Connect SoCal Adoption & PEIR Mitigation Measures

Natural and Farm Lands Conservation Working Group

India Brookover

Sustainability Department

October 15, 2020

www.scag.ca.gov

INNOVATING FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Recap of May 7, 2020 Actions

- SCAG Regional Council certifies final PEIR
- Connect SoCal was approved with the following expectations:
  - Consider the short and long-term impacts of COVID-19;
  - Work with local jurisdictions to make refinements to the Plan's Growth Forecast in relation to entitlements;
  - Identify and quantify all differences within the SCS and locally approved General Plans

Recap of September 3rd actions

- SCAG Regional Council formally adopts Connect SoCal
- Connect SoCal PEIR Addendum approved
  - In compliance with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
  - Technical refinements resulted in minimal impacts to Plan performance; still achieve federal air quality conformity and meet the State's greenhouse gas reduction targets
  - Includes clarifications and modification to some measures from stakeholder input received after the original PEIR commenting period.

Connect SoCal PEIR as a Tiering Document

- PEIR is **a region-wide program-level assessment** of potential environmental impacts of implementing projects, programs, and policies of the RTP/SCS.
- PEIR provides a **first tier analysis and foundation** for project- or site-specific environmental reviews that will be conducted by implementing agencies.
- **Project-level mitigation measures** can be used when tiering off the Connect SoCal PEIR

Connect SoCal PEIR Scope of Environmental Effects

20 Environmental Factors

- Aesthetics
- **Agriculture and Forestry**
- Air Quality
- **Biological Resources**
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gases
- Hazards & Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Parks and Recreation
- Transportation, Traffic and Safety
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire

Agriculture and Forestry

SCAG Mitigation Measure Updates

SMM AG-1: SCAG shall host a Natural & Farmlands Conservation Working Group which will provide a forum for stakeholders to share best practices and develop recommendations for natural and agricultural land conservation throughout the region, including the development and implementation of Connect SoCal's Natural and Farm Lands Conservation Strategies.

Agriculture and Forestry

SMM AG-2: SCAG shall develop a Regional Greenprint . . . to identify priority conservation areas and work with CTCs to develop advanced mitigation programs or include them in future transportation measures by

- funding pilot programs that encourage advance mitigation including data and replicable processes
- participating in state-level efforts that would support regional advanced mitigation planning in the SCAG region
- supporting the inclusion of advance mitigation programs at county level transportation measures.

Agriculture and Forestry

SMM AG-3: . . . Align with funding opportunities [such as Greenhouse Gas Reduction Funds] and pilot programs to begin implementation of conservation strategies through:

- seeking planning and implementation funds . . .that could advance local action on acquisition and restoration projects
- supporting CTCs and other partners
- continuing policy alignment with the State Wildlife Action Plan 2015 Update and its implementation.

Agriculture and Forestry

SMM AG-4: Provide incentives to jurisdictions that cooperate across county lines to protect and restore natural habitat corridors, especially where corridors cross county boundaries

Work with stakeholders to identify incentives and leverage resources that help protect habitat corridors.

Biological Resources

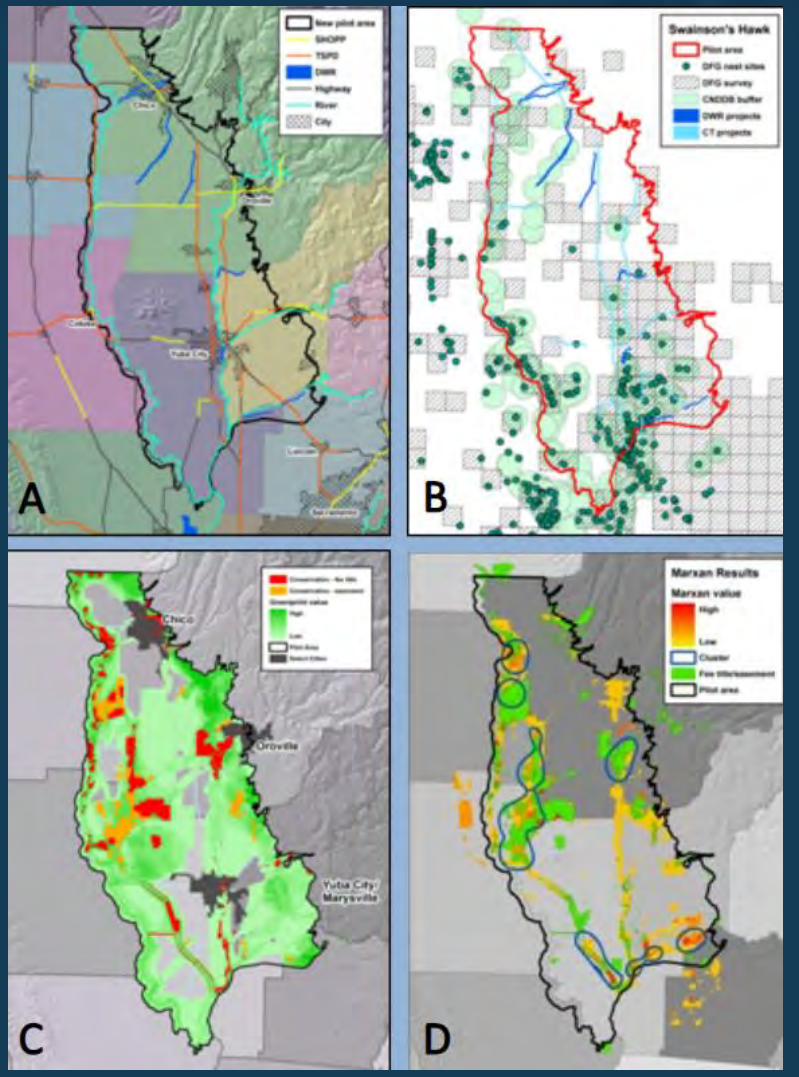
SMM BIO-1: . . .Facilitate reducing future impacts to species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species and its habitats through cooperation, information sharing, and program development.

. . .Vet and distribute environmental data (i.e., endangered species and important habitat areas) to local jurisdictions.

Biological Resources

SMM BIO-2: SCAG [shall] collaborate with stakeholders to establish a new Regional Advance Mitigation Program (RAMP) initiative to preserve habitat.

RAMP would establish and/or supplement regional conservation and mitigation banks and/or other approaches to offset the impacts of transportation and other development projects.



Biological Resources

- SMM BIO-2 CONTINUED:

. . . Develop new regional tools . . . to help prioritize lands for conservation based on best available scientific data.

- . . . Produce a whitepaper on the RAMP initiative, which includes approaches, needed science and analysis, models, challenges and opportunities and recommendations.

Biological Resources

SMM BIO-3: SCAG shall coordinate with Caltrans and ~~encourage~~ facilitate research, programs and policies to identify, protect and restore natural habitat corridors, especially where corridors cross county boundaries.

Biological Resources

SMM BIO-3 CONTINUED

SCAG shall disseminate key information related to the preservation and implementation of wildlife corridors and crossings by showcasing best practices at SCAG's Natural Lands Working Group.

SCAG shall also distribute wildlife corridors and crossings data to local jurisdictions, so they may incorporate said data into their general plans, as applicable.

Project Level Mitigation Measures

- As in previous years, SCAG identified actions project sponsors "can and should" take to reduce project impacts.

- Project sponsors may use SCAG's mitigation measures or comparable measures for streamlining

Project Level Mitigation Measures

PMM BIO-1: Where avoidance is determined to be infeasible, provide conservation measures . . . to protect the survival and recovery of federally and state listed endangered and local special status species . . .

Project design should address the protection of habitat on both sides of a freeway to improve effectiveness of the crossings.

Project sponsors shall consider the impacts of nitrogen deposition on sensitive species.

Project Level Mitigation Measures:

PMM BIO-2: . . . A Lead Agency . . . can and should consider mitigation measures to reduce substantial adverse effects related to riparian habitats . . .

g. Require project design to avoid sensitive natural communities and riparian habitats, ...Require upland buffers that sufficiently minimize impacts to riparian corridors.

Biological Resources

PMM BIO-4: . . . to reduce substantial adverse effects related to wildlife movement:

r. Implement berms and sound/sight barriers at all wildlife crossings . . . Sound and lighting should also be minimized in developed areas, particularly those that are adjacent to or go through natural habitats.

s. Reduce lighting impacts on sensitive species through implementation of mitigation measures

Biological Resources

BIO-4 CONTINUED

- t. Reduce noise impacts to sensitive species through implementation of mitigation measures.
- u. Require large buffers between sensitive uses and freeways.
- v. Create corridor redundancy to help retain functional connectivity and resilience.

Questions?

To learn more about Connect SoCal and the PEIR, please visit:
http://connectsocal.org

www.scag.ca.gov

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SoCal Greenprint

Update to the SCAG Natural and Working Lands Group

Elizabeth Hiroyasu, Science Lead
The Nature Conservancy
October 15, 2020

in collaboration with

www.scag.ca.gov

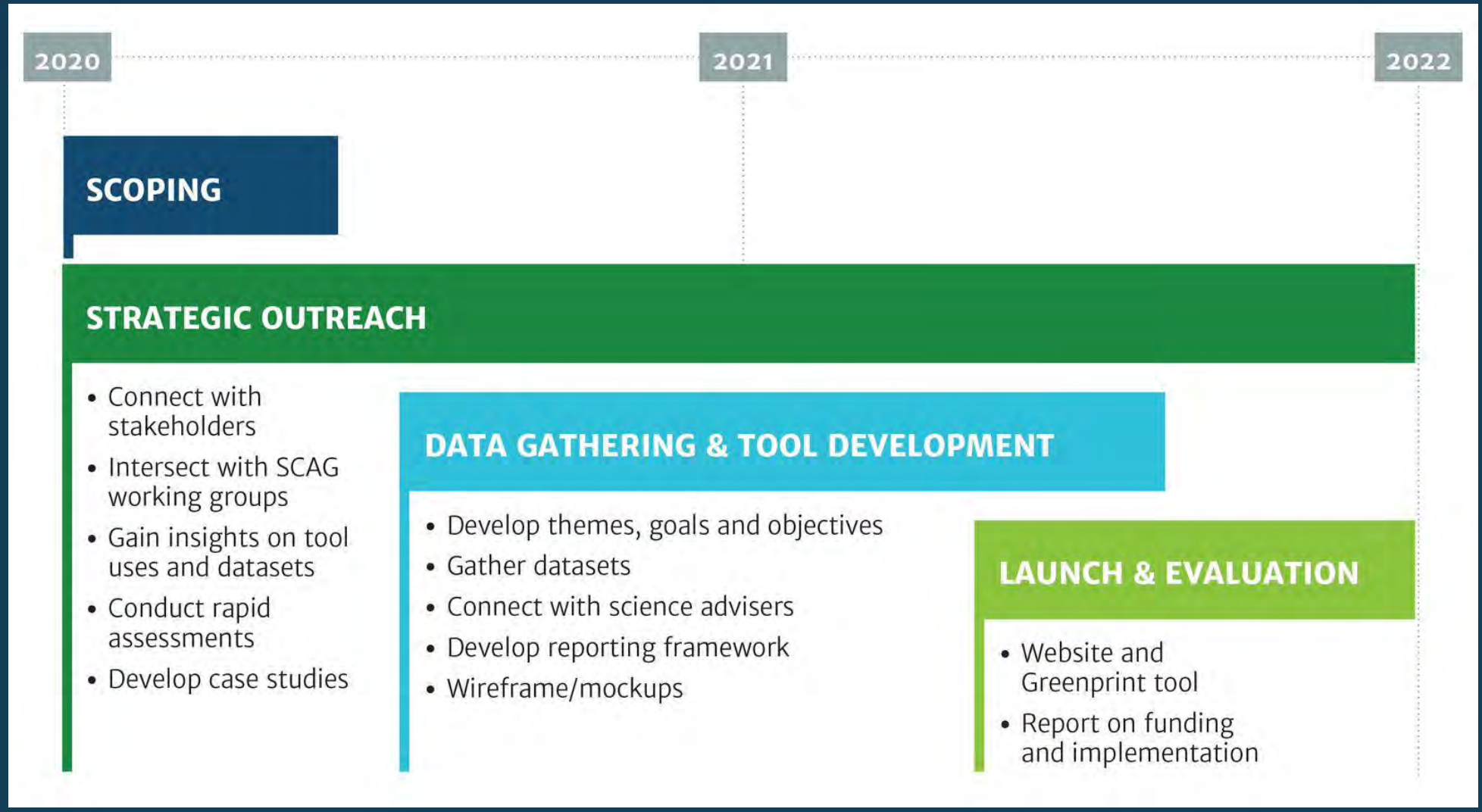
Goal of the SoCal Greenprint

To protect, restore, and enhance natural lands, public greenspace, working lands, and water resources and the benefits they provide to people and nature throughout the SCAG region.

The Greenprint provides relevant data and analyses to help prioritize and conserve our valued natural assets and working lands, ensure access to urban green spaces for all, and guide development to avoid conflicts with nature.

The Greenprint will support stakeholders in integrating public open space, natural and working lands resources into land use, conservation, and infrastructure plans and projects.

Project Timeline



Project Update

Key Users of the Greenprint:

Infrastructure agencies

Conservation practitioners

Community-based organizations

Developers

Planners - town, city, county, tribal

Steering Committee

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The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

UCLA Institute of the Environment & Sustainability

East Yard Communities For Environmental Justice

NALC

Tataviam Land Conservancy
HERITAGE • PRESERVATION • EDUCATION

Friends of Harbors, Beaches and Parks

Audubon California

NATURE FOR ALL
PROTECT • CREATE • CONNECT

Stakeholder Newsletter

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VIEW IN BROWSER | FORWARD TO A FRIEND

Development of the SoCal Greenprint is underway! In this update, we're sharing the progress we've made including an overview and key themes of the SoCal Greenprint, an update on Connect SoCal and a highlight on steering committee member Frank Ruiz.

What is the SoCal Greenprint?

The SoCal Greenprint will be an innovative online regional mapping tool that will highlight the benefits of natural lands, waters and agricultural lands, in
and connectivity, clean water, clean air, food pro
The tool will support planners, conservation prac
stakeholders in integrating the protection of natu
infrastructure plans. In partnership with The Natu
stakeholders, SCAG anticipates having the SoC
testing in spring 2021, with a launch planned for

The SoCal Greenprint will:

- Map, measure, and contextualize the values of nature's benefit and services within the region's ecosystem, economy and community.
- Aggregate existing data in an interactive online format.
- Help decision-makers plan for development with nature in mind.
- Encourage and highlight conserva multiple benefits for nature and pe SCAG region.
- Function as a resource for conser anyone can access for free.

CONNECT SOCAL PROVIDES A VISION FOR THE REGION

Connect SoCal is a long-range visioning plan that builds upon and expands land use and transportation strategies established over several planning cycles to increase mobility options and achieve a more sustainable growth pattern. It charts a path toward a more mobile, sustainable and prosperous region by making connections between transportation networks, between planning strategies and between the people whose collaboration can improve the quality of life for Southern Californians.

Connect SoCal was prepared through a collaborative, continuous and comprehensive process with input from local governments, county transportation commissions, tribal governments, non-profit organizations, businesses and local stakeholders within the counties of Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura.

Meet our Steering Committee Member: Frank Ruiz

Frank Ruiz is the Salton Sea Program Director with Audubon California. He has been a pastor and mental health professional for over 14 years and 10 years of experience as a chaplain for law enforcement agencies. In addition, he has been a grassroots leader and community organizer. Frank co-founded Por la Creacion: A faith-based alliance with the purpose of enabling the Latino community in areas of education and public policy in regards to public lands and conservation initiatives.

Tell us about what you're working on at the Salton Sea.
I launched a program that combines four elements, public policy, science, education and community engagement with the purpose of developing awareness about the emerging environmental, economic and public health crisis arising at the Sea.

How will the SoCal Greenprint support your work and communities?
It is imperative to enfranchise diverse and, in many cases, destitute communities in areas of conservation, public health and economic equity to achieve sustainable goals. SoCal Greenprint could bridge the conversations from different sectors to find areas of common interest that could translate into feasible solutions.

