

Awards Luncheon June 27, 2016

Members of the Awards Committee are: Terry Steinwand, North Dakota; Gregory Johnson, Kentucky; Mark Reiter, Indiana; and myself; we are one person short on the Committee with the retirement of Ed Boggess. I want to thank them for their assistance in choosing the winners. We had 18 nominations for the five main awards.

Award winners are:

The Law Enforcement Officer of the Year award is given to the individual who in the past year has shown superior leadership, initiative, and dedication in their duties. This person should personify achievement, public service, education, and above all natural resource conservation. This award goes to **Dustin Whitehead, Indiana**; *award accepted by Dustin*.

The Wildlife Biologist of the Year award is given to the individual who has shown an unparalleled initiative towards the better understanding of wildlife and their conservation. This award goes to **Dan Halstead, North Dakota**; *award accepted by Terry Steinwand*.

The Fisheries Biologist of the Year award is given to the individual who has shown an unparalleled initiative towards the better understanding of fishes and their conservation. This award goes to **Jonathan Meerbeek, Iowa**; *award accepted by Jonathan*.

The Spirit of the Shack award is given to the individual who exemplifies the ideals of the great conservationist and educator, Aldo Leopold, and who has contributed to conservation in a superior way. This individual should epitomize stewardship and dedication to fish and wildlife conservation. This year we chose two. The first award goes to **Edward K. Boggess, Minnesota**; *award accepted by Jim Leach*. The second award goes to **William Suchy, Iowa** posthumously, *award accepted by Kelley Myers who will see that his family gets the award*.

Excellence in Conservation award is given to the agency that has shown excellence in conservation through a specific project. Each member agency would select one project completed in the awards year that exemplifies the goal of fish and wildlife conservation. This award also has a perpetual plaque.

This award goes to:

**Heather Robinson, Ohio Environmental Crimes Unit,
Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney's Office**

Excerpt from nomination (if you want to read it):

Ms. Robinson prosecuted her first wildlife case in 2000. Highlighting her distinguished career, Ms. Robinson has prosecuted a multi-state ring of criminals poaching reptiles and salamanders from the wild for sale into the pet trade, the massive over-bagging of sport fish species for sale in restaurants, unscrupulous hunting guides who lured out-of-state hunters into Ohio to hunt on private lands without permission, and individuals poaching white-tailed deer to sell as fresh meat, jerky, wall mounts and home furnishings.

She has also prosecuted state and federal wildlife cases involving the illegal interstate trafficking and commercialization of white-tailed deer. Interstate movement of untested and uncertified deer threatens both wild deer herds and captive livestock. Three of these cases came to a successful completion in 2015, resulting in the largest fines and restitution for an individual

Trading a Focus on Species for a Natural Community Approach



Nate Muenks, Habitat Management Coordinator

The Midwest is a biologically diverse region.



Missouri alone has over 2,000 native
vascular plant species

Helton Prairie Natural Area, Harrison County

67 native mammal species



Eastern Chipmunk

434 bird species have been recorded within the state
- of those approximately **170** breed within Missouri annually



Scarlet Tanager



Eastern Collared Lizard

108 native reptile and amphibian species



Spring Peeper

214 native fish species



Niangua Darter



Pocketbook

69 species of **native** freshwater mussels

36 native crayfish



St. Francis River Crayfish

Monarch on rough blazing star

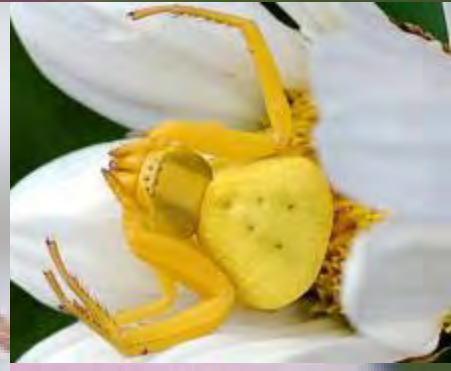


Over 100 species of **native** butterflies and skippers
Over 100 species of **native** dragonfly & damselfly



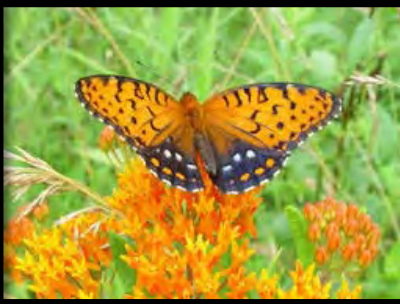
Widow Skimmer dragonfly

Over 400 species of **native** bees
1000+ species of other invertebrates



Species of Conservation Concern (SOCC)

1,143 Total SOCC



Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)

603 Total SGCN

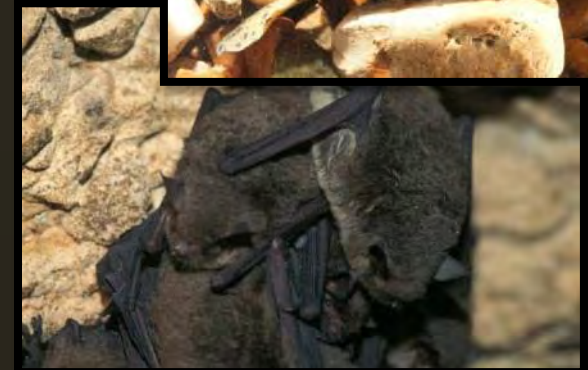
Recognized in the Missouri State Wildlife Action Plan

"Special Interest Species"

Game Species



Rare Species



As conservationists how do we conserve and manage this great amount of native biological diversity?



- Species by species approach is impractical.
- A lack of knowledge for some of these species': life history; distributions; habitat needs; population statuses; etc.
- Limited resources affect what we as conservationists can actually get done
- In the face of these issues, the most efficient way for us to conserve these species is to focus on the conservation/management of the natural communities (habitat systems) that these species occur within, along with the ecosystem functions and processes that they rely upon

Natural Community Conservation

Example - A native 30-acre prairie can support over 150 species of plants and 1000's of species of invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, birds, mammals and potentially, aquatic species.

With such diversity of species, we can see the value of managing a "mosaic" to benefit the suite of dependent species.



Conservation of structurally diverse, high quality natural communities exhibiting varying stages of succession (A "mosaic")

Natural Community Conservation

- The assumption is made that this approach will conserve the most species, including “special interest” species, with the most efficient use of resources.

- Could occur on many scales:

- Local “patches”
- Landscape
- State
- Regional
- ...or Beyond!



Natural Community Conservation

Doesn't Mean We Give Up on Species

- Monitoring is a must.
 - If necessary, additional resources can be put into “special interest” species.
 - If rare/declining species do not show signs of improvement, modification or species-specific management may be evaluated at that time





So....Out of all the opportunity out there, how do we prioritize where to go to work?



A photograph of a vast field of wildflowers, primarily pink and white, in full bloom. The flowers are scattered across a green field, with some taller stalks rising above the others. In the background, a dense forest of trees is visible under a slightly overcast sky. The overall scene is a natural, open landscape.

Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs)

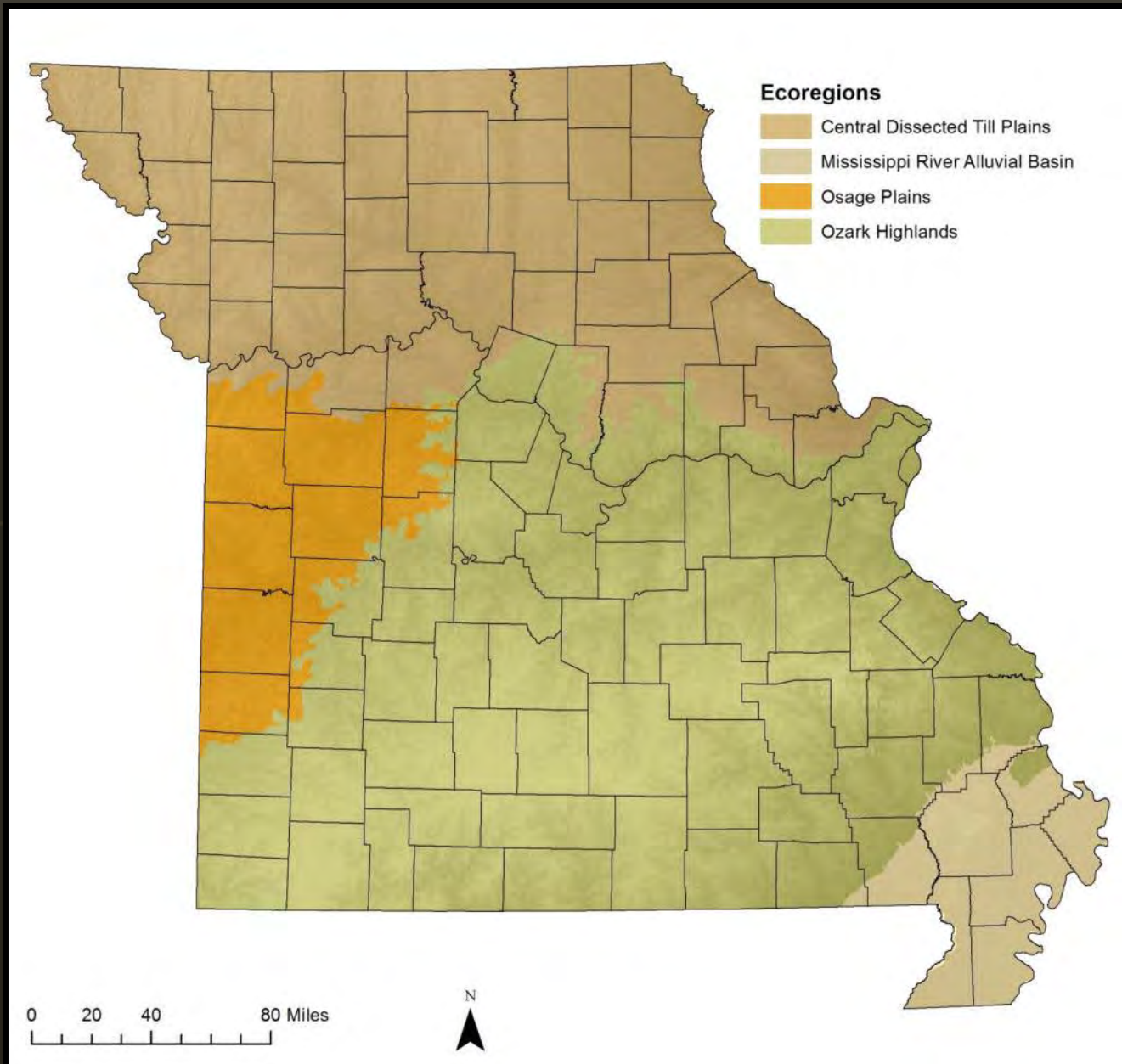
.....greatest opportunities for sustainable conservation of a state's natural communities and the native flora and fauna dependent upon them.

COAs - A Landscape Approach

- Providing proper management and connectivity of quality natural communities will not only serve to sustain current species populations, but hopefully bolster those populations in decline.



Missouri Ecological Regions





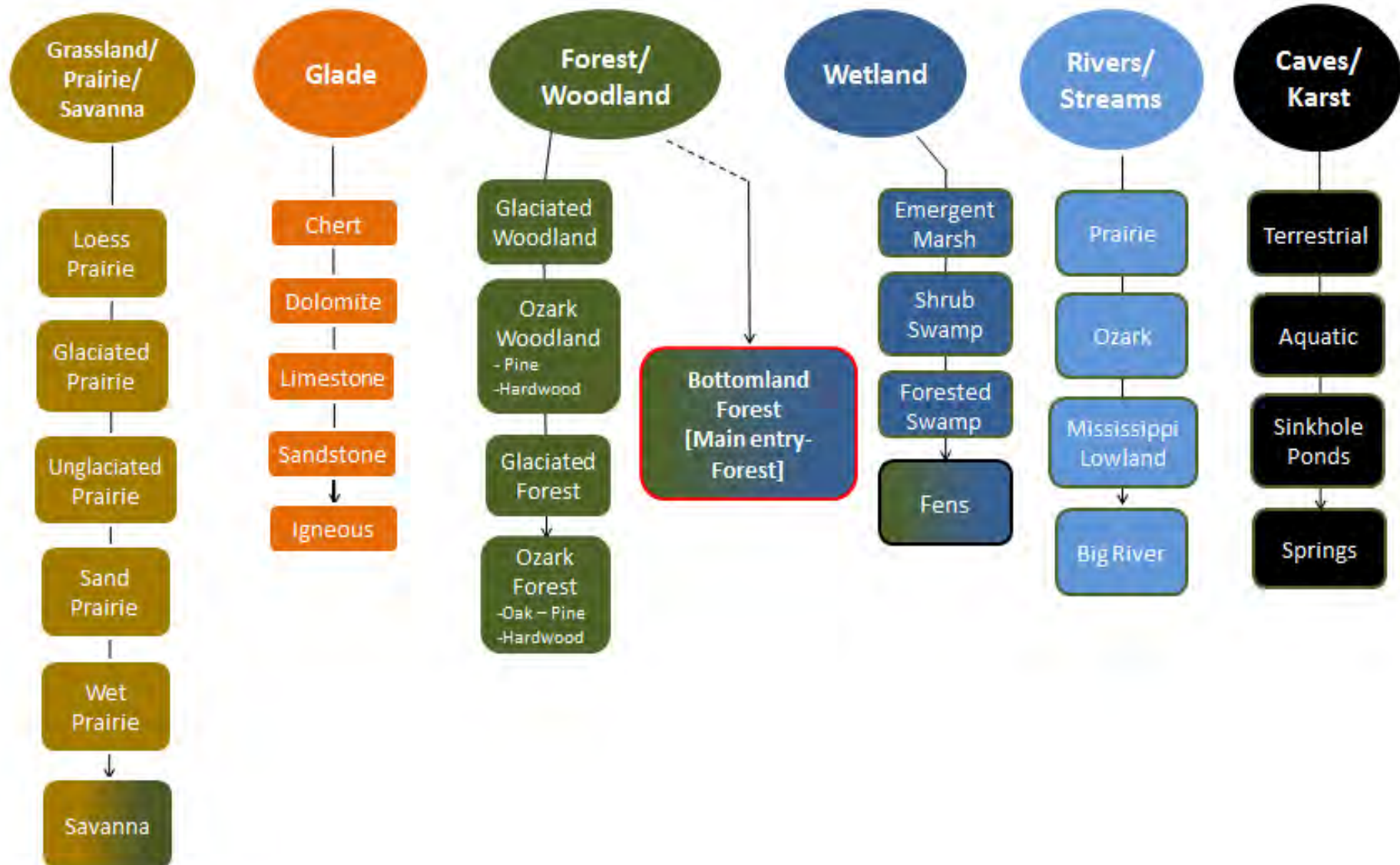
Primary Natural Communities of Missouri



- Caves and Karst
- Grassland/Prairie/
Savanna
- Forest and Woodland
- Glades
- Wetlands
- Rivers and Streams

