



# Eco-Logical Community of Practice

## How to Approach your Transportation Environmental Needs Eco-Logically

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**Kate Zielke**, North Central Texas Council of Governments

**Suzanne Melim**, California Department of Transportation

January 31, 2017

[\(Learn more about Eco-Logical  
at the FHWA website\)](#)



# SHRP2 & Its Focus Areas

## (Second Strategic Highway Research Program)

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**Safety:** Fostering safer driving through analysis of driver, roadway and vehicle factors in crashes, near crashes, and ordinary driving.



**Renewal:** Rapid maintenance and repair of the deteriorating infrastructure using already-available resources, innovations, and technologies.



**Capacity:** Planning and designing a highway system that offers minimum disruption and meets the environmental, and economic needs of the community.



**Reliability:** Reducing congestion and creating more predictable travel times through better operations.

# Eco-Logical: Community of Practice

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Purpose:

- To continue the exchange of information after SHRP2 activities have concluded.

Goals:

- To create a self-sustaining network of practitioners to share knowledge, best practices, ideas, and facilitate technical assistance amongst members.

# Implementing Eco-Logical

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- Landscape-scale approach to transportation project development.
- Transportation agencies collaborate during the planning process.
- Lead to agreed-upon mitigation strategies and timely permit decisions.





# Eco-Logical Approach Steps

1. Build collaborative partnerships & vision
2. Characterize resource status
3. Create REF
4. Assess effects on conservation
5. Identify & Prioritize actions
6. Develop crediting strategy
7. Develop agreements
8. Implement agreements
9. Update REF over time



# AASHTO & FHWA Contact Information

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# Eco-Logical Website and Tools

**AASHTO PRACTITIONER'S HANDBOOK**

**16**  
October 2015

**IMPLEMENTING ECO-LOGICAL: INTEGRATING TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND ECOLOGICAL DECISION MAKING**

The handbook is intended to provide transportation practitioners a practical approach to integrate ecological concerns into transportation planning at the project, program, and regional scales, and to establish a more holistic and effective delivery program to protect our nation's resources.

Key covered topics include:

- Ecoregion features and regulatory requirements as planning inputs
- Adopting an ecological framework for planning
- Identifying resources for conservation and assessment
- Developing a future transportation program in partnership with agencies and stakeholders to identify resources and their habitat on a project
- Establishing programmatic agreements to protect marine, wetlands, and riparian resources
- Maintaining the handbook and its participation

The Handbook is available in collaboration with an advisory panel that includes representatives to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), State Departments of Transportation, and other agencies and organizations.

The handbook is primarily intended to be used by project managers and others who have responsibility for developing compliance with a wide range of regulatory requirements. While best practices are shared, each handbook includes:

- Key issues to consider
- A background checklist
- Practical tips for avoiding compliance and habitat disturbance mistakes

In addition, key regulatory guidance materials and sample documents for each handbook are posted on the Center's web site at [www.aashto.com/transportation/ecological](http://www.aashto.com/transportation/ecological)

**AASHTO** National Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

**SHRP2 SOLUTIONS**

U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

Align Programs Resources Briefing Room Contact Search FHWA

**Environmental Review Toolkit**

Home Planning and Development NEPA and Project Development Accelerating Project Delivery Habitat Preservation Section 4(f) Water, Wetlands, and Wildlife

**Accelerating Project Delivery**

Program Overview  
Environmental Priorities  
Programmatic Agreements  
SHRP219 Expediting Project Delivery  
Conflict Resolution  
State Practice Database  
Newsletter

**Eco-Logical**

- Agency Implementing the Ecological Approach
- Technical Assistance Address
- Required Technical Assistance
- Ecological Alliances and Conferences
- Library
- Ecological Report Card Program
- Webinar Series

Performance Reporting  
Transportation Lesson Card  
Programmatic/Category Exclusion Agreements

2015 Field Book - Synchronizing Environmental Reviews for Transportation and Other Infrastructure Projects

Submit Feedback

**Implementing the Eco-Logical Approach**

The Eco-Logical approach provides current methods for addressing resource identification, avoidance, minimization and mitigation into a systematic, iterative process that occurs at the beginning of the transportation planning process and concludes with establishing programmatic approaches to ensuring resource issues that are implemented at the project level.

What are the advantages of an ecosystem approach?  
Show me an example of how this would work. Print out a Pocket Guide to Eco-Logical to share with your partners.

**PlanWorks**  
Better planning. Better projects.

PlanWorks is a web resource that supports collaborative decision-making during the transportation planning and project development process. It facilitates key decision points and common challenges encountered in long-range planning, programming, corridor planning, and environmental review with plans and projects of all scales. The Natural Environment and Implementing Eco-Logical coalition can help Eco-Logical practitioners implement each of the Integrated Ecosystem Framework (IEF) and contact the IEF in other areas of the transportation planning and project development process.

**Ecological 10-Year Anniversary and Reaffirmation**

2014 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the release of Ecological An Ecosystem Approach to Developing Infrastructure Projects. To celebrate this anniversary, the Secretary Agencies have commemorated and re-committed to work that advances the end-to-end-to-end approach through a reaffirmation statement and video. Learn more about the Reaffirmation here.

**10 YEARS OF ECO-LOGICAL LARGE-SCALE ACTIVITIES**

**A Pocket Guide to the Eco-Logical Approach**

U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

**SHRP2 SOLUTIONS** **AASHTO**

<https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/ecological/implementingecologicalapproach/default.asp>

# Today's Agenda

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- **Sean Connolly:** Applying Eco-Logical to establish solutions for programmatic mitigation bank needs.



**NCTCOG**  
North Central Texas Council of Governments

- **Kate Zielke:** Collect and organize geographic data to identify solutions for future conservation/mitigation sites.



- **Suzanne Melim:** Benefits of implementing Eco-Logical to planning wildlife crossings.



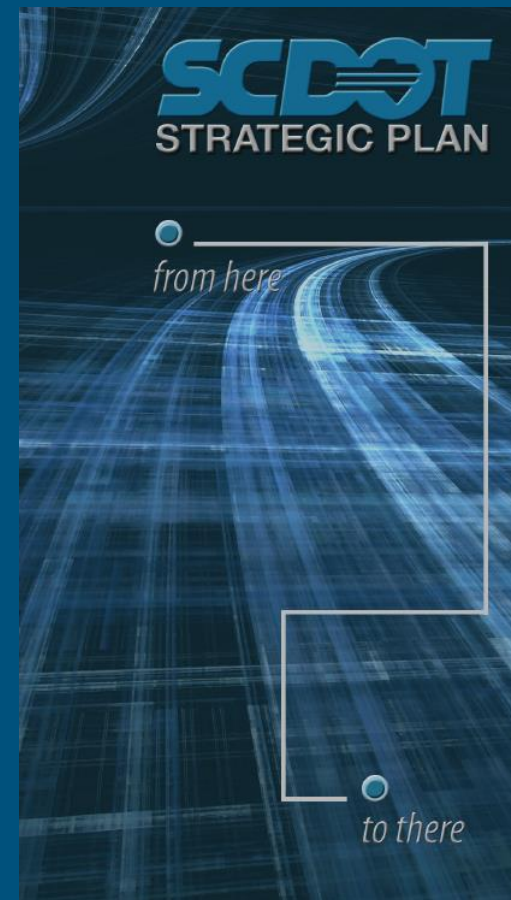
# SCDOT Mitigation Strategy

Eco-Logical 2017

# SCDOT's Vision

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The vision of SCDOT is to deliver, operate and maintain a world-class, 21<sup>st</sup> century, multimodal transportation system that enables the Palmetto State to continue to grow its economy, enhance communities, and improve the environment.

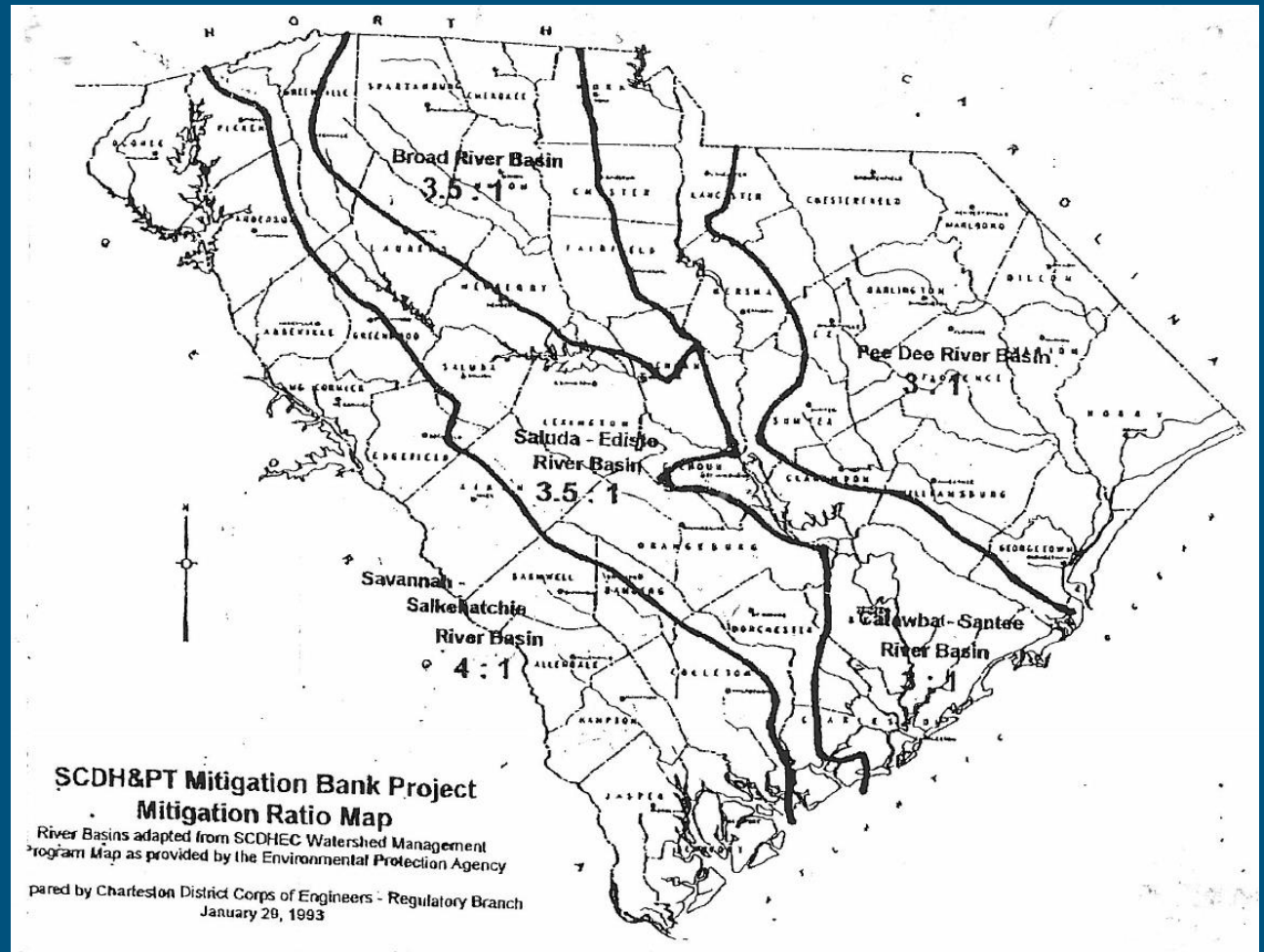


# What is SCDOT's Mitigation Strategy?

- To solve the anticipated mitigation issue for projects prior to entering the NEPA phase to have more economical and readily available mitigation options to deliver projects while also benefitting the resources.
- Improve quality of project outcomes and improve scheduling for safer, improved infrastructure.
- Begin development of a framework to improve watershed and ecosystem health as well as increase connectivity and conservation.
- To develop a framework and foundation for an interagency collaborative and ecosystem approach to developing infrastructure projects.