In your opinion, what will be the most important benefit of the Greenprint?
Building awareness among diverse communities and governments of the need of quality outdoor places, urban greening and healthy initiatives that could transform the culture of nature for all.

SCAG The Nature Conservancy

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Science Update

- Themes
- Metrics
- Rapid Assessments
- Advisory Committee Meeting

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Themes

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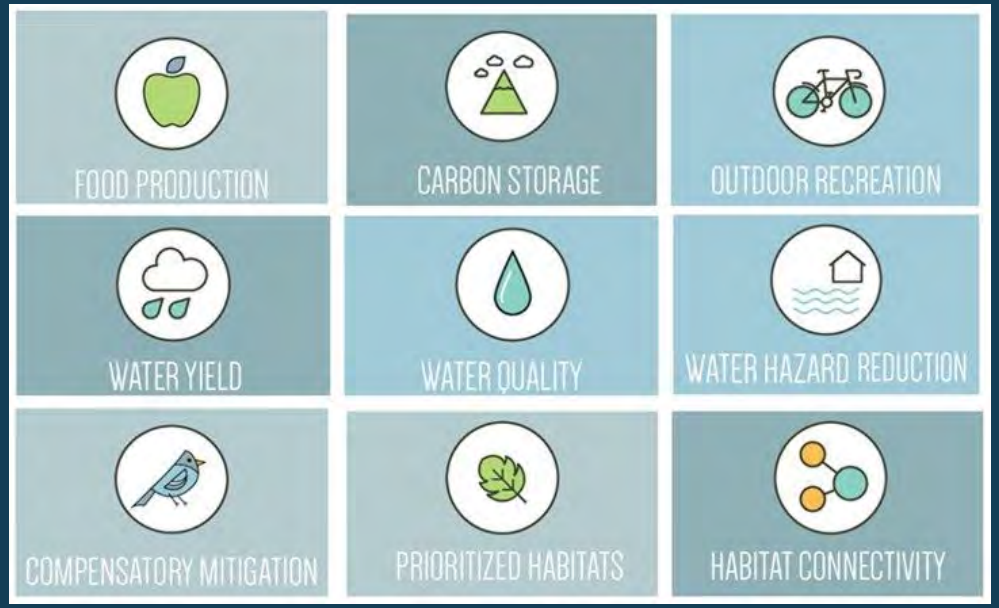
Common themes across all analyses

Themes provide a structure to organize the data in the Greenprint. This allows users to quickly and easily access the information relevant to their project. With themes, users will be able to look at groups of data together and understand how they might impact their proposed project.



Proposed Greenprint Themes

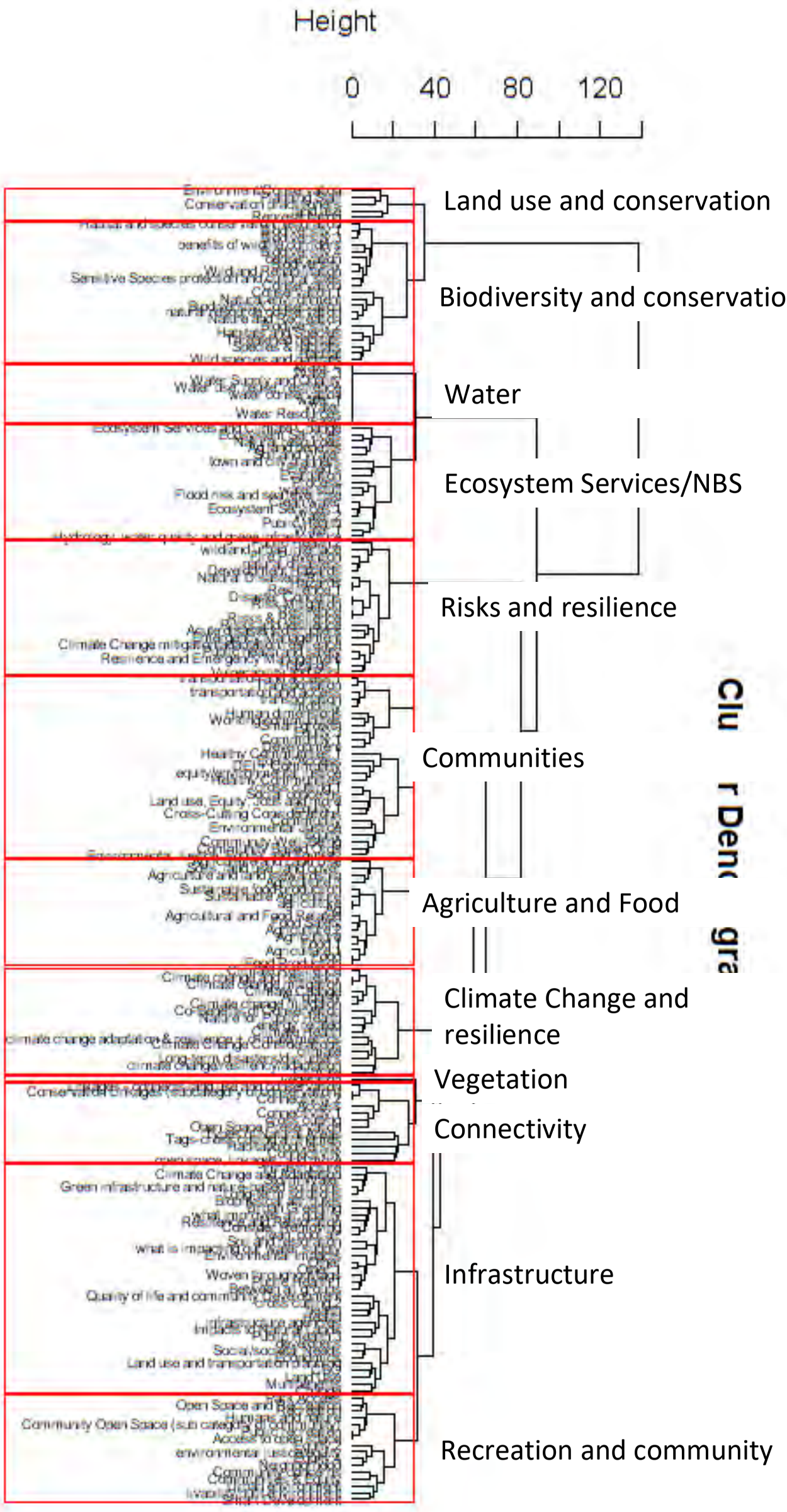
- Agriculture
- Conservation/biodiversity/habitat
- Community and equity
- Infrastructure and the built environment
- Risks and resilience
- Water

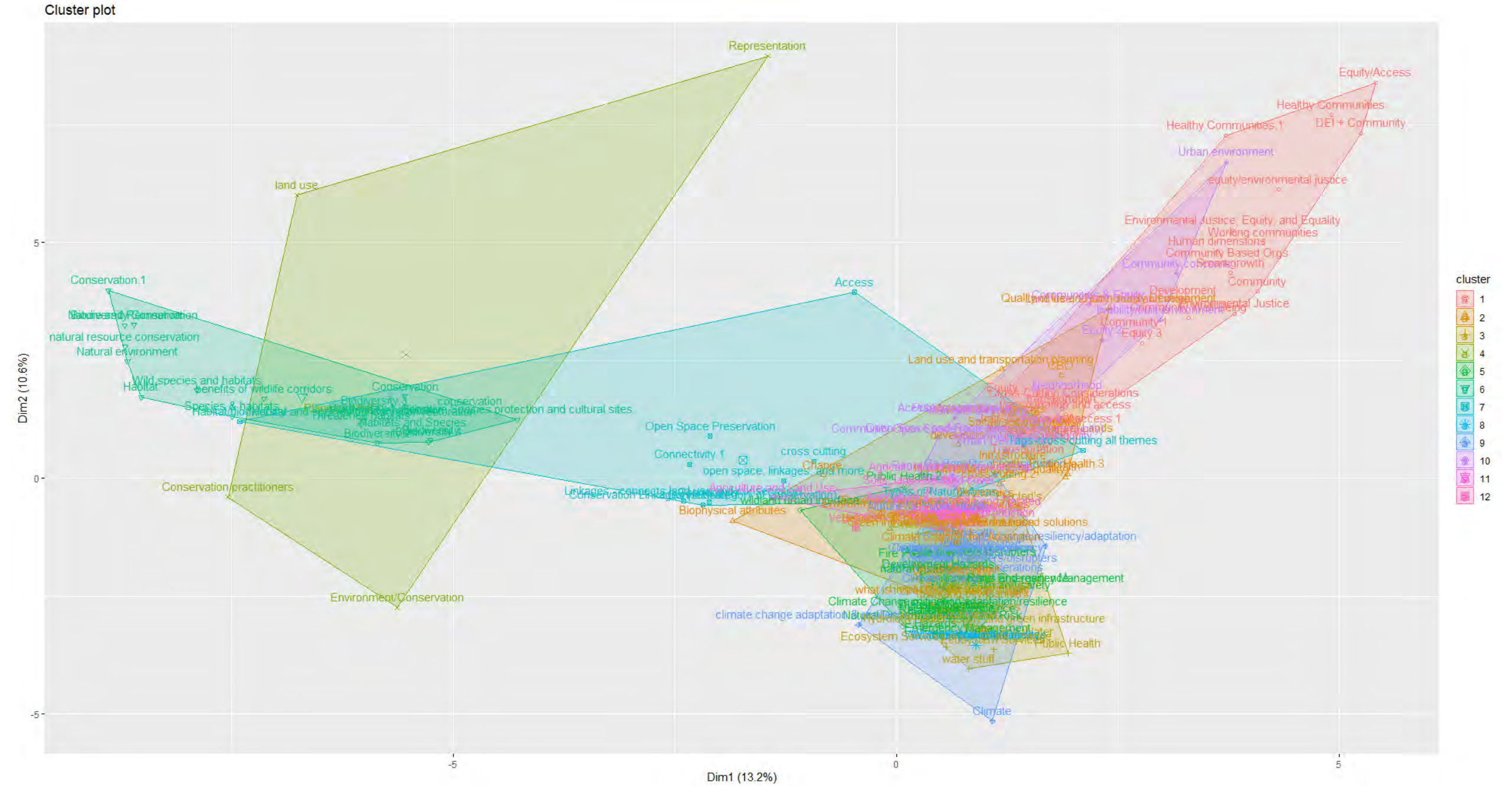
Climate Change, urban greening, and equity are likely to be cross-cutting and represented across all themes

Methods: Full data set

- 194 different themes identified by advisors (162 unique)
- 70 topics
- 7 Science advisors
- 7 strategic advisors
- 7 Steering committee members
- 6 core team members

Full Sample


Height
0
40
80
120
Land use and conservation
Biodiversity and conservation
Water
Ecosystem Services/NBS
Risks and resilience
Communities
Agriculture and Food
Climate Change and resilience
Vegetation
Connectivity
Infrastructure
Recreation and community


Cluster plot
Representation
land use
Conservation.1
Natural environment
Wild species and habitats
Habitat
Conservation
Conservation practitioners
Environment/Conservation
Access
Open Space Preservation
Connectivity.1
cross cutting
open space, linkages
Biophysical attributes
Equity/Access
Healthy Communities
Healthy Communities.1
DEI + Community
Urban environment
equity/environmental justice
Environmental Justice, Equity, and Equality
Working communities
Human dimensions
Community Based Orgs
Community
Land use and transportation planning
Tags-cross cutting all themes
Public Health 2
Public Health 3
Public Health
Climate
water stuff
Ecosystem Services
climate change adaptation
Dim1 (13.2%)
Dim2 (10.6%)
cluster
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12

Themes Proposal 2

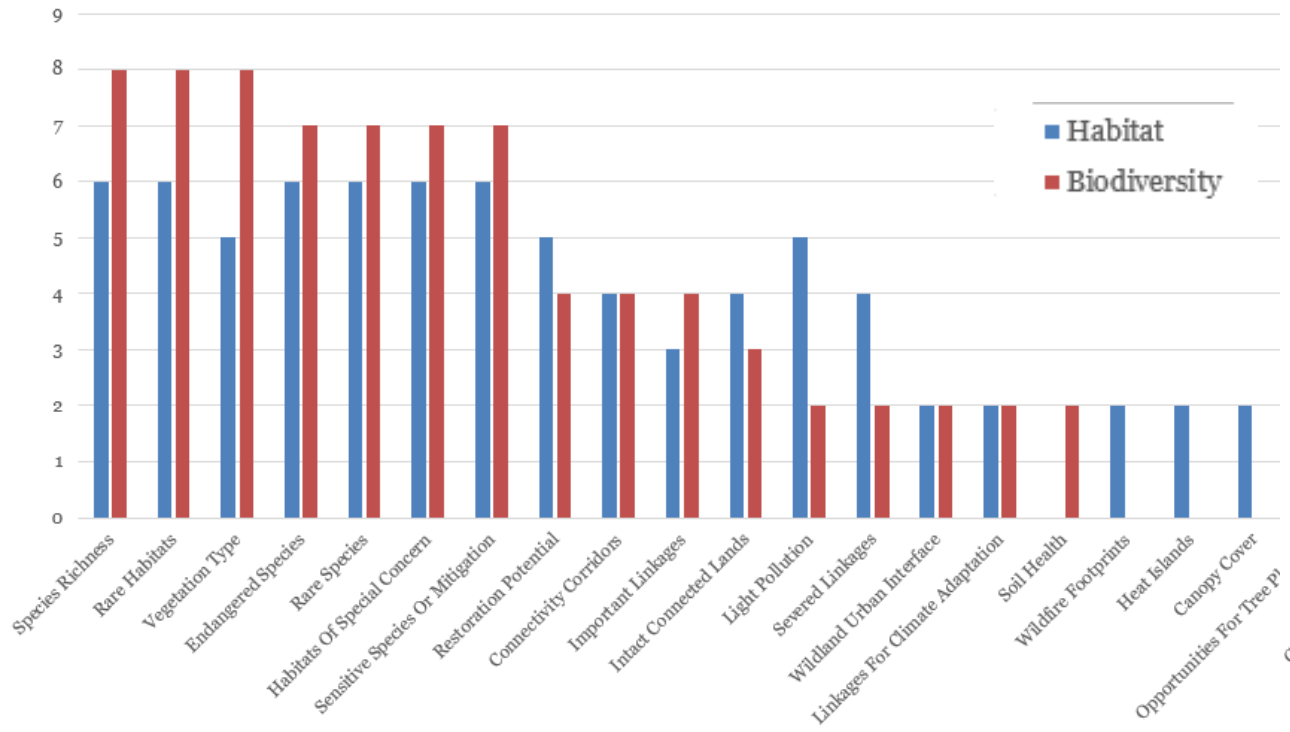
- Health, Equity, Access, and Community
- Biodiversity and Habitat
- Connectivity
- Agriculture
- Water
- Built Environment: Transportation, Housing, Jobs
- Resilience, Threats, and Nature-based solutions

Cross cutting:
Green Infrastructure (existing and need)
Additional equity metric across themes (% resource within DAC)

