

# **REGIONAL CONSERVATION INVESTMENT STRATEGIES PROGRAM & RESOURCES**

California's New Conservation & Advance  
Mitigation Program

Cal-IPC Symposium – November 9, 2018

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Habitat Conservation Planning Branch



# AGENDA

- CDFW Landscape Conservation Tools
- RCIS Program Overview
- RCIS Program Uses
- RCIS Analysis Example Using ACE 3.0
- RCIS Program Summary
- Funding Opportunities



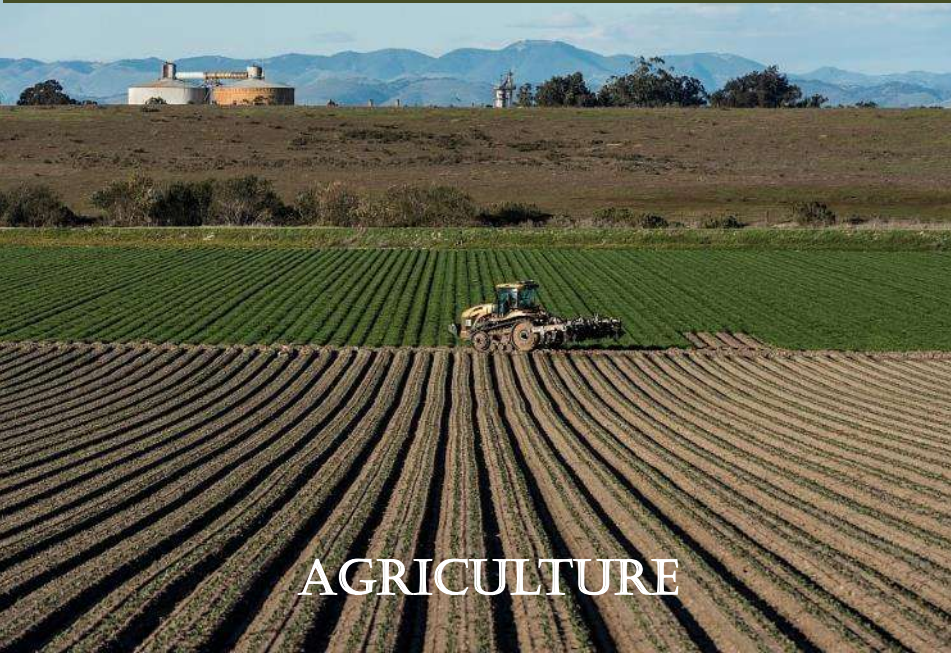
# OUR LAND USES DEPEND ON CONSERVATION



BIODIVERSITY



# ECOSYSTEM SERVICES



AGRICULTURE



WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION



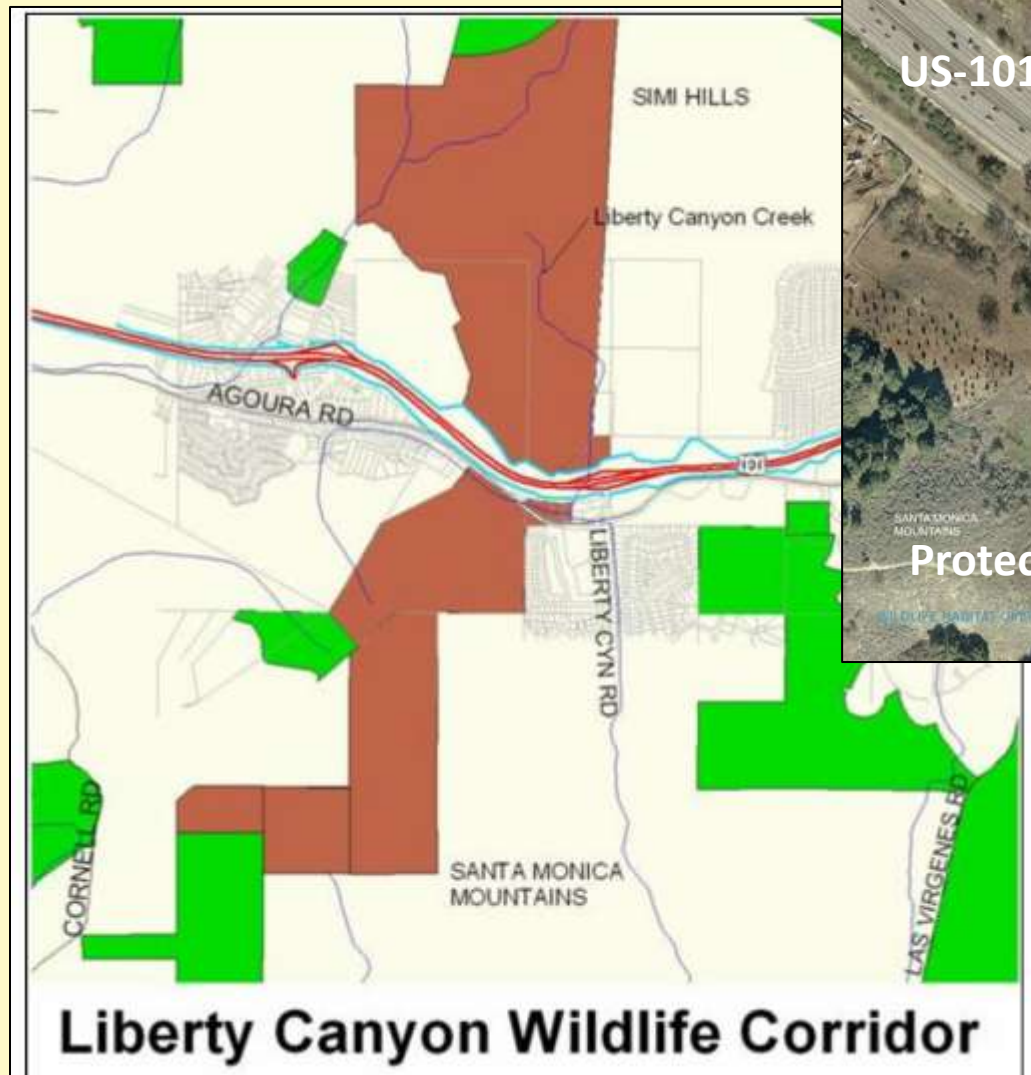
RECREATION