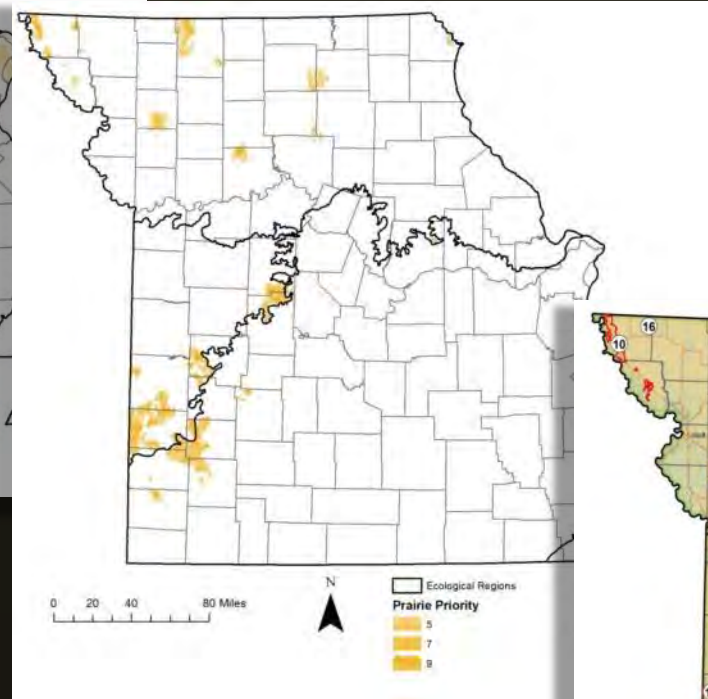
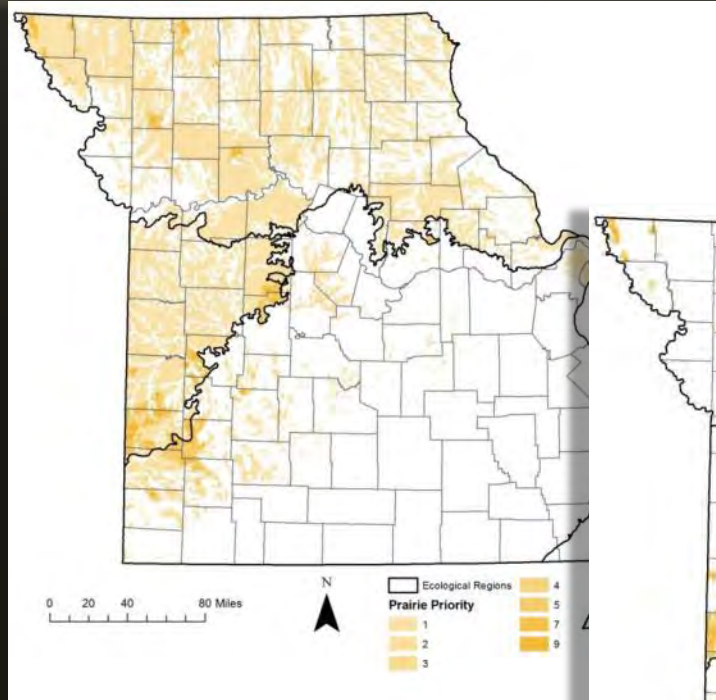


Natural Communities Breakdown



COAs - The Process

3) Better Focus conservation efforts



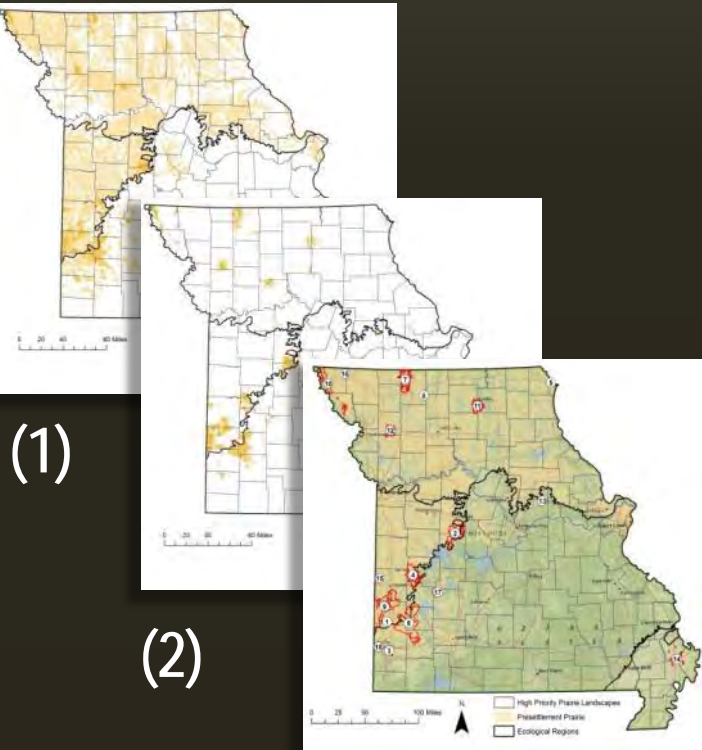
1) Identify all conservation opportunities

2) Isolate those areas of greatest conservation opportunity

COAs - The Overarching Goal



4) Guide strategic decision-making regarding conservation actions within the state/region



(1)

(2)

(3)

Natural Community Teams

	Glade	Rivers and Streams	Caves/Karst	Forest/Woodland	<i>Wetland</i>	<i>Grassland</i>
Wildlife	Rhonda Rimer* Randall Roy Susan Farrington* Chris Newbold	Chris Daniel* Krista Noel Steve Buback	Rhonda Rimer* Andrea Schuhmann Bruce Henry	Lee Hughes Nikki Walker Justin Gailey Ryan Jones Susan Farrington*	Chris Daniel* Mike Leahy Chris Freeman Kevin Brunke Craig Crisler Brad Jacobs Sarah Kendrick	Max Alleger Scott Sudkamp Matt Hill
Private Lands	Aimee Coy Julie Norris	Mike Petersen Kyle Reno	Brad Pobst Jan Dellamano	Matt Curry Jamie Barton	Chris McLeland Rod Doolen	John Murphy Randy Haas
Fisheries	Andy Turner Dave Woods	Eric Rahm Matt Matheney Phil Pitts Joe McMullen Sherry Fisher	Paul Blanchard* Jason Crites Rick Horton	Blake Stephens Rob Pulliam	Paul Blanchard* Chris Kennedy	Adam Boman Greg Pitchford Paul Calvert
Forestry	Greg Cassell Paul Johnson	Phil Sneed Ross Glenn Steve Paes	Mike Keeley Sarah Egly	Rich Blatz Mark Pelton Jason Jacobson Mark Johanson	Mark Pelton	
Resource Science	Jeff Briggler* Janet Haslerig Malissa Briggler*	Zach Ford Steve McMurray Jeff Briggler*	Tony Elliot Doug Novinger Shelly Colaskie	Elizabeth Olson Alex Wolf Jeff Briggler* Debby Fantz	Doreen Mengel Del Lobb Frank Nelson Andy Raedeke	Elizabeth Middleton Malissa Briggler*
Admin		Stuart Miller			Stuart Miller	

*individual participates in multiple habitat teams



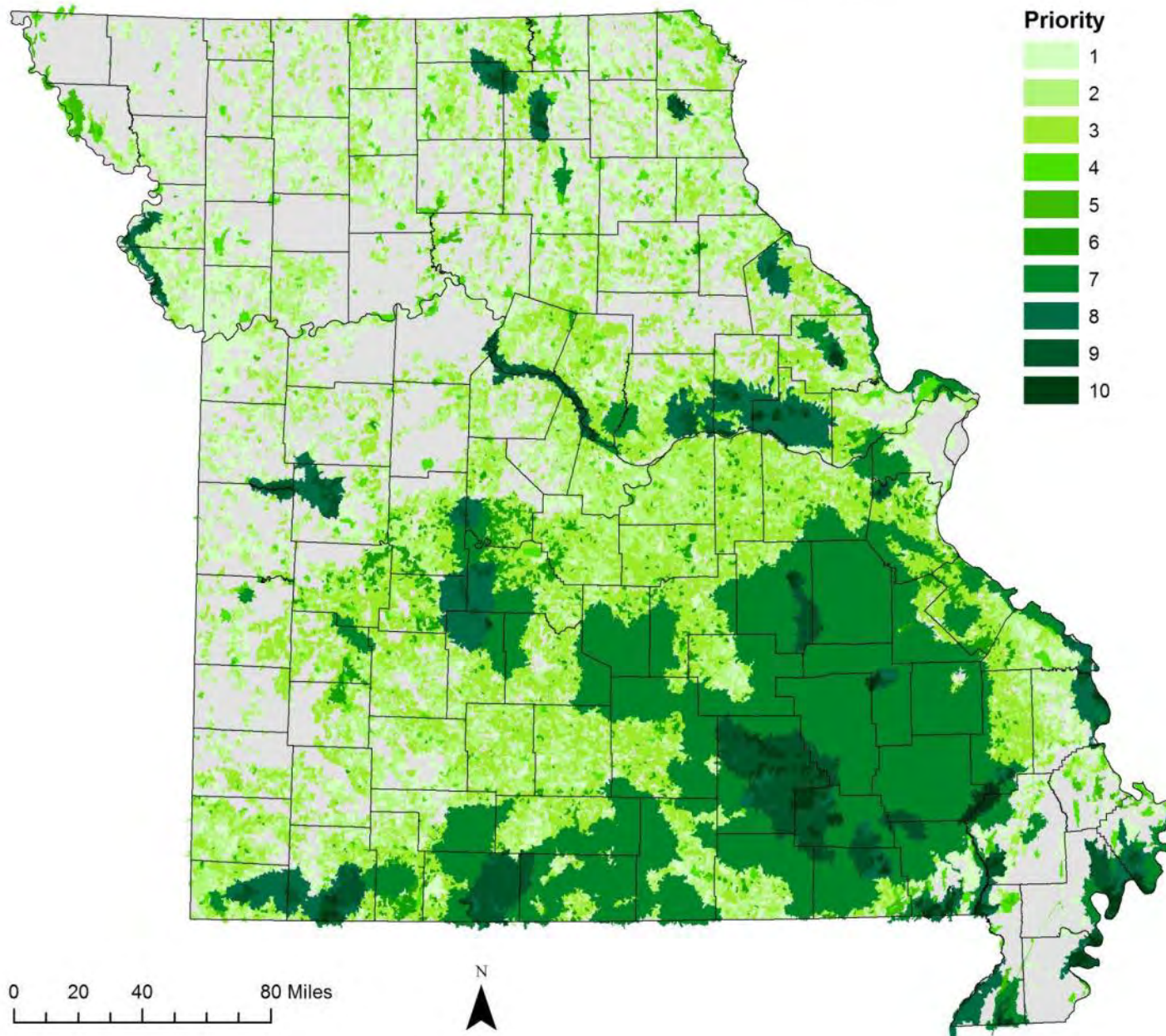
Forest and Woodland Opportunities

Criteria For Forest/Woodland Opportunities

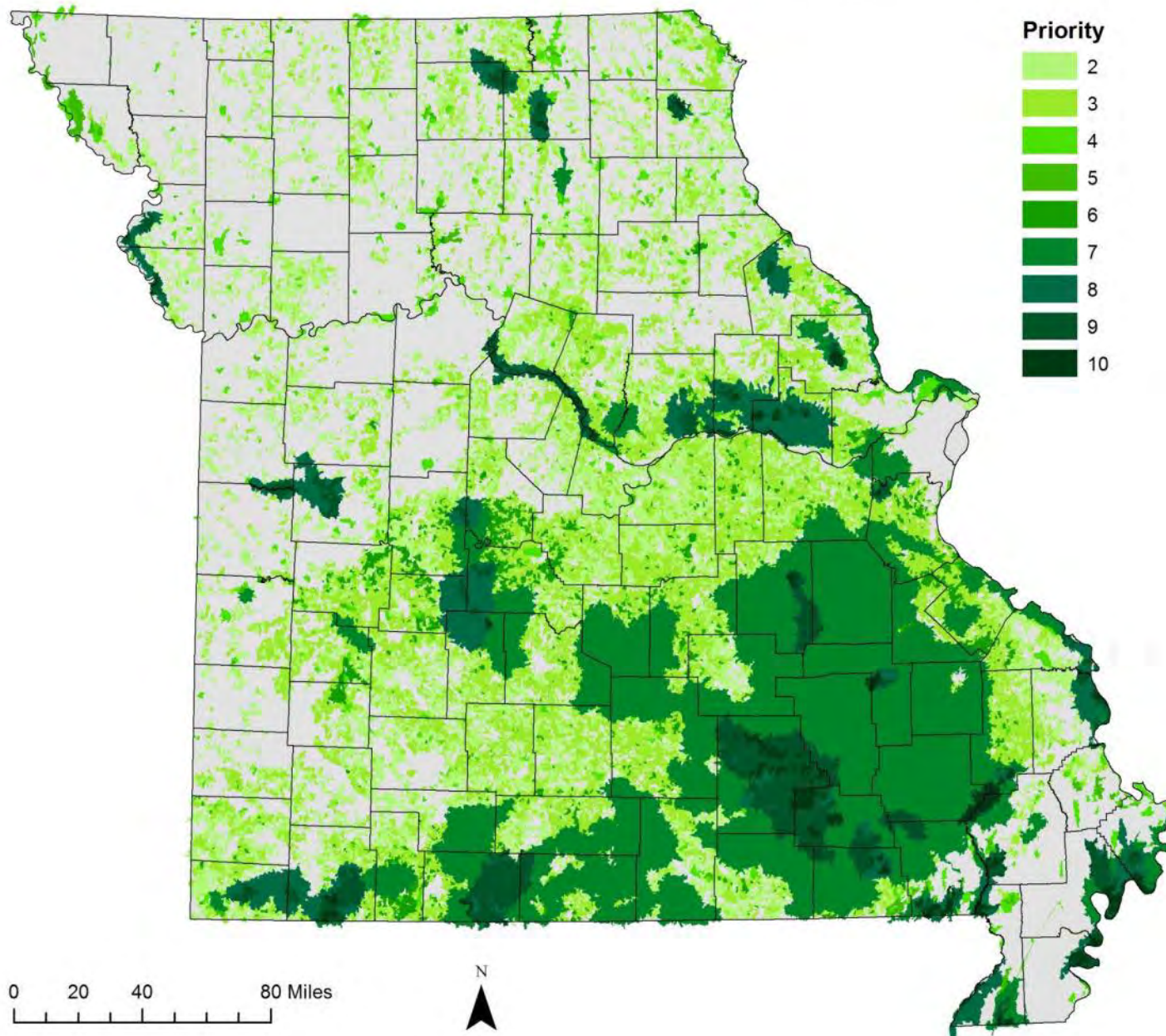
Forest/Woodland

- 1 → Catchment has >50 acres of woodland/forest potential, AND at least one of the following: $\geq 80\%$ cropland/pasture, OR $\geq 30\%$ developed, OR <75% of woodland/forest potential is still treed
- 2 → Catchment has >50 acres of woodland forest potential, AND all of the following: has <80% cropland/pasture, AND <30% developed, AND between 75%-90% of woodland forest potential still treed
- 3 → Catchment has >50 acres of woodland forest potential, AND $\geq 90\%$ forest woodland potential is still treed, AND <80% cropland/pasture, AND <30% developed
- 4 → One or more recent* heritage records for forest or woodland species or communities
- 5 → Greater than 1 recent heritage records for forest or woodland species or communities
- 6 → Catchment has >50 acres of woodland forest potential, AND $\geq 90\%$ forest woodland potential is still treed, AND <10% cropland/pasture, AND <10% developed
- 7 → Catchment intersects Forest Action Plan, OR intersects TNC
- 8 → Catchment intersects priority forest landscapes, OR intersects CFLRP landscape, OR intersects the Elk Restoration Zone, OR intersects high priority geography for forest or woodland habitat
- 9 → Catchment intersect priority forest landscapes, OR intersect CFLRP landscape, OR intersect the Elk Restoration Zone, OR intersects high priority geography for forest or woodland habitat, AND intersects the conservation network
- 10 → Those areas scoring a 9 AND contain >1 recent heritage record

