

State Land Conservation Spending

Environmental Law Institute

Making Open Space Dollars Work for Wildlife

Roundtable Discussion

December 2007

Defenders of Wildlife





Defenders of Wildlife

...is dedicated to the protection of all native wild animals and plants in their natural communities.

New approaches that keep species from becoming endangered

Protect entire ecosystems and interconnected habitats



Road Map

- Land Conservation Spending Project
- State Spending Highlights
- Land Protection & State Wildlife Action Plans



Defenders of Wildlife Land Conservation Spending Project

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Land Conservation Spending Project

- Objective: To estimate how much is currently being spent toward protecting a system of habitat conservation areas across the U.S. (follow-on to Shaffer et al. 2002)
- Spending on Land Conservation 1992-2001
- Types: Fee Title, Easement, Rental, Cost Share
- 25 Federal Programs
- Spending Data from 45 States
- Land Conservation as surrogate for wildlife habitat protection



Land Conservation Spending Project

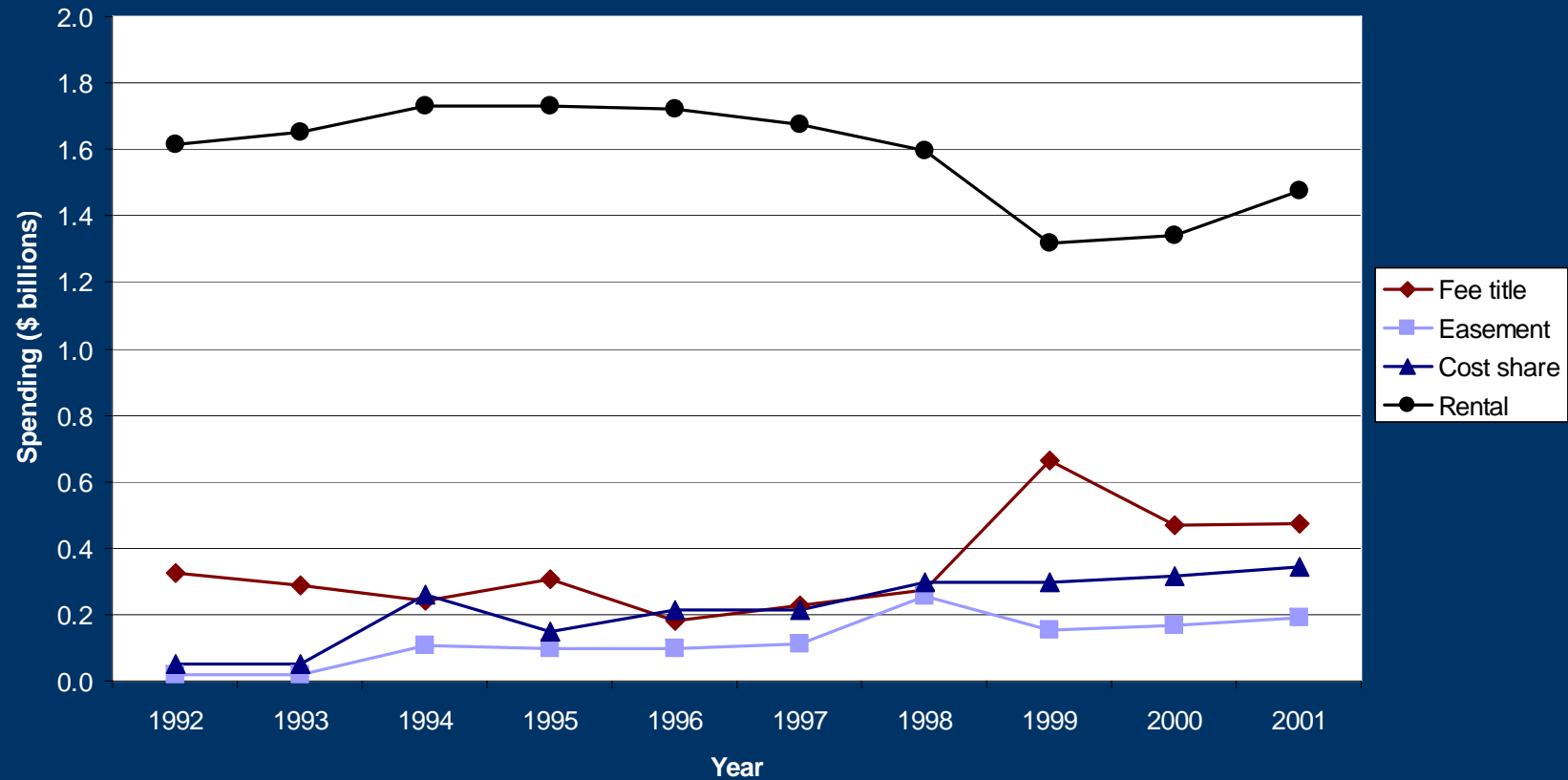
Land conservation spending by categories and sectors, 1992-2001

