Conasauga

Conservation Opportunity Area

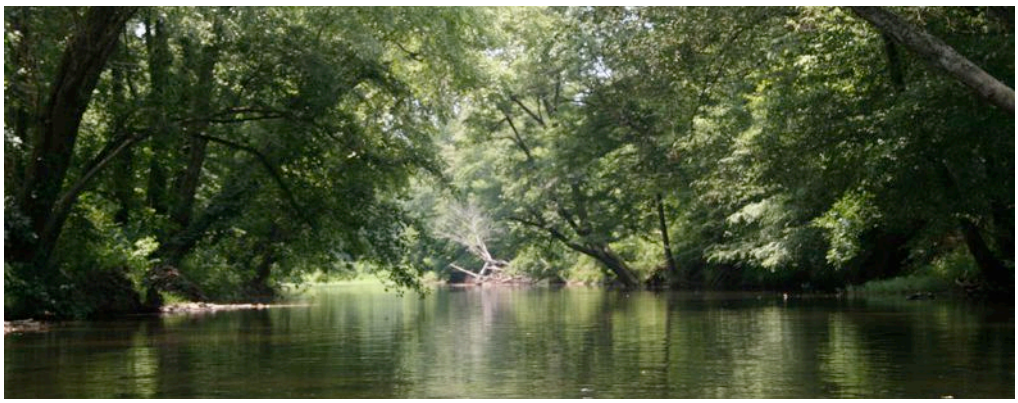
The Conasauga River originates in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Georgia, and almost all of the headwaters are protected within national forests. The river flows through Tennessee for eight miles before it turns south back into Georgia; it is the only river that flows through Tennessee that does not drain into the Mississippi River. Water quality is excellent within the national forests, providing a home to more than 70 species of fish. Some pools within the river have inventory lists of greater than 40 fish species.

As the river leaves the forest and enters the Ridge and Valley region, the water quality quickly declines due to less than favorable land use practices, for example, allowing livestock unlimited access to streams. Conservation opportunities within this river system include the establishment of forested riparian zones and widening existing ones to 50 feet or greater.

To improve water quality outside the National Forests, opportunities exist to aid with reduction or elimination of threats. Stream bank stabilization will greatly aid in reducing siltation in the river. Working with farmers to reduce sources of nonpoint pollution will also help to increase water quality of the Conasauga River. Also, working with partners to replace poorly designed culverts and storm water drains will greatly increase river connectivity for aquatic species.

Public Lands within the COA

South Cherokee National Forest, Conasauga State Scenic River



The Conasauga is the only river flowing through Tennessee that does not drain into the Mississippi River, with excellent water quality within the South Cherokee National Forest.

Top to bottom: Conasauga Blue Fish and Crayfish in the Conasauga River - Jeremy Monroe, Freshwaters Illustrated; Wide view of Conasauga River - USFWS/next page: Perched culvert prevents small fish passage - Sam Beebe

Conasauga
Conservation Opportunity Area

Partnerships

TWRA will develop and expand partnerships with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Office of Surface Mining, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Forest Service, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Tennessee Valley Authority, Tennessee Dept. of Environment and Conservation, Tennessee Division of Forestry, The Nature Conservancy, the Tennessee Aquarium, Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation, Land Trust for Tennessee, Chattanooga Aquarium, University of Tennessee, and private landowners.

	Desired Change	Units
+	Increase restoration of critical land units and aquatic resources on private lands using government-funded incentive programs	acres
+	Increase acres of native ecosystems by restoring pastures and agricultural lands.	acres
+	Restore riparian buffers and physical stream habitat in priority locations throughout the watershed	miles
✓	Implement integrated pest management plan to aid with the control of native and exotic pests.	acres
+	Increase acres of critical habitat under permanent conservation management.	acres
+	Develop and/or participate in regional conservation planning initiatives sponsored by federal, state, and local agencies.	plans
+	Improve conservation outcomes for GCN species and habitats through participation in environmental planning and permitting.	reviews

To learn more about the Conasauga Conservation Opportunity Area, please contact:
Chris Simpson, Wildlife Diversity Coordinator, Region 3 (931) 484-9571