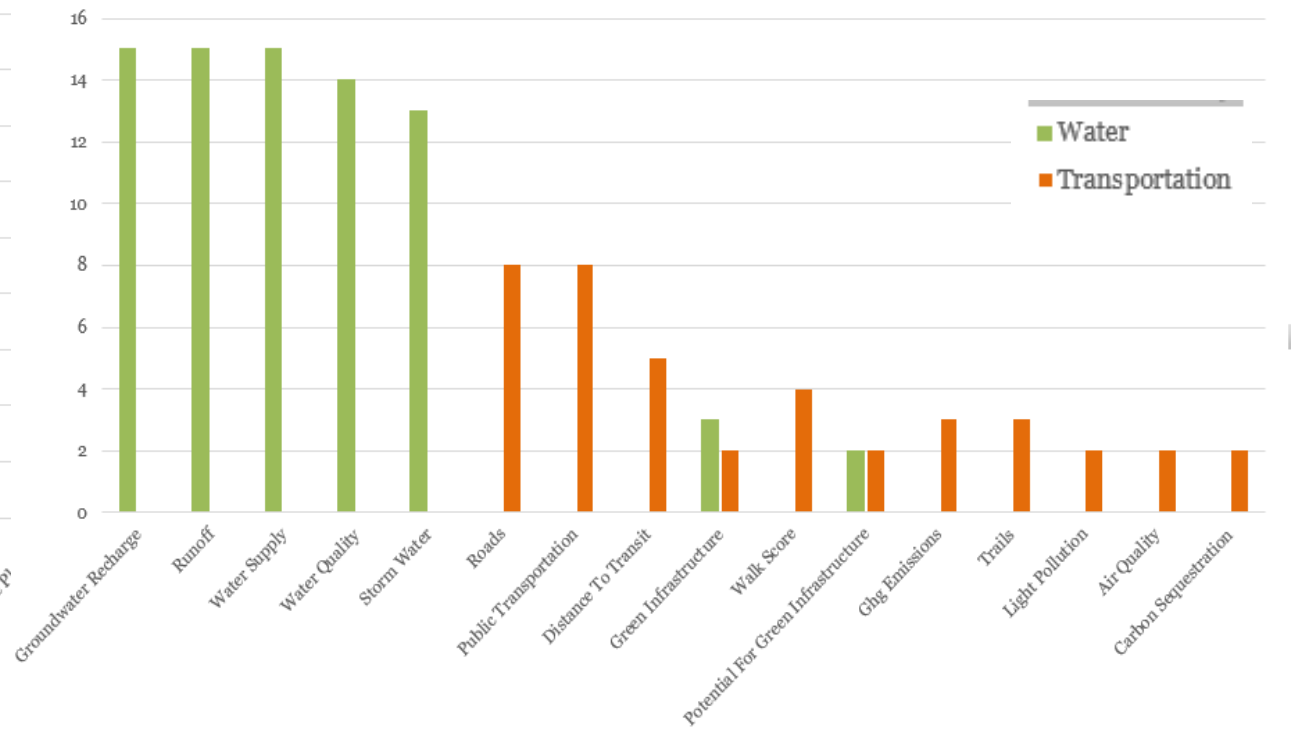
Methods 2: Themes analysis

Further collapse 'like' themes

Biodiversity vs. Habitat
Collapsed to single theme – similar composition

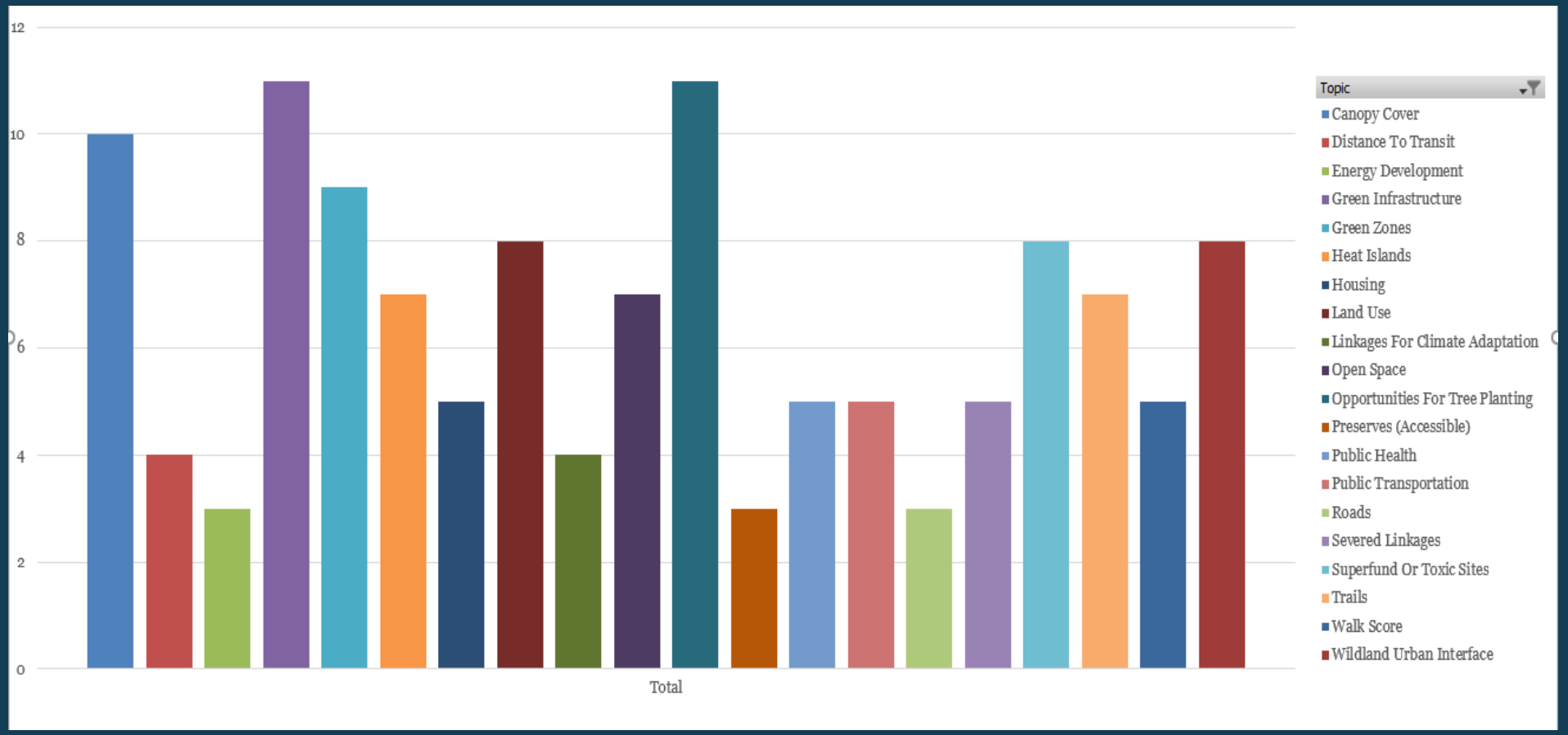


Water vs Transporation
NOT collapsed – unique composition



Methods 2: Cross-cutting topics

After all the card/theme manipulation – several cards still were spread across themes. Height represents # of themes a card was found in - magnitude of disagreement



Top 4 topics of theme disagreement

- Green Infrastructure
- Opportunities for tree planting
- Canopy Cover
- Green Zones

'Green Infrastructure' like topics seems to be cross-cutting
Participants sorted into the most different themes

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Metrics

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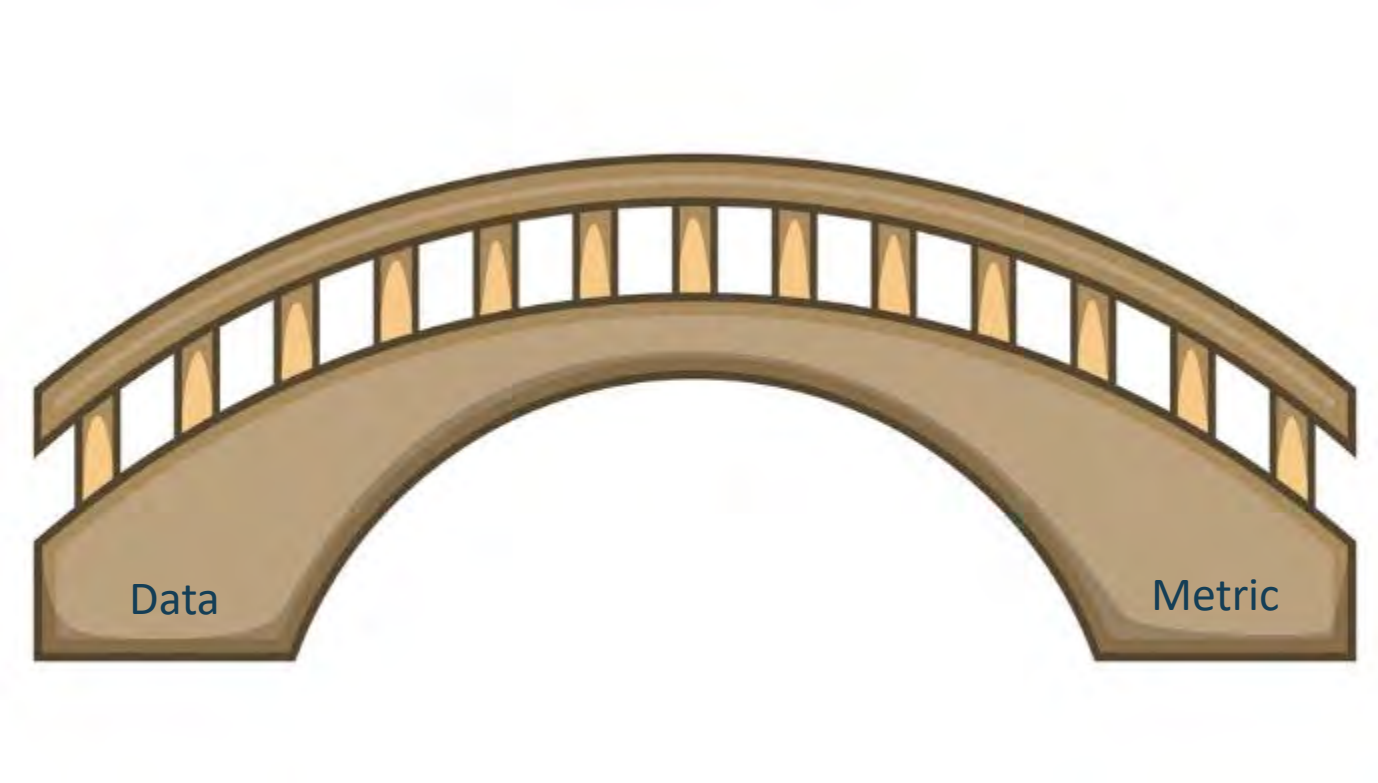
Metrics: Background

One of the roles of a Greenprint is to act as a ‘bridge’ between the data creators and practitioners

Data Creators / Academics, Researchers

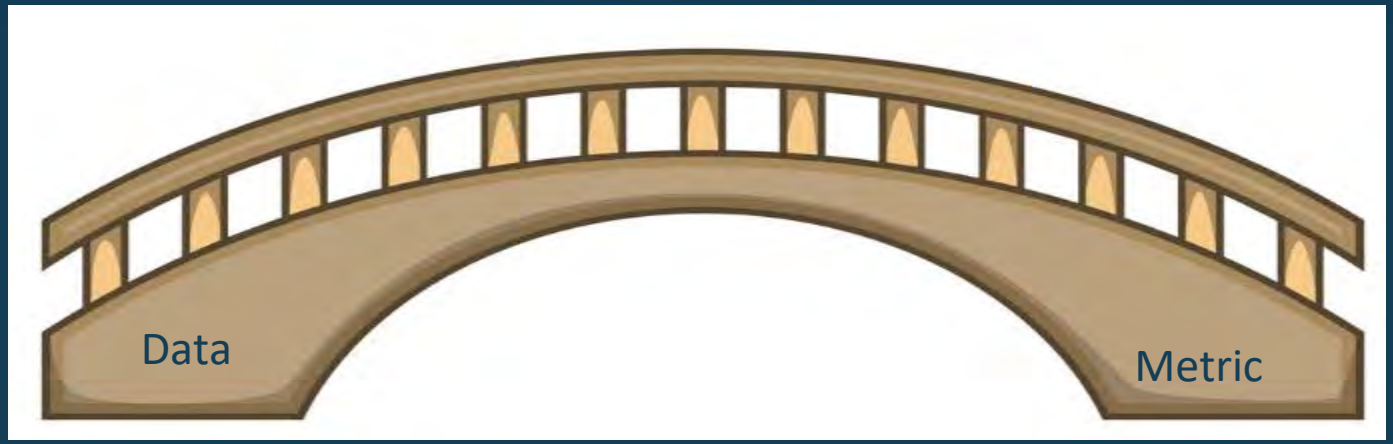


Data Users / Practitioners

Example: The Bay Area Greenprint curates and delivers 'Climate Water Deficit' projection data into a metric on 'how climate change may impact food production'

Data: climate water deficit

The term climatic water deficit defined by Stephenson (1998) is quantified as the amount of water by which potential evapotranspiration (PET) exceeds actual evapotranspiration (AET).



Metric in the Bay Area Greenprint:

30-year summary time periods	GCMs and ES/RCP combinations (for futures only)	
		CMIP 5:
Historic:	CMIP 3:	MIROC5-RCP26
1921-1950	GFDL-A2	MIROC-RCP45
1951-1980	GFDL-B1	MIROC-RCP60
1981-2010	PCM-A2	MIROC-RCP85
	PCM-B1	GISS-RCP26
Projected:	MIROC3_2 -A2	MRI-RCP26
2010-2039	CSIRO-A1B	MPI-RCP45
2040-2069	GISS_AOM -A1B	CCSM4-RCP85
2070-2099		IPSL-RCP85
		CNRM-RCP85
		FGOALS-RCP85

How will climate change impact food production?

A warmer and/or drier climate may require additional irrigation to maintain the same crop in the same location.

In your area, 168,904 acre-feet per year of additional irrigation will be needed to offset climate change under the 'hotter, drier' scenario and 65,362 acre-feet per year of additional irrigation will be needed under the 'warmer wetter' scenario.

Metrics: Background

Metrics provide interpretation and context to make data **useful**, **understandable**, and **influential** to our users

Question to consider as we evaluate types of metrics:

How can we deliver data so it will influence the way a key-user makes a decision?

Descriptive Metrics vs Action Oriented Metrics

Descriptive metrics provide just the facts. The user then will bring their own values and toolset to the Greenprint to determine what action to take.

There are X acres of urban heat island

X acres of this area are priorities for street tree planting

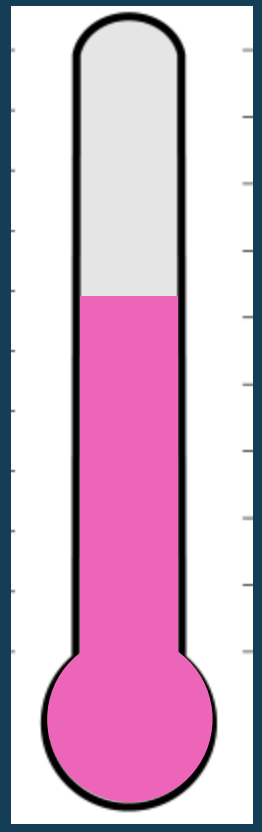
Tree canopy is inequitably distributed in this area

Action-oriented metrics may suggest actions a user can take based on quantities of resources and geographic and jurisdictional context

Planting street trees in this area can address urban heat islands, help sequester air pollutants, and can start to address the inequitable distribution of tree canopy

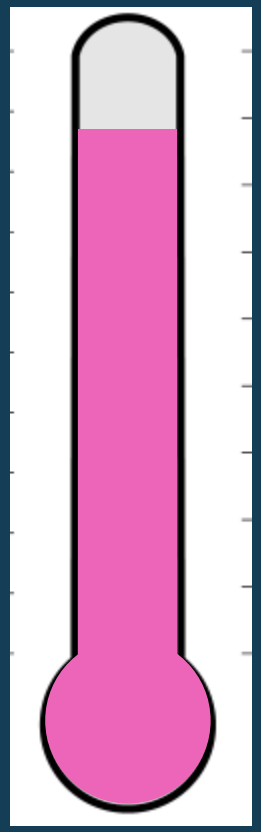
Is the quantity locally or regionally significant?