Billions of dollars

Spending Category	Federal	State	Total
Fee Title	\$3.4	\$8.0	\$11.4
Easement	\$1.2	\$1.5	\$2.7
Rental	\$15.8	No data	\$15.8
Cost Share	\$2.2	No data	\$2.2
Total	\$22.6	\$9.5	\$32.1



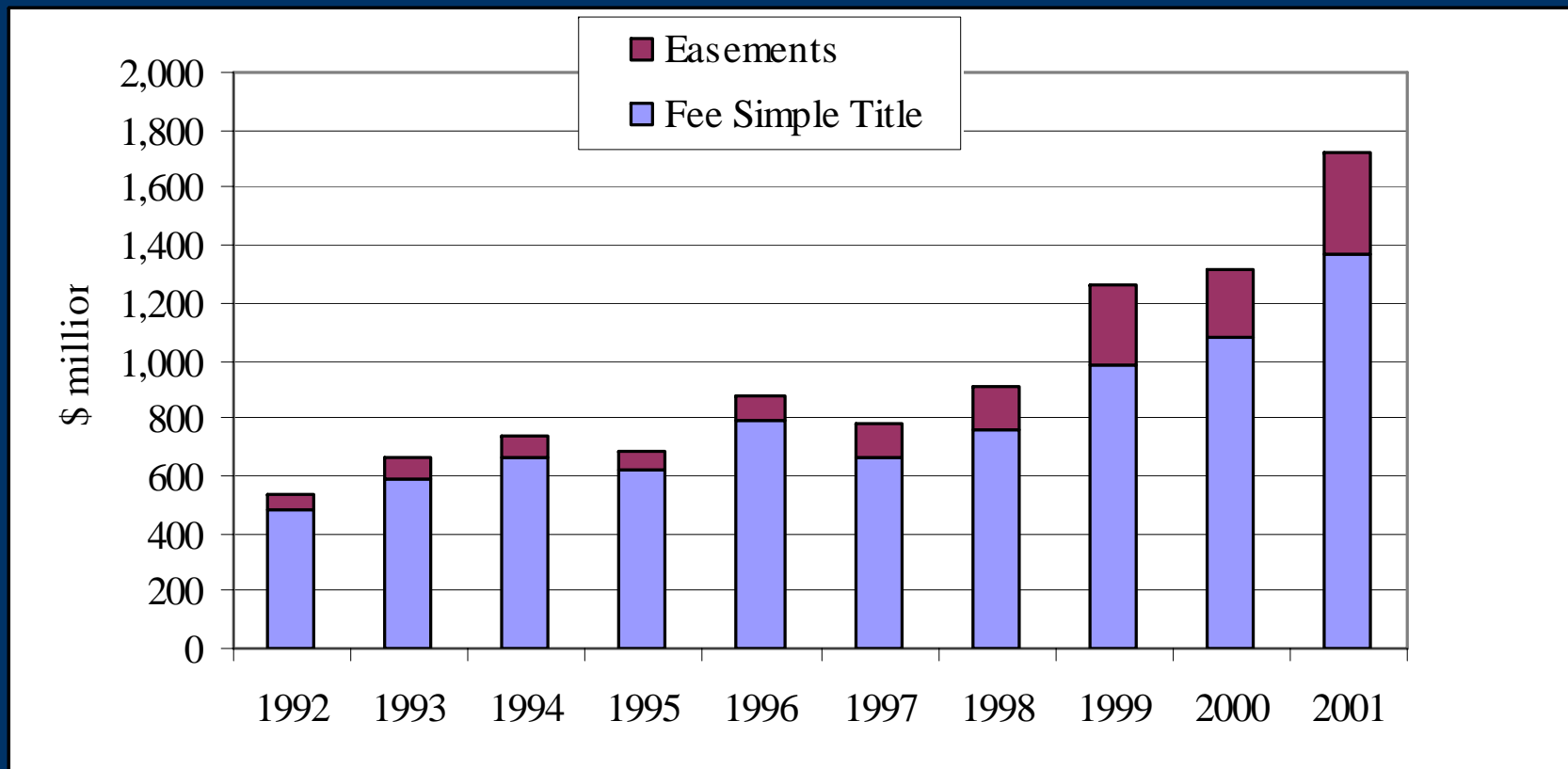
Federal Spending



Most federal spending (1.5 Billion/yr.) is in short term rentals through Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)