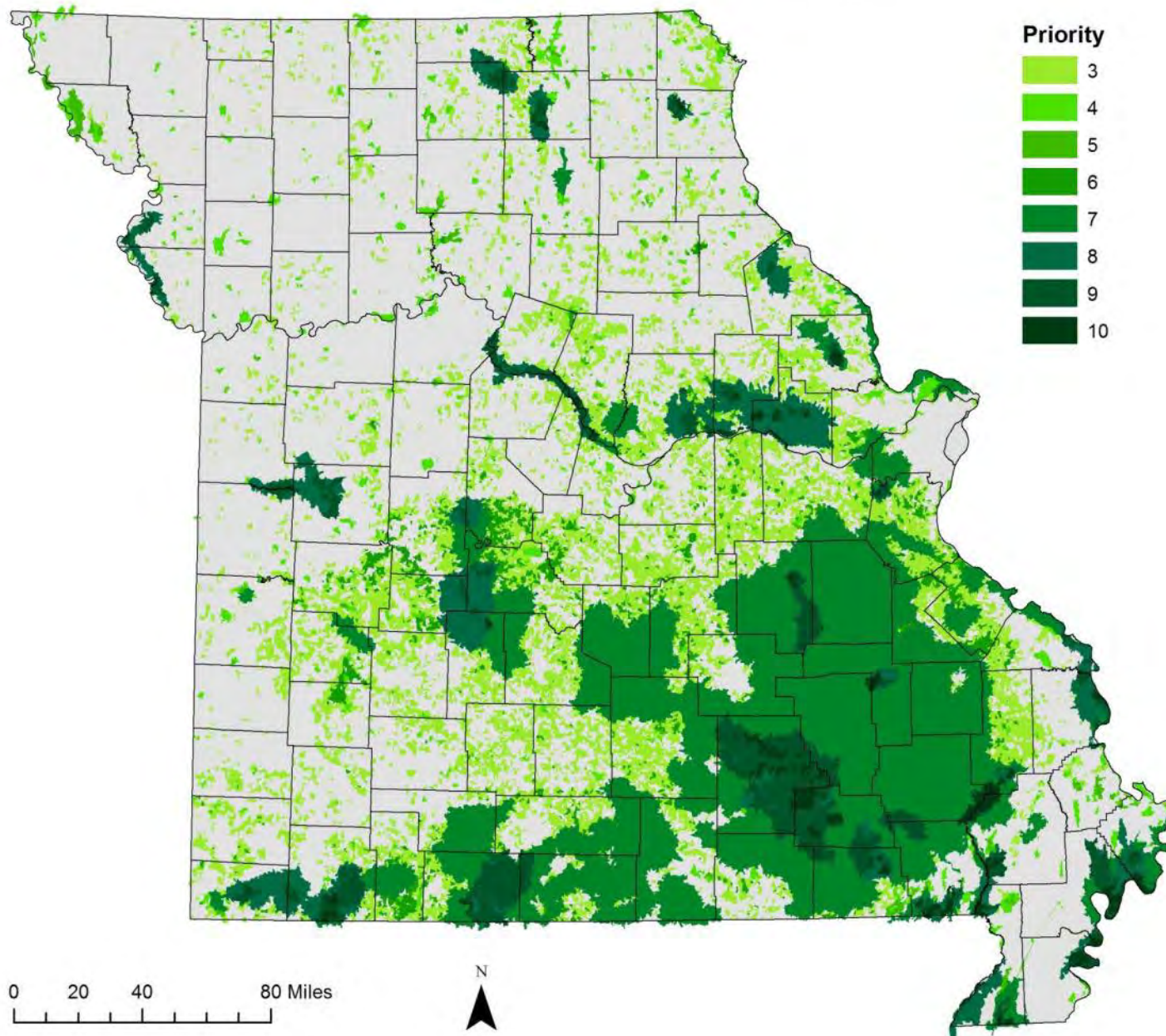
Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



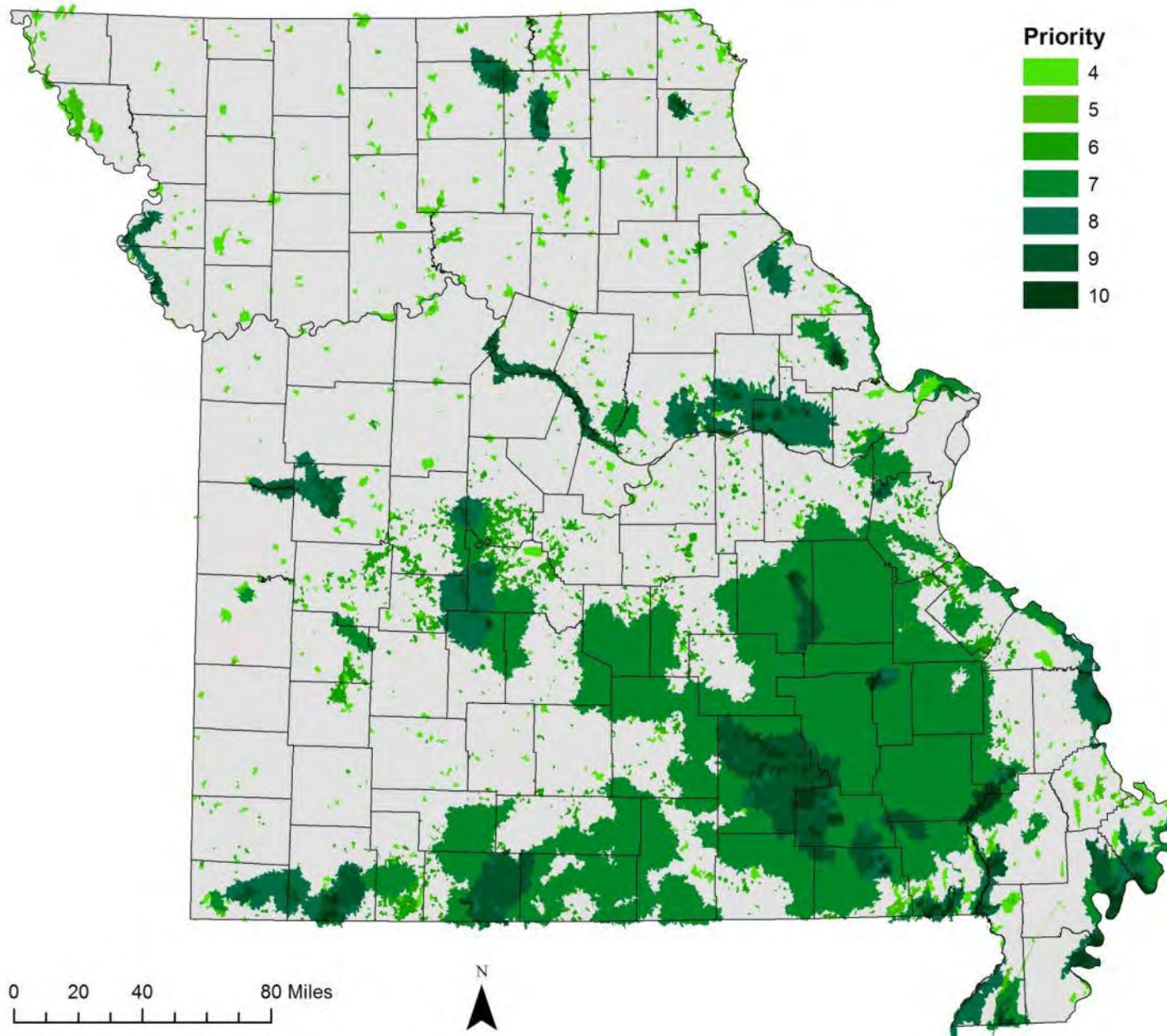
Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



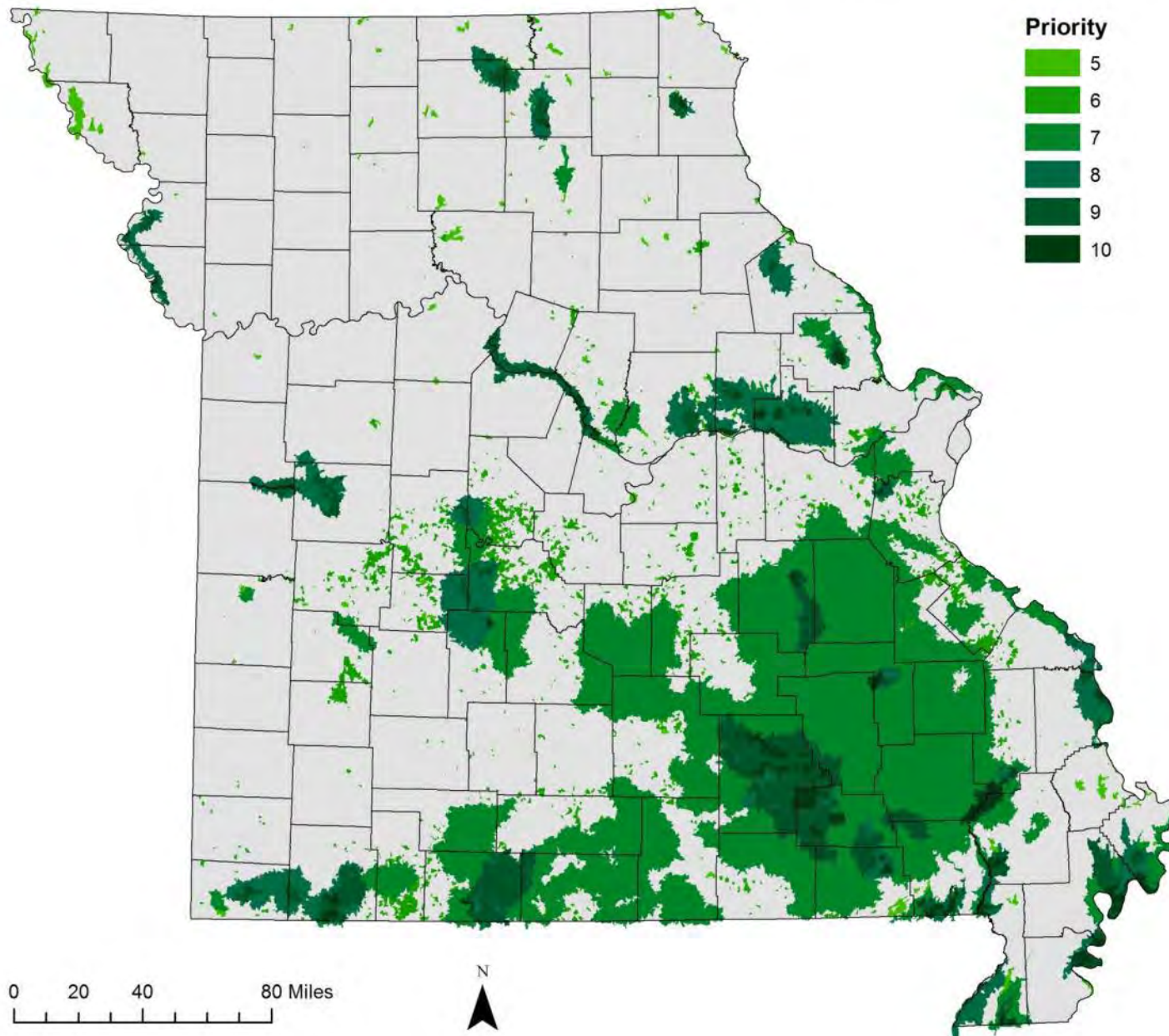
Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



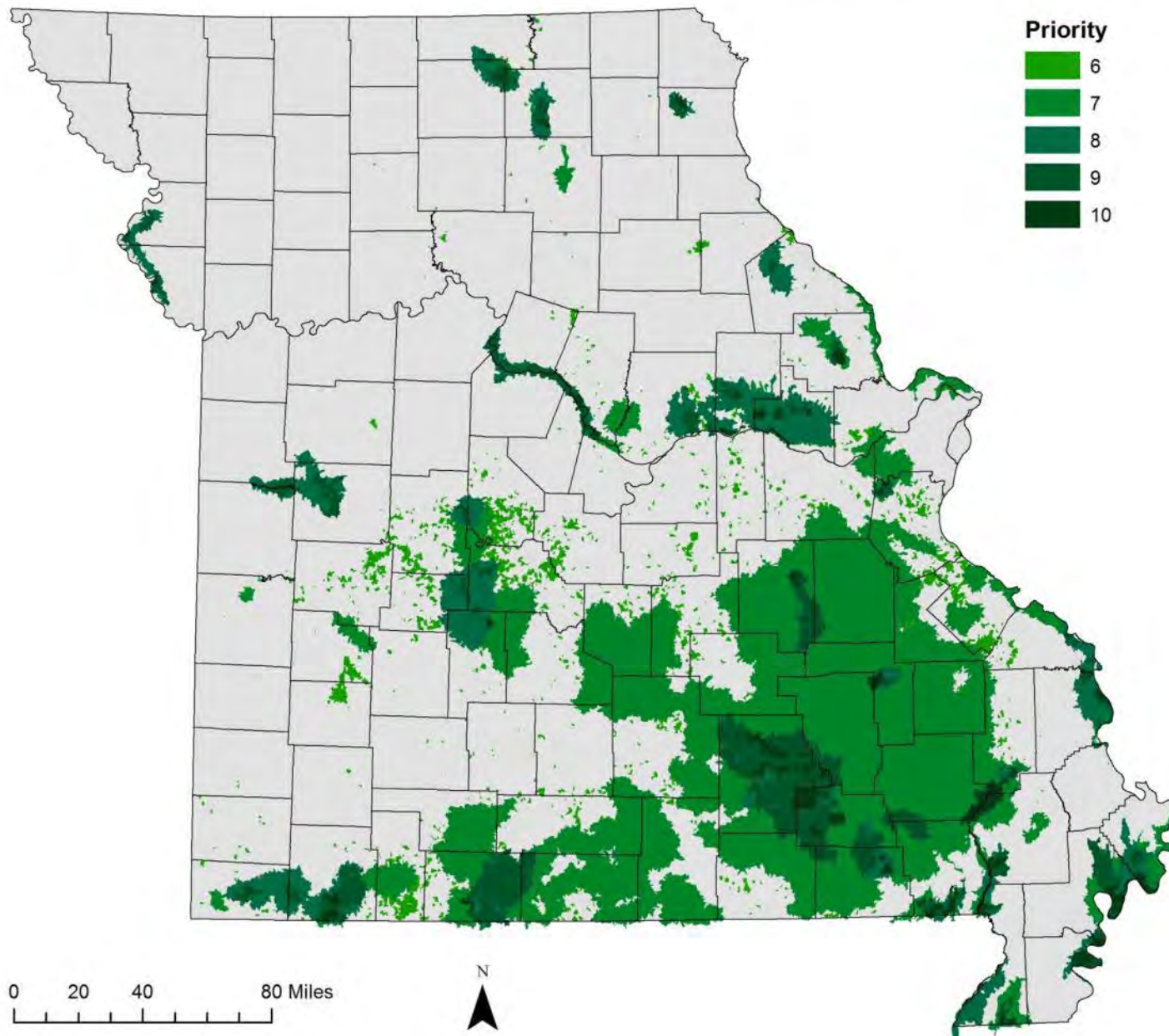
Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