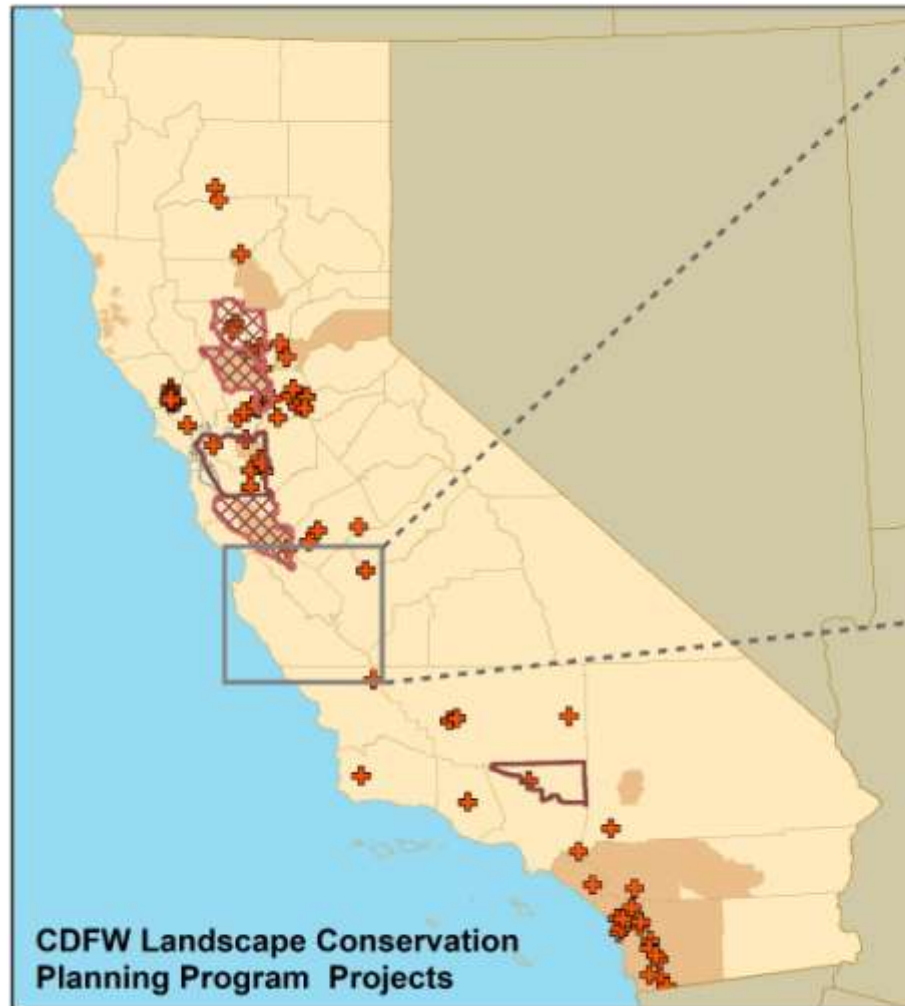
FLOOD RISK REDUCTION







# CORRIDORS AND CROSSINGS



# CDFW LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION TOOLS



Source: CALands.org

-  Banks for Which CDFW is a Signatory (Open and Closed)
-  NCCPs (Approved or In Preparation)
- RCISs Boundaries**
  -  Submitted
  -  In Process

# RCIS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

RCIS  
Program  
Overview



# THE RCIS PROGRAM

- Established January 1, 2017
- Achieve more strategic, effective conservation
- Protect vulnerable and declining species
- Enhance resiliency to climate change
- Provide efficient mitigation delivery
- Conserve with working lands and public lands