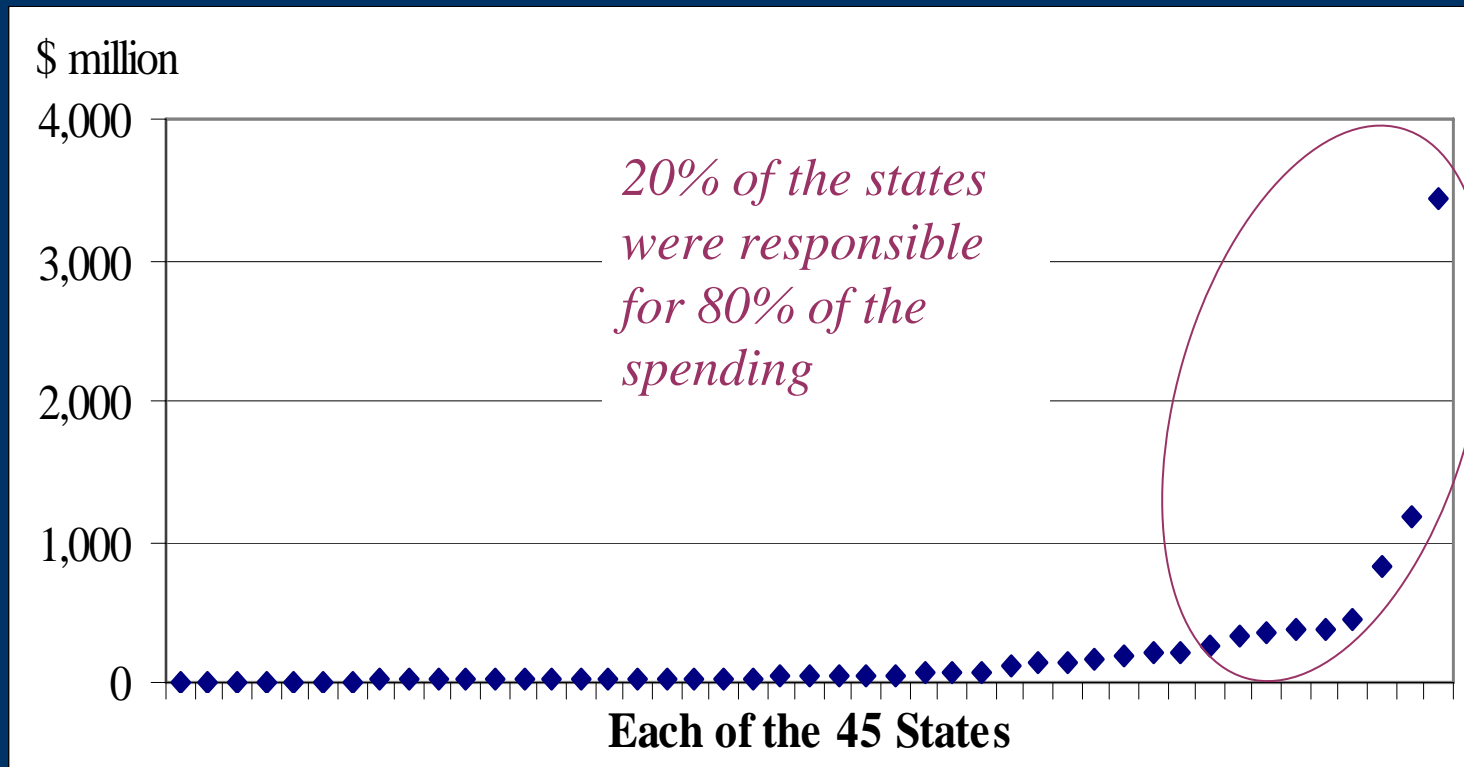
State Spending



Annual state spending on fee simple title vs. easements, 1992-2001;
Total = \$9.5 billion



State Spending



Total spending by each state on conservation land, 1992-2001
Total = \$9.5 billion