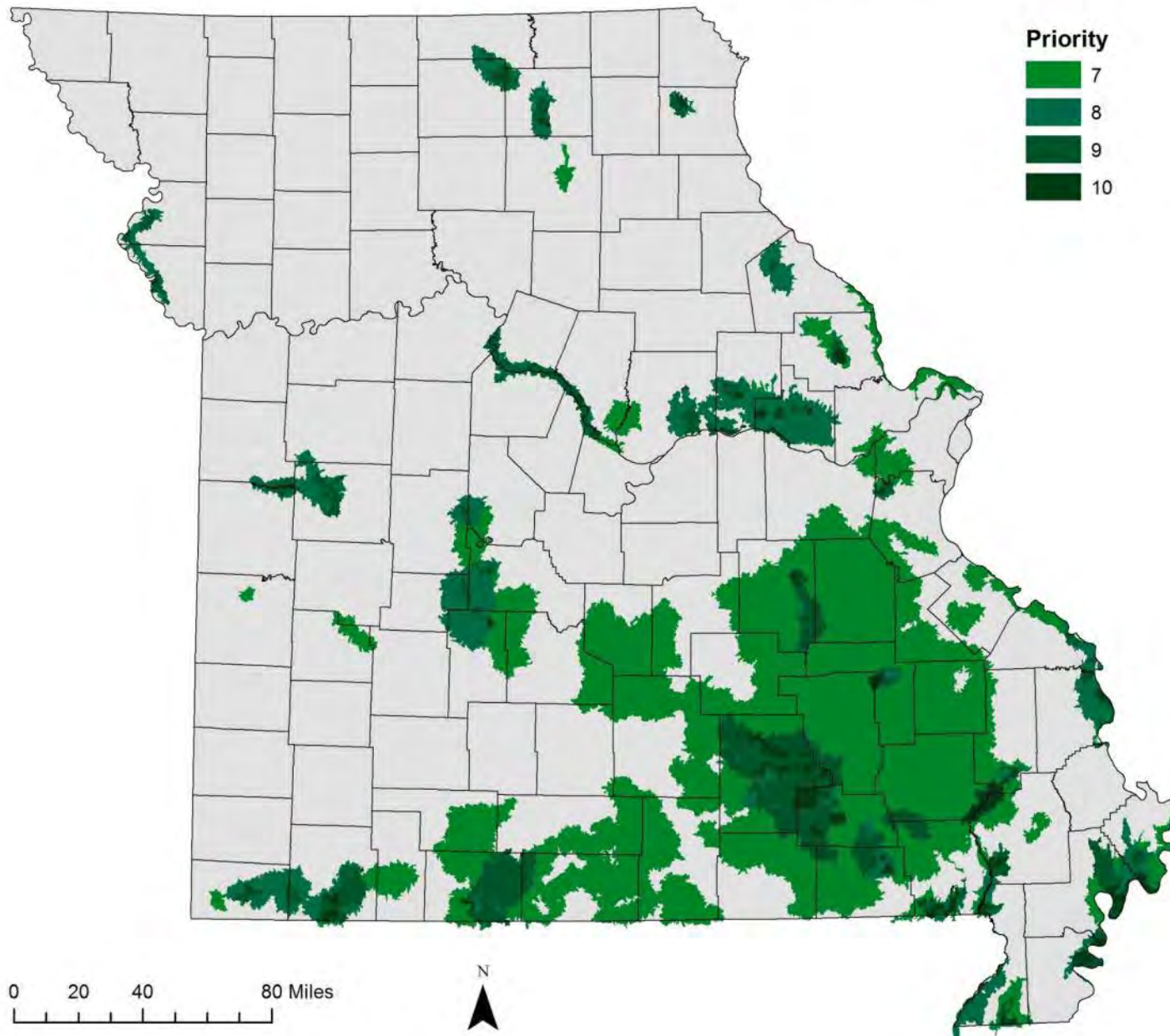
Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



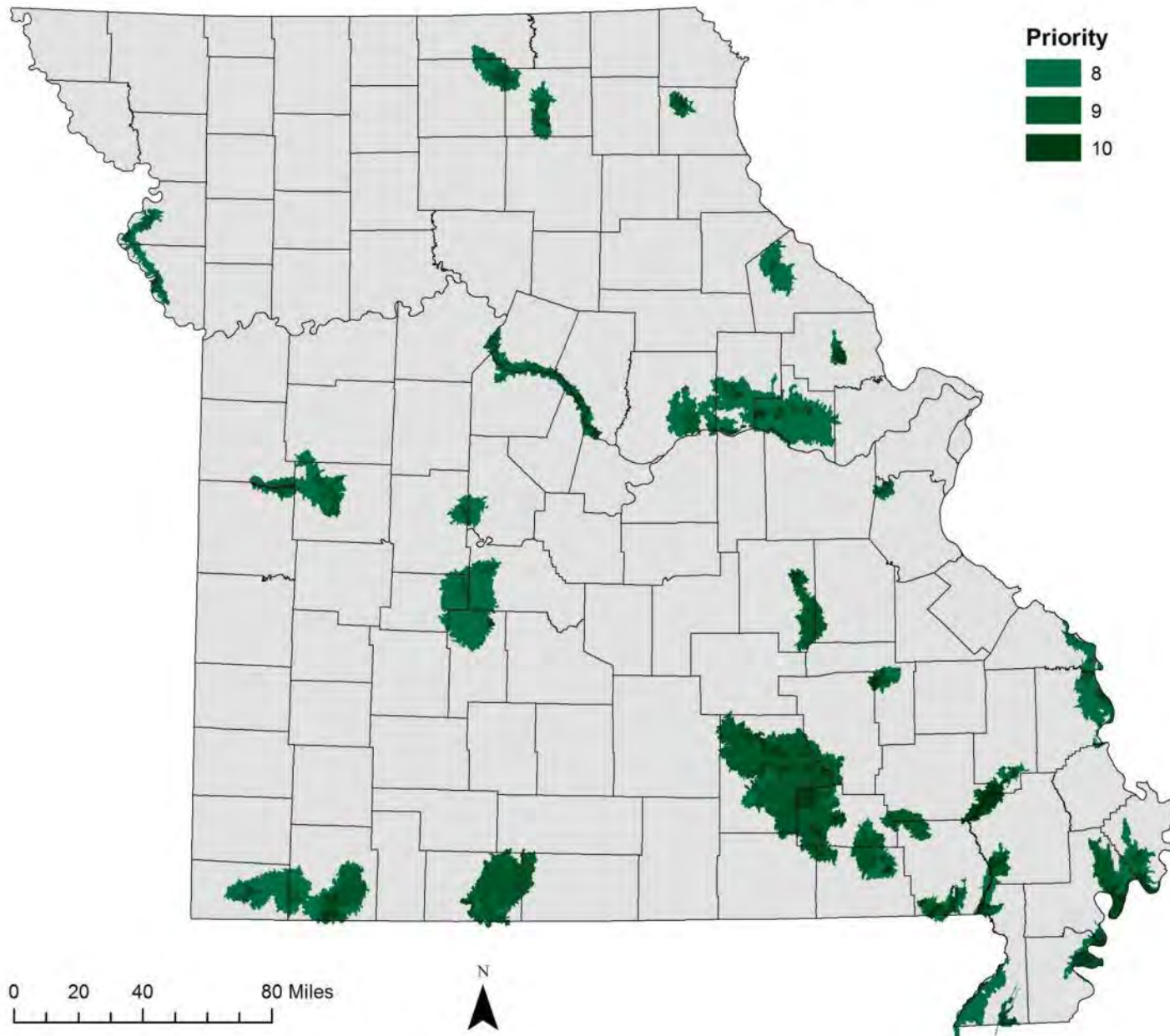
Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



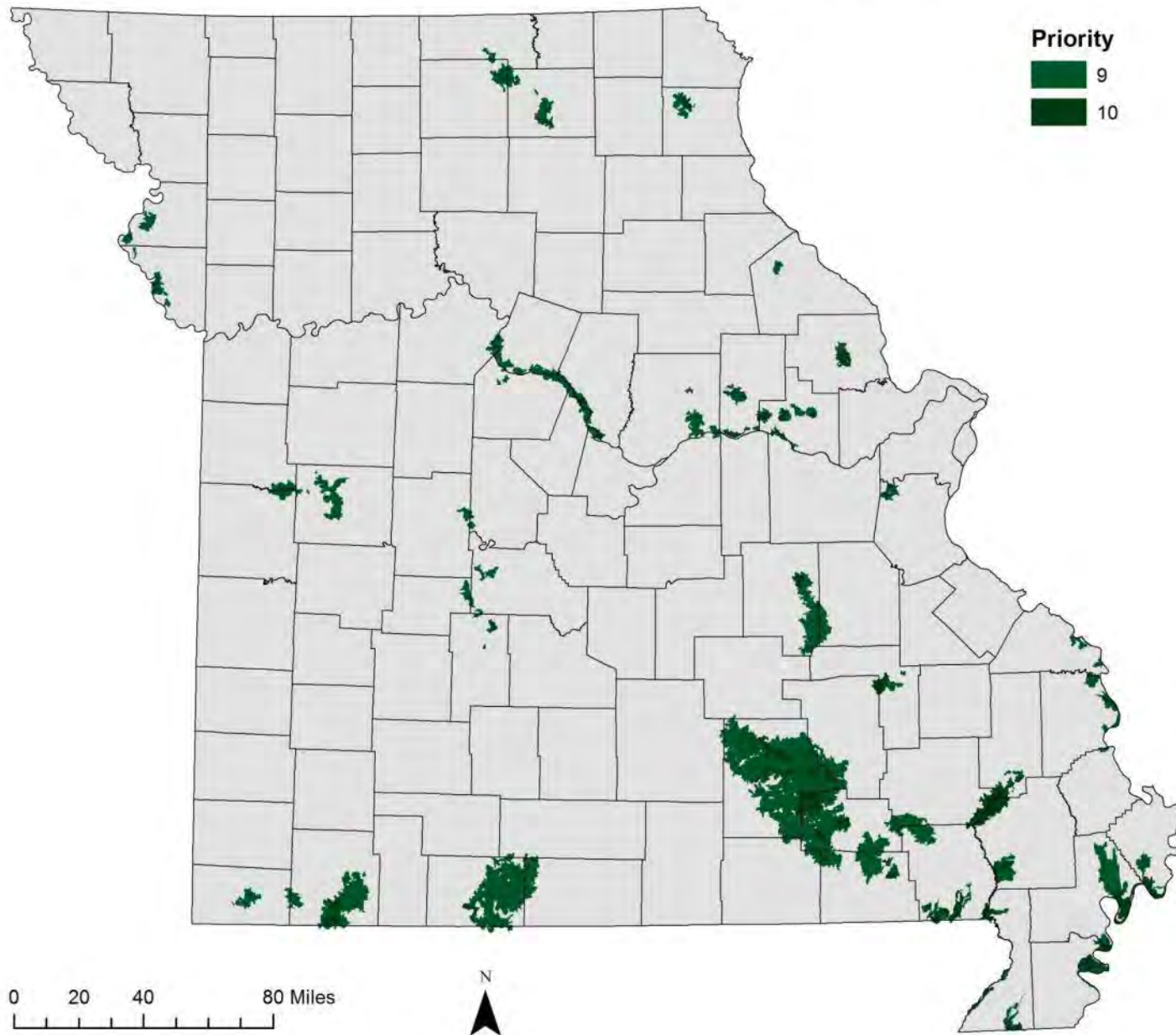
Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



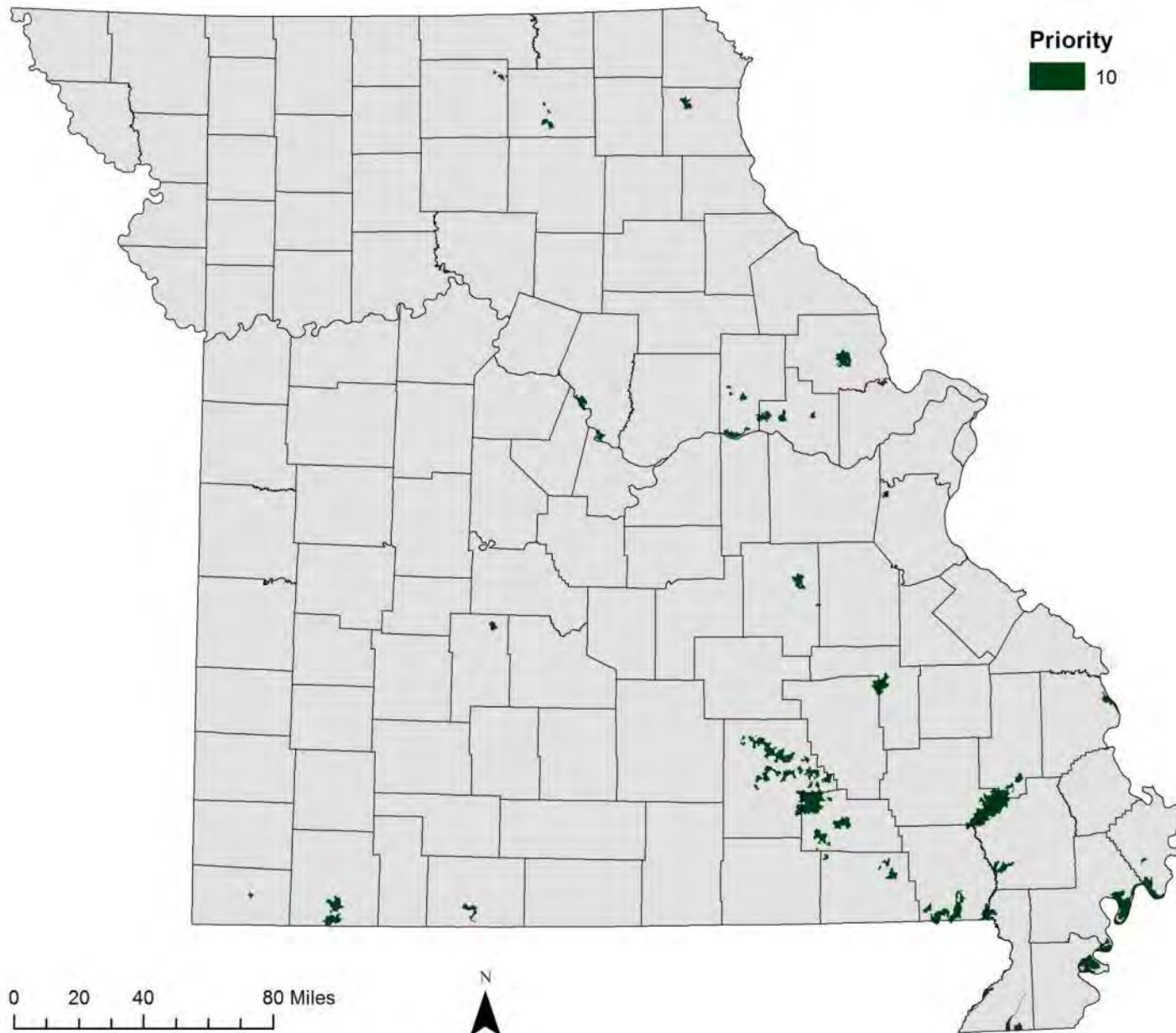
Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