# SCDOT's Historical Mitigation Methods





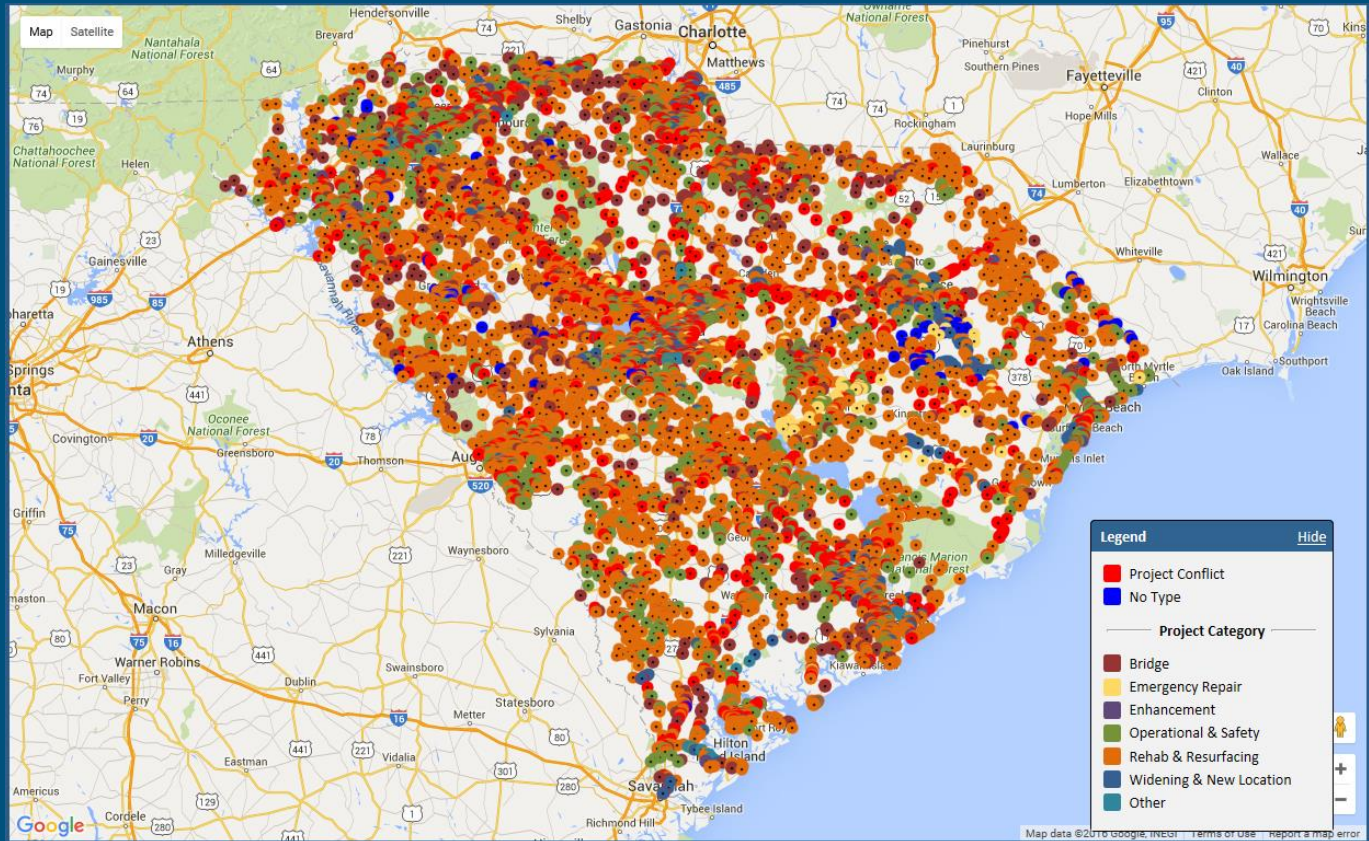
# Problem Statement

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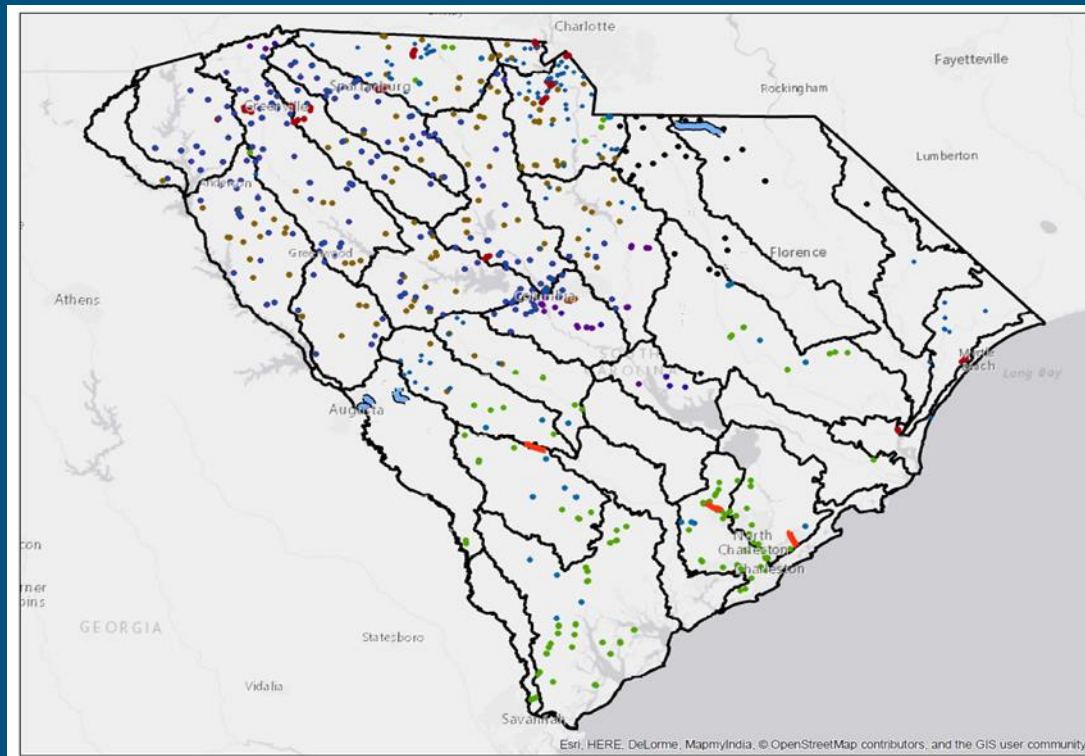
- Few Mitigation Banks
- No Coastal Stream Mitigation Banks
- Concern due to limited credits available even within approved banks
- Permittee-Responsible Mitigation is not economical for smaller projects
- Project delays and complexities
- Volume of Projects
- Increasing Costs



# Volume of Projects



# Projects with Possible Impacts

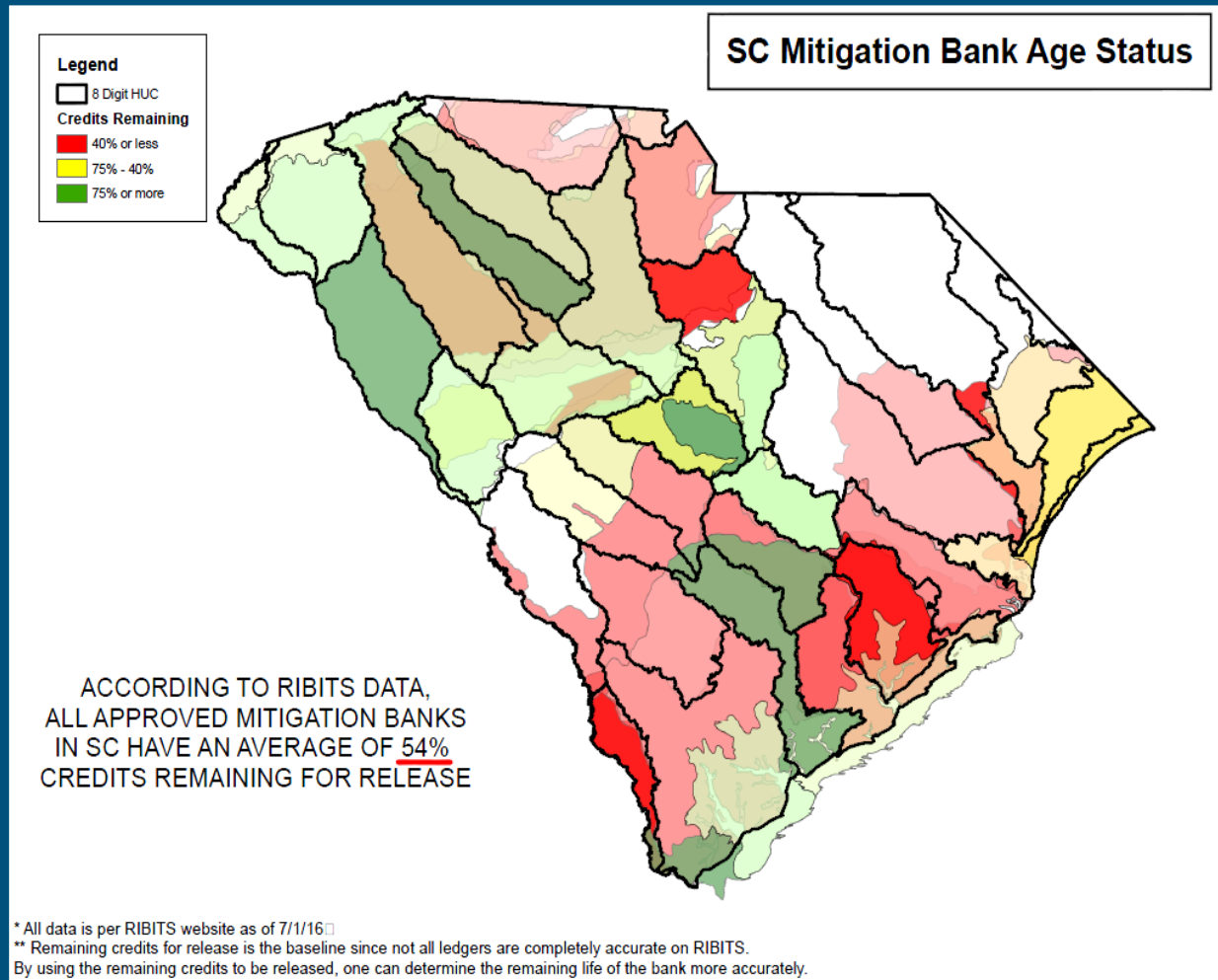


# SC Mitigation Bank Service Areas

Two areas that immediately jump off the map

Zero bank coverage for these areas of the state

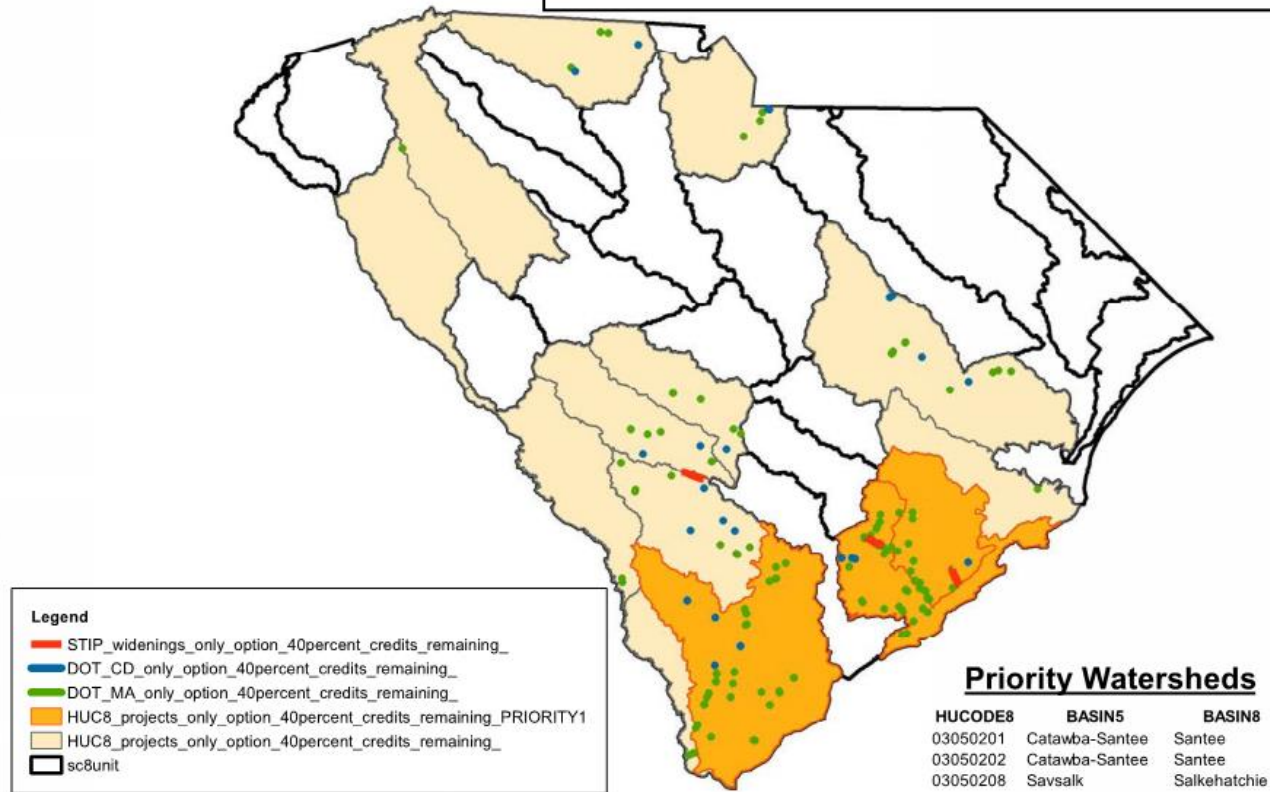
Also Coastal Area Wetlands Only





138  
projects  
identified

## Short Term Projects Where Only Options Are Banks With 40% or Less Credits



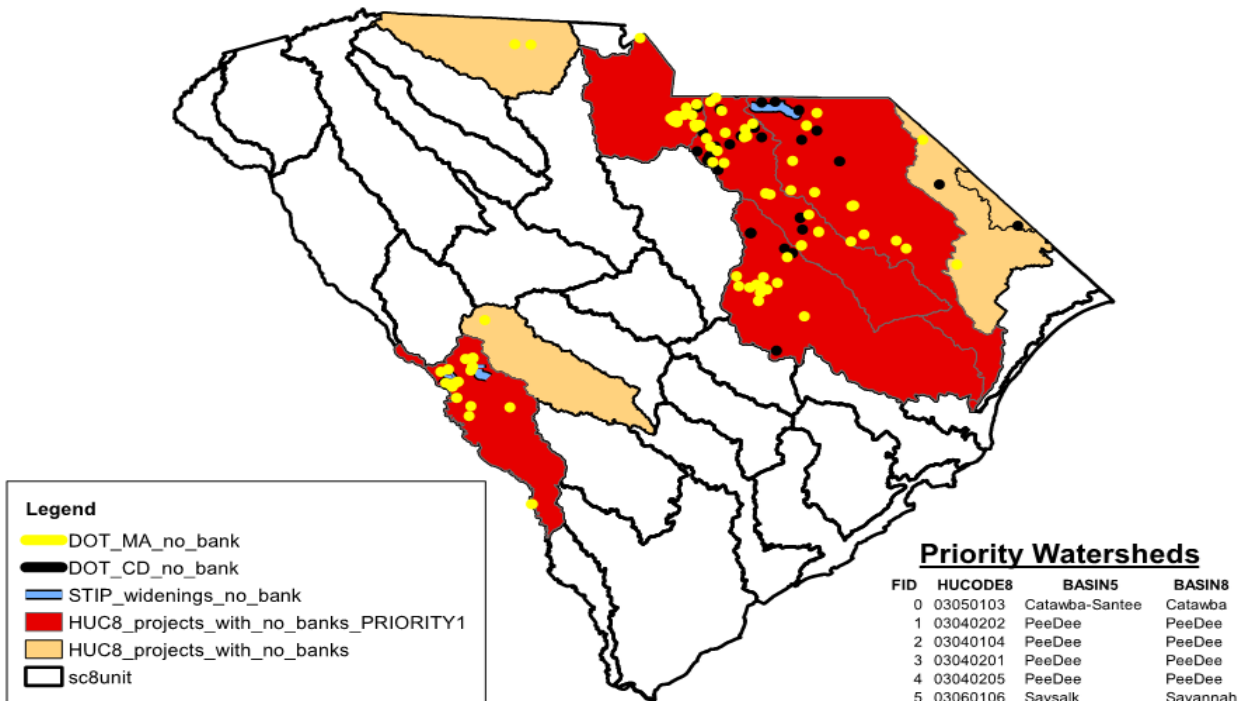
\* All data is per RIBITS website as of 7/1/16

\*\* Remaining credits for release is the baseline since not all ledgers are completely accurate on RIBITS.