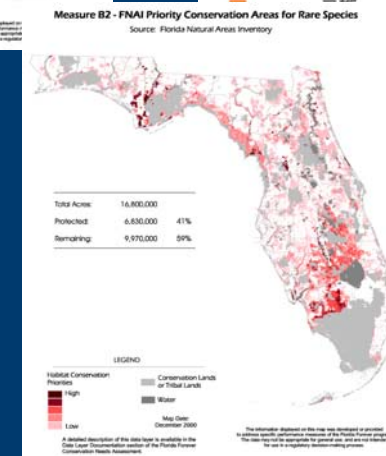
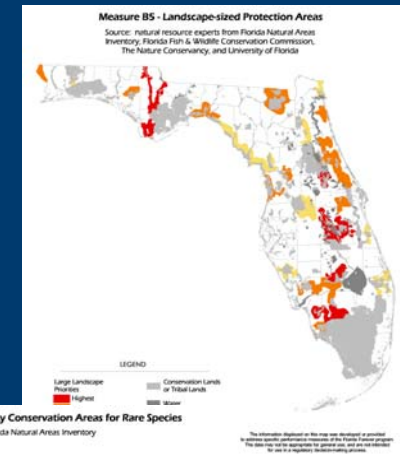
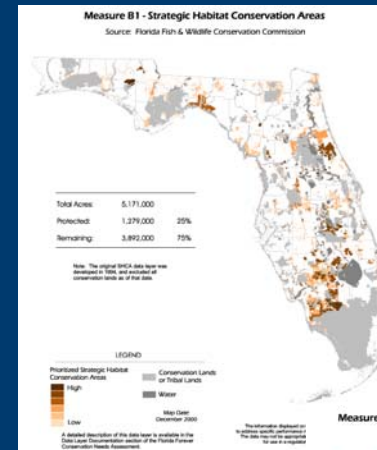
Leading States 1992-2001

1) Florida = 3.4 B	6) Maryland = 381 M
2) California = 1.2 B	7) New York = 346 M
3) New Jersey = 828 M	8) Pennsylvania = 338 M
4) Massachusetts = 444 M	9) North Carolina = 258 M
5) Washington = 383 M	10) Minnesota = 204 M



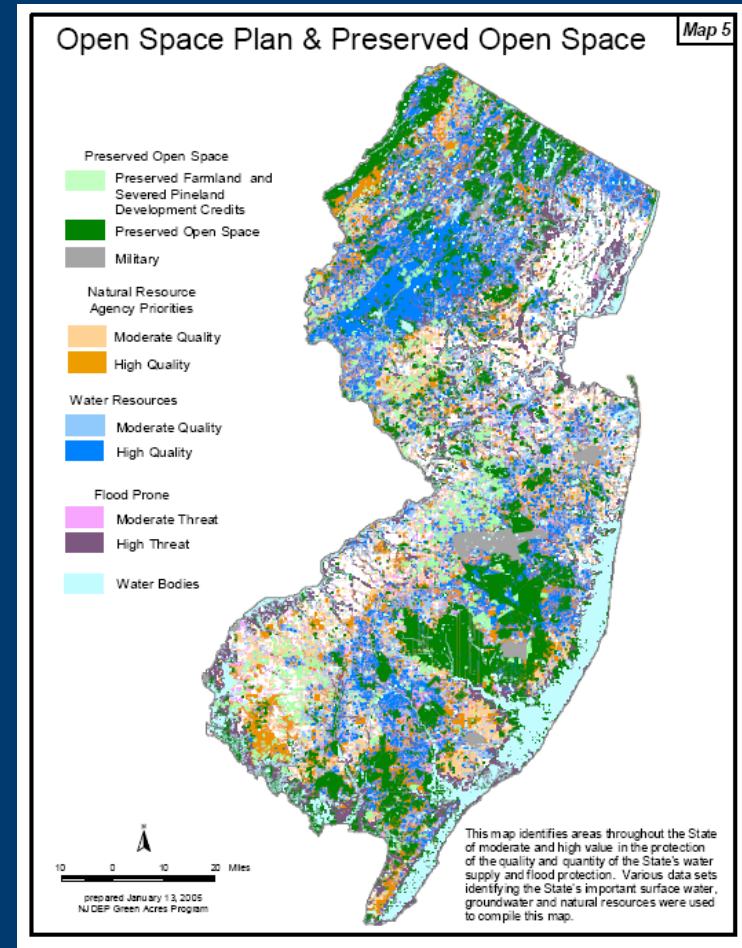
Florida Forever

- \$2.7 M spent 1992-2001
- 1.7 M acres protected since 1990
- 35% to Dept. Environmental Protection
- 1.5% to Florida Wildlife Commission
- Extensive criteria and maps - FNAI Conservation Needs Assessment