Quantity of resource in area of interest within **watershed**



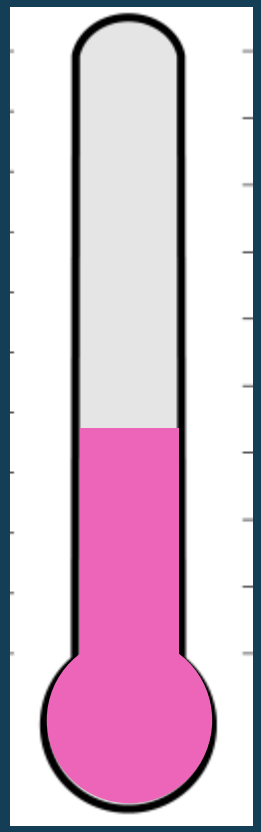
60 % of feature

Quantity of resource in area of interest in **landscape unit**



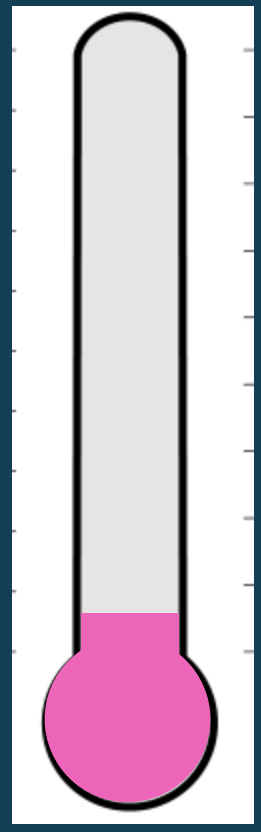
90% of feature

Quantity of resource in area of interest in **county**



30% of feature

Quantity of resource in area of interest in **SCAG region**



3% of feature

Is the quantity locally or regionally significant?

EXAMPLE:

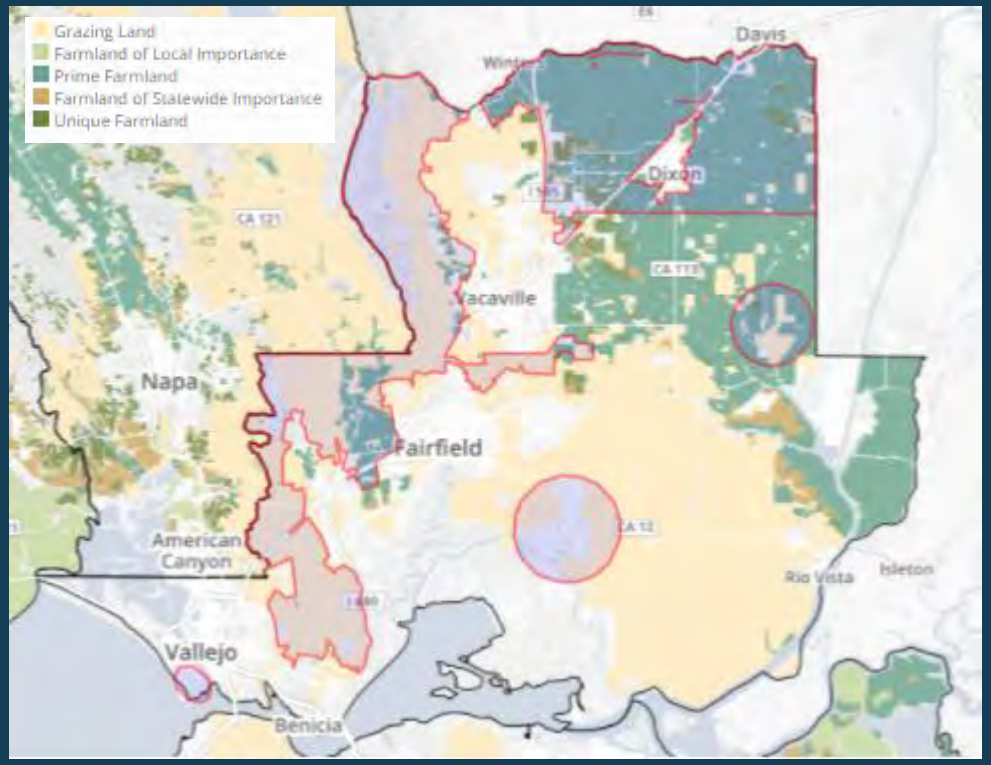
BAY AREA GREENPRINT

How much prime farmland?

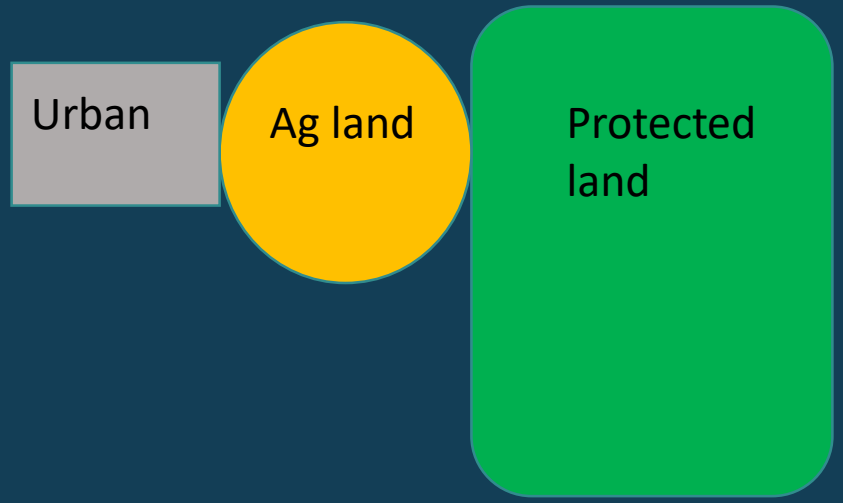
68,000 acres

Is that a lot?

More than **half** of the county's prime farmland



Does the landscape context make the impact significant?



Does the landscape context make the impact significant?

EXAMPLE: Local

Does the landscape context make the impact significant?

EXAMPLE:

Local

In Context A:

Does the landscape context make the impact significant?

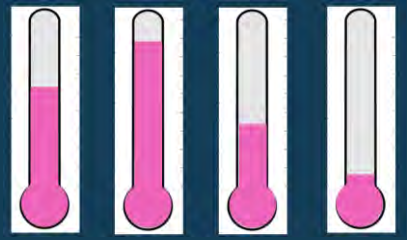
EXAMPLE:

Local

In Context B:

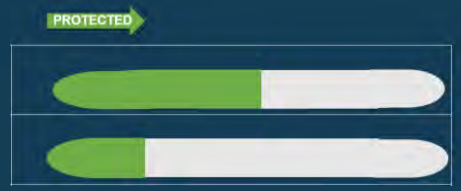
How can we deliver data so it will influence the way a key-user makes a decision?

Regionally significant?

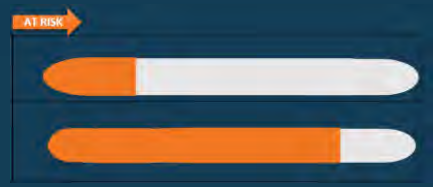


Neighborhood Context?

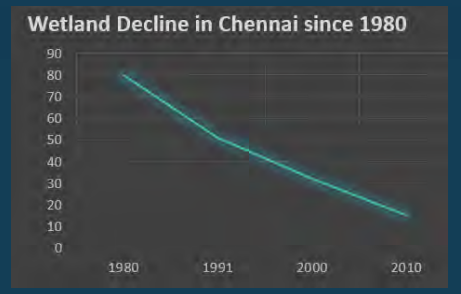
Protected?



At Risk?

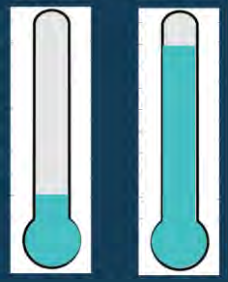


Historic Trend?

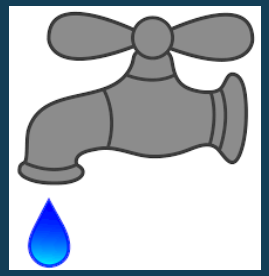


Desired Future?

Inequitable Distribution?



Equivalence?



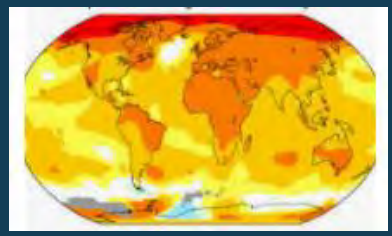
Threshold?

Historic Context

Local Interest?

Who works here?

Climate change impacts?



Rapid Assessments

An early case-study exercise to help us design the Greenprint to meet the needs of our targeted user groups and on-the-ground practitioners.

They are conducted early in the development/design process to gather concrete feedback from key users on:

1) the information proposed to be in the Greenprint for a real-world use-case, and
2) how that information is analyzed and communicated

What's next?

Joint Science & Strategy Advisory Committee Meeting

- November 5, 2020
- Advisors will work in teams to create a mock conservation assessment
- Provide feedback on themes, metrics, and data

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Thank you! Any questions please reach out!

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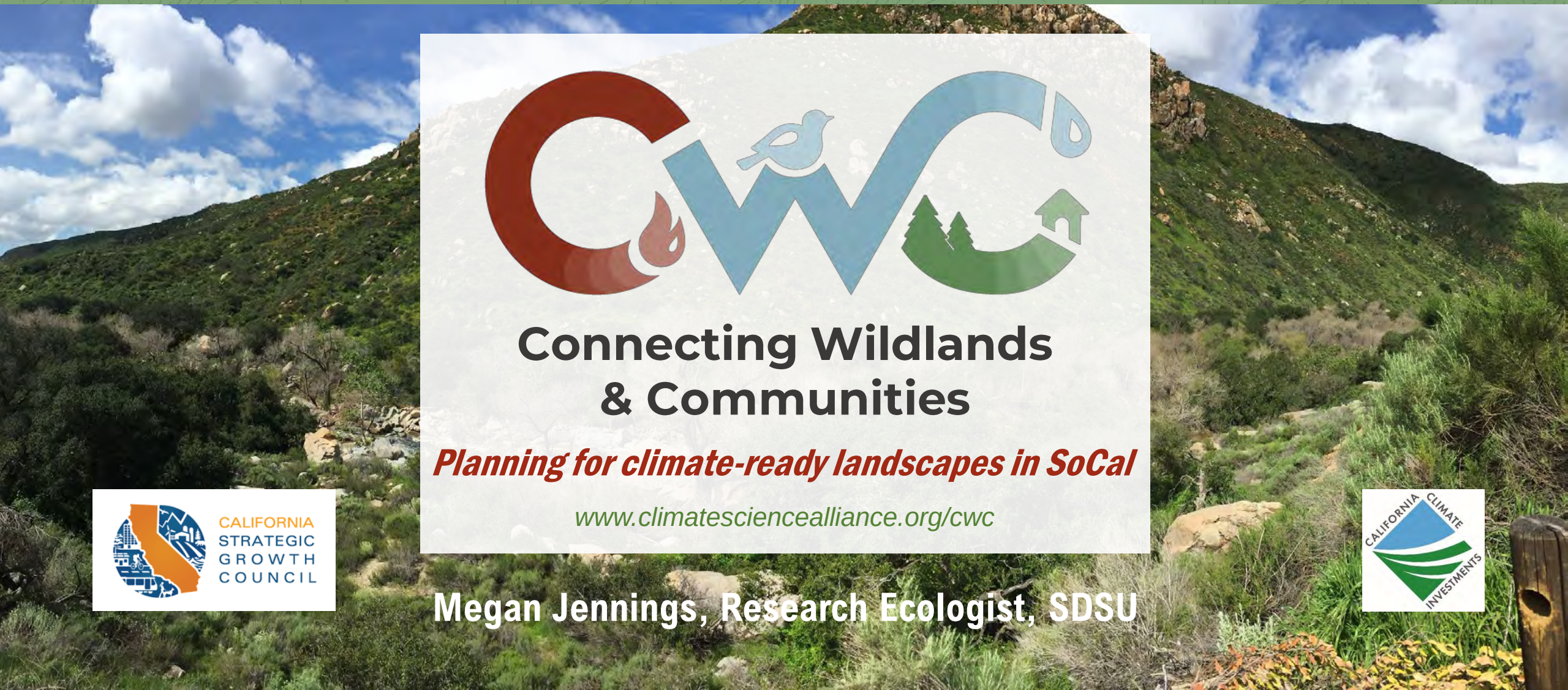
The Nature Conservancy

SCAG Natural and Working Lands Working Group Update

October 15, 2020



Connecting Wildlands & Communities

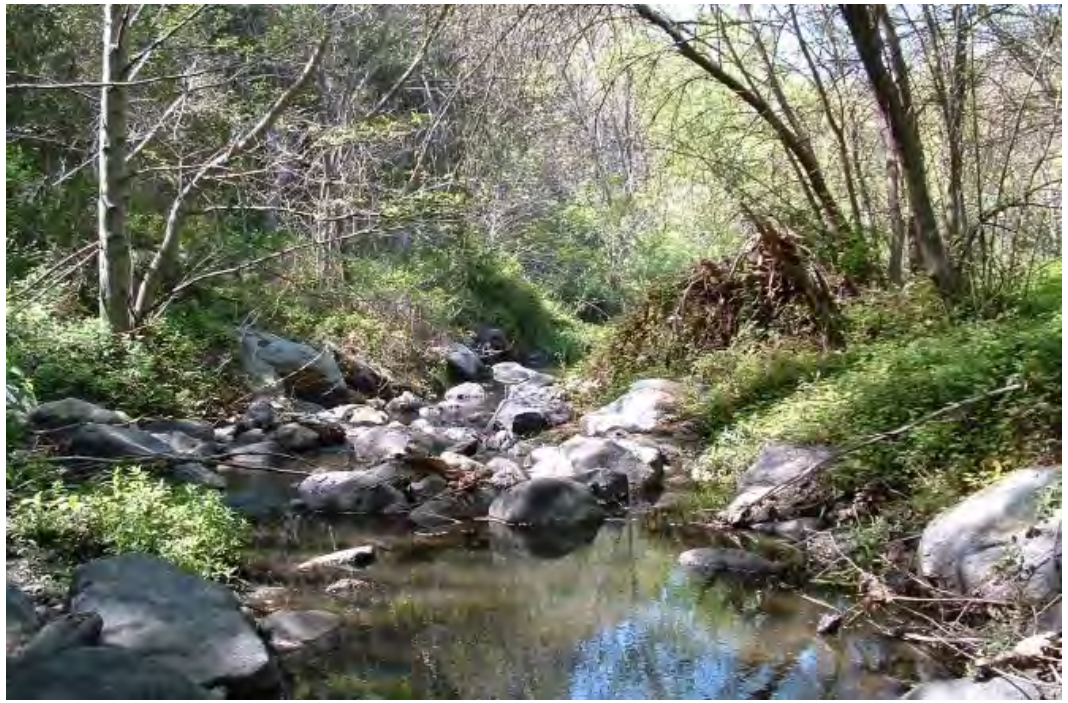
Planning for climate-ready landscapes in SoCal