# RCIS PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- Regional Conservation Assessment (RCA)  
*Purpose: Assess conservation opportunities at an ecoregional scale*
- Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS)  
*Purpose: Develop a voluntary conservation strategy to inform conservation investments and advance mitigation*
- Mitigation Credit Agreement (MCA)  
*Purpose: Provide an advance mitigation tool for use on public and private lands, to offset CESA, CEQA, LSA, & other impacts*

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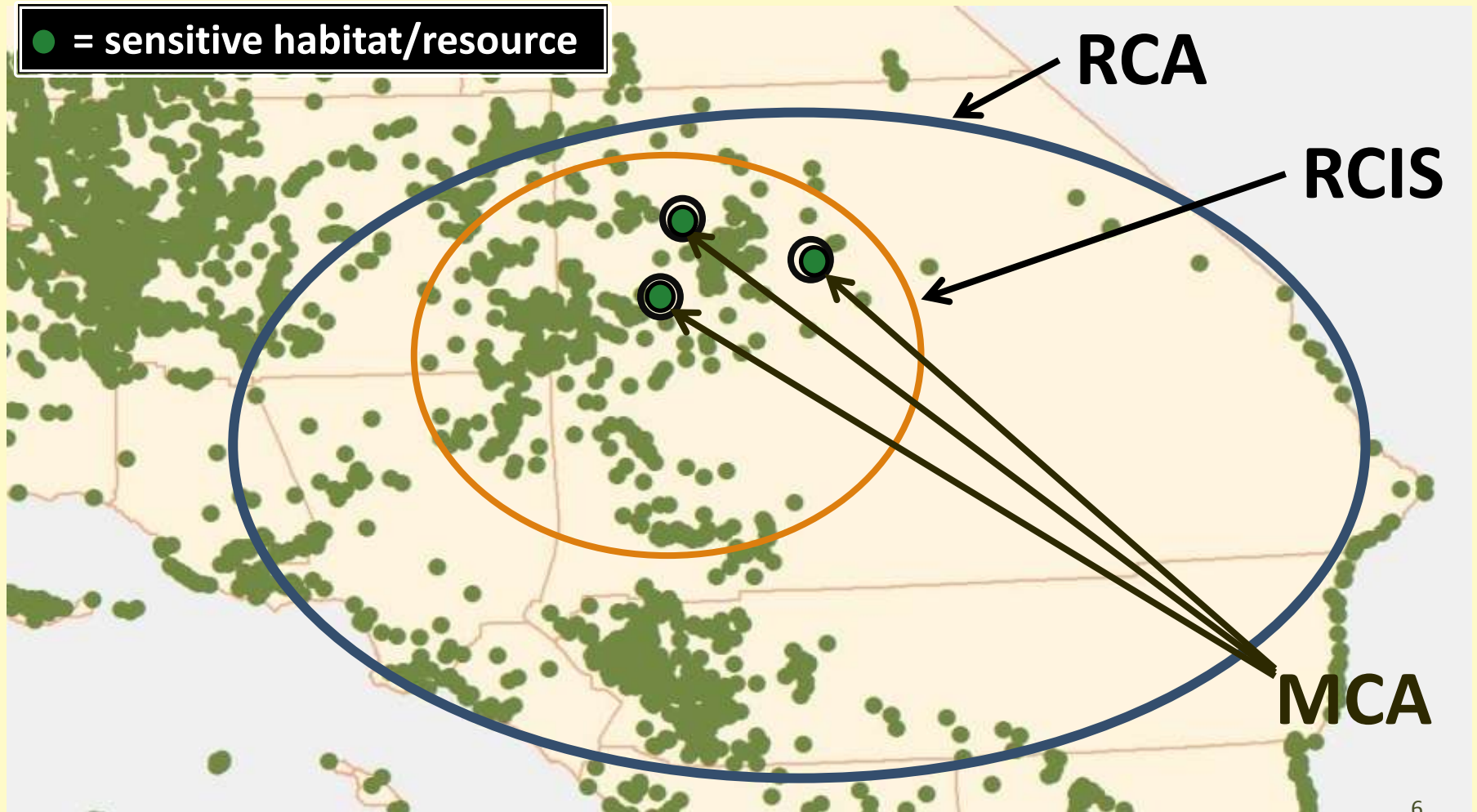
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# REGIONAL CONSERVATION SCALES