By using the remaining credits to be released, one can determine the remaining life of the bank more accurately.

# Projects Lacking Bank Coverage

## Short Term Projects With No Mitigation Banks

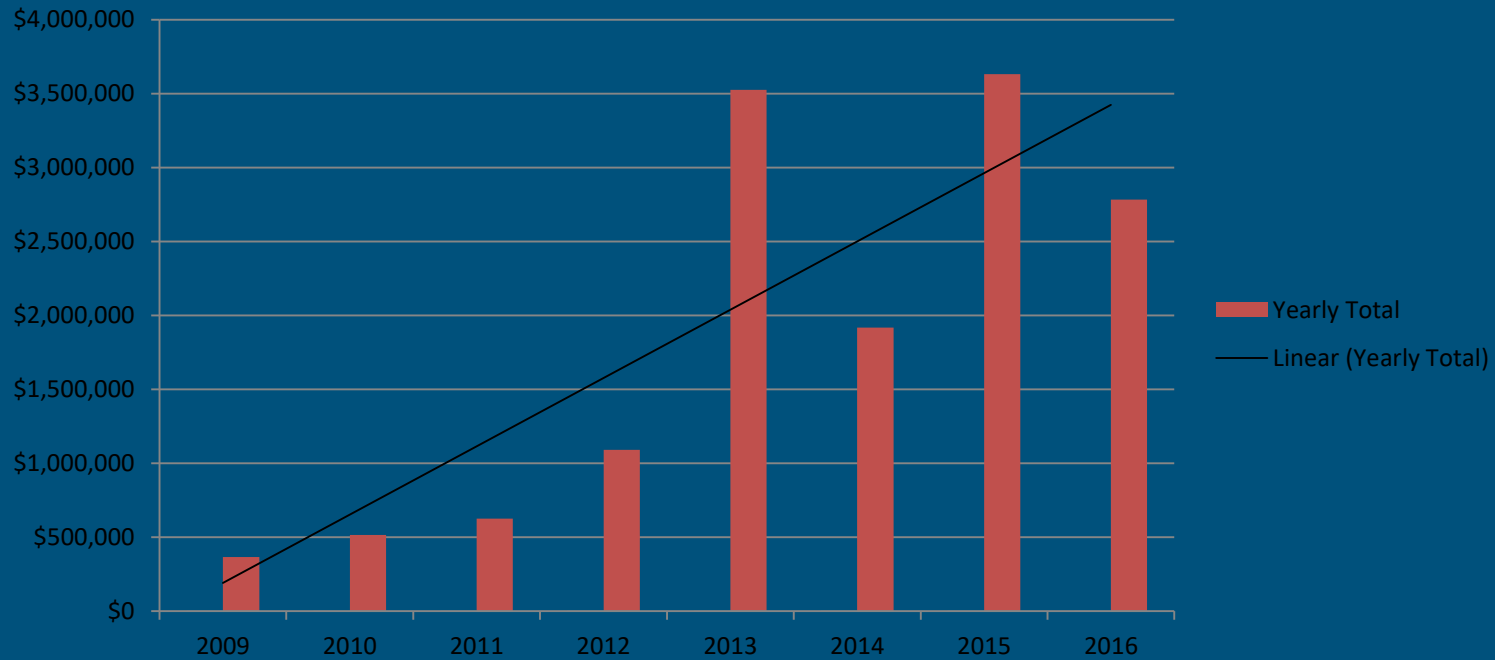


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By using the remaining credits to be released, one can determine the remaining life of the bank more accurately.

# Increasing Compensatory Mitigation Costs



# Implementing Eco-Logical Steps

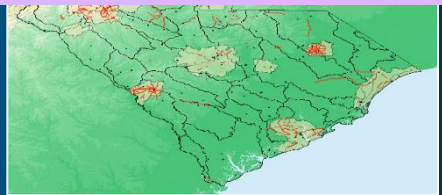
1. Build collaborative partnerships & vision
2. Characterize resource status
3. Create REF (USC Forecast Tool)
4. Assess effects on conservation
5. Identify & Prioritize actions
6. Develop crediting strategy (AMP)
7. Develop agreements
8. Implement agreements
9. Update REF over time





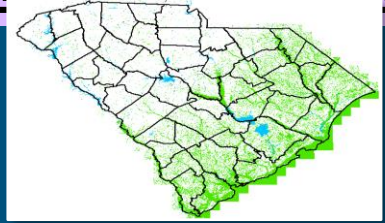
# REF STEP 3 –Forecast Impacts

Where are the future road projects?

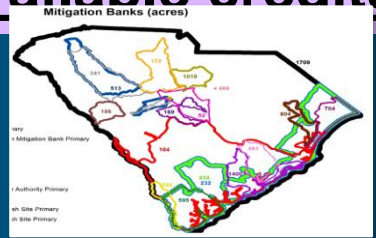


Where are the wetlands and streams?

NWI  
NHD  
&  
More



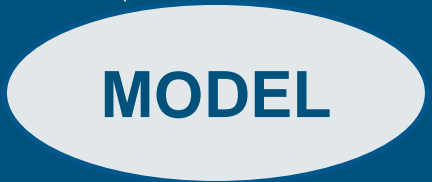
Where are the available credits?



Ok, specifically where will the surface/shoulders be?



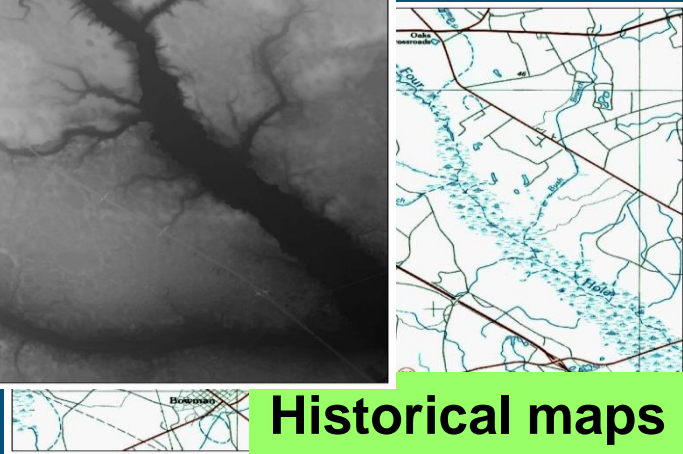
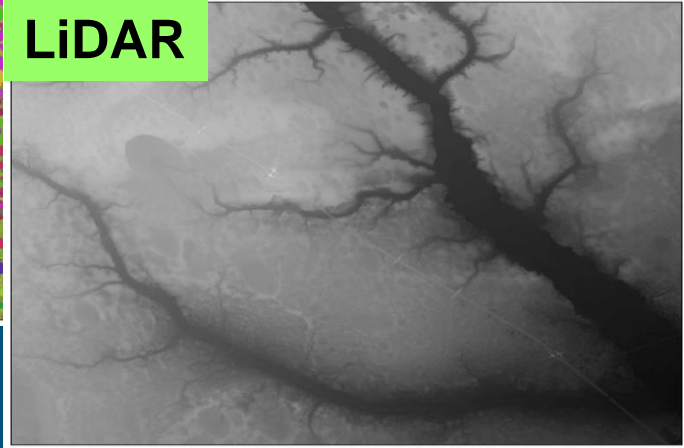
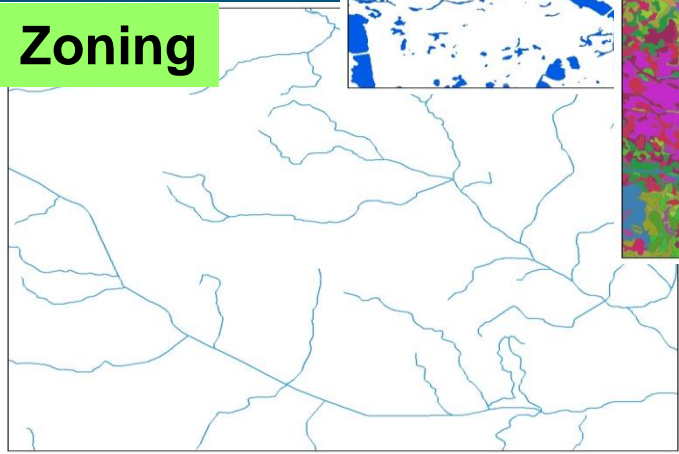
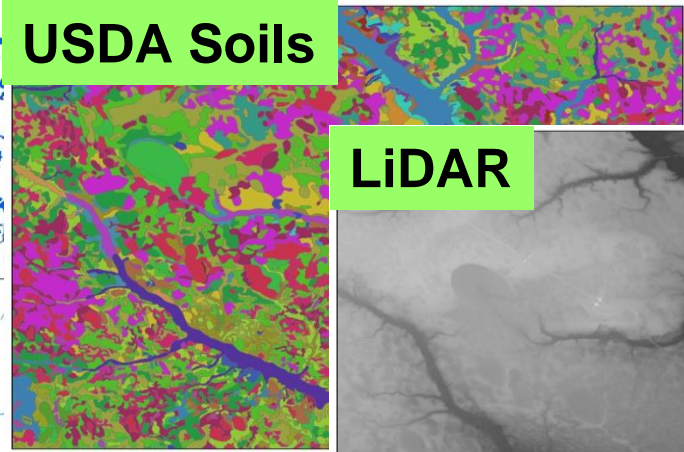
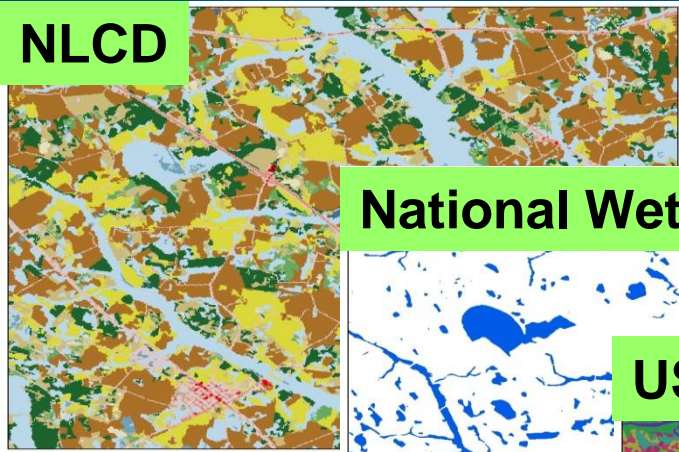
Where are the wetlands?