www.climatesciencealliance.org/cwc

CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL

CALIFORNIA CLIMATE INVESTMENTS

Megan Jennings, Research Ecologist, SDSU



Planning context

Regional plan updates

Hazard mitigation and disaster planning

General Plan updates

Climate Action Plans

Climate Adaptation Plans

Natural Community Conservation Plans/Habitat Conservation Plans

Implementation of all of the above

Connecting Wildlands & Communities

STAKEHOLDER
OUTREACH MEETING
1.30.2019

STAKEHOLDER
OUTREACH MEETING
2.21.2019
LOS ANGELES

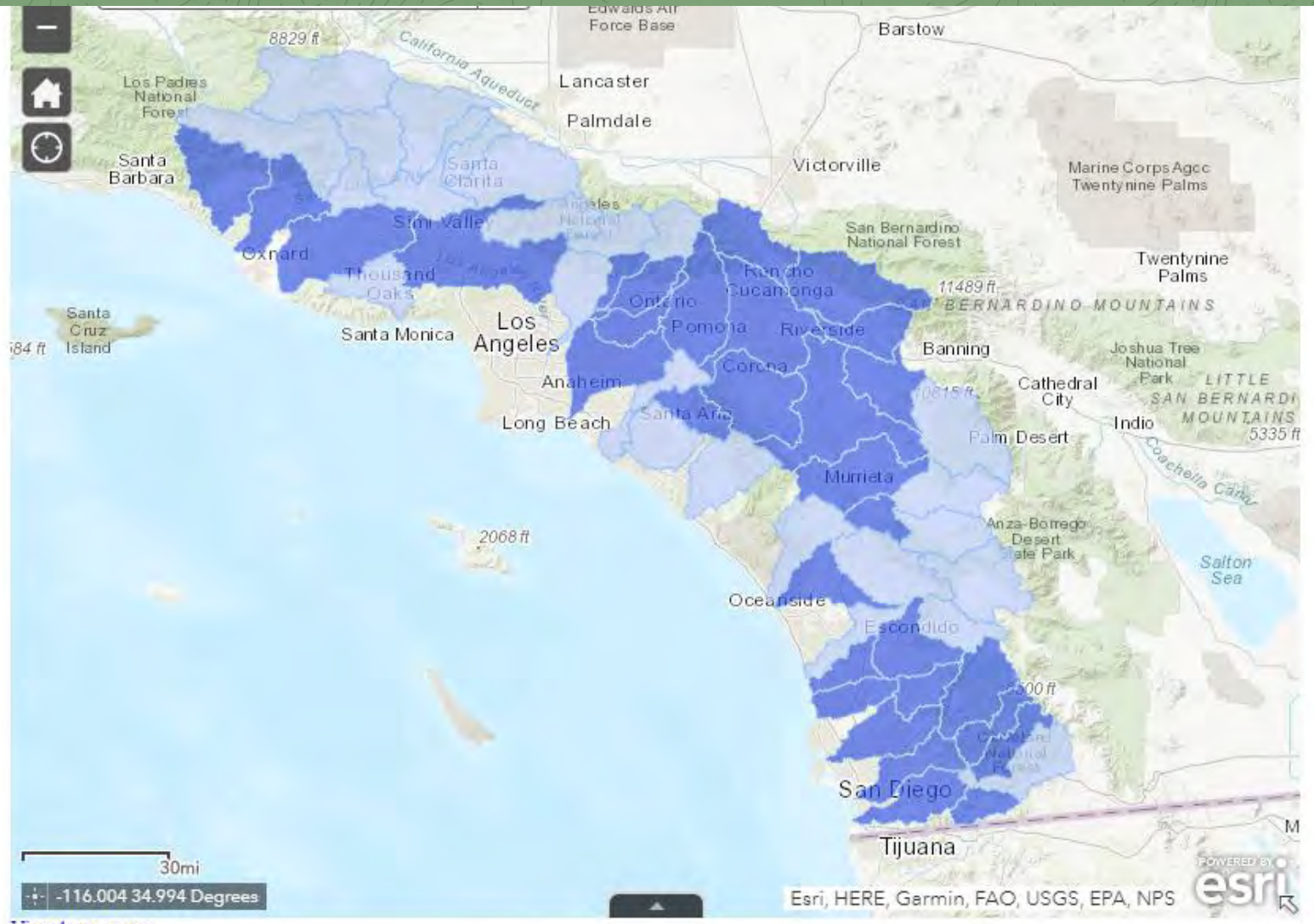
Connecting Wildlands & Communities

STAKEHOLDER
OUTREACH MEETING
2.28.2019
PALA BAND OF
MISSION INDIANS

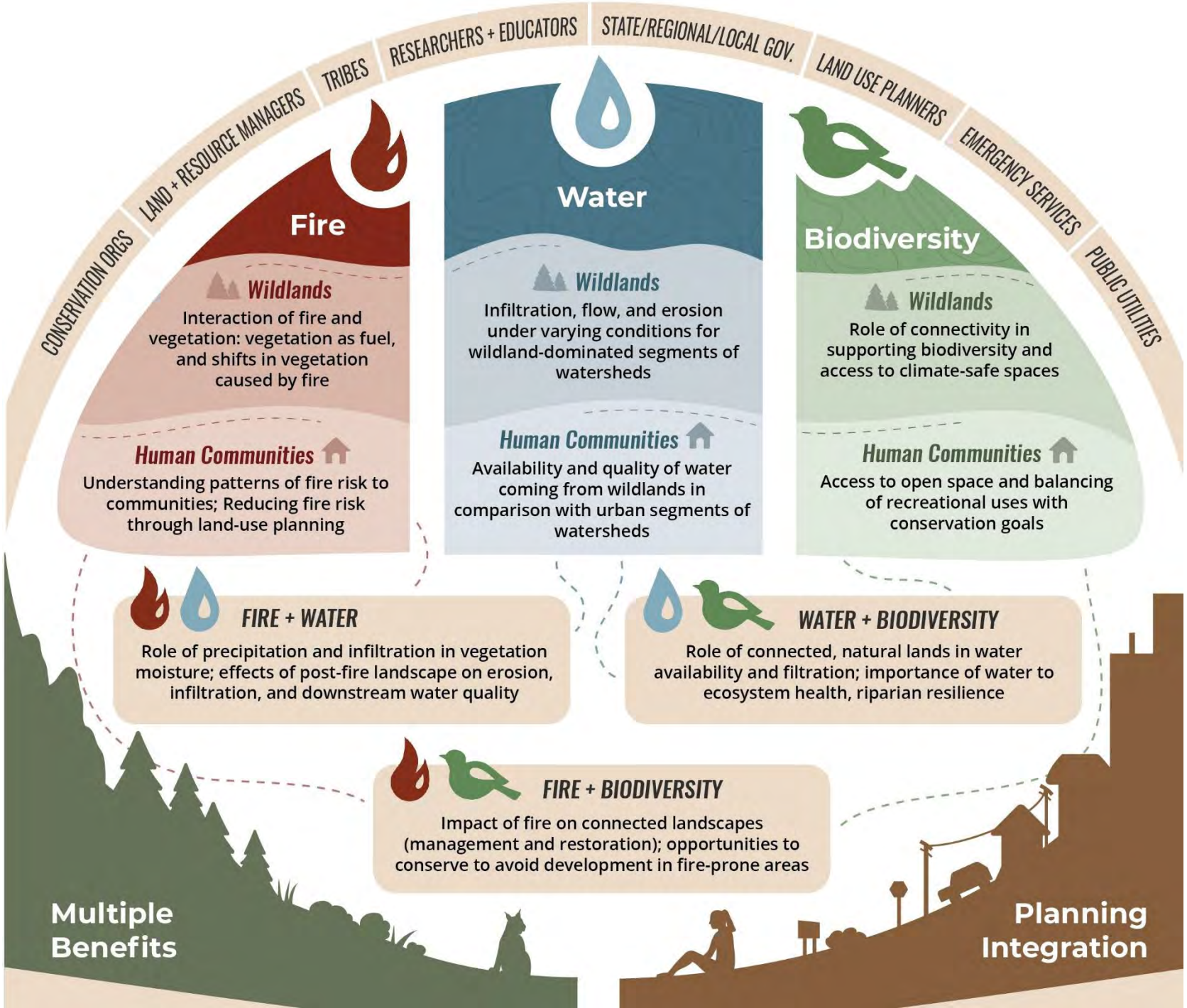
Connecting Wildlands & Communities

Study Area

- Wildland-urban interface
- WUI resilience
- Watershed based approach



View larger map


CONSERVATION ORGS
LAND + RESOURCE MANAGERS
TRIBES
RESEARCHERS + EDUCATORS
STATE/REGIONAL/LOCAL GOV.
LAND USE PLANNERS
EMERGENCY SERVICES
PUBLIC UTILITIES
Fire
Wildlands
Interaction of fire and vegetation: vegetation as fuel, and shifts in vegetation caused by fire
Human Communities
Understanding patterns of fire risk to communities; Reducing fire risk through land-use planning
Water
Wildlands
Infiltration, flow, and erosion under varying conditions for wildland-dominated segments of watersheds
Human Communities
Availability and quality of water coming from wildlands in comparison with urban segments of watersheds
Biodiversity
Wildlands
Role of connectivity in supporting biodiversity and access to climate-safe spaces
Human Communities
Access to open space and balancing of recreational uses with conservation goals
FIRE + WATER
Role of precipitation and infiltration in vegetation moisture; effects of post-fire landscape on erosion, infiltration, and downstream water quality
WATER + BIODIVERSITY
Role of connected, natural lands in water availability and filtration; importance of water to ecosystem health, riparian resilience
FIRE + BIODIVERSITY
Impact of fire on connected landscapes (management and restoration); opportunities to conserve to avoid development in fire-prone areas
Multiple Benefits
Planning Integration

Technical Advisory Group

3-4 Meetings between June 2020 and Feb 2021

Topics to Address:

- Planning framework for climate resiliency
  (Fire, Water, Biodiversity, Carbon Sequestration)
- Data Review and Development (October 22 & November 19)
- Planning Tool Development and Review

Planning Integration

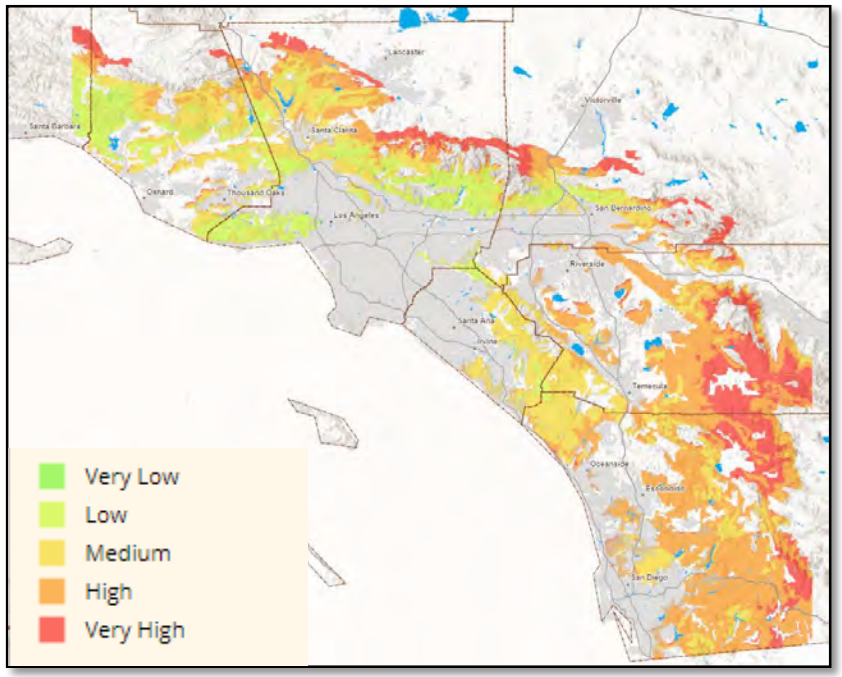
Planning Document	Plan Level			Direct Mandate?	Fulfills Another Mandate?	Affects Access to Funding?
	Local	Region	State			
General Plans	✓			Y	N	Y
Regional Transportation Plans		✓		N	N	Y
Hazard Mitigation Plans	✓	✓	✓	N	N	Y
Climate Action Plans	✓	✓	✓	N	Y	Y
Climate Adaptation Plans	✓	✓	✓	N	Y	Y
Natural Community Conservation Plans		✓	✓	N	Y	Y
Habitat Conservation Plans		✓	✓	N	Y	Y

Wildfire Assessment

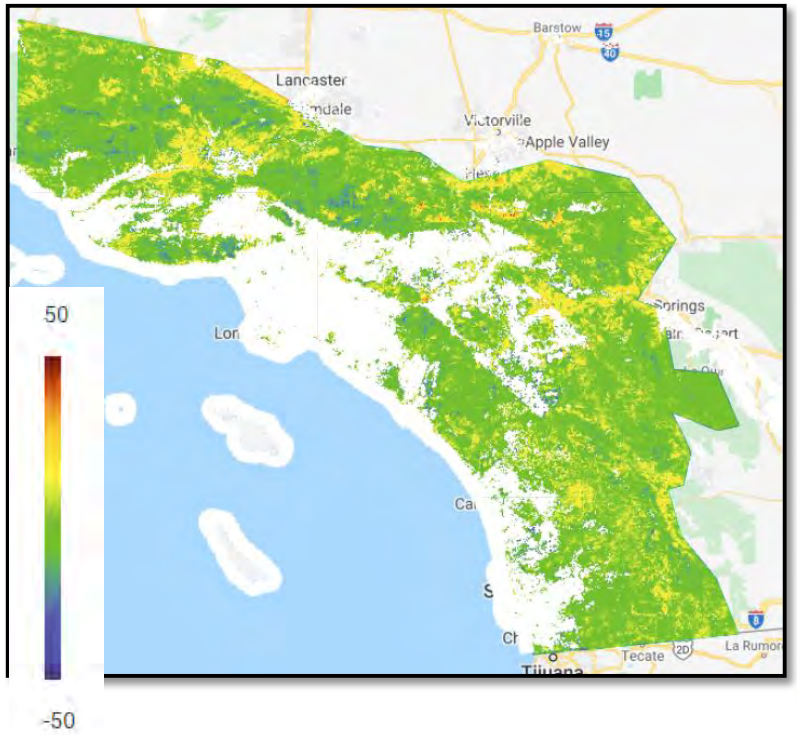
- Burn area & fire history
- Distribution & expansion of non-native herbaceous vegetation
- Regional post-fire chaparral drought vulnerability
- Patterns of fire damage by home price
- Effects of herb expansion on biodiversity and fire regime

Wildfire Assessment

Chaparral drought vulnerability

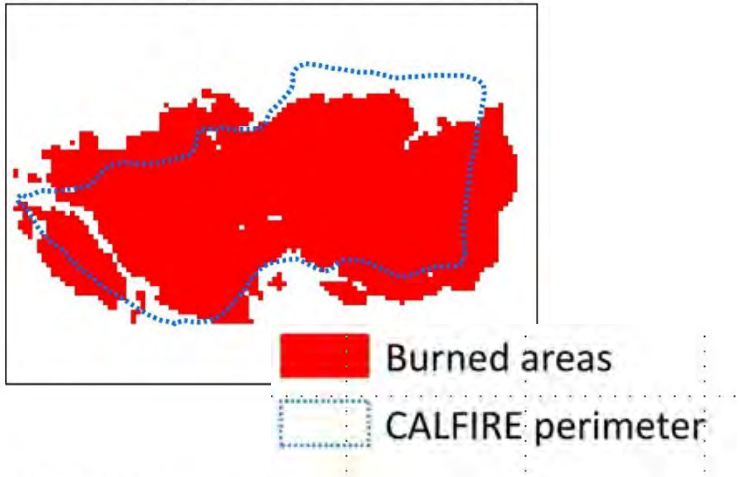


Herbaceous Cover Change

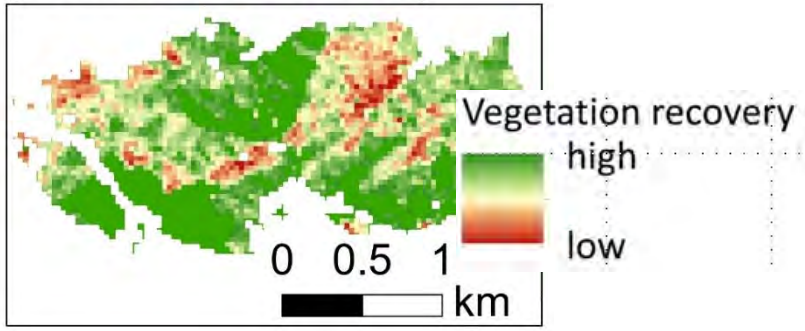


% Change between averages from 1984-1988 & 2015-2019

Refined fire map versus CALFIRE perimeter map



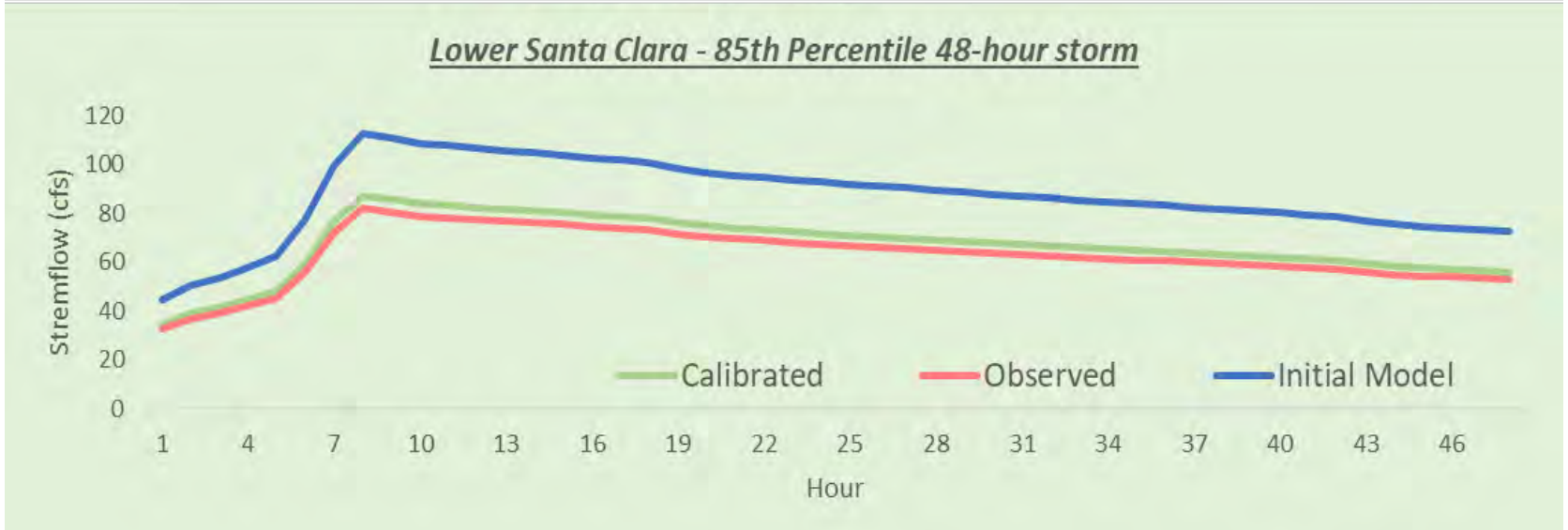
Satellite estimate of post-fire recovery