New Jersey Green Acres

- Over 520,000 acres protected since 1961
- \$640 M spent 1992-2001
- Goal of 1 million additional acres in 10 years (1999-2010)
- Landscape Project used among factors



Recommendations

- Tracking Conservation Spending
- Documenting State Funding Sources
- Sharing Spending Experiences with other States
- Guiding Spending with Conservation Planning
- Spending Effectiveness for Habitat Conservation



State Wildlife Action Plans & Land Protection

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Importance of State Wildlife Grants Program

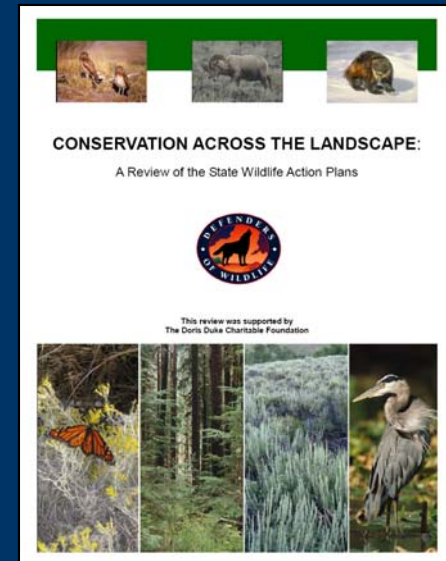
- **Conservation Planning** – Most states have never done a comprehensive wildlife plan.
- **Habitat Conservation** – Habitat loss is the main problem for wildlife. Plans can map out habitat areas.
- **Funding & Policy Connections** – To address habitat loss, plans can be used to inform land use decisions and open space investments.