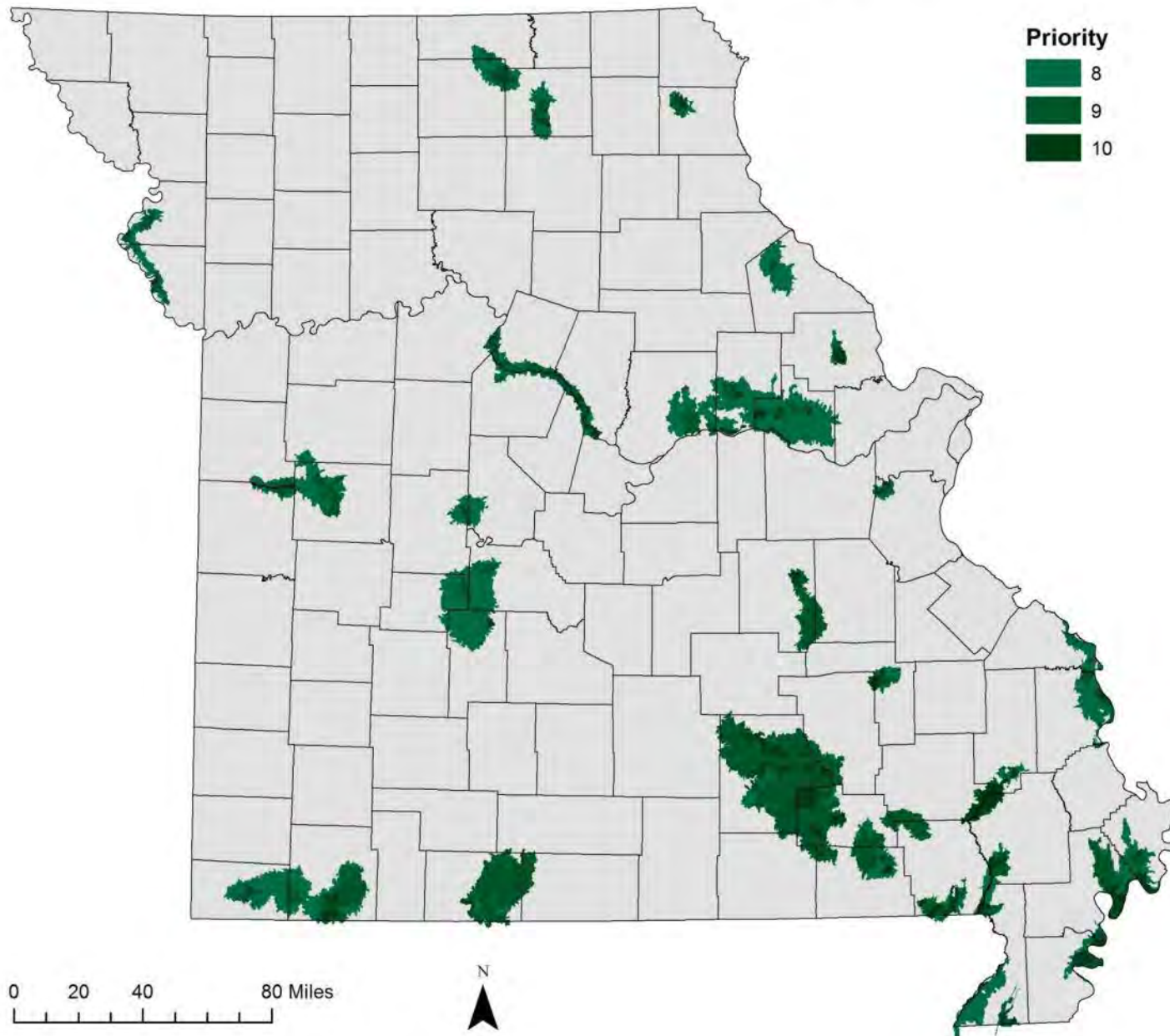
Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



Opportunity Areas for Forest and Woodland Conservation



A wide-angle photograph of a prairie landscape. The foreground is filled with a dense field of wildflowers, including tall purple spikes and smaller yellow and white blossoms. The field stretches towards a flat horizon under a vast sky filled with soft, white clouds. A dark horizontal band across the middle of the image contains the title text.

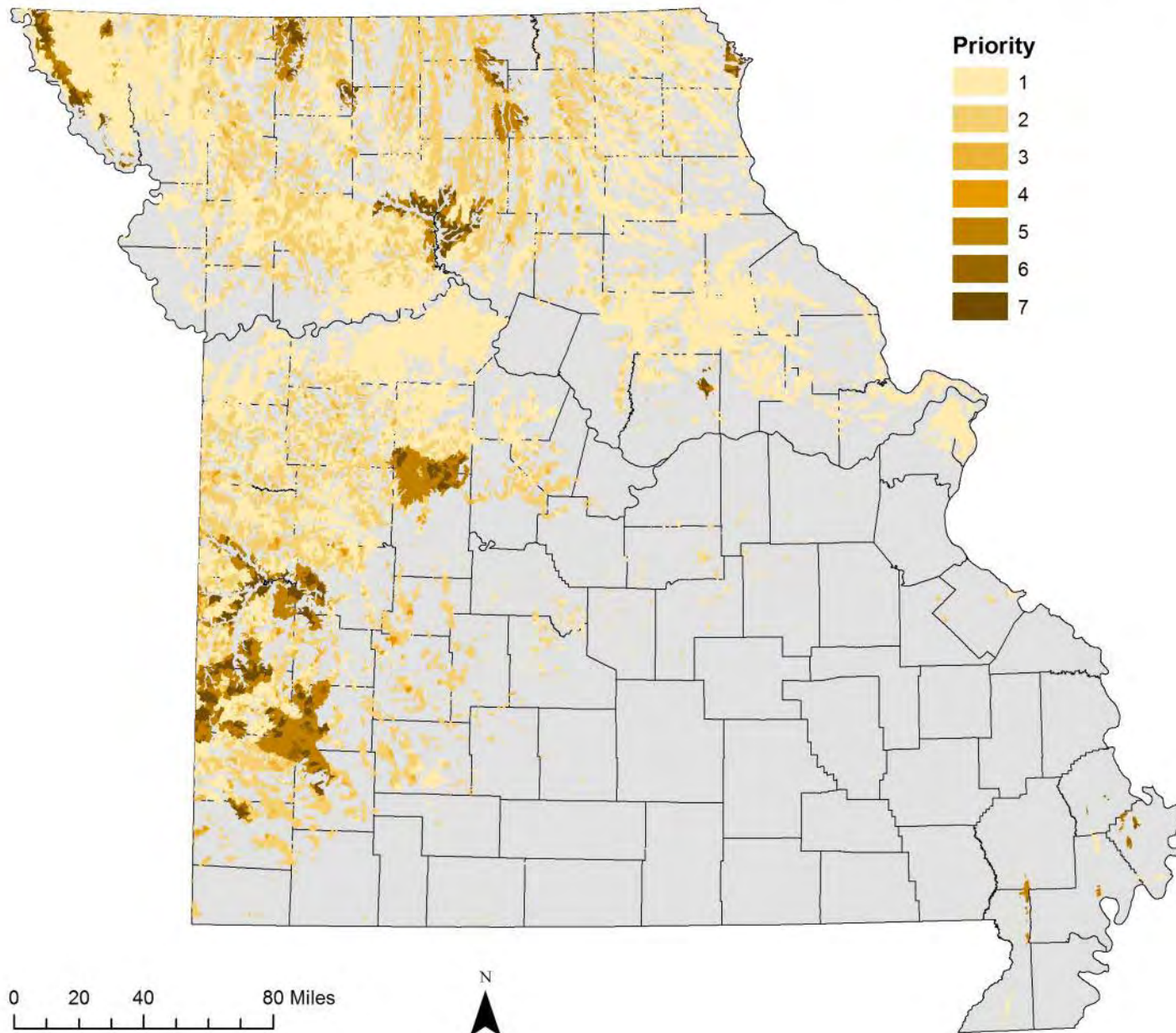
Grassland/Prairie/Savanna Opportunities

Criteria For Grassland/Prairie/Savanna Opportunities

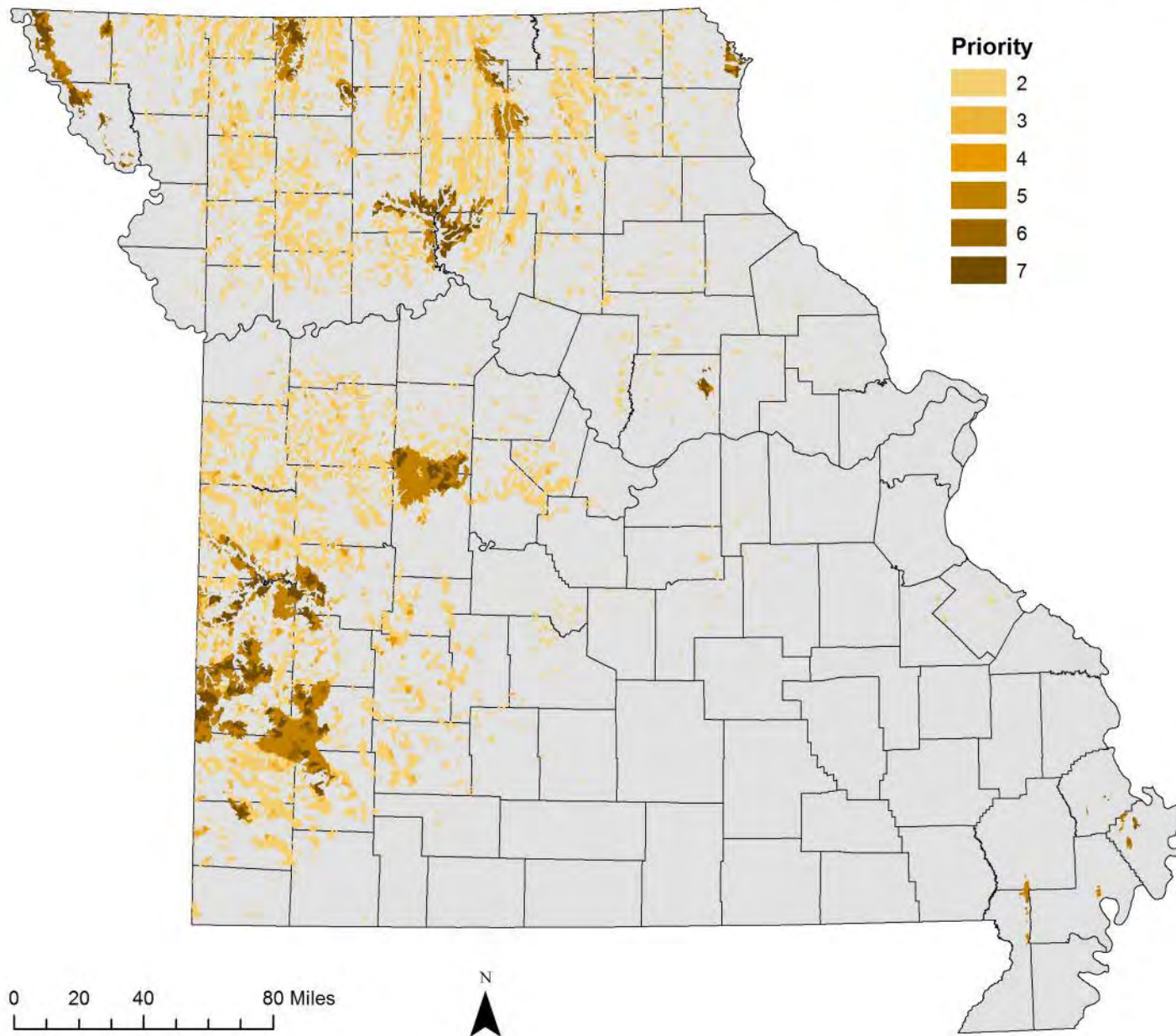
Grassland/Prairie/Savanna

- 1 → Presettlement catchments containing <50% grassland/pasture from NLCD 2011
- 2 → Presettlement catchments containing ≥50% grassland/pasture from NLCD 2011
- 3 → Presettlement catchments containing ≥50% grassland/pasture, AND 1 recent* grassland/prairie heritage record
- 4 → Presettlement catchments containing ≥50% grassland/pasture, AND >1 recent* grassland/prairie heritage record
- 5 → Catchment within a grassland/prairie opportunity area
- 6 → Catchment within a grassland/prairie opportunity area, AND contains >1 recent* grassland/prairie heritage record
- 7 → Catchment within a grassland/prairie opportunity area, AND contains a grassland easement and/or conservation network

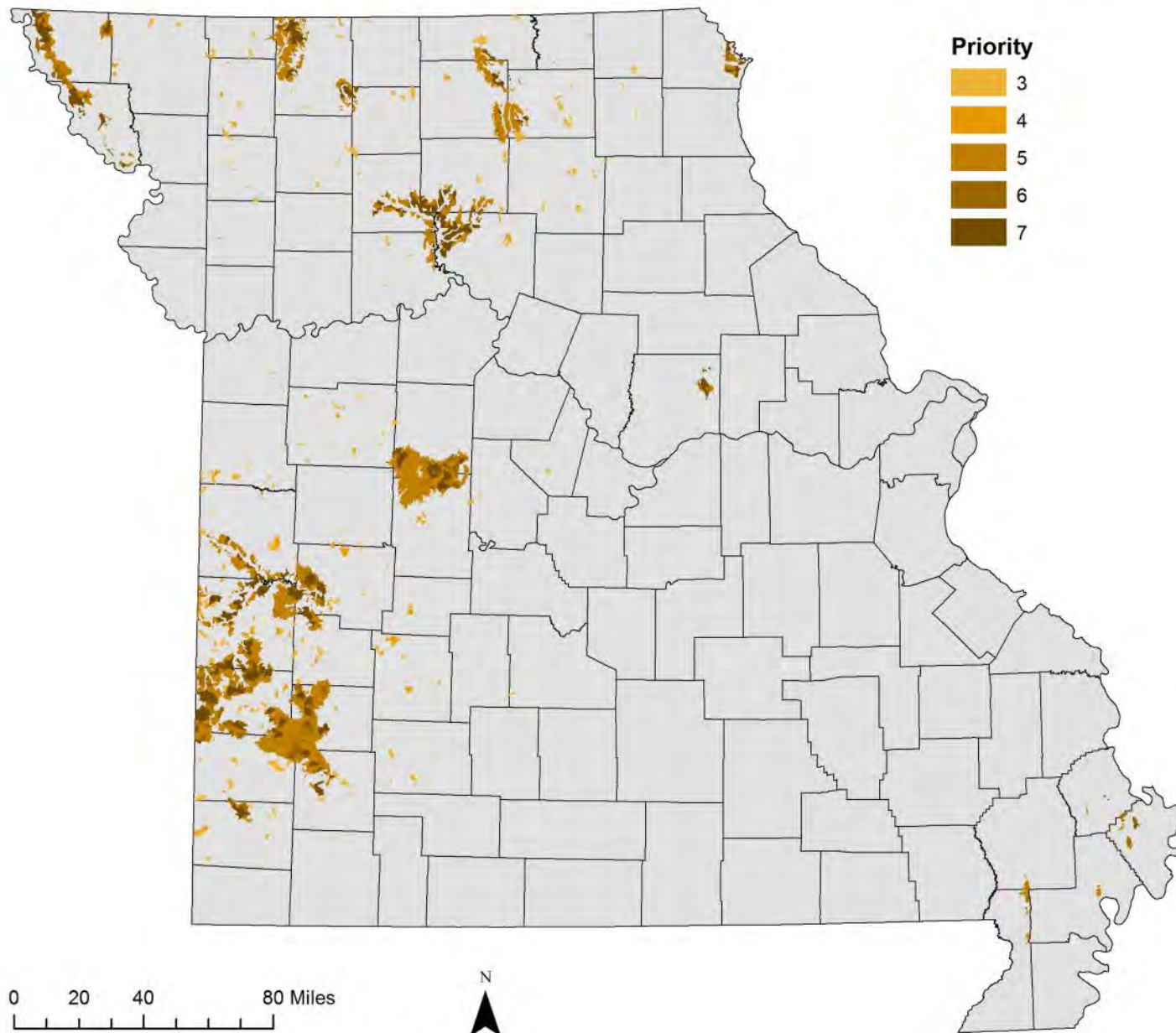
Opportunity Areas for Grassland/Prairie/Savanna Conservation