Watershed Assessment

- Flow, production, & loading
  - Flow volume, depth, and anomalies, water quality, water supply
- Time series and maps under future disturbance scenarios
- Risk characterization at the watershed scale
- Evaluate impacts on habitat from changes in water availability and water quality under future scenarios

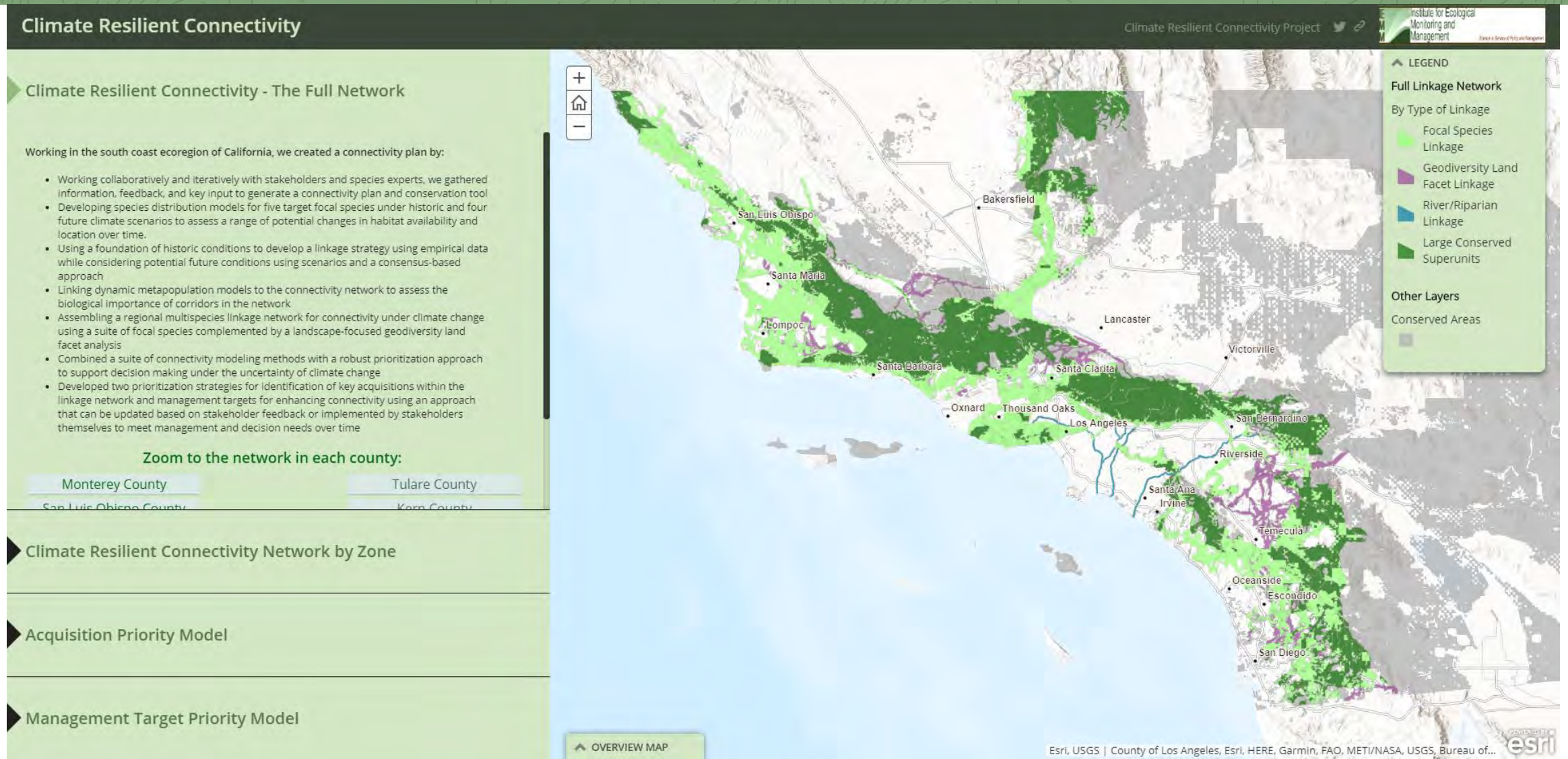
Watershed Assessment



Biodiversity & Conserved Lands

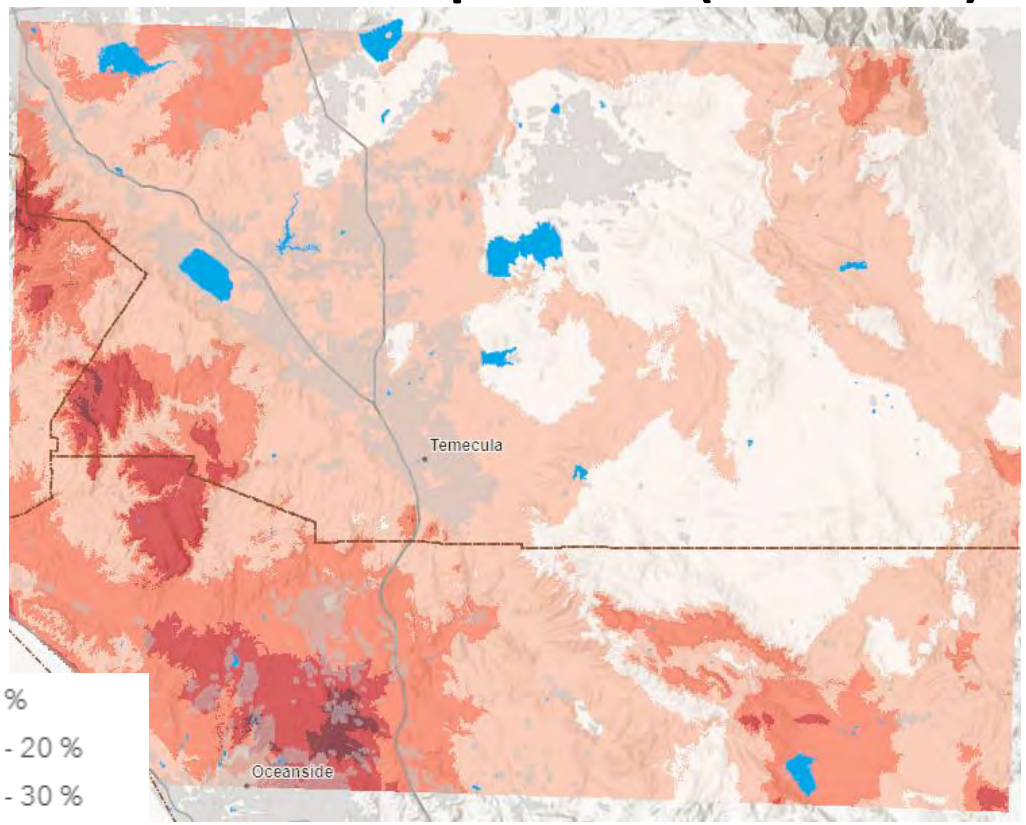
- Connectivity: condition of regional landscape linkages
- Climate refugia: extreme temperature and drought refugia
- Recreation: planning for access that minimizes conservation impacts
- Carbon sequestration: above- & below-ground carbon stocks

Climate Resilient Connectivity



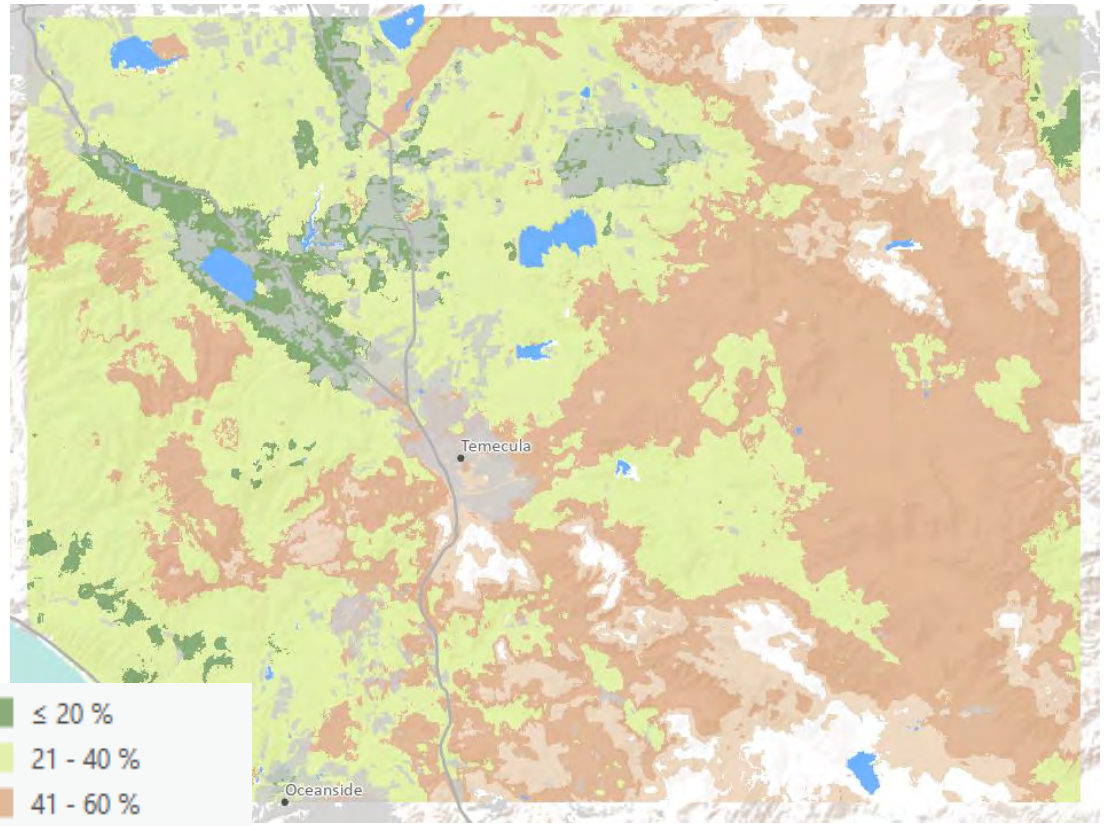
Climate Refuges

Historic frequency
Extreme temperature (90th %tile)



Percent of years 1980 – 2019

Projected frequency
Extreme water deficit (90th %tile)

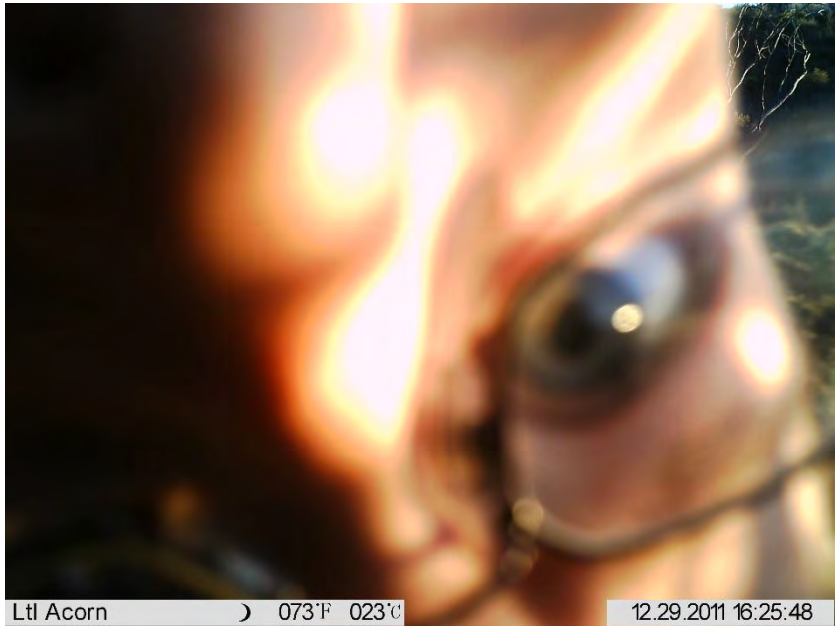


Percent of years 2019 – 2089
(HadGEM ES climate model)