# REGIONAL CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT (RCA) OVERVIEW

RCIS  
Program  
Overview



# RCA KEY POINT

RCA is an ***assessment***  
to identify areas for conservation



# RCA OVERVIEW

- Ecological Information

*Biodiversity, sensitive species & habitats, connectivity, existing protected areas*

*Sources: CDFW BIOS, ACE 3.0, SWAP, CWHR, others*

- Pressures & Stressors

*Climate change, invasive species, others*

- Major Existing and Foreseeable Land Uses

*Conservation areas, infrastructure & development*

# REGIONAL CONSERVATION INVESTMENT STRATEGY (RCIS) OVERVIEW

RCIS  
Program  
Overview



## RCIS KEY POINT

RCIS is a ***strategy*** with ***actions*** for  
philanthropic and mitigation conservation  
investments



# RCIS OVERVIEW

- Voluntary, non-regulatory
- Non-binding on land use authorities
- Proposed by any public agency
- Good for 10 years, extendable
- ***RCIS required for MCAs***
- CDFW can approve eight or more\* RCISs
  - \****with support letter from State water or transportation infrastructure agency***



# RCIS COMPONENTS

- Ecological assessment of *focal species & other elements*
- Pressures/stressors – climate change, invasives, others
- Major foreseeable development, protected lands
- Opportunities for working lands conservation
- *Identify conservation & enhancement actions*



# POTENTIAL CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT ACTIONS

- Acquire and protect land
- Protect wildlife/habitat corridors
- Restore creeks and rivers
- Restore habitat on public land
- Install wildlife crossings
- Remove fish barriers
- Create/restore rearing habitat





# MITIGATION CREDIT AGREEMENT OVERVIEW

RCIS  
Program  
Overview



# MCA KEY POINT

**MCA<sup>\*</sup> *implement* RCIS actions  
as mitigation credits**

**\*MCA guidelines in process**

# MCA ENABLES:

- Advance mitigation
- Offset permanent and *temporary* impacts
- On *public* or private land
- Transferrable credits
- *Excess* project enhancements used as credits
- Offset impacts under CESA, CEQA, LSA





# MCA OVERVIEW

- Anyone may apply for an MCA
- Based on conservation & habitat enhancement actions in an approved RCIS
- Consistent with CDFW's Banking Program