Impacts:  
Wetland acres  
Stream feet



# Database



# Data Sources

## Sample of data sources that will be utilized

South Carolina	Source
Grey Infrastructure	
Roads	SCDOT
Bridges	SCDOT
Culverts	SCDOT
Railroads	SCDOT
Dams	SCDHEC, American Rivers
Land Development	
Zoning	County Govs, COGs, MPOs
Land Cover	USGS
GAP	USGS
Parcels	County Govs
Existing Land use	aerial photography
Wildland Urban Interface	SCFC
Habitat Fragmentation	

Green Infrastructure	
Local Parks	County Govs
Publicly Owned Lands	
USGS PADUS	SCDNR
	SC Forestry Commission
	US Forestry
	USFW
	SCDOT
	State Parks
	National Parks
	Other State agencies
	Department of Correction
	Department of Energy
	Other Federal Agencies
	Ports Authority
	Army Corps of Engineers

Existing Conservation Easements	
National Conservation Easement Database	NRCS Easements
	SCDNR
	Land Trusts
	SC Conservation Bank
Nature Conservancy, DU, NWTF, Audubon, Norfolk RR	Other NGOs
Local Watershed Districts	DNR will look
Existing Mitigation Banks	USACOE - RIBITS
Service Areas	USACOE - RIBITS
	USACOE - RIBITS
Physical Location	USACOE - RIBITS
Threatened and Endangered Species	SCDNR, USFW
SWAP species	SCDNR
Trout streams	SCDNR, SCDHEC
EcoRegions	SCDNR, USGS
Critical Area	OCRM
Shellfish Harvesting	SCDHEC, SCDNR
Shellfish Bed locations	SCDHEC, SCDNR
Wetlands likelihood	USC

# Data Sources

Blue Infrastructure	
SCDHEC Watershed Atlas	SCDHEC
Streams	SCDHEC, SCDNR, USGS
Wetlands likelihood	USC
Rivers	USGS, SCDHEC, SCDNR
Scenic Rivers	SCDNR
Lakes	USGS, SCDHEC, SCDNR
Ponds	USGS, SCDHEC, SCDNR
Aquifers	

Ground Water	SCDHEC
Water Quality	SCDHEC 303(d) TMDL Stations
FEMA floodzones	FEMA
Watersheds	SCDHEC, SCDNR, USGS
All HUCs available	SCDHEC, USGS
River Basins	SCDHEC, USGS
DNR Stream Assessment tool??	SCDNR

Other	
Historical Aerials	USC Thomas cooper, counties
Census	
LiDAR	SCDNR
SCDNR Focus Areas	SCDNR
Farmland	NRCS
Forest Action Plan	SCFC

# Example: USC-SCDOT Public Access Site

www.wetmit.org

The screenshot displays the WetMit web application interface. The browser window title is "WetMit: Wetlands" and the address bar shows "wetmit.org/scwetland.html". The page content is organized into three main sections on the left side of the map:

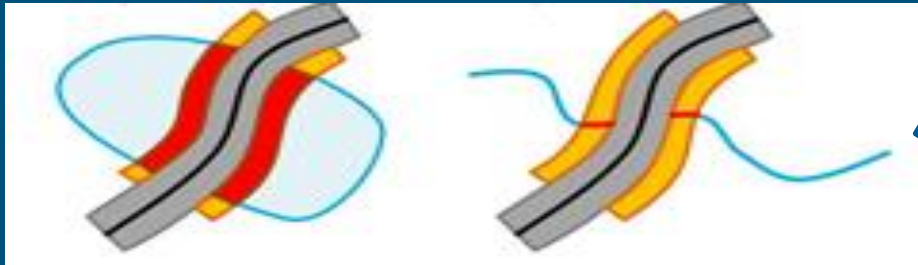
- 1. Query wetlands & flowlines**: Includes a dropdown menu for "Wetland (size in acres):" set to "Any" and a "Query" button.
- 2. Optional layers**: Includes a checkbox for "NLCD (View legend)" with radio buttons for "NLCD 2011" (selected), "NLCD 2006", and "NLCD 2001". It also has a "FEMA Layers:" dropdown menu set to "None selected/Clear".
- 3. Buffer analysis**: Includes radio buttons for "New Road" (selected) and "Widening Road", and two dropdown menus for buffer types: "Rural 2-Lane Arterial" and "Rural 4-Lane Divided Arterial".

The central map shows a geographic area with various features: roads (Savannah Hwy, Marginal Rd, Bolton Rd, etc.), water bodies (Long Branch, Stone River), and wetland areas (shaded in green and brown). A yellow and red buffer line is overlaid on the map, following the path of Savannah Hwy. The map includes standard navigation controls like a scale bar (200m) and a "Map/Satellite" toggle.



# Desktop Road Modification Tool

## Wetlands Impacts



## Stream Impacts



Widening Road (Batch)

Workspace  
C:\Users\yu79\_000\Desktop\result

Road centerline  
C:\Users\yu79\_000\Desktop\SCDOT\STIP\_Join.shp

Surface width  
SurfWidth

Shoulder, left  
ShWidLo

Shoulder, right  
ShWidRo

Surface width, new  
min

Shoulder, left, new  
zero\_sh

Shoulder, right, new  
zero\_sh

Wetlands/Streams  
C:\Users\yu79\_000\Desktop\SCDOT\SCHWL.shp

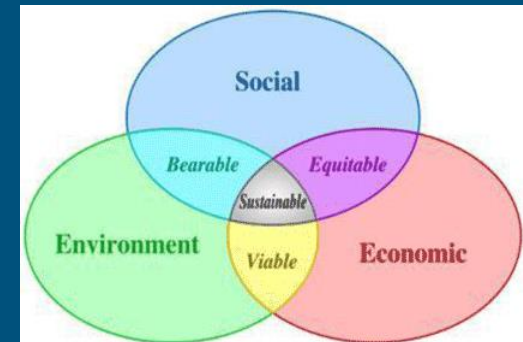
Output  
C:\Users\yu79\_000\Desktop\result\SCHWI impact.shp

OK Cancel Environments... Show Help >>

# It's NOT all about SCDOT

Together, partners can work to implement an ecosystem approach to infrastructure projects. In doing so, substantive contributions to species, watershed, and ecosystem health and recovery can be made that are sometimes missed when regulations are administered on a project-by-project basis.

( ECO-Logical April 2006)



# 2nd Phase- Advanced Mitigation Partnership

**Who:** SCDNR, SCDHEC, USACE, USFWS, SCDOT, NMFS, SCFC, SCDOT, FHWA, USEPA

**When:** AMP meets every other month

**What:** Evaluate USC Forecast Model, SCDOT critical watersheds, and Short term/ Long Term Improvements

**Why:**



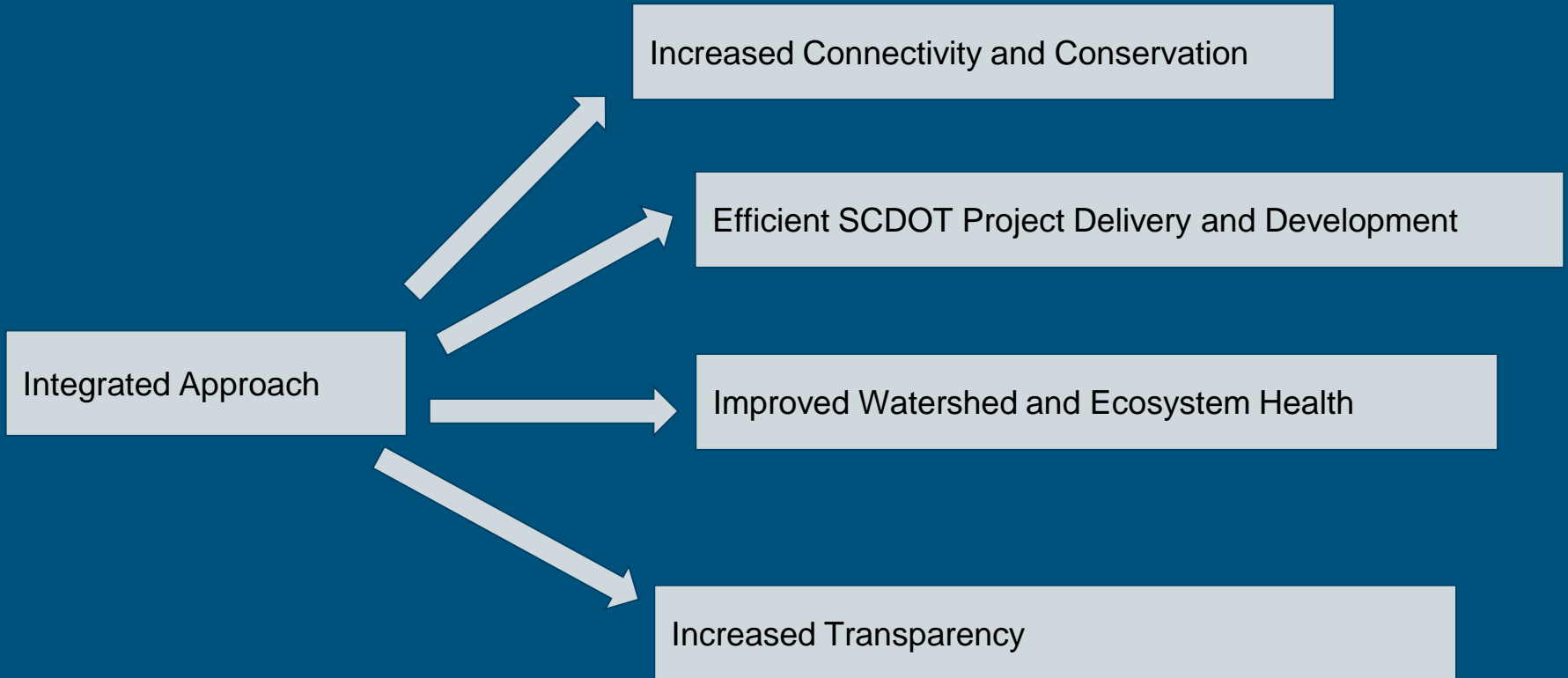


# SC Advanced Mitigation Partnership

1. Discuss Absolutes for Mitigation.
2. Evaluate and incorporate overlapping Agency Missions and develop AMP step by step (e.g. 303(d) list, Fish Passage).
3. Share data between each agency.
4. Evaluate watershed's needs and best way to protect and/or restore. (stream buffers, corridors, stormwater retrofit)



In other words...

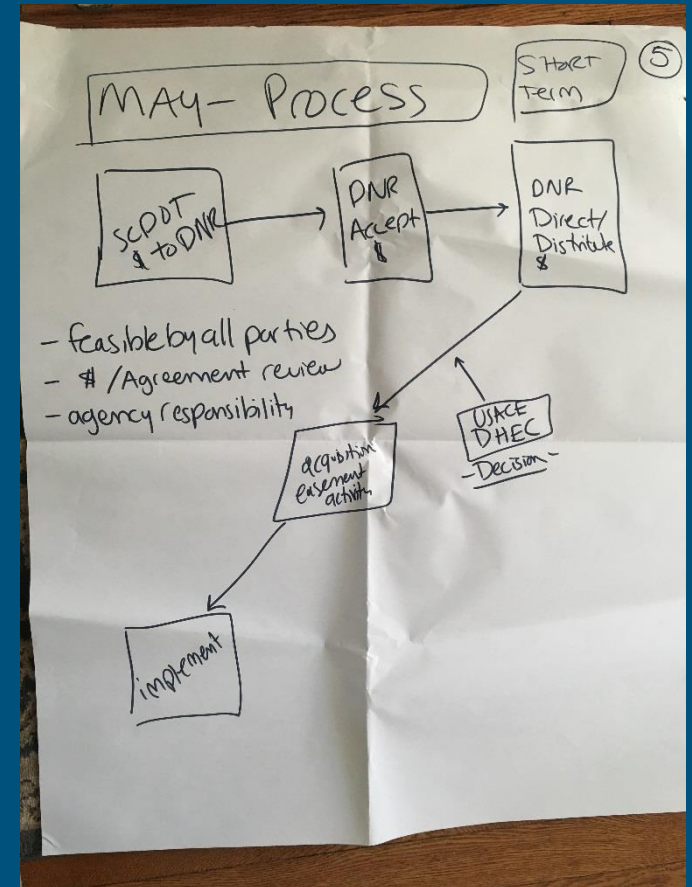


# Ultimate Goals

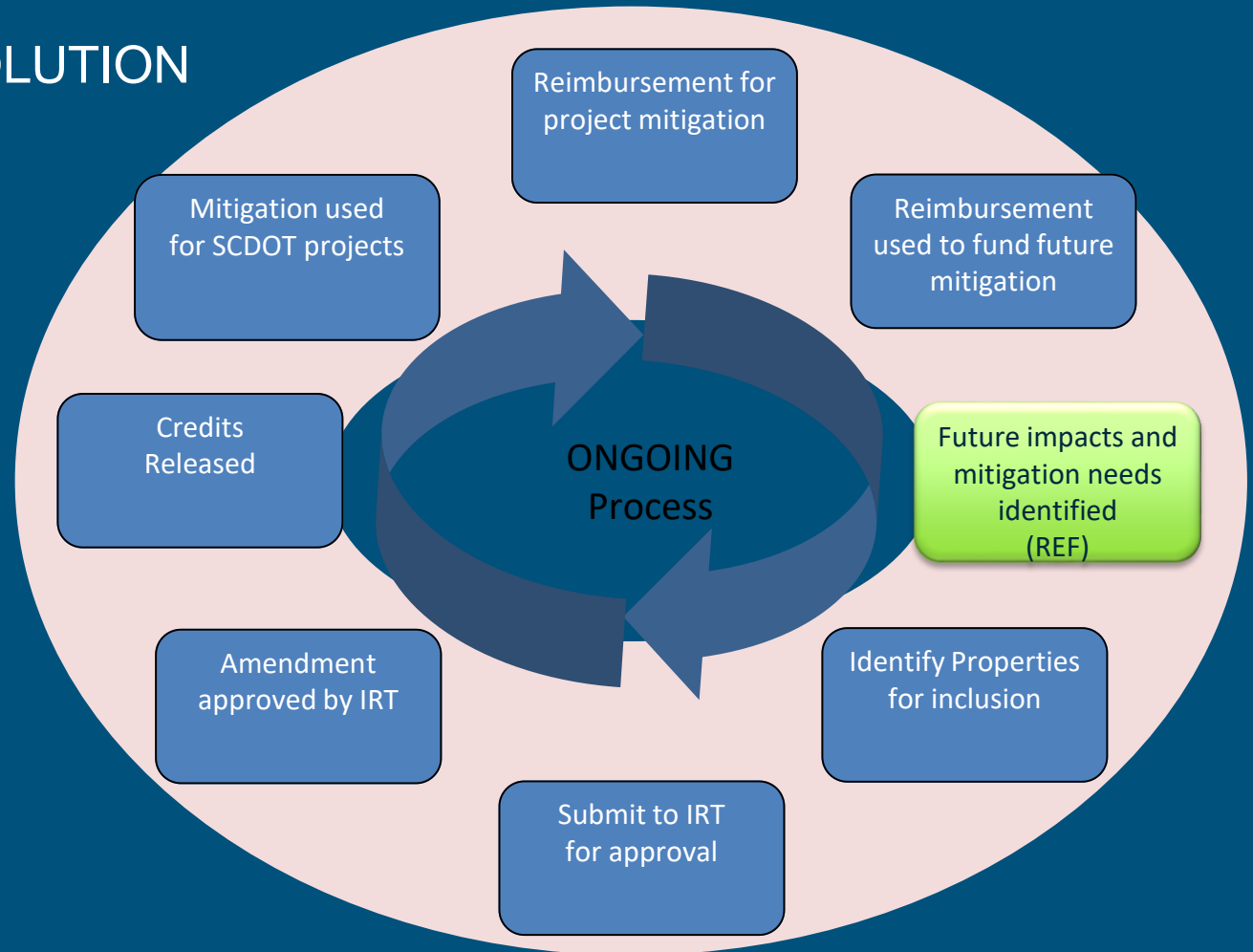


- Create a methodology that is based on South Carolina resource needs and is scientifically sound
- Continue collaboration and information sharing between state agencies and federal agencies
- Have a functioning web based tool that will identify enhancement/restoration and preservation opportunities for a variety of resources throughout the state of SC
  - This tool can be used for more than wetlands and stream mitigation site identification
- Create solutions that benefit the state of South Carolina
  - Good for resources, Good for agencies, Good for taxpayers and general public

# Solutions Begin with an Idea: JUST START



# A POTENTIAL SOLUTION (Long Term)



- AMP Generated Process

Sean Connolly  
SCDOT Permitting Division Manager  
[connollyms@scdot.org](mailto:connollyms@scdot.org)  
803-737-1398

Thank you!