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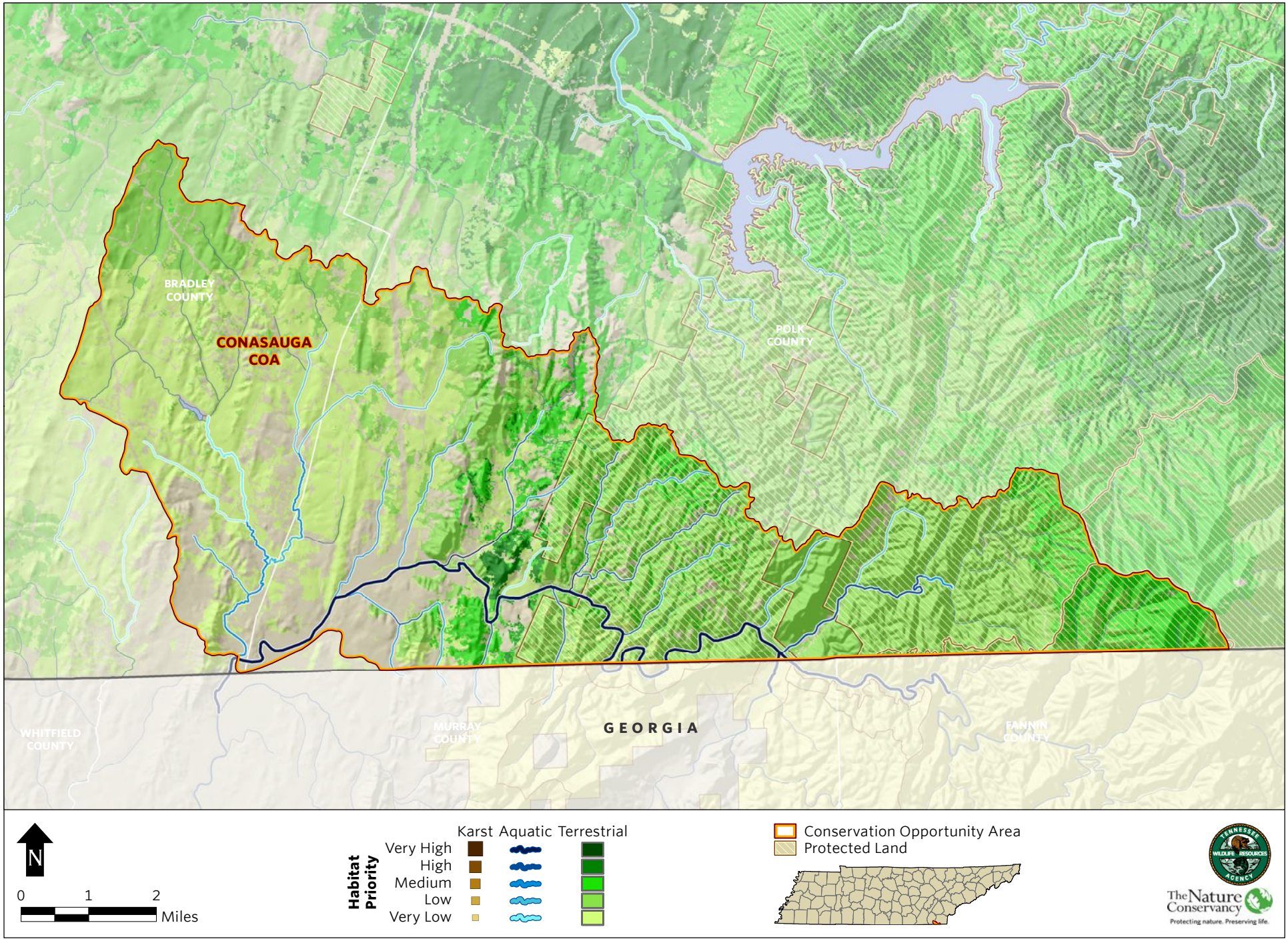