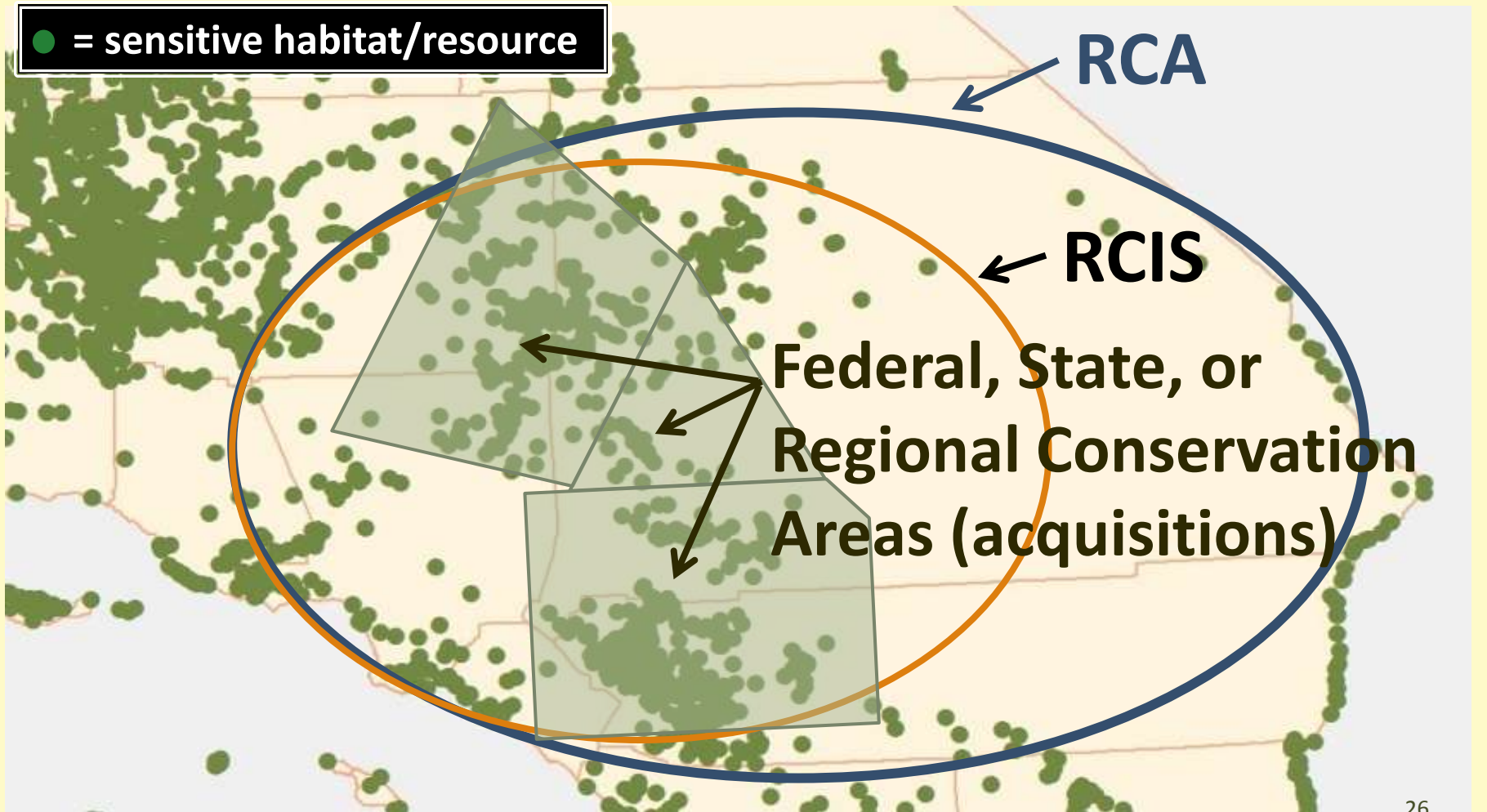


# RCIS PROGRAM EXAMPLES OF USES

## RCIS Program Overview

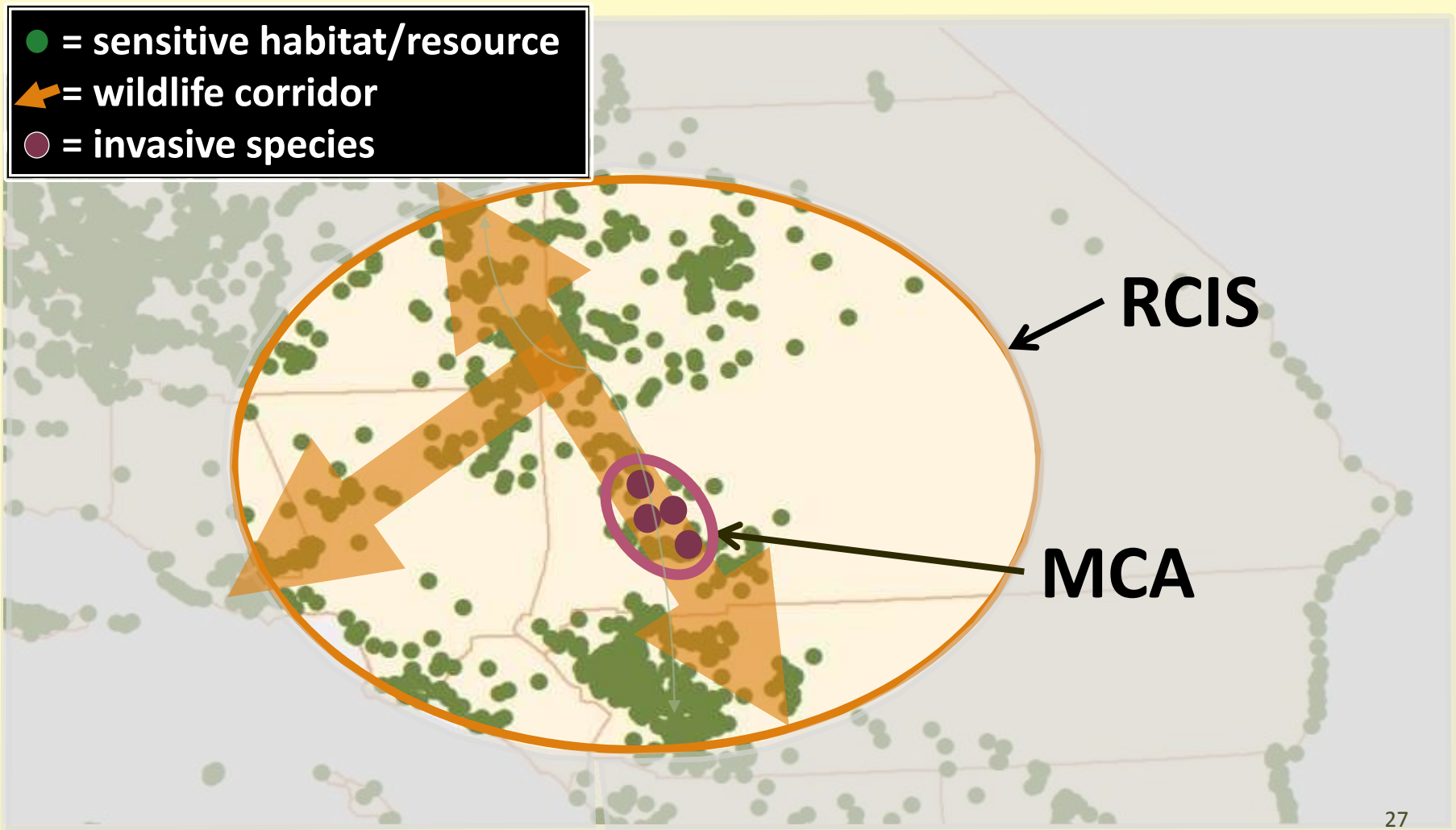


# PROGRAM USES – CONSERVATION





# PROGRAM USES – INVASIVE SPECIES



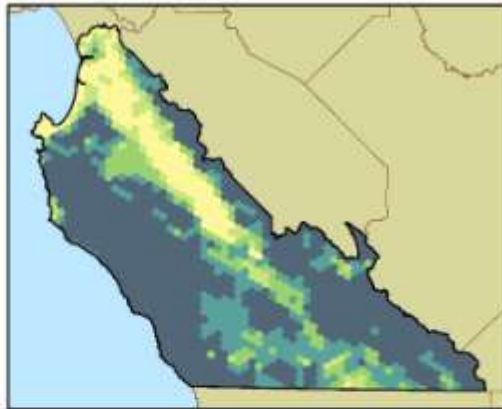
# RCIS PROGRAM ANALYSIS EXAMPLE USING ACE 3.0