# How to Approach Your Transportation Environmental Needs Eco-Logically

North Central Texas Council of Governments  
AASHTO Eco-Logical Community of Practice Webinar  
January 31, 2017

# Regional Perspective

## Population

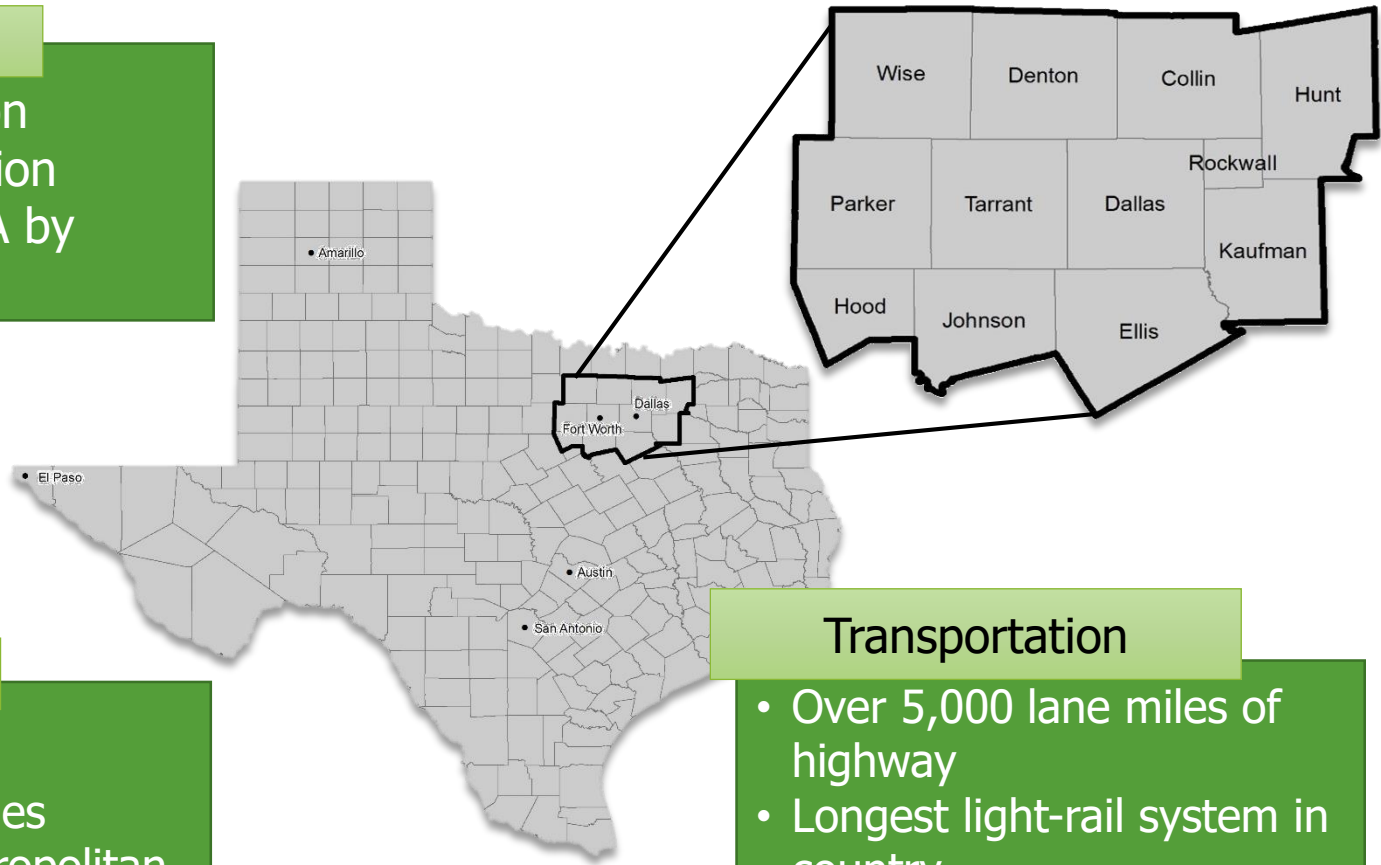
- 2017: 7.2 million
- 2040: 10.7 million
- 4<sup>th</sup> Largest MSA by Population

## Area

- 12 counties
- 9,441 square miles
- 2nd Largest Metropolitan Planning Area

## Transportation

- Over 5,000 lane miles of highway
- Longest light-rail system in country
- \$118.9 billion identified in Mobility 2040 plan





# NCTCOG Eco-Logical Efforts

2008, 2013 FHWA Eco-Logical Grants

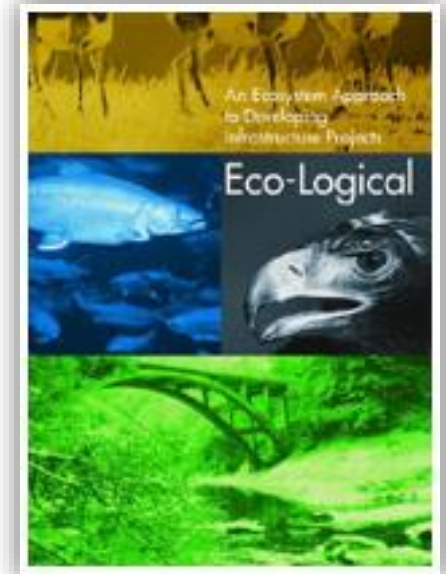
Regional Ecosystem Framework  
(REF)

Loop 9 Corridor Area Conservation Vision  
and Opportunities

REF Update

REF Website

Wetland and Stream  
Mitigation Assessment

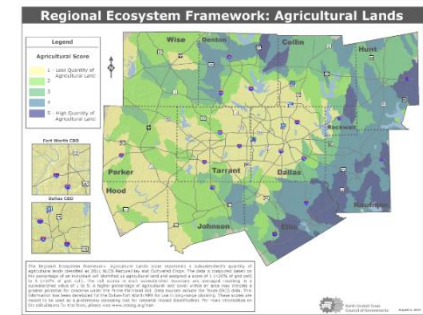
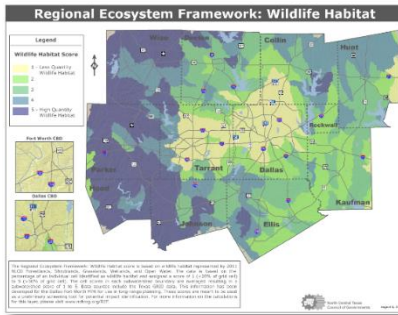
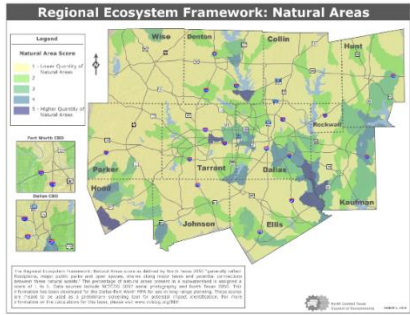


# Regional Ecosystem Framework (REF)

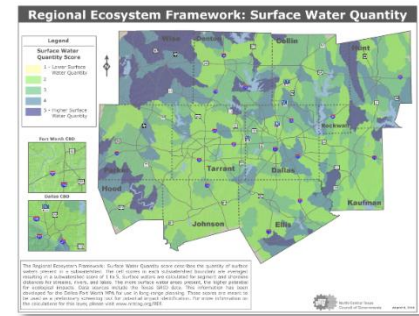
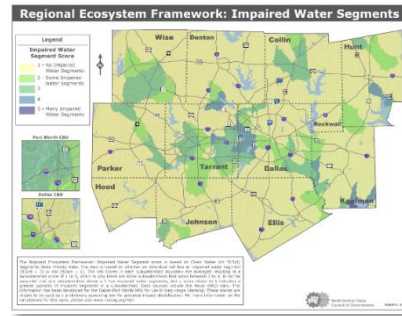
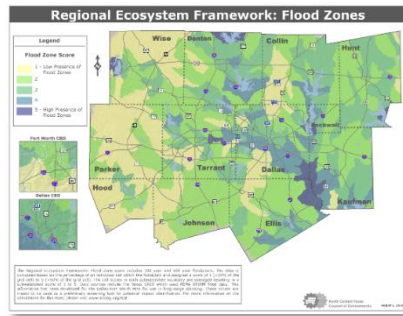
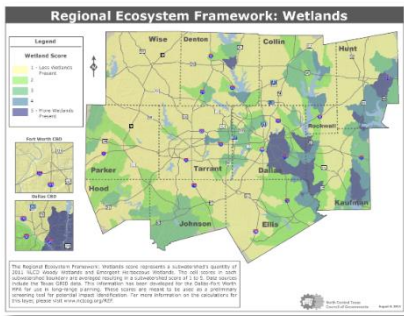
- Planning tool developed to identify natural/ecological/agricultural resources
- Developed with feedback from resource agency partners
- Data is aggregated to HUC12 level
- An early screening tool, not a mitigation tool

# REF Layers

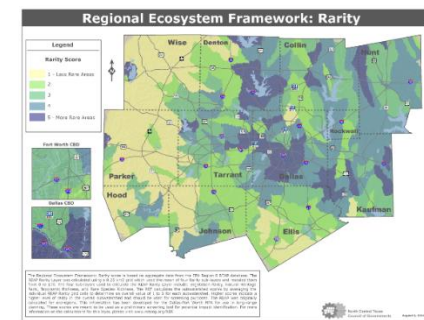
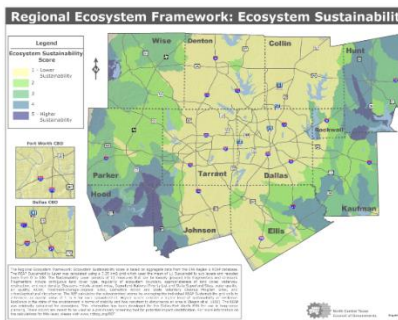
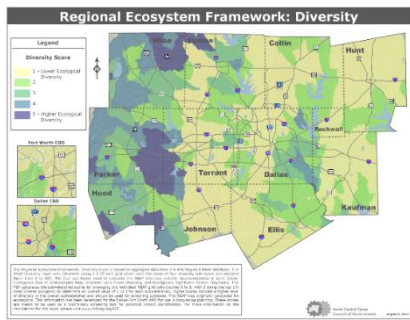
## Green Infrastructure Layers



## Water Considerations Layers



## Ecosystem Value Layers



# REF Data Sources

## **Green Infrastructure Layers**

National Land Cover Database (USGS/DOI)

Vision North Texas (NCTCOG)

## **Water Considerations Layers**

303(d) List (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality)

Flood Zones (FEMA)

National Hydrography Dataset (USGS)

National Land Cover Database (USGS/DOI)

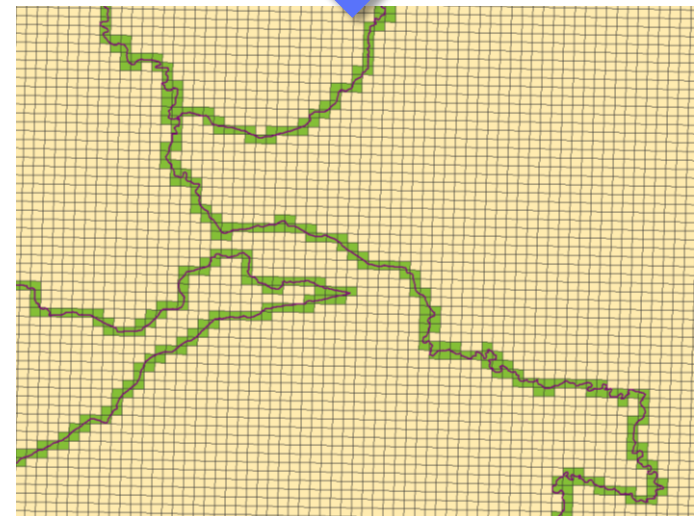
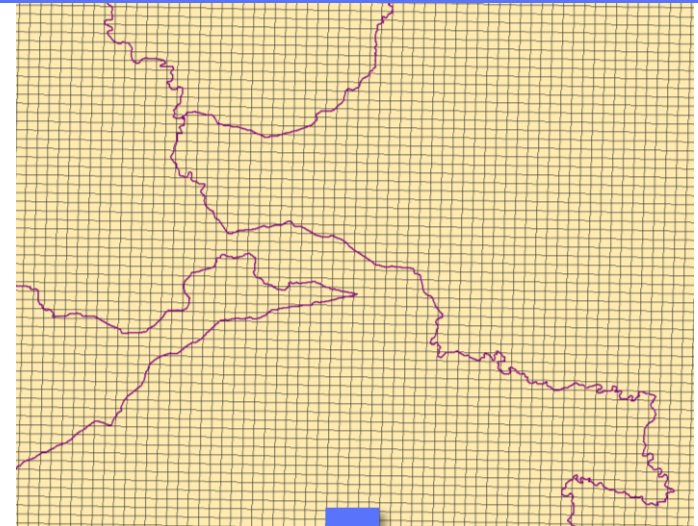
## **Ecosystem Value Layers**