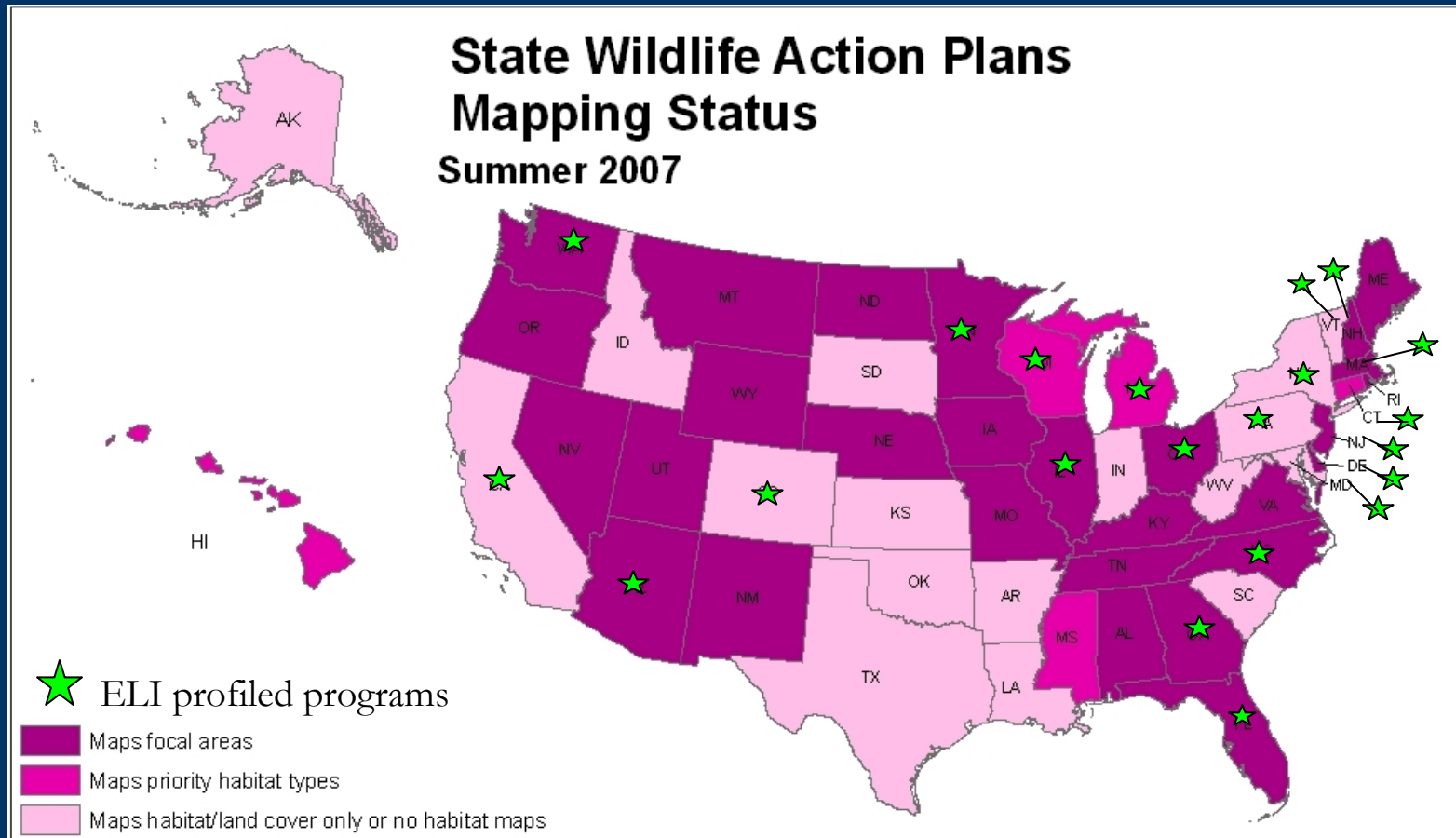
Wildlife Plans Review

Essential Questions:

- **Where should we work?**
(Conservation planning is a spatial exercise)
- **What should we do when we get there?**
(Conservation Goals & Actions)
- **What do we do first?**
(Prioritization)
- Summary of Results in Defenders report:
“Conservation Across the Landscape: A Review of the State Wildlife Action Plans”



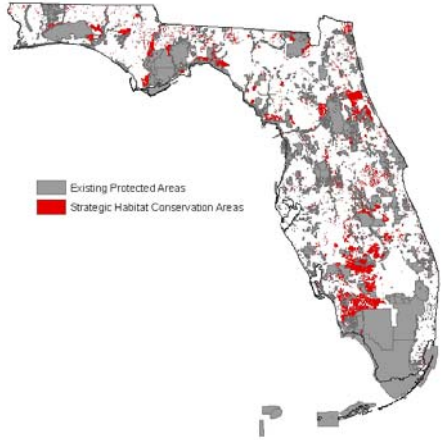
Habitat Conservation: Mapping is Key



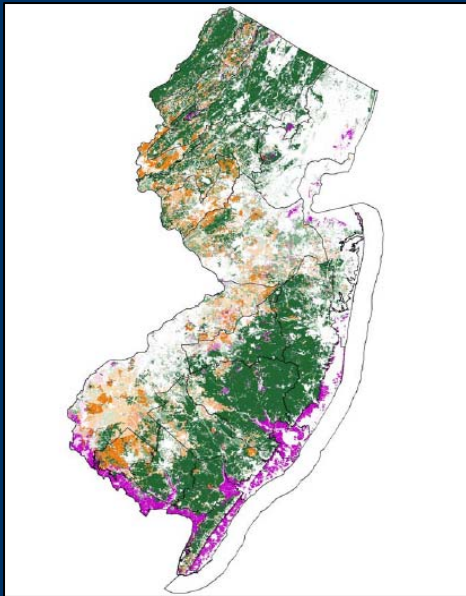
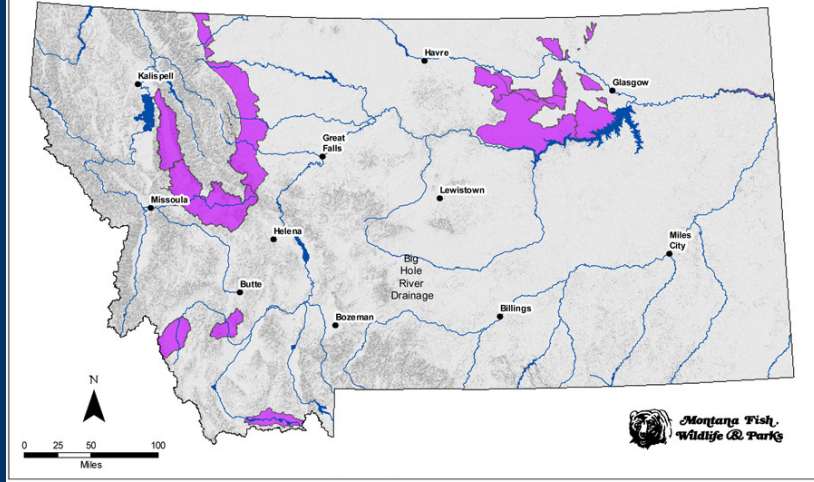
56% of States produced maps showing conservation focal areas