	CONASAUGA COA GCN SPECIES (TN)
Taxa Group	Scientific & Common names
Bat	Myotis leibii (Eastern Small-footed Bat)
Bat	Myotis septentrionalis (Northern Myotis)
Bat	Perimyotis subflavus (Tri-colored Bat)
Bird	Accipiter striatus (Sharp-shinned Hawk)
Bird	Anas rubripes (American Black Duck)
Bird	Aquila chrysaetos (Golden Eagle)
Bird	Bonasa umbellus (Ruffed Grouse)
Bird	Caprimulgus carolinensis (Chuck-will's-widow)
Bird	Caprimulgus vociferus (Whip-poor-will)
Bird	Cardellina canadensis (Canada Warbler)
Bird	Chaetura pelagica (Chimney Swift)
Bird	Circus cyaneus (Northern Harrier)
Bird	Colinus virginianus (Northern Bobwhite)
Bird	Empidonax minimus (Least Flycatcher)
Bird	Euphagus carolinus (Rusty Blackbird)
Bird	Falco peregrinus (Peregrine Falcon)
Bird	Geothlypis Formosa (Kentucky Warbler)
Bird	Grus americana (Whooping Crane)
Bird	Haliaeetus leucocephalus (Bald Eagle)
Bird	Helmitheros vermivorum (Worm-eating Warbler)
Bird	Hylocichla mustelina (Wood Thrush)
Bird	Icteria virens (Yellow-breasted Chat)
Bird	Icterus spurius (Orchard Oriole)
Bird	Limnothlypis swainsonii (Swainson's Warbler)
Bird	Melanerpes erythrocephalus (Red-headed Woodpecker)
Bird	Parkesia motacilla (Louisiana Waterthrush)
Bird	Scolopax minor (American Woodcock)
Bird	Setophaga dominica (Yellow-throated Warbler)
Bird	Sitta pusilla (Brown-headed Nuthatch)
Bird	Sphyrapicus varius (Yellow-bellied Sapsucker)
Bird	Sturnella magna (Eastern Meadowlark)
Bird	Tyto alba (Barn Owl)
Bivalve	Elliptio arctata (Delicate Spike)
Bivalve	Hamiota altilis (Finelined Pocketbook)
Bivalve	Medionidus acutissimus (Alabama Moccasinshell)
Bivalve	Medionidus parvulus (Coosa Moccasinshell)
Bivalve	Pleurobema chattanoogaense (Painted Clubshell)
Bivalve	Pleurobema georgianum (Southern Pigtoe)
Bivalve	Pleurobema hanleyianum (Georgia Pigtoe)
Bivalve	Pleurobema perovatum (Ovate Clubshell)
Bivalve	Ptychobranchus foremanianus (Rayed Kidneyshell)
Bivalve	Strophitus connasaugaensis (Alabama Creekmussel)
Bivalve	Villosa nebulosa (Alabama Rainbow)
Bivalve	Villosa umbrans (Coosa Creekshell)
Bivalve	Villosa vanuxemensis (Mountain Creekshell)
Bivalve	Villosa vibex (Southern Rainbow)
Crustacean	Cambarus stockeri (Cocoa Crayfish)
Fish	Cyprinella caerulea (Blue Shiner)
Fish	Etheostoma brevirostrum (Holiday Darter)
Fish	Etheostoma rupestre (Rock Darter)
Fish	Etheostoma trisella (Trispot Darter)
Fish	Hybopsis lineapunctata (Lined Chub)
Fish	Ichthyomyzon gagei (Southern Brook Lamprey)

	CONASAUGA COA GCN SPECIES (TN)
Taxa Group	**Scientific & Common names**
Fish	Notropis asperifrons (Burrhead Shiner)
Fish	Notropis chrosomus (Rainbow Shiner)
Fish	Percina antesella (Amber Darter)
Fish	Percina jenkinsi (Conasauga Logperch)
Fish	Percina kusha (Bridled Darter)
Fish	Phenacobius catostomus (Riffle Minnow)
Insect	Ophiogomphus edmundo (Edmund's Snaketail)
Insect	Speyeria diana (Diana Fritillary)
Mammal	Spilogale putorius (Eastern Spotted Skunk)
Plant	Acer leucoderme (Chalk Maple)
Plant	Diervilla sessilifolia var. rivularis (Mountain Bush-honeysuckle)
Plant	Nestronia umbellula (Nestronia)
Plant	Panax quinquefolius (American Ginseng)
Plant	Prunus virginiana (Choke Cherry)
Plant	Thermopsis fraxinifolia (Ash-leaved Bush-pea)

CONASAUGA COA HABITATS (TN)	
Terrestrial Habitat Type	**Total acres of very high, high, and medium ranked habitat**
Natural habitats	
Southern Appalachian Oak Forest	3353
Southern Ridge and Valley / Cumberland Dry Calcareous Forest	1501
Southern and Central Appalachian Cove Forest	971
South-Central Interior Mesophytic Forest	472
Allegheny-Cumberland Dry Oak Forest and Woodland	197
Southern Appalachian Low-Elevation Pine Forest	53
Semi-natural habitats	
Old Field / Successional	407
Aquatic Habitat Type	**Total stream miles of very high, high, and medium ranked habitat**
Headwaters and Streams	36
Small River	12