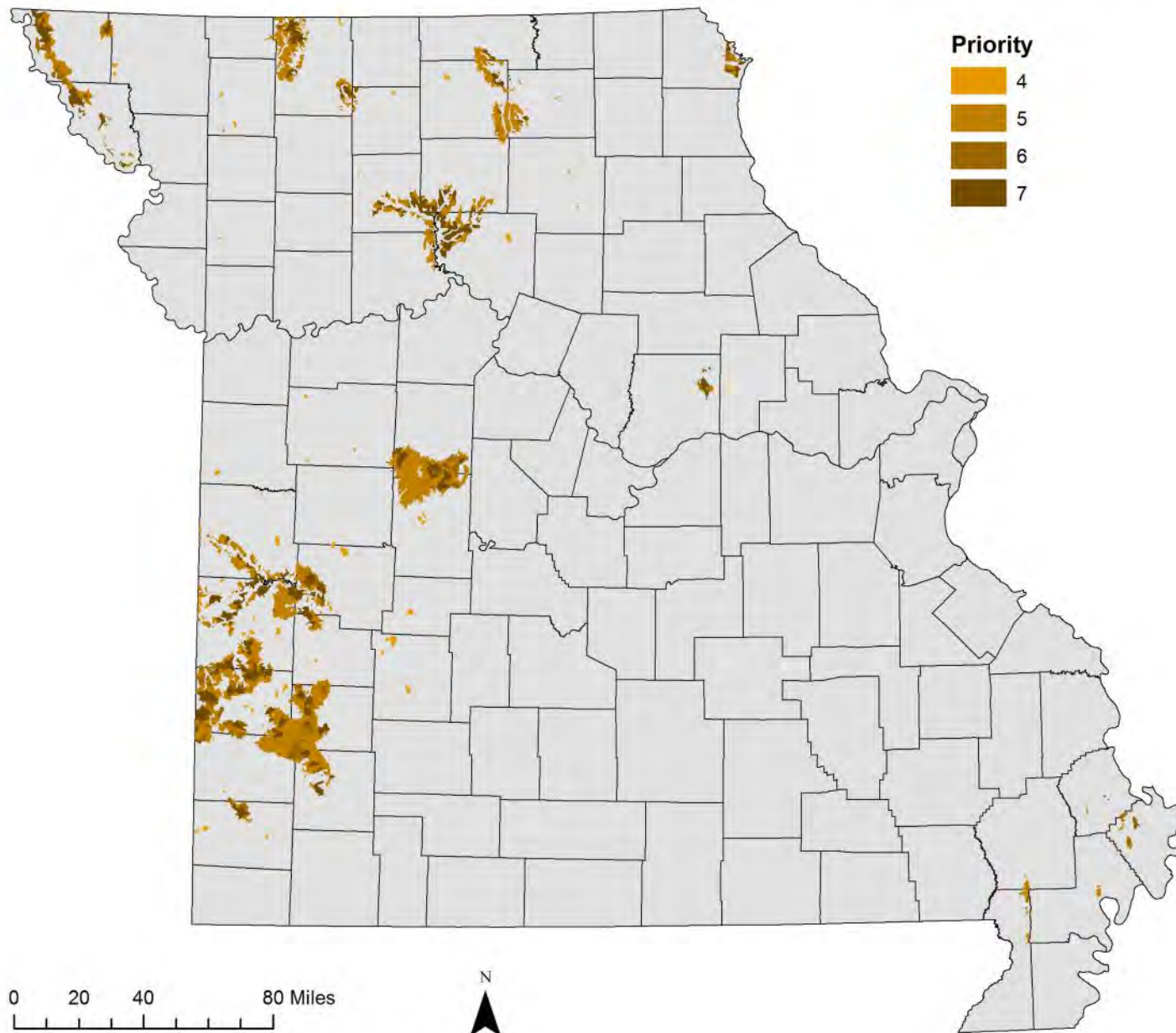
Opportunity Areas for Grassland/Prairie/Savanna Conservation



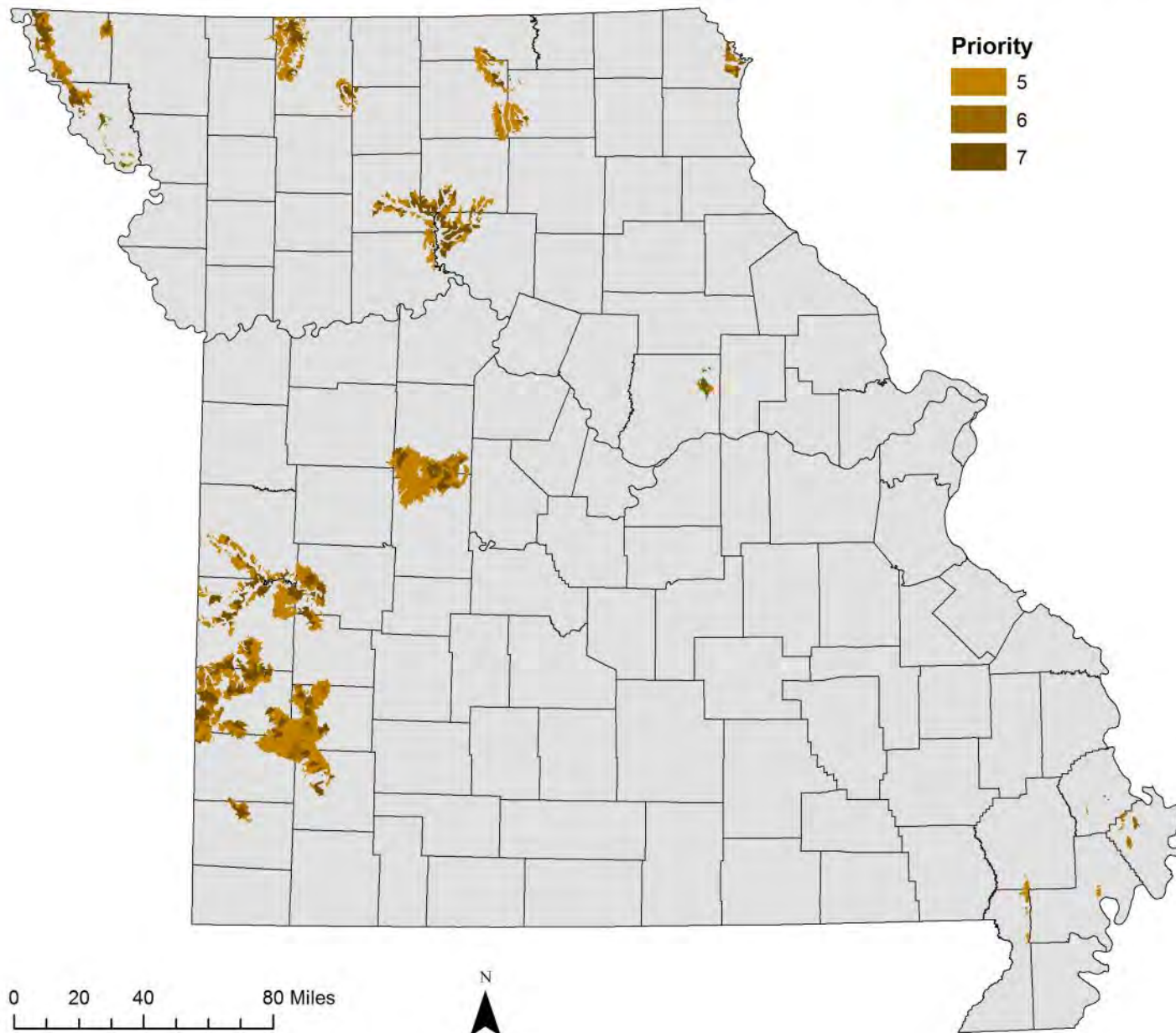
Opportunity Areas for Grassland/Prairie/Savanna Conservation



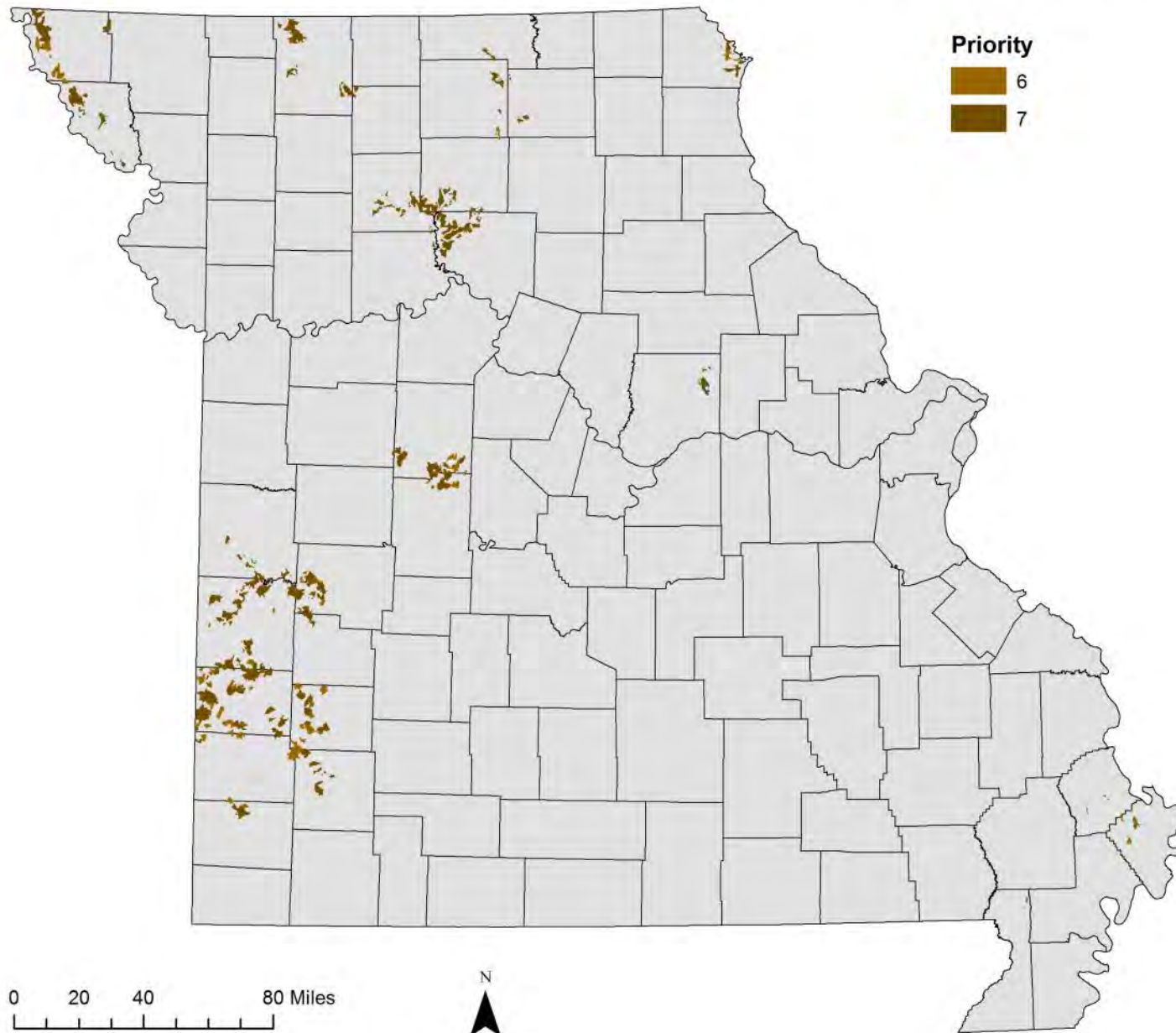
Opportunity Areas for Grassland/Prairie/Savanna Conservation



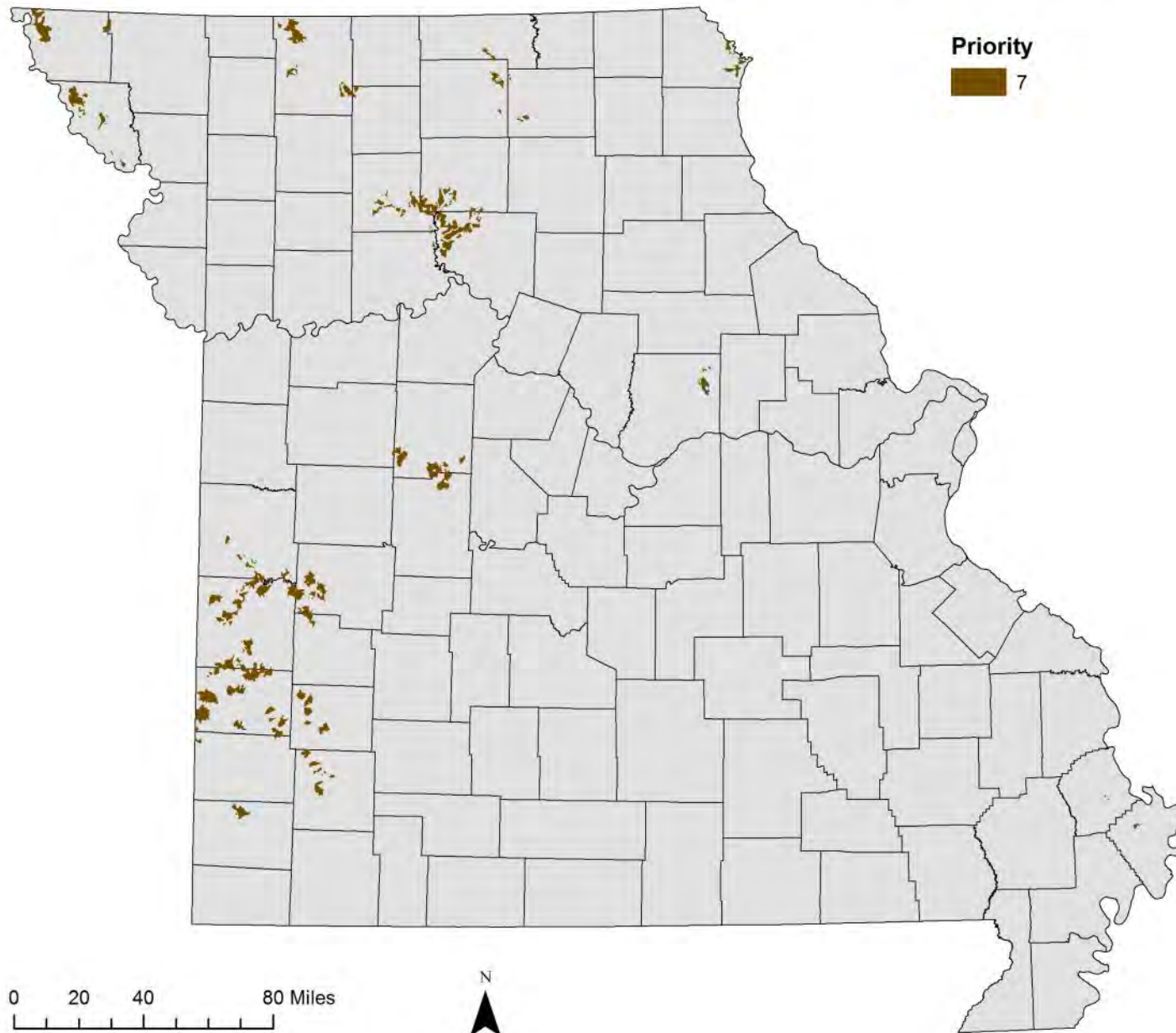
Opportunity Areas for Grassland/Prairie/Savanna Conservation