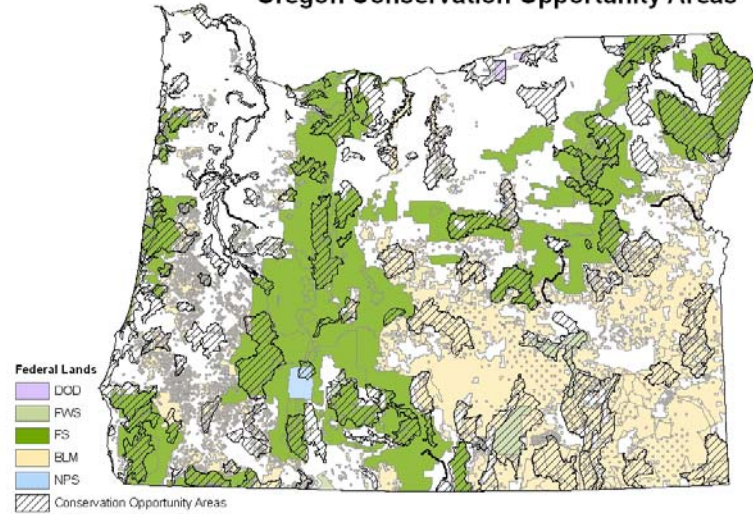
Florida's Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas



Commonly Identified Conservation Focus Areas



Oregon Conservation Opportunity Areas



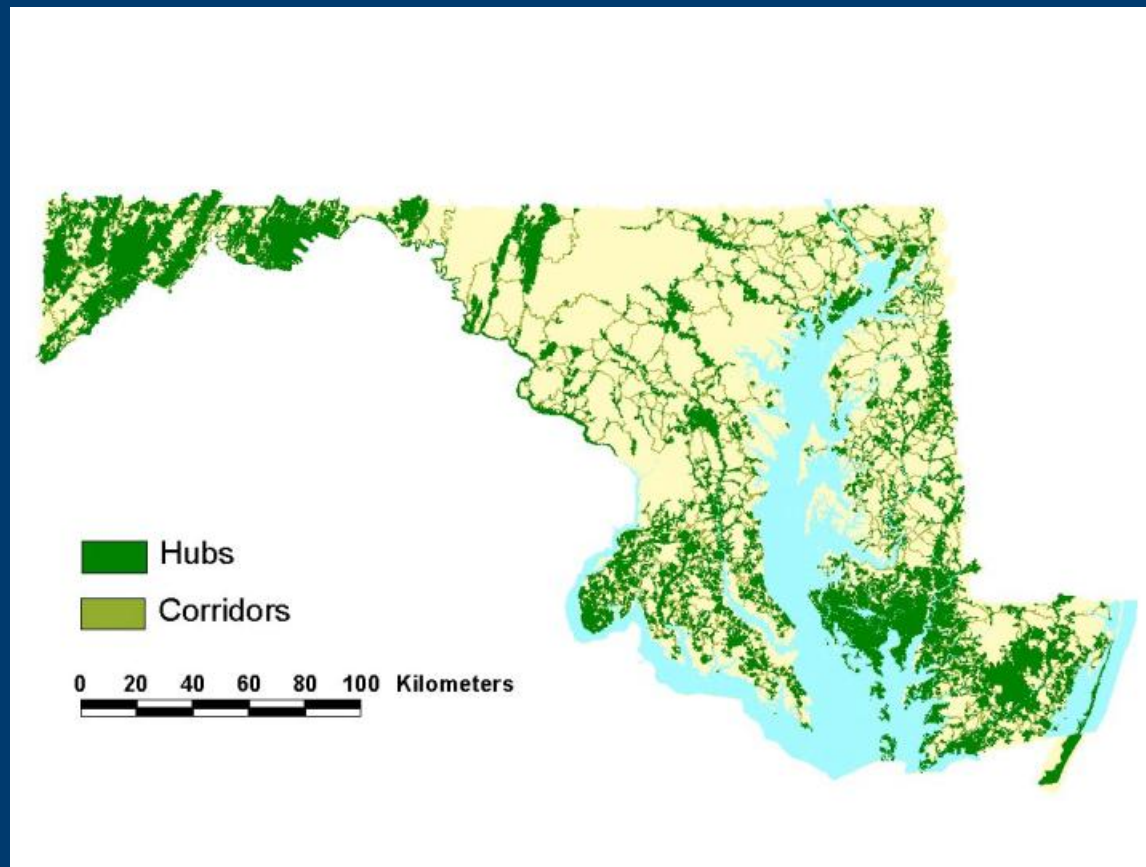
Maryland Conservation Actions

- **Focal Areas:** “Identify the most important sites throughout the state for wildlife diversity conservation”
- **Conservation Network:** “Develop a core network of protected wildlife diversity conservation lands to capture the full array of Maryland’s wildlife species”
- **Planning:** “Incorporate wildlife diversity conservation at the local land use planning level.”
- **Bay:** “Collaborate with Chesapeake Bay conservation initiatives to incorporate wildlife diversity conservation into efforts to ‘Save the Bay’.”

Source: MD WDCP Table 4.2



Maryland GreenPrint



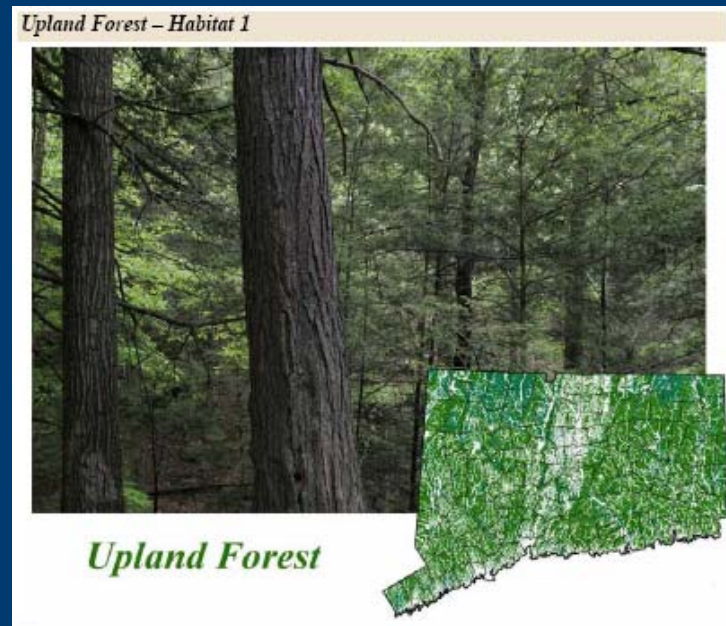
Source: Maryland Department of Natural Resources

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Connecticut Land Protection

- The Green Plan: Guiding Land Acquisition & Protection in Connecticut 2007-2012
- Reference to State wildlife plan among 7 DEP plans in appendix 1.
 - “Protection of lands containing the identified habitats will aid in ensuring the long term protection of these species”
 - Unfortunately, no focal areas defined in state wildlife plan.



Land Trusts

- Key partners in land conservation
- IRS audits – more scrutiny of public benefits from conservation easements to be worthy of a federal tax benefit
- Land trusts need information to document “conservation purposes” in easement language



Funding: Strategic Investment in Habitat

- The U.S. spends over \$3 Billion/yr on land conservation.
- State Wildlife Grants provides \$65 million a year for wildlife plans, research and some habitat conservation.
- Strategic use of land conservation spending for habitat is critical and achievable with conservation plans.



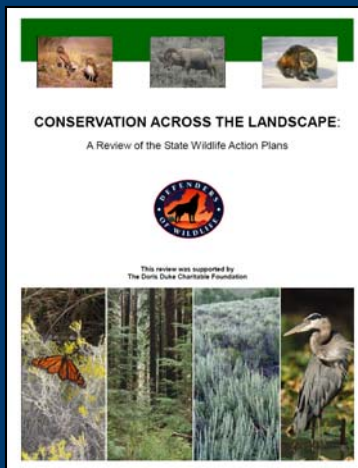
What Can Open Space Conservationists Do?

- Learn about your state wildlife action plan
- Ask states wildlife agencies to tell you where it is most important to protect wildlife habitat
- Invest your time and dollars strategically in those places
- Doing so will help your state improve the utility of its wildlife plan



www.defenders.org/statewildlifeplans

www.wildlifeactionplans.org



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