



Boundary for Portland, Maine and Vicinity

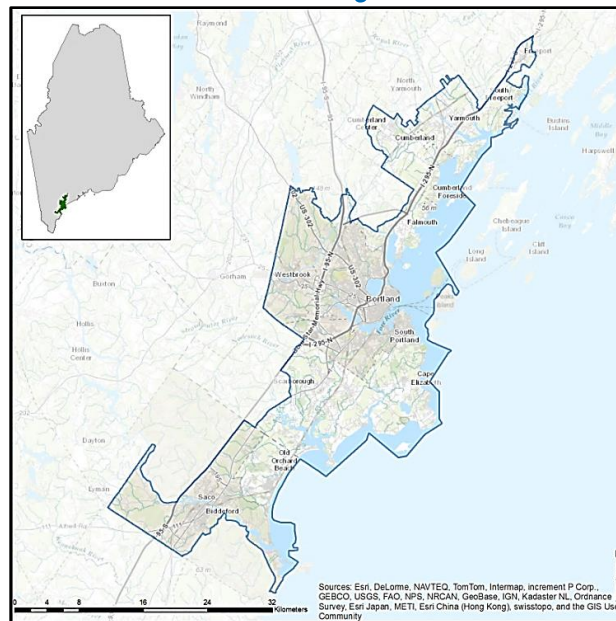
The Portland, Maine area was chosen as one of the EnviroAtlas pilot communities based on its status as the research pilot for EPA's Community-Focused Exposure and Risk Screening Tool ([C-FERST](#)). This community provides opportunities to leverage existing research and community engagement activities. It has received high quality of life ratings that can be evaluated from an ecosystem services perspective. The EnviroAtlas boundary for the Portland, Maine area was determined using the 2010 U.S. Census definition of an urban area. In addition to Portland, it includes portions of Biddeford and Yarmouth as well as additional towns within York and Cumberland Counties. The Portland area measures 523 square kilometers, and encompasses 146 census block groups.

How was this boundary created?

EnviroAtlas community boundaries are derived from the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau's Urbanized Areas (UAs). The UAs are created using census blocks that "comprise a densely settled core of...blocks that meet minimum population density requirements, along with adjacent territory containing non-residential urban land uses as well as territory with low population density included to link outlying densely settled territory with the densely settled core." UAs must have at least 50,000 people. Because the EnviroAtlas community component uses the census block group (each comprised of 4-10 census blocks) as a unit of analysis, community boundaries were created from the UAs rather than reflecting the UAs themselves.

Block groups were initially included if 50% of their population was within the UA boundary. From there, all holes were filled and all islands were excluded. If a block group only touched the main body of block groups at one corner, it was excluded.

The EnviroAtlas team then assessed each community boundary individually to ensure that it included all the area relevant to the principal community of focus and did not extend far beyond that community. Where available, the municipal boundaries were compared to the EnviroAtlas boundaries to ensure that the municipal core of the principal community was fully included. In Portland, Maine the community boundary was derived by these rules and not altered beyond that point.



Where can I get more information?

For answers to frequently asked questions regarding the Census 2010 Urban Rural Classification, go to the [Census website](#). EnviroAtlas also includes [community summary](#) fact sheets for each EnviroAtlas community that give an overview of the featured area and a description of some of the available community ecosystem services metrics—for example, the air and water filtration services provided by tree cover or the benefits of green space to residents' health.

In-depth information on the relationships between urban ecosystems and human residents, such as green space and human health and well-being, can be found in EPA's [Eco-Health Relationship Browser](#). For additional information on data creation, access the metadata found in the drop-down menu for each map layer listed in the EnviroAtlas table of contents and click again on metadata at the bottom of the metadata summary page for more details. Click [here](#) to view the map service REST page pertinent to Urban Area attributes used in EnviroAtlas. To ask specific questions about this data layer, please contact the [EnviroAtlas Team](#).

Acknowledgments

The outlined boundary creation process was conducted by Alexandra Mackey, EPA Student Services Contractor. The fact sheet was also created by Alexandra Mackey.