RCIS  
Program  
Overview

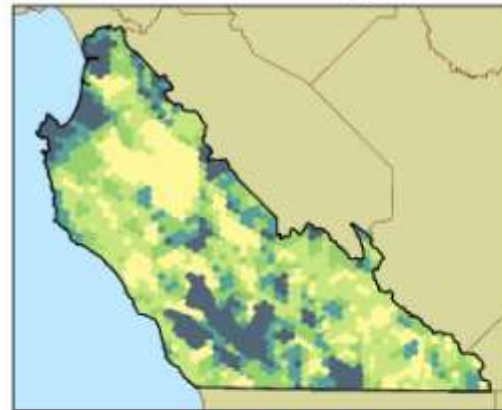


# CDFW ACE 3.0 DATA

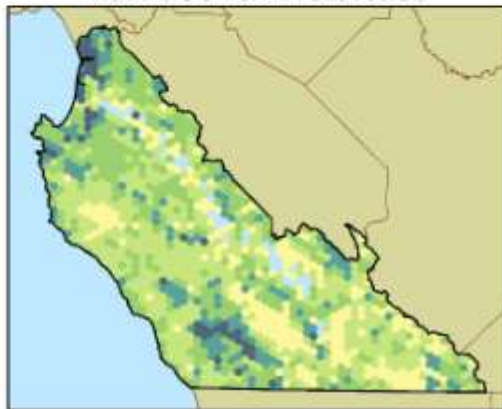
**Connectivity**



**Biodiversity**



**Significant  
Terrestrial Habitats**



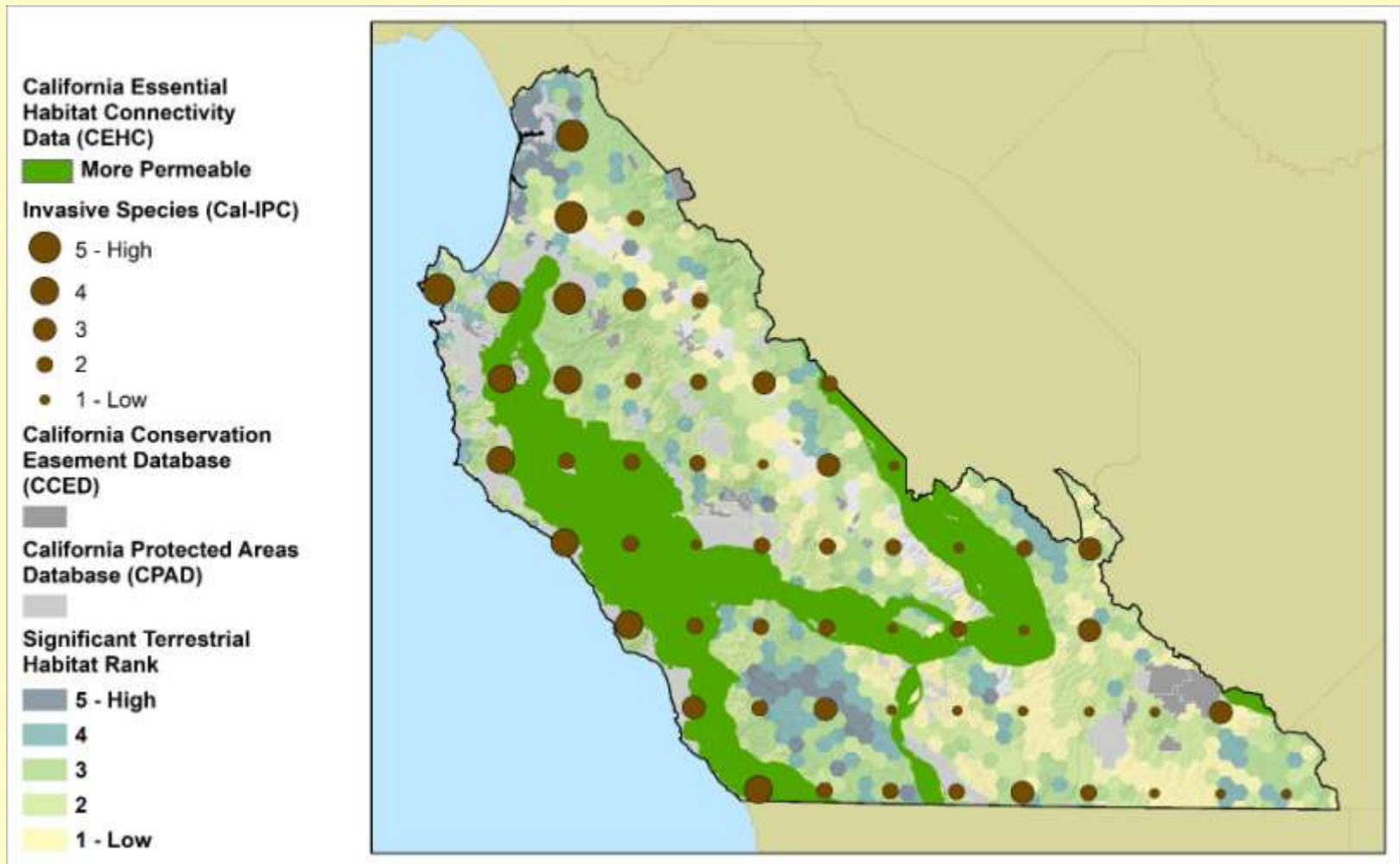
**Climate Resilience**



**ACE Rank**

- 5 - high
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1 - low

# ACE 3.0 DATA USAGE EXAMPLE





# RCIS PROGRAM SUMMARY

- *RCIS Program is voluntary, non-regulatory*
- *RCA is an assessment*
- *RCIS indicates actions*
- *MCA provides credits*
- *Non-binding on land use authorities*
- *Intended to be done quickly*