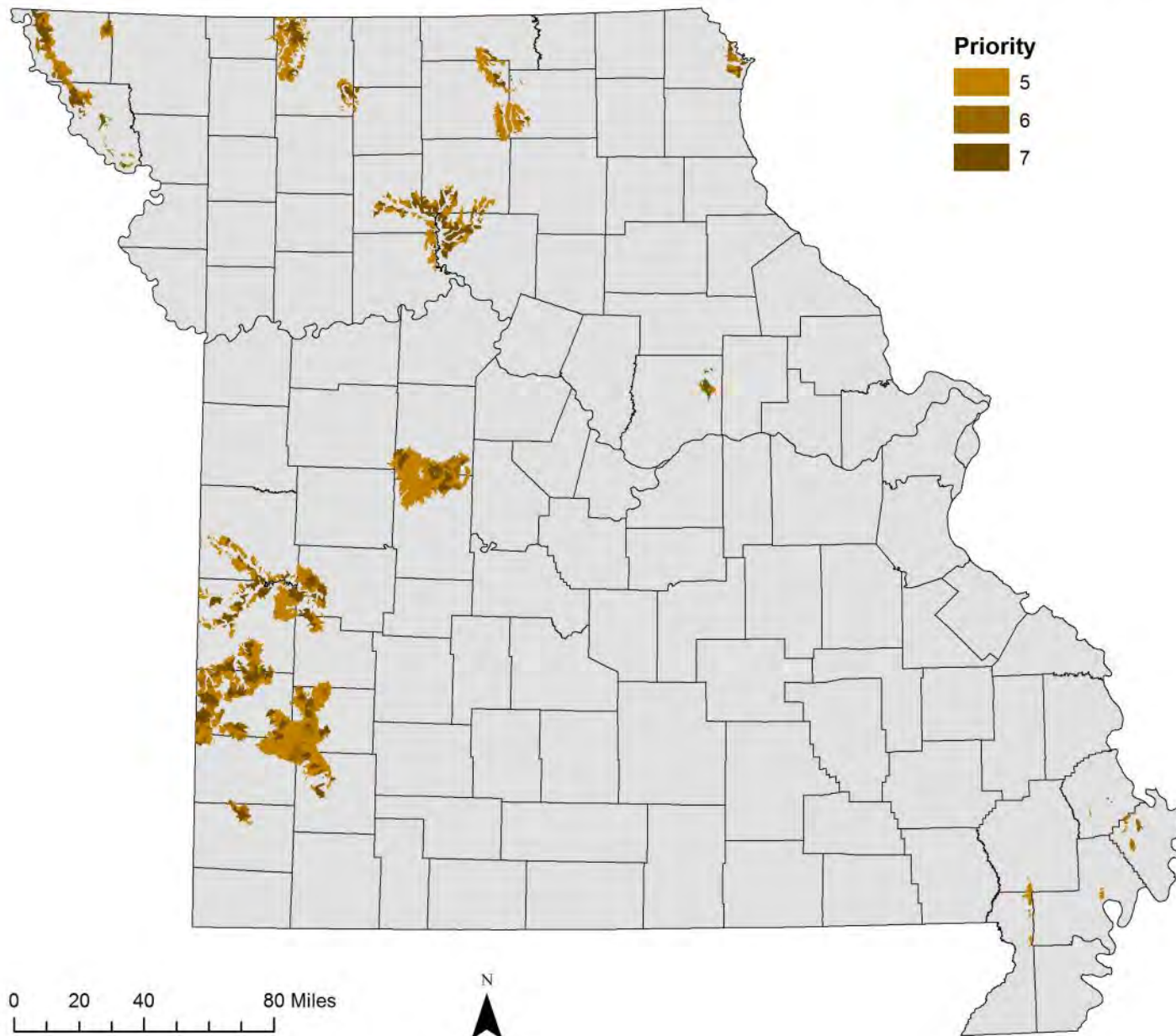
Opportunity Areas for Grassland/Prairie/Savanna Conservation



Opportunity Areas for Grassland/Prairie/Savanna Conservation



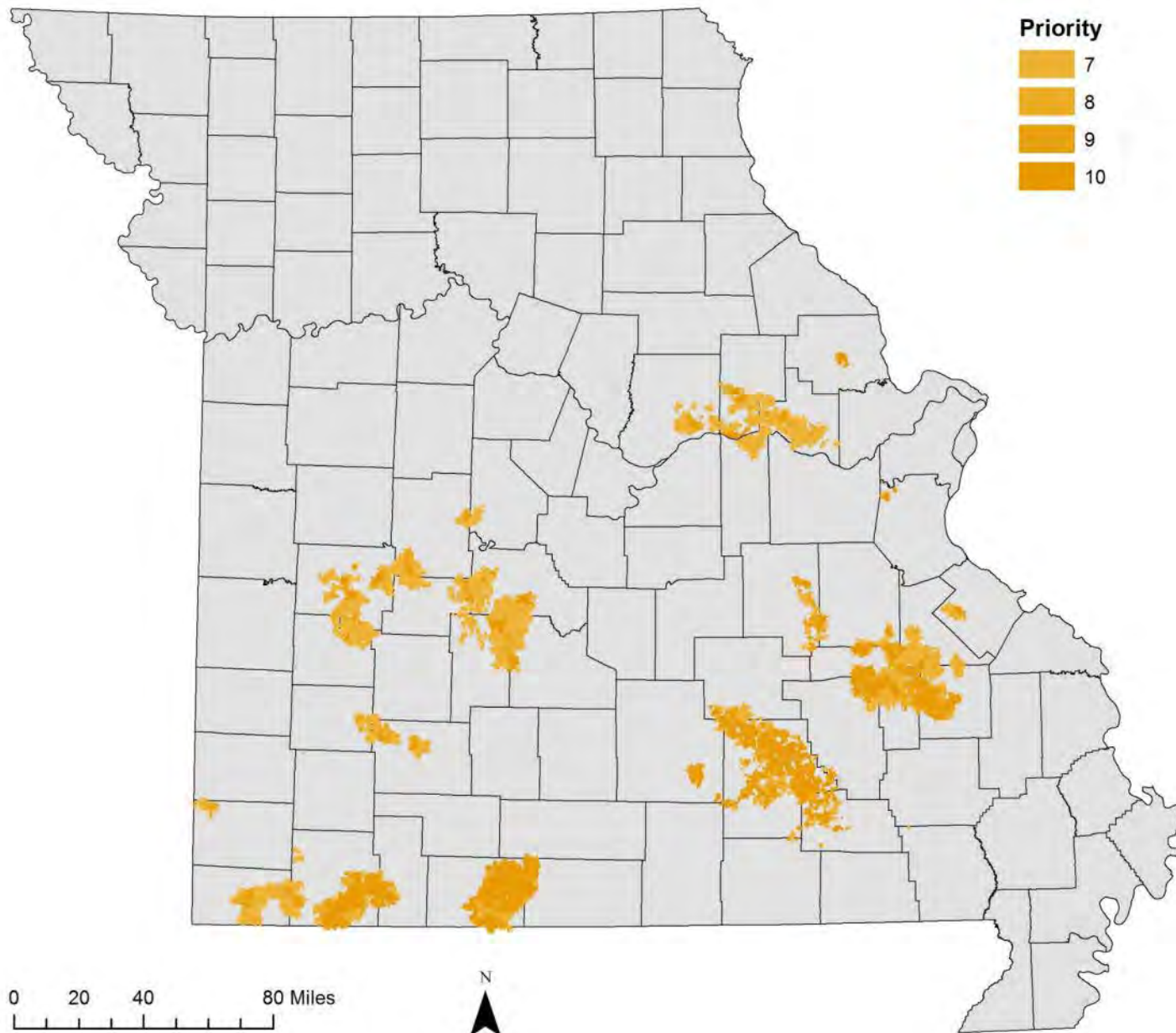
Opportunity Areas for Grassland/Prairie/Savanna Conservation



A scenic landscape photograph of a grassy glade. In the foreground, several red flowers with dark centers are scattered among green foliage and a large, flat rock. The middle ground is a vast, open field of green grass. The background is a dense, forested hillside under a clear sky.

Glade Opportunities

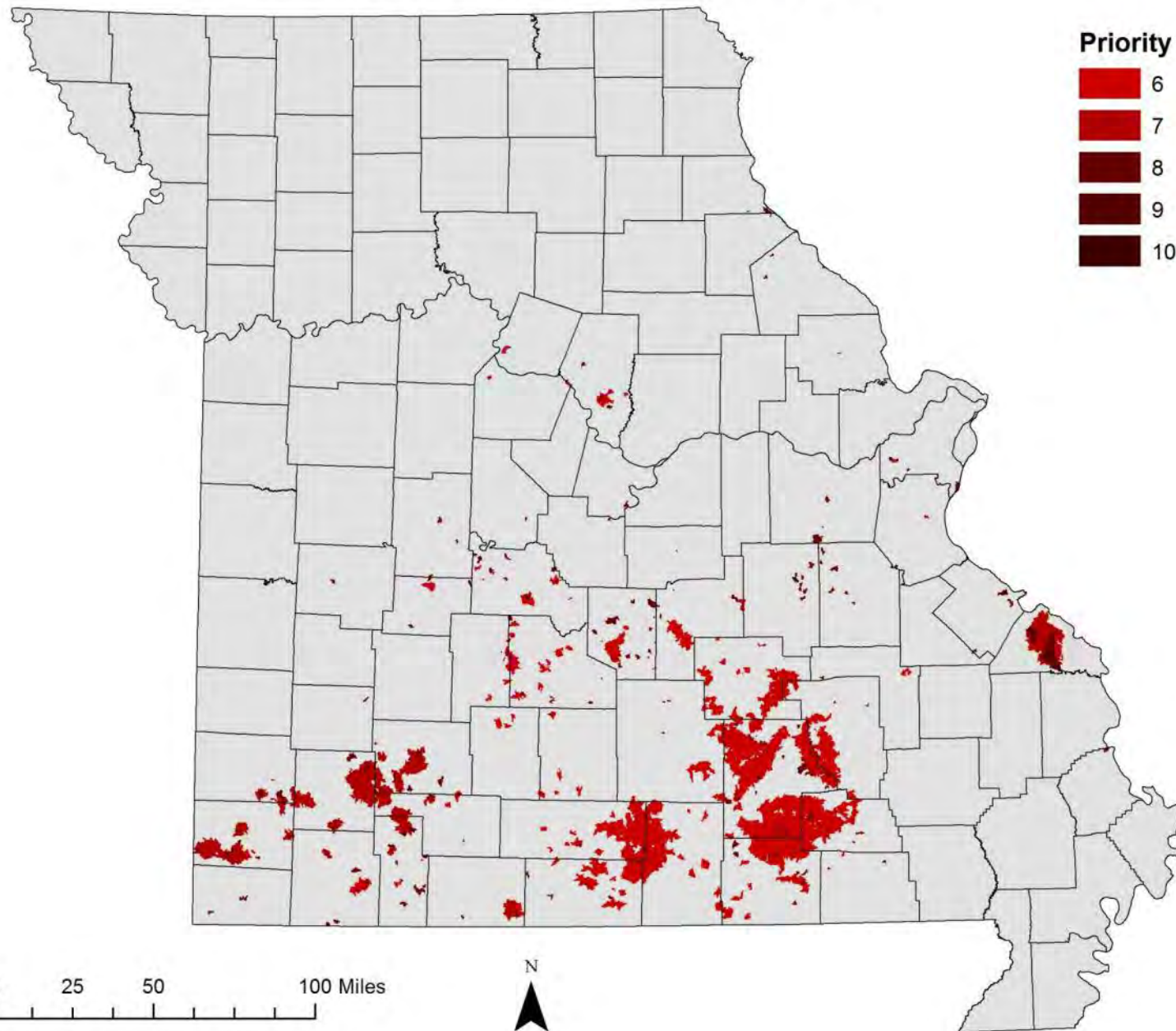
Opportunity Areas for Glade Conservation





Cave and Karst Opportunities

Opportunity Areas for Cave and Karst Conservation

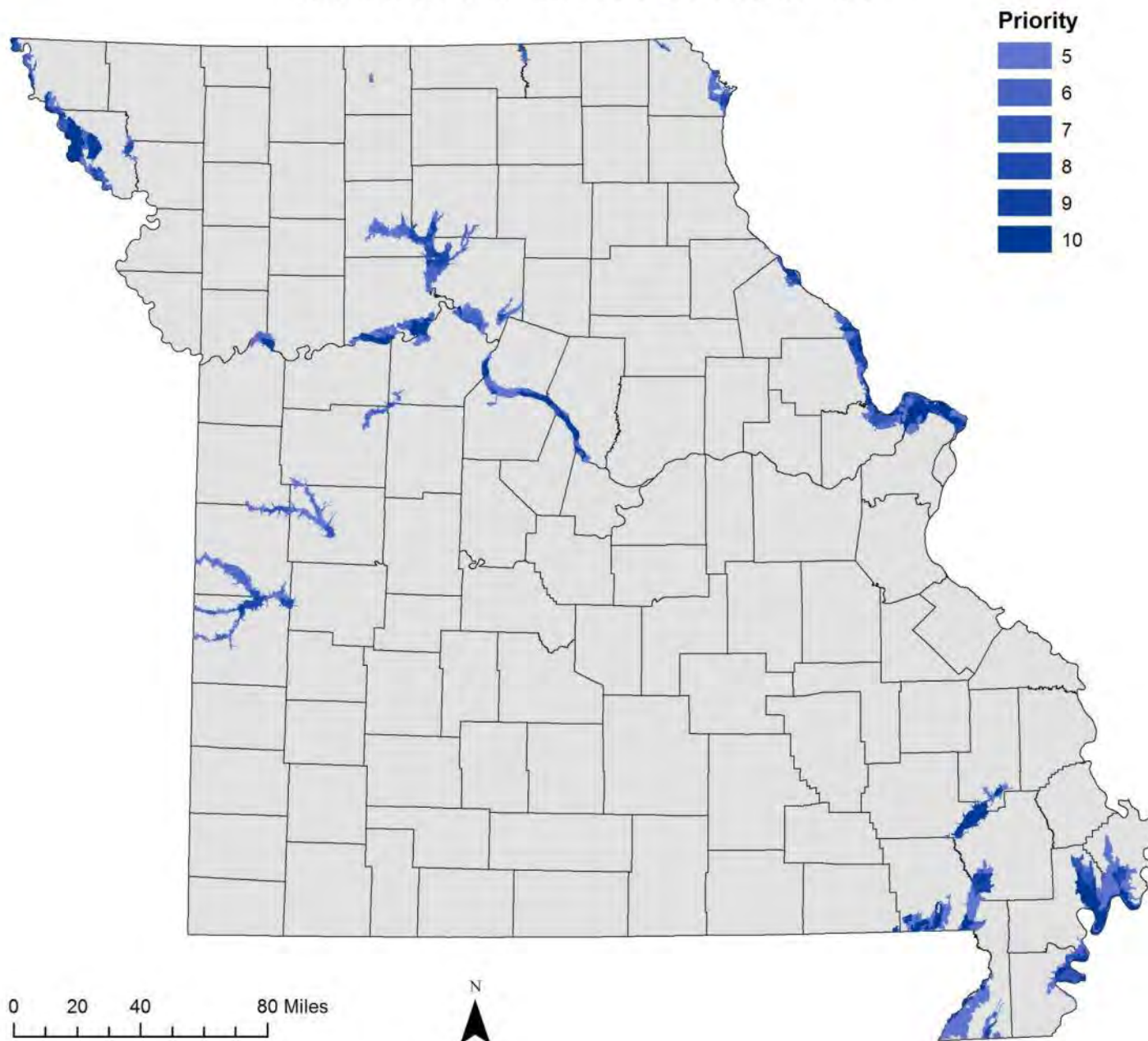


A photograph of a swampy wetland. In the foreground, a large cypress tree with a thick, buttressed trunk stands in shallow water. The water is calm, reflecting the tree and the surrounding green foliage. In the background, more trees and dense vegetation are visible, creating a lush, green landscape. The text "Wetland Opportunities" is overlaid in white on a dark horizontal band across the middle of the image.