Regional Ecological Assessment Protocol (EPA Region VI)

# Layer Scoring Example

## Impaired Water Segments

- Region is divided into 1/4km<sup>2</sup> grid
- Select by Location tool is used to target grid cells that contain an impaired water segment
- Grid cells are assigned a score based on presence of an impaired water segment:



Grid Cell Attributes	Score
No Impaired Water Segment Present	1
Impaired Water Segment Present	5

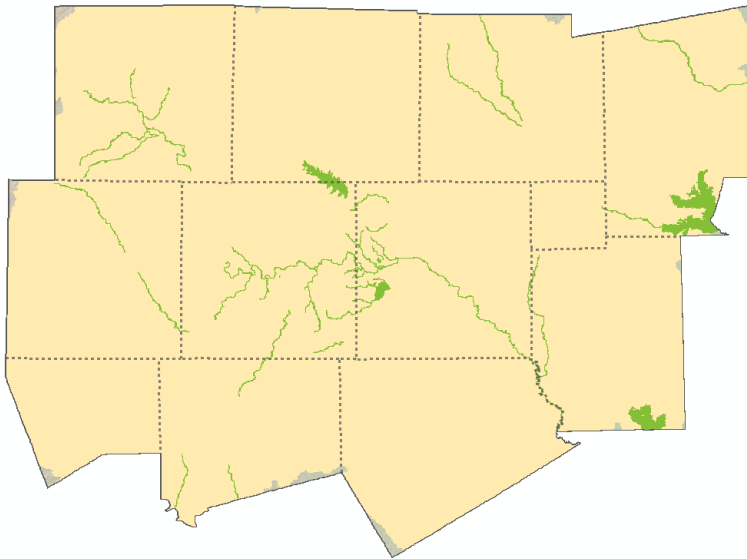


# Layer Scoring Example

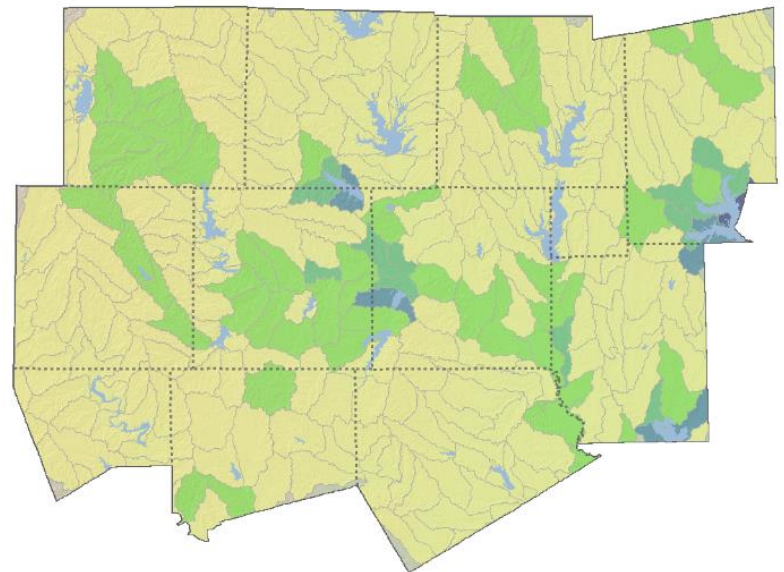
## Impaired Water Segments

Grid cell scores are aggregated to subwatershed level by using natural breaks to assign scores from 1 to 5

Grid-Level Scores



Subwatershed Scores



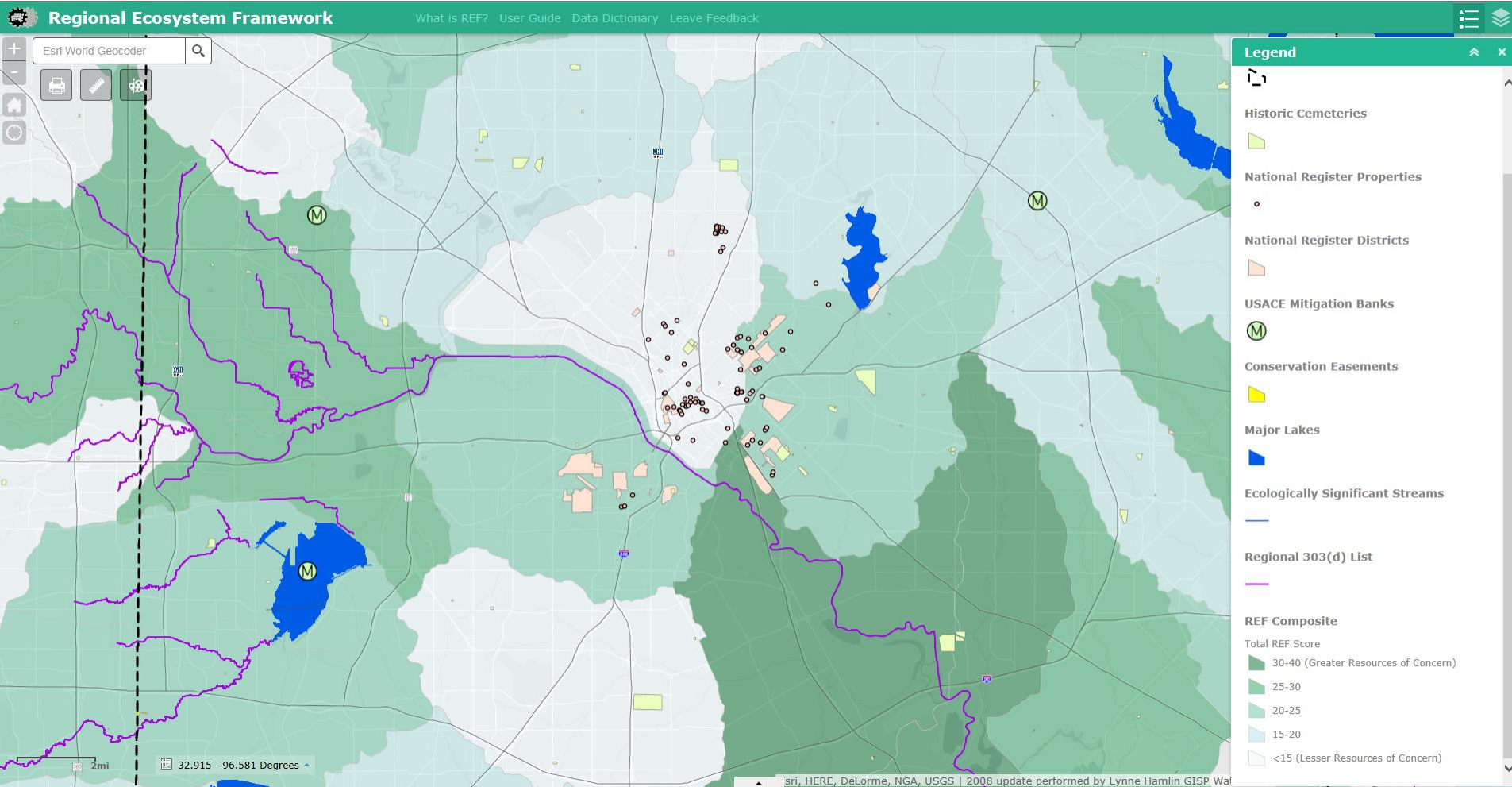


# Current Applications of REF

- In Mobility 2040:
  - Used in environmental scoring of roadway and transit projects
  - Identified HUC12 subwatersheds through which each project travels
- Included in publicly available [REF Website](#)
- Used as an overlay layer to enhance analysis of estimated mitigation credit demand in Wetland and Stream Mitigation Assessment
- Helped develop NCTCOG culture of sensitivity to ecosystem approach
  - Led to funding for Environmental Stewardship Program

# Sharing REF Data

## REF Interactive Mapping Website



# Future Applications of REF

## Mobility 2045 goals:

- Identify which environmental resources in each subwatershed may face the greatest impacts generated by roadway and transit projects; will help identify future mitigation needs
- Update environmental scoring method and include score in project-selection process for Mobility 2045

# Issues to Address

- Data updates
  - Diversity, Ecosystem Sustainability, and Rarity layers produced by EPA using grant funds – data dates to ~2001
  - Natural Areas layers come from NCTCOG vision plan
- Limited species data
- Cannot compare aggregated change over time
  - About half of layers were not updated in 2014
  - Counties for which data was available changed over time for one layer
  - Original scoring of this layer did not differentiate between no data and lowest score
- Aggregating data should be discussed
  - People like to see one final score, but a lot of information is lost

# Wetland and Stream Mitigation Assessment

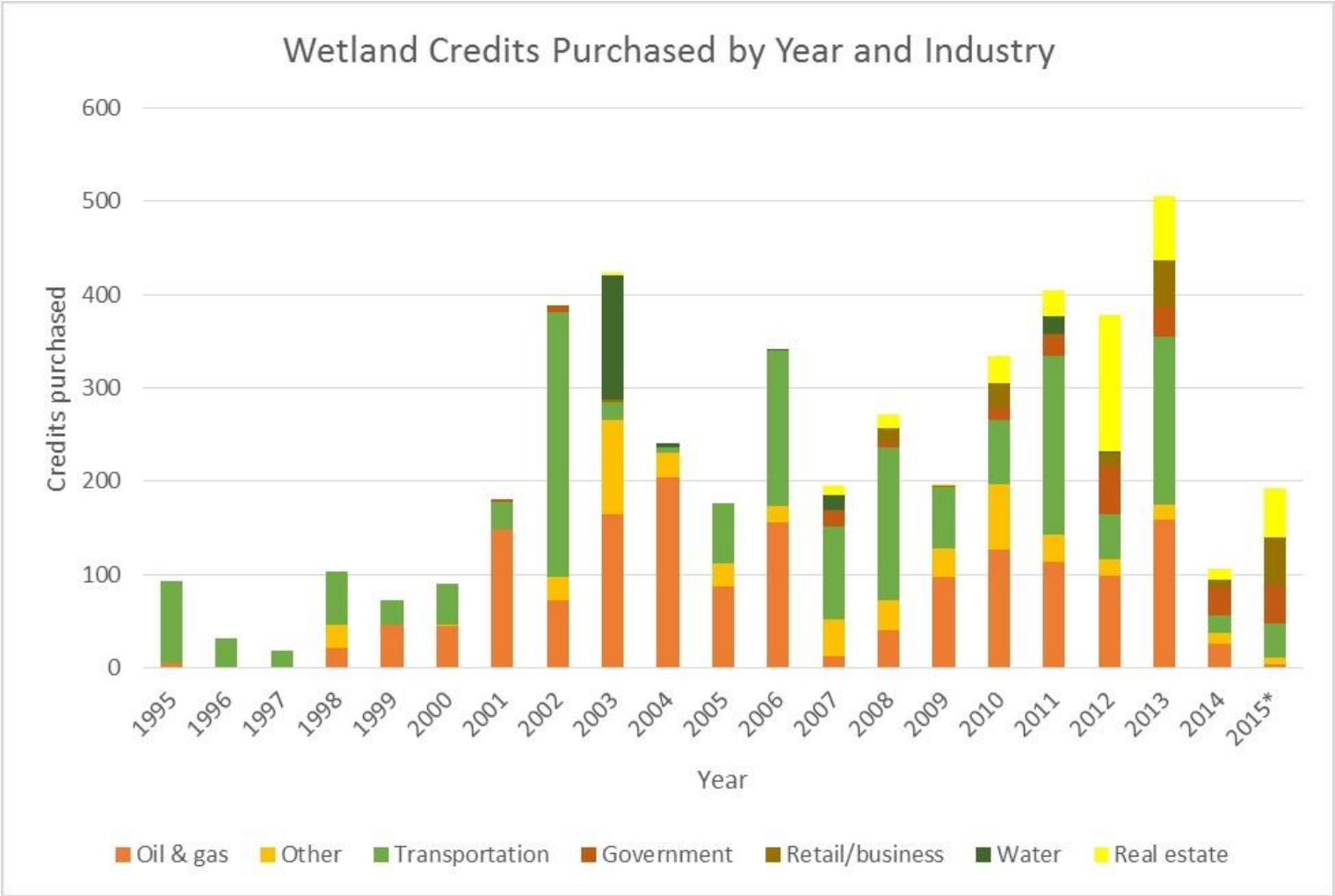
## Four Components of Project

- Quantifying supply and demand of Clean Water Act Section 404 wetland and stream mitigation credits
- Mapping available credits
- Estimating demand generated by roadway projects in Mobility 2040
- Identifying potential locations for mitigation banks that would meet demand and generate the greatest ecological benefit
  - Sought the expertise of resource and regulatory partners



