="page-41-0"></span>6. APPENDIX

### <span id="page-41-1"></span>6.1. Impervious Cover by Municipality within the Taunton River Watershed

<span id="page-41-2"></span>**Table 6-1. Summary of 2016 baseline impervious cover by the municipality in the Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_41_Picture_683.jpeg)

![](_page_42_Picture_724.jpeg)

Land cover classes: TRANS – transportation, COM – commercial, IND – industrial, HDR – high-density residential, MDR – medium-density residential, LDR – low-density residential, OPEN – open land

#### <span id="page-42-0"></span>**Table 6-2. Summary of 2060 future impervious cover by municipality in Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_42_Picture_725.jpeg)

![](_page_43_Picture_486.jpeg)

Land cover classes: TRANS – transportation, COM – commercial, IND – industrial, HDR – high-density residential, MDR – medium-density residential, LDR – low-density residential, OPEN – open land

## <span id="page-44-0"></span>6.2. Surface Runoff, Groundwater Recharge, Evapotranspiration, and Nutrient Loads by Municipality within the Taunton River Watershed

<span id="page-44-1"></span>**Table 6-3. Summary of annual average runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load for 2016 baseline condition by the municipality in Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_44_Picture_629.jpeg)

![](_page_45_Picture_647.jpeg)

#### <span id="page-45-0"></span>**Table 6-4. Summary of annual average runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load for 2060 future condition by municipality in Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_45_Picture_648.jpeg)

![](_page_46_Picture_625.jpeg)

<span id="page-46-0"></span>**Table 6-5. Summary of annual average runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load for the 2060 future condition and the Ecodeficit 8.5 Dry climate scenario by municipality in Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_46_Picture_626.jpeg)

![](_page_47_Picture_681.jpeg)

![](_page_48_Picture_619.jpeg)

<span id="page-48-0"></span>**Table 6-6. Summary of annual average runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load for the 2060 future condition and the Ecodeficit 8.5 Median climate scenario by municipality in Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_48_Picture_620.jpeg)

![](_page_49_Picture_635.jpeg)

<span id="page-49-0"></span>**Table 6-7. Summary of annual average runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load for the 2060 future condition and the Ecodeficit 8.5 Wet climate scenario by municipality in Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_49_Picture_636.jpeg)

![](_page_50_Picture_634.jpeg)

<span id="page-50-0"></span>**Table 6-8. Summary of net increase between the 2060 Future Condition and 2016 Baseline Condition in annual average runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load by municipality in Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_50_Picture_635.jpeg)

![](_page_51_Picture_683.jpeg)

![](_page_52_Picture_654.jpeg)

#### <span id="page-52-0"></span>**Table 6-9. Summary of net increase between the 2060 Future Condition, Ecodeficit 8.5 Dry and 2016 Baseline Condition in annual average runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load by the municipality in Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_52_Picture_655.jpeg)

![](_page_53_Picture_653.jpeg)

<span id="page-53-0"></span>**Table 6-10. Summary of net increase between the 2060 Future Condition, Ecodeficit 8.5 Median and 2016 Baseline Condition in annual average runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load by the municipality in Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_53_Picture_654.jpeg)

![](_page_54_Picture_608.jpeg)

<span id="page-55-0"></span>**Table 6-11.Summary of net increase between the 2060 Future Condition, Ecodeficit 8.5 Wet and 2016 Baseline Condition in annual average runoff volume, groundwater (GW) recharge, evapotranspiration (ET), total nitrogen (TN) load, and total phosphorus (TP) load by the municipality in Taunton River watershed**

![](_page_55_Picture_659.jpeg)

![](_page_56_Picture_241.jpeg)

# <span id="page-57-0"></span>7. REFERENCES

NELF, n.d. New England Landscape Futures Project [WWW Document]. URL https://newenglandlandscapes.org/story/ (accessed 12.31.21).

Paradigm Environmental and Great Lakes Environmental Center, 2021. Holistic Watershed Management For Existing And Future Land Use Development Activities: Opportunities For Action For Local Decision Makers: Phase 1 – Modeling And Development Of Flow Duration Curves (FDC 1 Project).

- Thompson, J.R., Plisinski, J.S., Lambert, K.F., Duveneck, M.J., Morreale, L., McBride, M., MacLean, M.G., Weiss, M., Lee, L., 2020. Spatial Simulation of Codesigned Land Cover Change Scenarios in New England: Alternative Futures and Their Consequences for Conservation Priorities. Earth's Futur. 8, 23. https://doi.org/10.1029/2019EF001348
- Thompson, J.R., Plisinski, J.S., Olofsson, P., Holden, C.E., Duveneck, M.J., 2017. Forest loss in New England: A projection of recent trends. PLoS One 12. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0189636