Ltl Acorn
095°F 035°C
12.23.2011 12:25:52


Ltl Acorn
066°F 019°C
02.19.2012 12:15:17


4/19/12 2:23 PM
Cuddeback

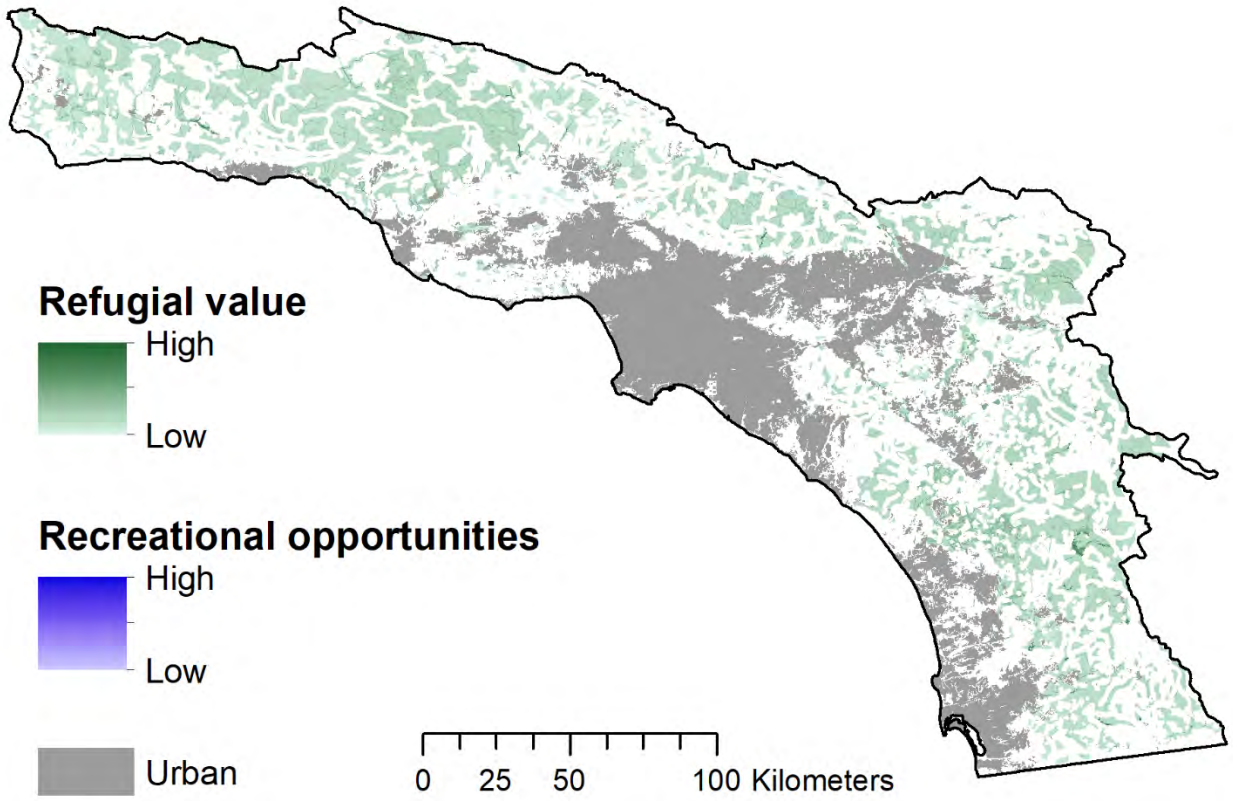

Ltl Acorn
073°F 023°C
12.29.2011 16:25:48


12/20/11 3:51 AM
Cuddeback

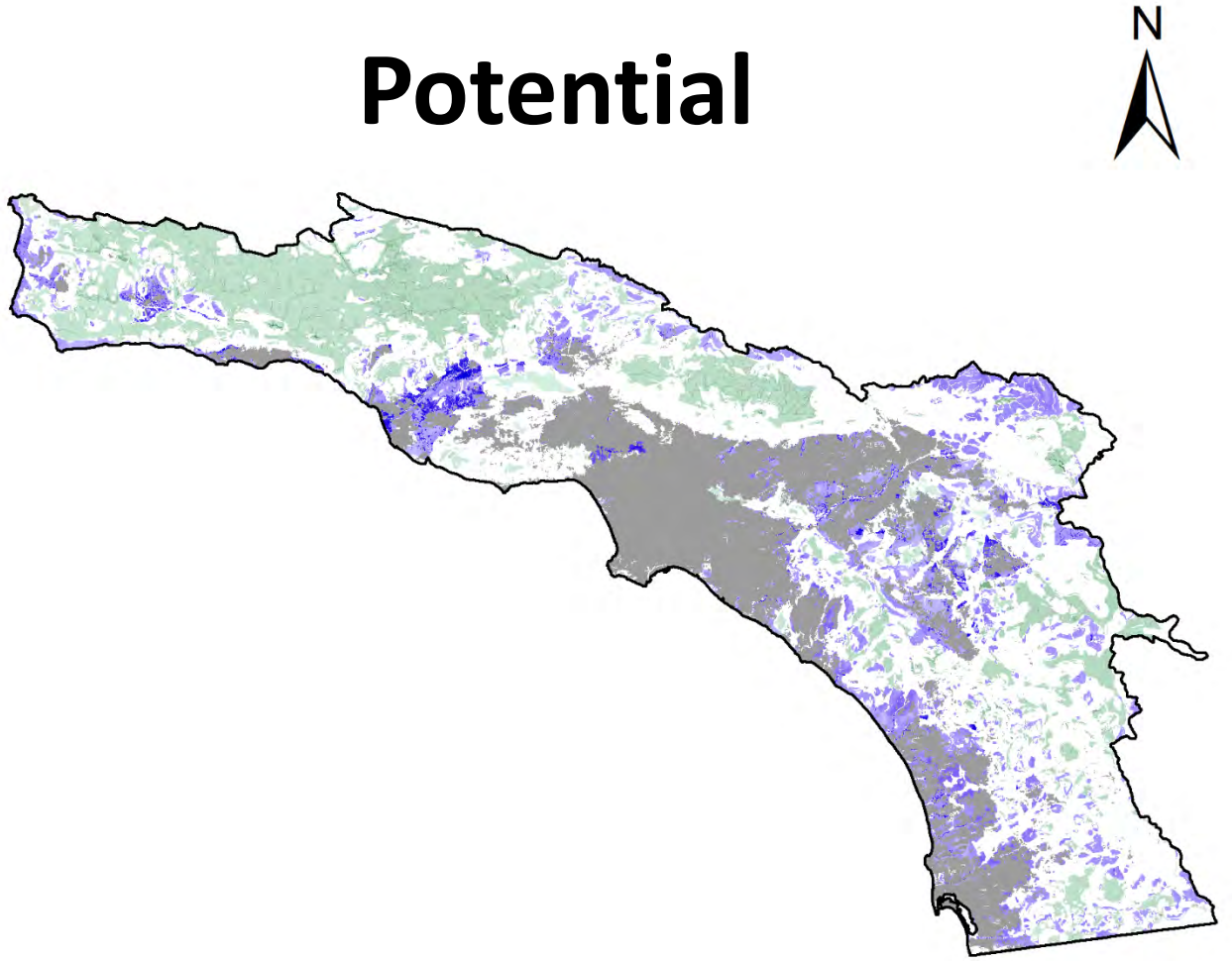

Ltl Acorn
104°F 040°C
06.29.2012 13:07:11

Recreational Refugia

Current

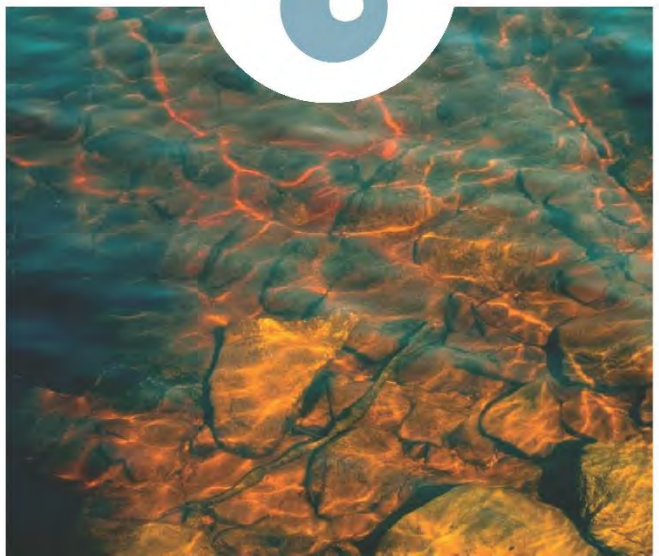


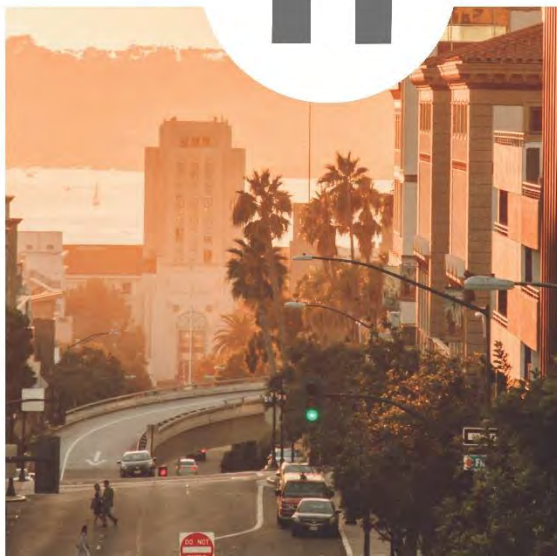
Potential



Connecting Wildlands & Communities

PROJECT TEAM *updates*





art • storytelling • science
climate kids

Meaningful Engagement

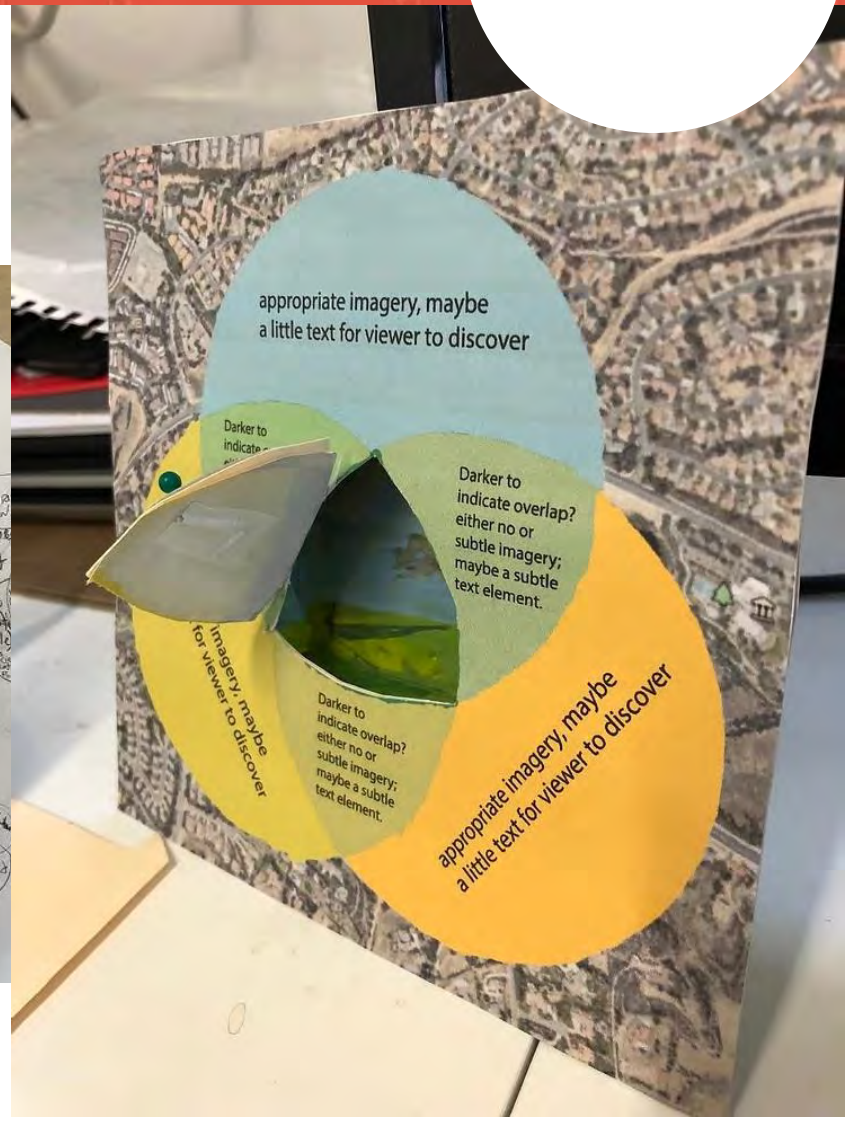
ART & COMMUNITY

CLIMATE KIDS

MEXICO

TRIBES

AMBASSADORS



Meaningful Engagement

CLIMATE SCIENCE ALLIANCE

SOUTHWEST ADAPTATION FORUM

March 2021

Southwest Climate Adaptation Science Center

https://www.climatesciencealliance.org/cwc

mjennings@sdsu.edu

San Bernardino County Regional Conservation Investment Strategy - Update

October 2020

DUDEK

cog sb cta

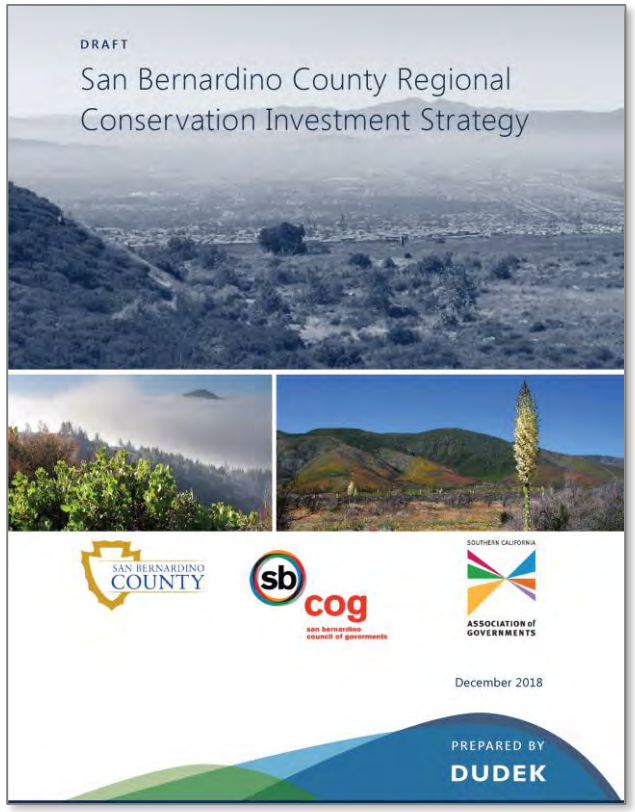
san bernardino council of goverments

San Bernardino County Transportation Authority

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

SBC RCIS – Brief History

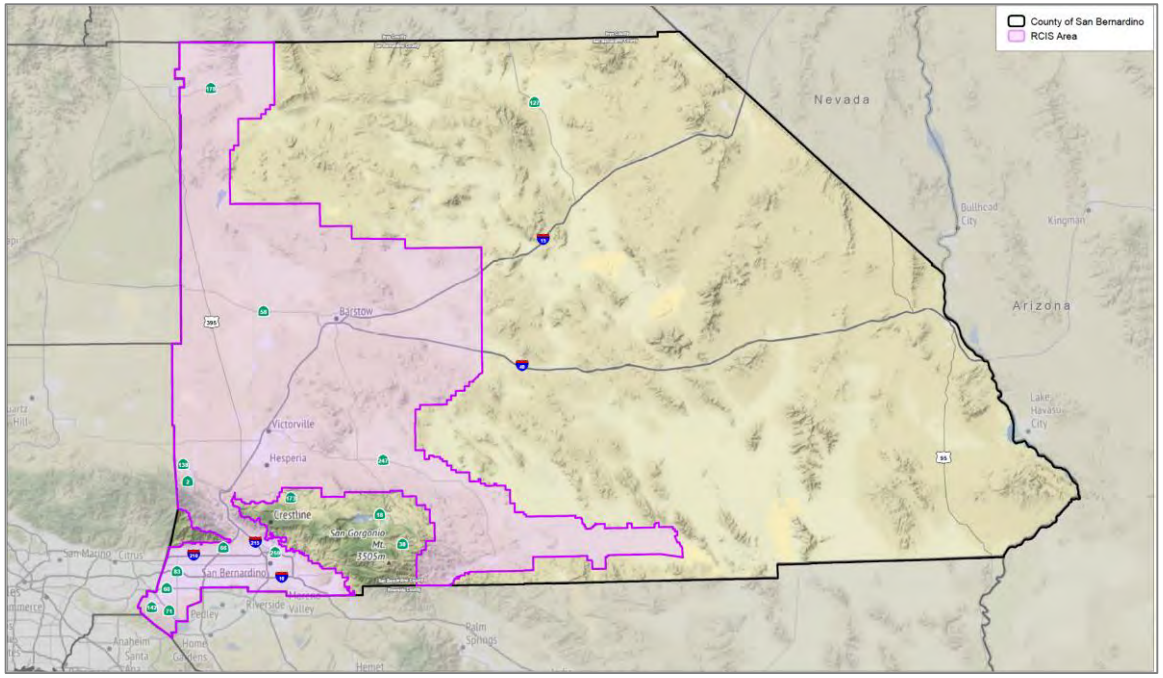
- Habitat Conservation Framework planning in the County began in 2014, prior to establishment of the State RCIS Program
- Evolved into an RCIS in 2016, and a Preliminary Draft was released to the public in 2018, and a public meeting was held in March 2019.
- SBCTA sought and received WCB grant funding for RCIS completion in 2020.