# Wetland and Stream Mitigation Assessment

## Supply and Demand



\* Through November 2015



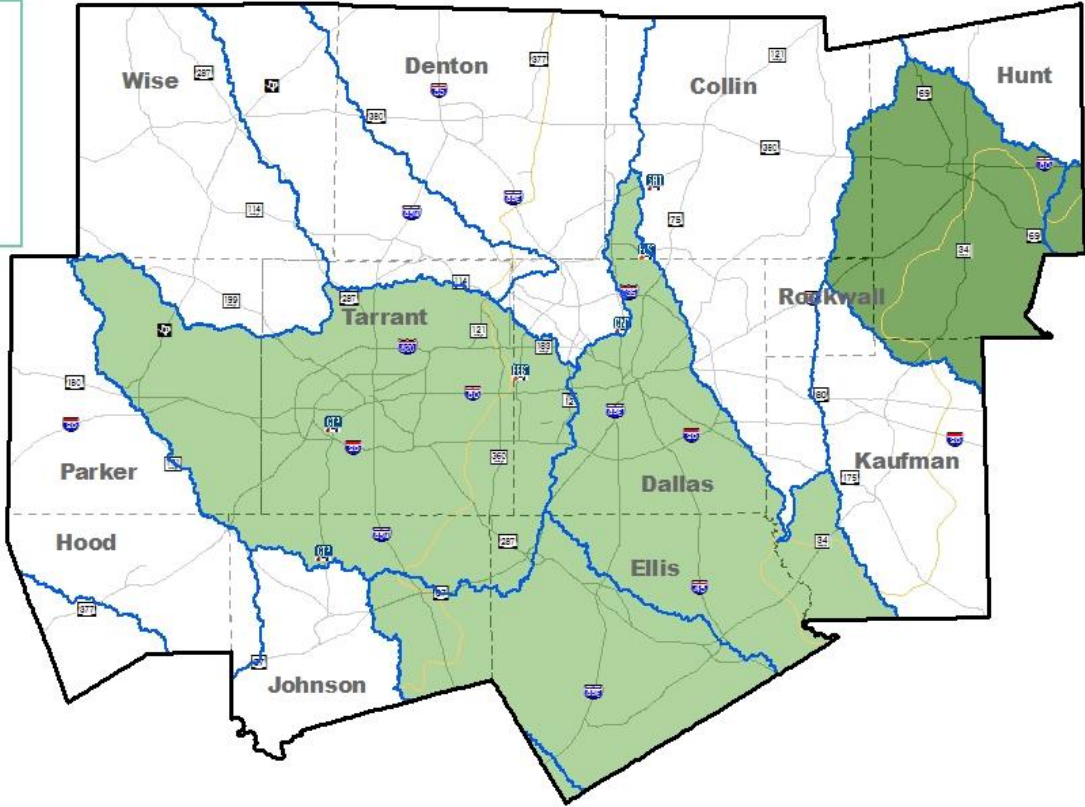
# Wetland and Stream Mitigation Assessment

## Mapping Available Credits

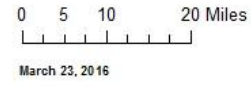
### Available Perennial In-Channel Credits

**Legend**

- HUC-8
- Ecoregions
- Zero credits
- 184 credits
- 2891 credits

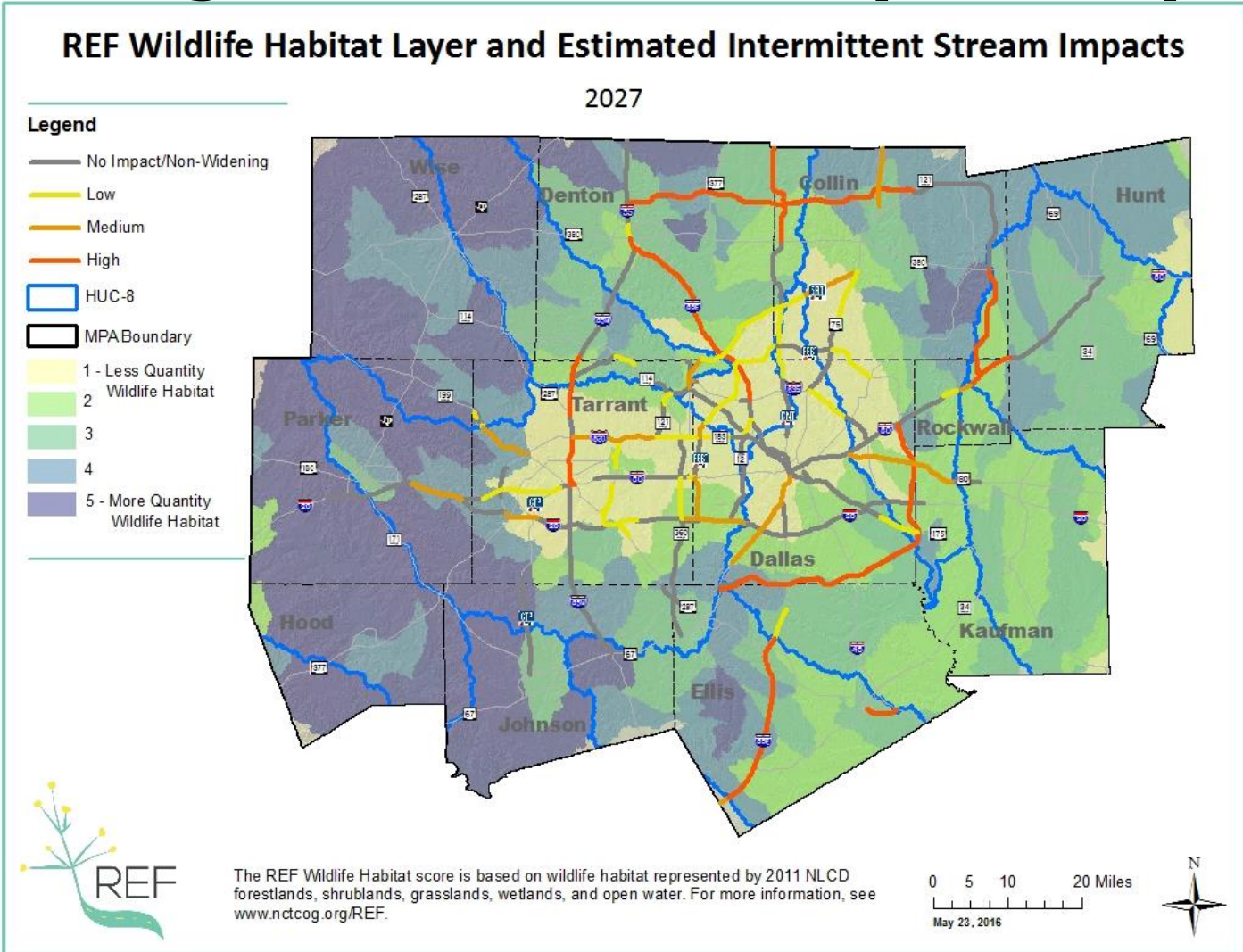


This map does not differentiate between primary, secondary, and tertiary service areas. "Available" stream credits are those that have been released but not yet withdrawn. The numbers on this map do not account for pre-sales of credits that have not been recorded in RIBITS. Credits have been rounded to whole numbers. Data were acquired from the RIBITS database and are current as of March 18, 2016.



# Wetland and Stream Mitigation Assessment

## Estimating Demand Created by Mobility 2040

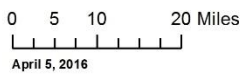
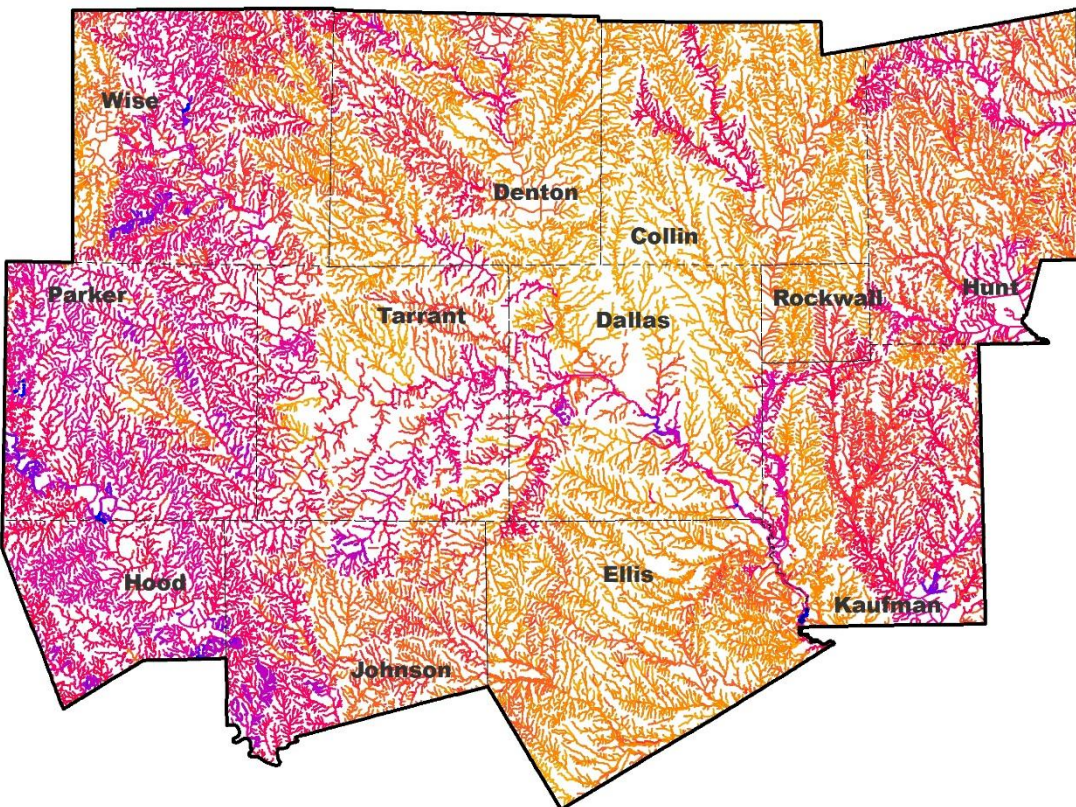
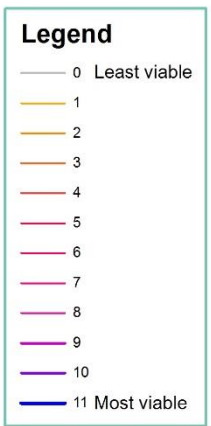




# Wetland and Stream Mitigation Assessment

## Identifying Potential Mitigation Sites

### Viability of Sites for Potential Stream Enhancement



# Results of Mitigation Assessment

- Identified supply-side issue with stream mitigation credits
- Led to mitigation emphasis for the private-sector education component of our Environmental Stewardship Program. We are in preliminary discussions with partners to:
  - Encourage builders and developers to avoid, minimize
  - Educate mitigation bankers about our need for stream credits
- Identified State Natural Resource Code that prevents NCTCOG from creating mitigation bank
- Hope to estimate credit demand with each metropolitan transportation plan

# Shortcomings of Mitigation Assessment

- Estimated demand is just that – estimated
  - Roadway widths are estimates; actual alignments not yet determined
  - Issues such as single and complete linear transportation projects and separate and distinct crossings of aquatic resources could not be addressed
  - No spatial data on ephemeral streams exists for our region, so no estimates could be made
  - Quality of aquatic resources could not be considered
- Supply is a moving target
- 20-year transportation planning horizon is much longer than mitigation bankers' planning horizon

# Contact Information

## Project Info

[www.nctcog.org/ref](http://www.nctcog.org/ref)

Includes links to reports, methodology, REF website

## Contact

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Transportation Planner

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# Highway 89 Stewardship Team

Success in Partnership

An Eco-Logical Approach to Planning & Efficient Project Delivery



# Who is the Highway 89 Stewardship Team?

*The Highway-89 Stewardship Team is a diverse group dedicated to reducing animal-vehicle collisions & preserving wildlife movement corridors through education, research & direct mitigation.*

- [Sierra County Fish and Wildlife Commission,](#)
- [Sierra County,](#)
- [USDA Forest Service: Tahoe National Forest & Pacific Southwest Research Station,](#)
- [California Department of Fish and Game,](#)
- [California Department of Transportation \(Caltrans\)](#)
- [University of California Cooperative Extension,](#)
- [UC Berkeley-Sagehen Creek Field Station,](#)
- [California Deer Association,](#)
- [University of California, Davis.](#)







# Sierra County, California



## What does this presentation offer?

- The Eco-logical approach does not have to be large or expensive
- How to get started
- What makes a small effort successful
- A little planning can lead to large accomplishments
- How to have a lasting effect