# RCIS PROGRAM STATUS SUMMARY

## **RCAs:**

- IRCAD – Mojave Desert (in process)

## **RCISs:**

- Santa Clara County (submitted, in review)
- Yolo County (submitted, in review)
- Mid Sacramento Valley (submitted, in review)
- East Bay (in process)
- Antelope Valley (in process)
- West San Bernardino County (in process)

# PROGRAM COMPARISONS & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Programs  
Overview



# POTENTIAL FUNDING & COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES

## ➤ **Proposition 68 (June 2018)**

- **RCISs** - for developing RCISs
  - \$5 million total
  - \$2 million available soon - through June 30, 2020

## ➤ **SB 1, SB 103** – advance mitigation for transportation

## ➤ **Agencies** – CalTrans, DWR, other local agencies


## ➤ **USFWS** – Section 6 ESA grants for HCPs/NCCPs

## ➤ **Others** - NGOs, philanthropies, Propositions



# FOR FURTHER RCIS PROGRAM INFO...

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

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## Regional Conservation Investment Strategies Program

On September 22, 2016, the Governor signed [Assembly Bill 2087 \(PDF\)](#) which created CDFW's **Regional Conservation Investment Strategy** pilot program (Program). The Program went into effect on January 1, 2017 and is administered by CDFW's Habitat Conservation Planning Branch in Sacramento. On July 21, 2017 the Governor signed Senate Bill 103 which makes two changes to Assembly Bill 2087: 1) it removes the January 1, 2020 "sunset" provision; and 2) it allows a Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) to be exempt from the "cap" (i.e., the limit of eight RCISs that may be approved by CDFW) if a state water or transportation infrastructure agency requests approval of the RCIS.

### Program Overview

The new Program encourages a voluntary, non-regulatory regional planning process intended to result in higher-quality conservation outcomes and includes an advance mitigation tool. The Program uses a science-based approach to identify conservation and enhancement opportunities that, if implemented, will help California's declining and vulnerable species by protecting, creating, restoring, and reconnecting habitat and may contribute to species recovery and adaptation to climate change and resiliency.

The Program consists of three components: regional conservation assessments (RCAs), regional conservation investment strategies (RCISs), and mitigation credit agreements (MCAs).



CDFW photo by Billie Wilson

### Regional Conservation Assessments (RCAs)

An RCA is a voluntary, non-regulatory, non-binding conservation assessment that includes information and analyses of important species, ecosystems, protected areas, and habitat linkages at the USDA ecoregion scale and may include more than one ecoregion. RCAs include information supporting the development of long-term conservation priorities including ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, water conservation, and preservation of agricultural lands. RCAs also support the development of RCISs that will more specifically identify areas of greatest conservation value. An RCA is not

### RCIS Documents

#### Program Guidelines

- [Regional Conservation Investment Strategies Program Guidelines \(PDF\)](#) (Updated June 2017)

#### Templates

RCA, RCIS and MCA templates expected Fall 2017

#### Fees and Fee Schedule

Fees and fee schedules to be published as follows:

- [RCA and RCIS Fee Schedule](#) (published June 5, 2017) (PDF)
- MCA expected Fall 2017

#### Presentations

- [RCIS Program Guidelines Public Presentation, June 21, 2017 \(PDF\)](#) - [with speaker notes \(PDF\)](#)
- [California Biodiversity Council - Interagency Alignment Team Meeting \(December 2016\) \(PDF\)](#)
- [California HCP Coalition Tahoe to Bay Workshop \(October 2016\) \(PDF\)](#)

#### Additional Resources

- [AB 2087 Text](#) (as enrolled September 2016) (PDF)
- [Guide to AB 2087 \(PDF\)](#)



# FOR FURTHER RCIS PROGRAM AND CONNECTIVITY INFO...

Please visit

[www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning/  
Regional-Conservation](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning/Regional-Conservation)

Landscape Conservation Planning Program

Habitat Conservation Planning Branch

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