https://www.gosbcta.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/SBC_RCIS_Draft_December_018.pdf

SBC RCIS – Next Phase

- Re-Engagement
  - RCIS Steering Committee
  - EE Group (Stakeholders and the Public)
  - Dedicated webpage and webmapping
- Revising the Preliminary Draft to address latest State RCIS Guidelines
  - RCIS Area revision
  - Focal Species list update
  - Climate change vulnerability
- RCIS review and finalization



SBC RCIS

- Opportunities to get Involved:
  - Next EE Group Meeting: Tentatively scheduled for Dec 2.
  - To get on the SBC RCIS email list, contact:
    - Mike Howard at mhoward@dudek.com
      or
    - Josh Lee at jlee@gosbcta.com

Antelope Valley Regional Conservation Investment Strategy

SCAG Natural Lands Working Group Update

October 15, 2020

Scott Fleury, Ph.D.
Conservation Biologist

Location of AV RCIS:

Conservation Values Map to Guide Priority Conservation Areas

Biological Values

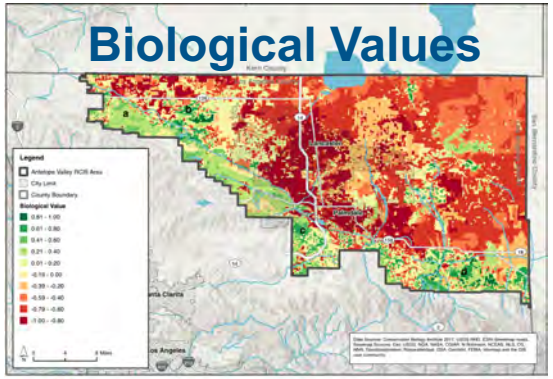


Figure 3-13
Foothill/RiparianBiological Values Model for the Antelope Valley RCIS Area

+

Terrestrial Intactness

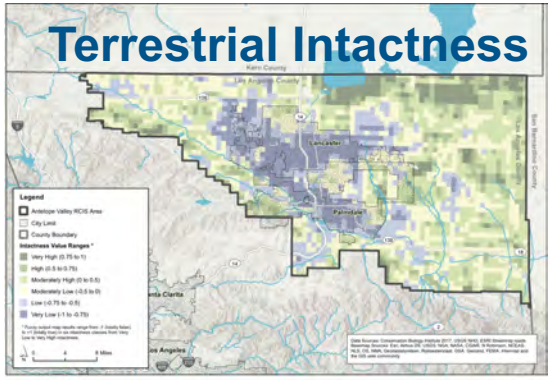


Figure 3-16
Terrestrial Intactness Model Results for the Antelope Valley RCIS Area

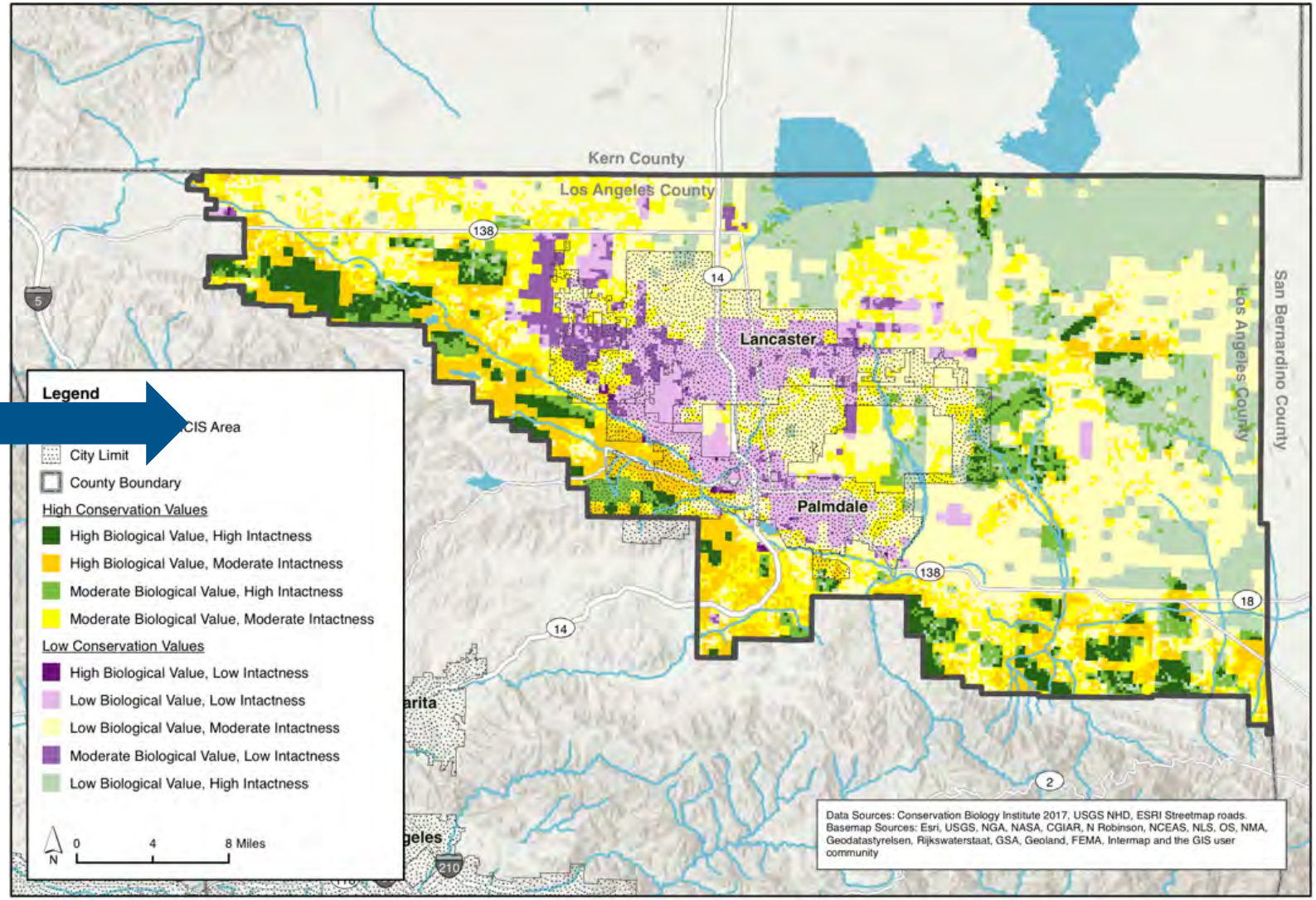
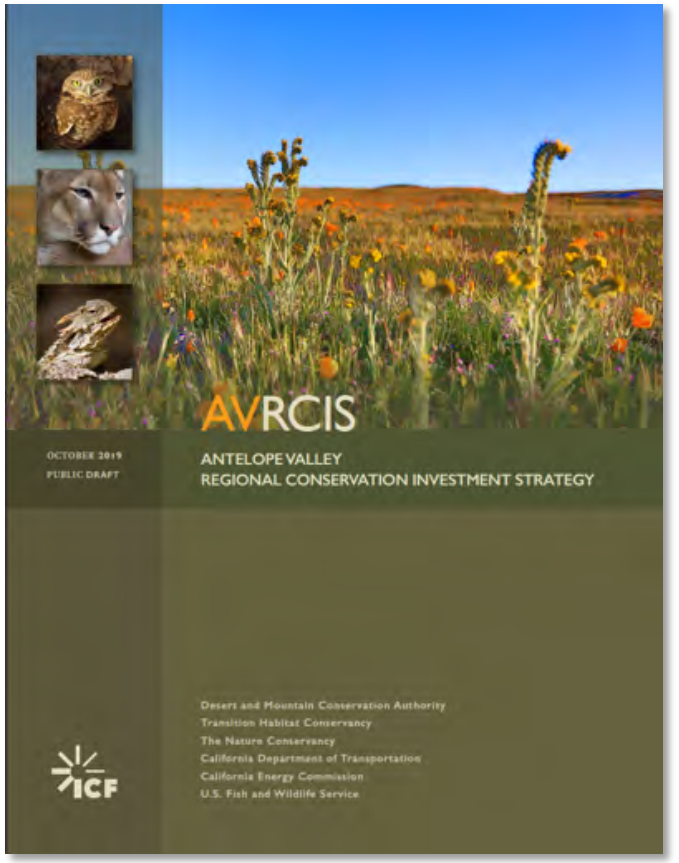


Figure 3-19
Conservation Values Mapping for the Foothill/Riparian Species Group in the Antelope Valley RCIS Area

Status of the Antelope Valley RCIS

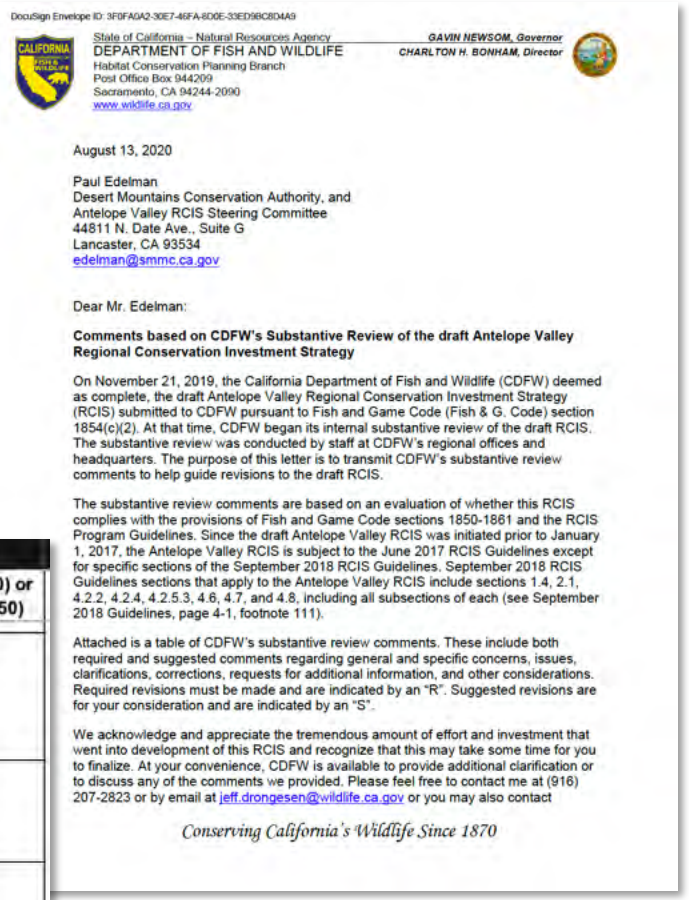
- **February 2019:** Submitted to CDFW for Completeness Review
- **March 2019:** CDFW Letter determined RCIS incomplete
- **October 2019:** Resubmitted to CDFW for 2nd Completeness Review
- **November 2019:** CDFW Letter determined RCIS is complete
- **December 13, 2019:** Public Review initiated (60-day review period)
- **December 23, 2019:** Local jurisdictions notified in writing
  - At least 60 days prior to submitting final RCIS
  - Allowed minimum of 30 days to comment
- **February 10, 2020:** End of Public Review period
- **June – September 2020:** Tribal outreach and coordination
- **August 2020:** Receive CDFW adequacy comments



Integrating Public and CDFW Comments, Gearing up to address and revise the RCIS

Overview of CDFW Adequacy Review Comments

- **Total CDFW Comments = 160**
  - Required changes to RCIS = 110
  - Suggested changes to RCIS = 50
- **Comments were similar in nature to what we received on other RCISs**
- **None of the comments were novel and troubling. (i.e., indicating a new/different interpretation of the CFGC or Guidelines that would require adding or reformulating the RCIS).**



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State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Habitat Conservation Planning Branch
Post Office Box 944209
Sacramento, CA 94244-2090
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director

August 13, 2020

Paul Edelman
Desert Mountains Conservation Authority, and
Antelope Valley RCIS Steering Committee
44811 N. Date Ave., Suite G
Lancaster, CA 93534
edelman@smmc.ca.gov

Dear Mr. Edelman:

Comments based on CDFW's Substantive Review of the draft Antelope Valley Regional Conservation Investment Strategy

On November 21, 2019, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) deemed as complete, the draft Antelope Valley Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) submitted to CDFW pursuant to Fish and Game Code (Fish & G. Code) section 1854(c)(2). At that time, CDFW began its internal substantive review of the draft RCIS. The substantive review was conducted by staff at CDFW's regional offices and headquarters. The purpose of this letter is to transmit CDFW's substantive review comments to help guide revisions to the draft RCIS.

The substantive review comments are based on an evaluation of whether this RCIS complies with the provisions of Fish and Game Code sections 1850-1861 and the RCIS Program Guidelines. Since the draft Antelope Valley RCIS was initiated prior to January 1, 2017, the Antelope Valley RCIS is subject to the June 2017 RCIS Guidelines except for specific sections of the September 2018 RCIS Guidelines. September 2018 RCIS Guidelines sections that apply to the Antelope Valley RCIS include sections 1.4, 2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.4, 4.2.5.3, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8, including all subsections of each (see September 2018 Guidelines, page 4-1, footnote 111).

Attached is a table of CDFW's substantive review comments. These include both required and suggested comments regarding general and specific concerns, issues, clarifications, corrections, requests for additional information, and other considerations. Required revisions must be made and are indicated by an "R". Suggested revisions are for your consideration and are indicated by an "S".

We acknowledge and appreciate the tremendous amount of effort and investment that went into development of this RCIS and recognize that this may take some time for you to finalize. At your convenience, CDFW is available to provide additional clarification or to discuss any of the comments we provided. Please feel free to contact me at (916) 207-2823 or by email at jeff.drongesen@wildlife.ca.gov or you may also contact

Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

	A	B	C	D
1	Comment #	Page #	Comment	Required (110) or Suggested (50)
154	153	Figure F-8	Figure F-8 does not appear to show the historic record of Desert Tortoise along Lovejoy Buttes, which is supported by CNDDB. Please ensure that the historic records of Agassiz's Desert Tortoise, as supported by CNDDB, are included in the analysis and figure.	R
155	154	G-4	Threshold SDMs: There are many options for model thresholds, and the choice of threshold has a significant effect on the final map of potentially suitable habitat. Please describe why MSS was chosen as the threshold and include references.	R
156	155	G-4	Threshold SDMs: In the second paragraph, clarify the methodology in the "From here, we took values..." sentence. Why were the data split into two classes, and what impact does this have on the RCIS model? Please include any references. Both classes show values higher than the MSS value. Please clarify the "The higher valued class..." sentence that states that the higher class identified areas higher than the MSS value.	R
	156	G-18	It is unclear is the RCIS used existing connectivity analysis results or if unique connectivity analysis was run for the RCIS. If a unique analysis was performed, the RCIS needs to include an explanation	R

Public Comments | CDFW Adequacy Review Comments | +

Integration of Tribal Concerns

- **Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians**
- **San Manuel Band of Mission Indians**
- **Tejon Indian Tribe**

  - Held mini workshop meetings and outreach phone calls
  - Answer questions regarding the AV RCIS
  - Listen to understand concerns
    - Protection of Cultural resources and sacred sites
    - AV RCIS can benefit tribal resource protection if RCIS implementation is coordinated with tribes

  - Process to integrate tribal awareness and sensitivity into RCIS
    - Description of each tribe and history in the planning area
    - Opportunities and process by which tribes can actively participate in the RCIS
    - Process by which other RCIS uses coordinate with the tribes when implementing an MCA and/or MCA/protected area management

Schedule to Finalize the Antelope Valley RCIS

- **February 2019:** Submitted to CDFW for Completeness Review
- **March 2019:** CDFW Letter determined RCIS incomplete
- **October 2019:** Resubmitted to CDFW for 2nd Completeness Review
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- **June – September 2020:** Tribal outreach and coordination
- **August 2020:** Receive CDFW adequacy comments
- **Fall 2020:** Address public and CDFW comments
- **Winter 2020/21:** Final RCIS Submitted to CDFW