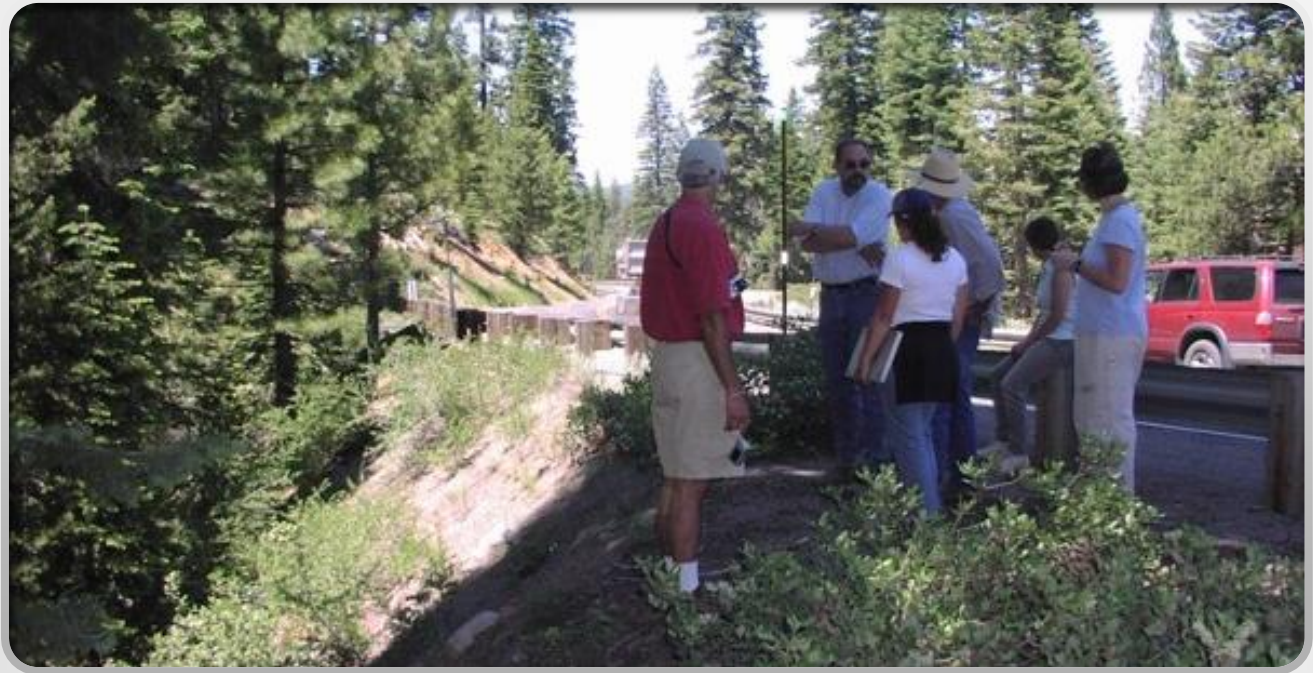


# The Highway 89 Stewardship Team began with a meeting.....

How to make the first meeting a success:

- Bring together potential partners
- Recognize the problem and identify the goals
- Identify what each agency can achieve through the partnership
- Start discussing goals for the corridor





Next: Bring together what you already know

*Roll out a map or go out in the field*



# Identify initial opportunities to fill in the data gaps

Caltrans

- Continue collecting roadkill data
- Investigate and map Traffic accident data
- Evaluate planning documents
- Research funding opportunities

USFS

- Provide Habitat mapping
- Review Forest Plan for goals and priorities
- Meeting facilitation

CDFW

- Wildlife Numbers
- Critical Habitats
- Deer Collaring

Sierra County Fish and Wildlife Commission

- Money for Cameras
- Public Support

UC Davis

- Education Connection
- Leadership and research

UC Berkeley

- Research opportunities and connections
- Education facility
- Funding opportunities

Sierra County

- Transportation priority
- Education grants
- Local Support

California Deer Association

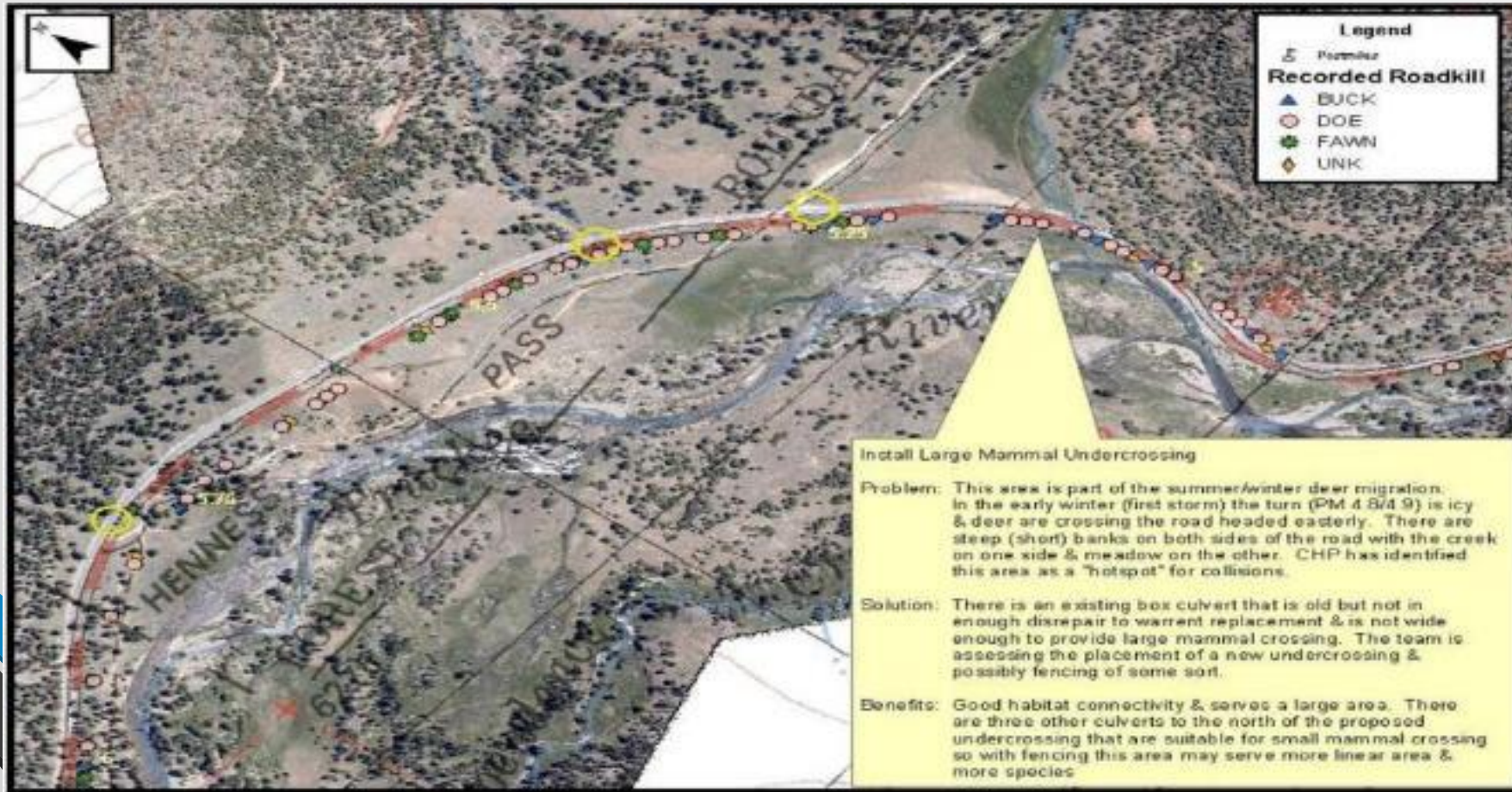
- Grant money for cameras
- Public interest
- Grant money for wildlife collaring

# How to tackle a corridor:

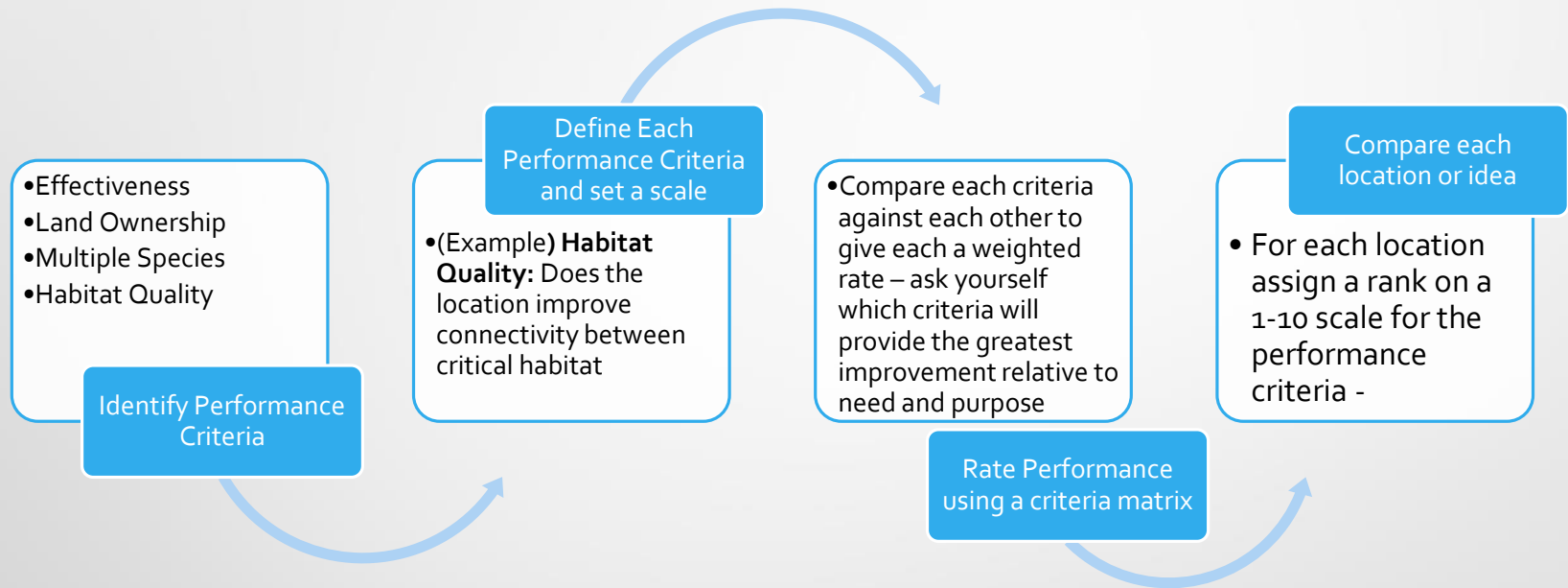
In a just a few meetings:

- We broke the corridor down into segments
- We prioritized the segments by roadkill/accident data, area to be affected by increased pressure (traffic, development), areas where other habitat plans contributed to the landscape
- Within our priority segment we evaluated all the locations for habitat connectivity and collision reduction
- We considered new structures and retrofit opportunities

# Map data, identify potential mitigation locations, discuss priority criteria



# Conduct an initial evaluation of the information you have



For our initial evaluation we re-purposed various tools from the value analysis process to prioritize our locations and then evaluated potential solutions at each location.

											<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>Feasibility</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Aesthetics</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>K</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Maintainability</b>		<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>K</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Environmental Impacts</b>			<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>K</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Cost Effectiveness</b>				<b>E</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>K</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Land Ownership</b>					<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>K</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Urgency</b>						<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>G</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Habitat Quality</b>							<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>H</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Multiple Species</b>								<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>I</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Safety</b>									<b>J</b>	<b>J</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Human Disturbance</b>										<b>K</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>









## And then came a project...

- As the team developed and shared their findings, Sierra County and Caltrans decided to invest in a project
- With the limited available data the team was called upon to make a recommendation on the location
- Just by meeting a few times, prioritizing segments, identifying potential locations and supporting the project it is estimated that the Stewardship Team saved the environmental approval phase 6-9 months



# How to maintain momentum

- Share your success
- Re-evaluate the team objectives, location criteria, new data
- Re-evaluate partner priorities
- Continue evaluating the corridor and searching for funding



# Share your Success



The team applied for an Eco-logical grant to share and evaluate the framework of the Stewardship success and work on the longoterm strategy for Sierra 89. We mentored a team in Northeastern California and the Southern Sierra Nevada in and around Yosemite National Park.



*Innovative Approaches to  
Wildlife and Highway Interactions –  
UC Berkeley Sagehen Creek Field Station*

# Modoc 139 (Northern Team)



The problem



The Planning



# What are the Unique Challenges of the Modoc 139



Highway 139 bisects critical winter range for California Mule Deer, Elk and Pronghorn Antelope that migrate from southern Oregon and Northeastern California. There is a mixture of public and private land with extensive agricultural areas. There is a national wildlife refuge and Lava Beds National monument to the west and a parallel railroad.

- The solution will require substantial partnership with private landowners
- The critical habitat needs should be evaluated
- The public land management agencies need to evaluate if there is vegetation management they can complete to reduce the need for wildlife to move across the highway in severe storm events
- The team needs to study and understand the habitat connectivity needs



# State Route 41 in the Sierra National Forest accessing Yosemite National Park (Southern)





# The Unique Challenges of the State Route 41 Team

- The mammals being impacted are small so there is no collision data (Pacific Fisher); there is also a Great Grey Owl road mortality concern
- The highway goes through a typical public and private checkerboard of ownership
- The public property is primarily the Sierra National Forest until you get into the Park
- There is a lack of data sharing
- There is substantial key partner turnover
- The National Park is limited to what they can do



# What we are learning...



## **Great Grey Owl road mortality ideas:**

- Vegetation trimming
- Public education

## **Pacific Fisher:**

- Share data with Caltrans
- Prioritize Crossing locations
- Determine mitigation measures (fencing, more culverts, more/less cover)



# How do we continue Eco-logical?



- Long term research strategy using the new paired undercrossings
- Begin evaluation and priority of the next segment
- Expand the success to more corridors throughout the state
- Create regional data and information sharing



We estimate that for the second project of 2 undercrossings, the eco-logical approach saved the project 9-12 months in planning

- Continue to work with the new teams
- Share and plan for the mitigation opportunities
- Expand the success to more corridors throughout the state
- Create regional data and information sharing



# How to Apply Eco-logical?

- Recognize that a lot can be done with limited resources
- Take a leadership role and pull together a meeting – start the dialogue
- Find out what your partners are looking for, issues they have and common ground
- Evaluate your system, the available plans and upcoming opportunities
- Meetings can occur as little as quarterly and be very effective
- Share what the team is learning (with everyone)





# Questions?



# Contact Information

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404-562-3618

# Questions?

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Please remember to type in  
your questions to the question  
prompt.

Thank you for participating!