Wetland Opportunities



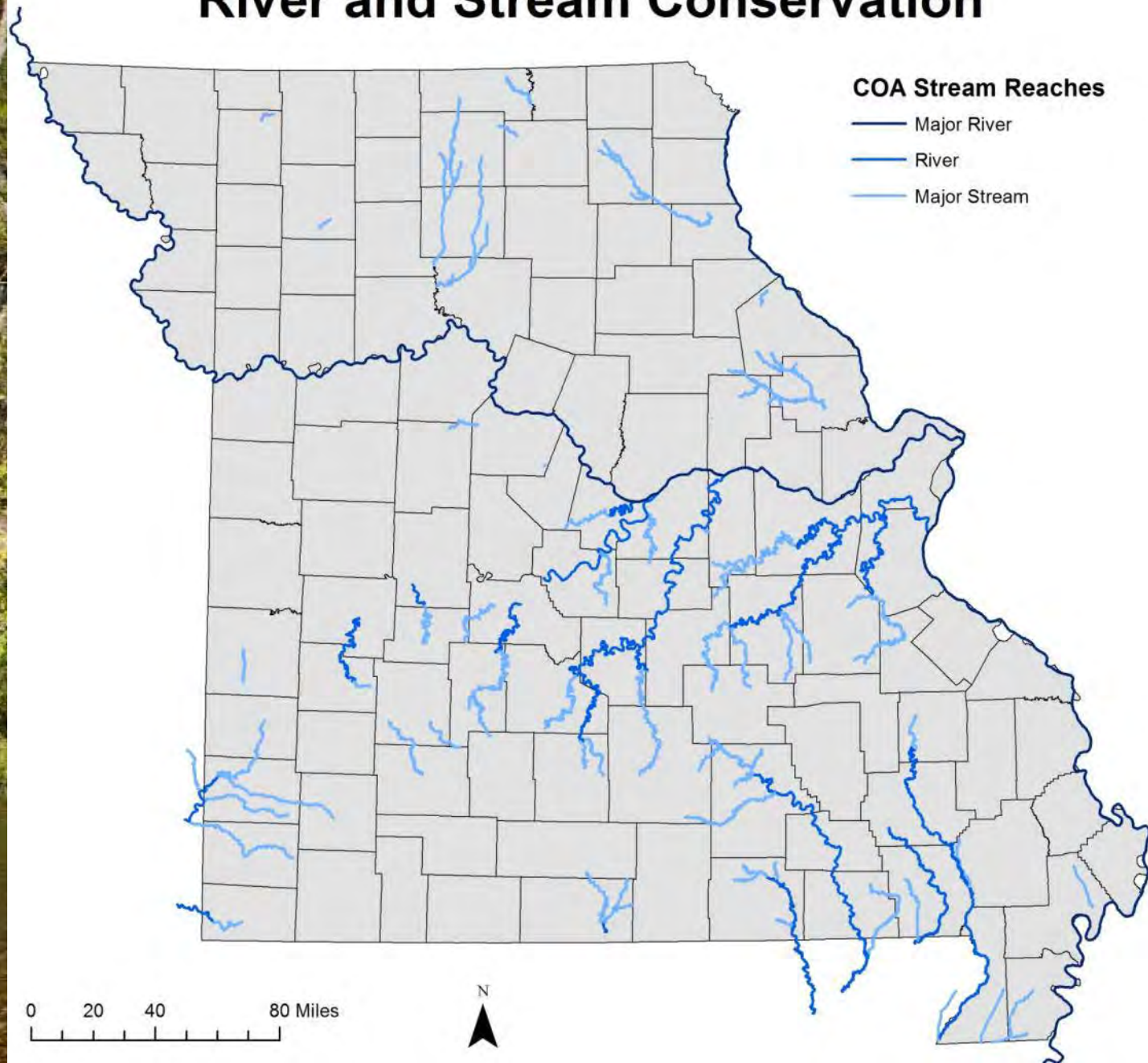
Opportunity Areas for Wetland Conservation



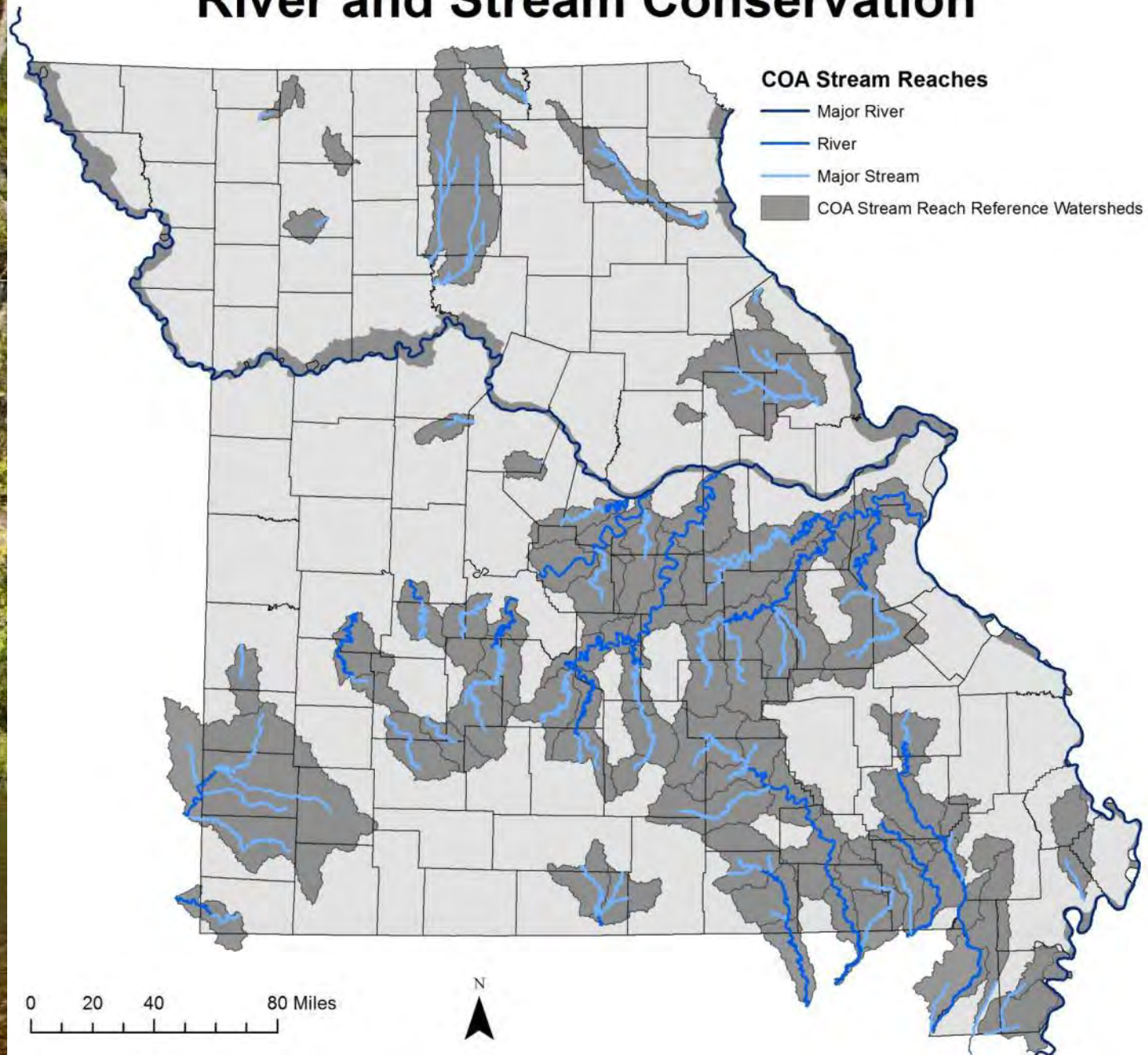


River and Stream Opportunities

Opportunity Areas for River and Stream Conservation



Opportunity Areas for River and Stream Conservation

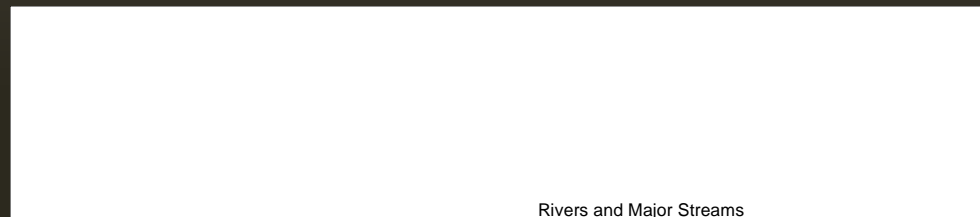
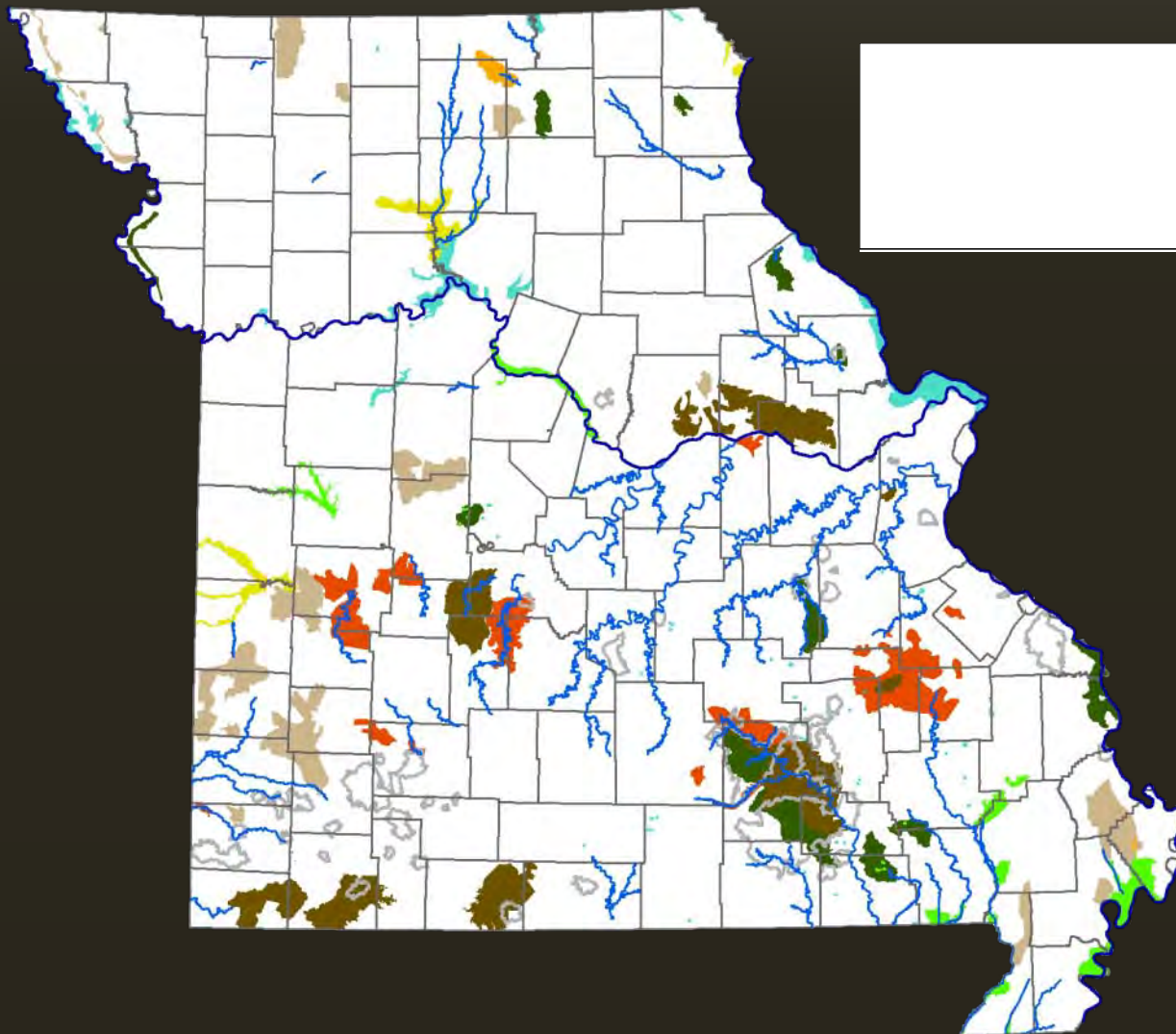




Put it all together...

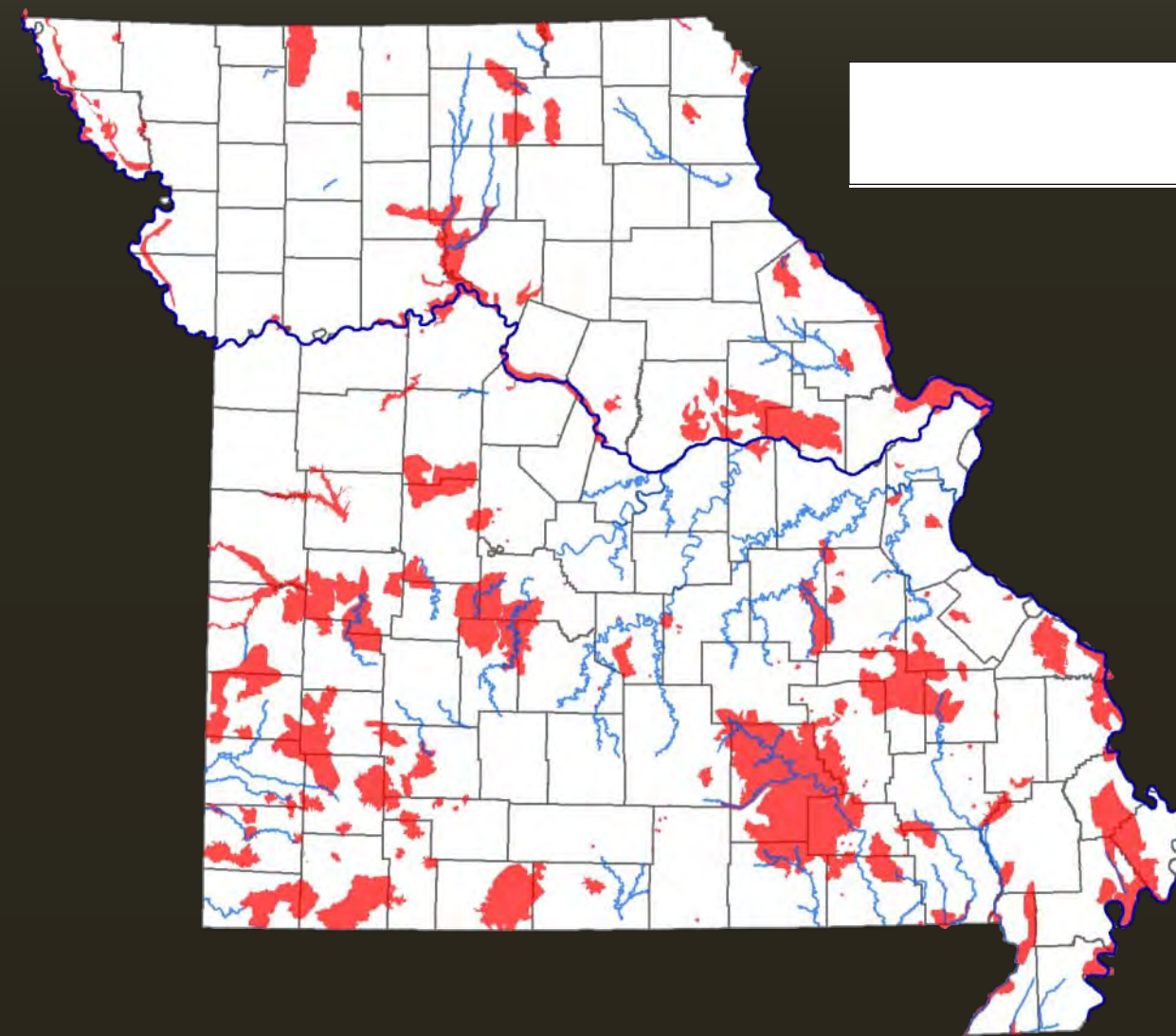


2015 COAs – Natural Community Approach (Separated by System)



Rivers and Major Streams

2015 COAs – Natural Community Approach (Combined Systems)



Conservation Opportunity Areas

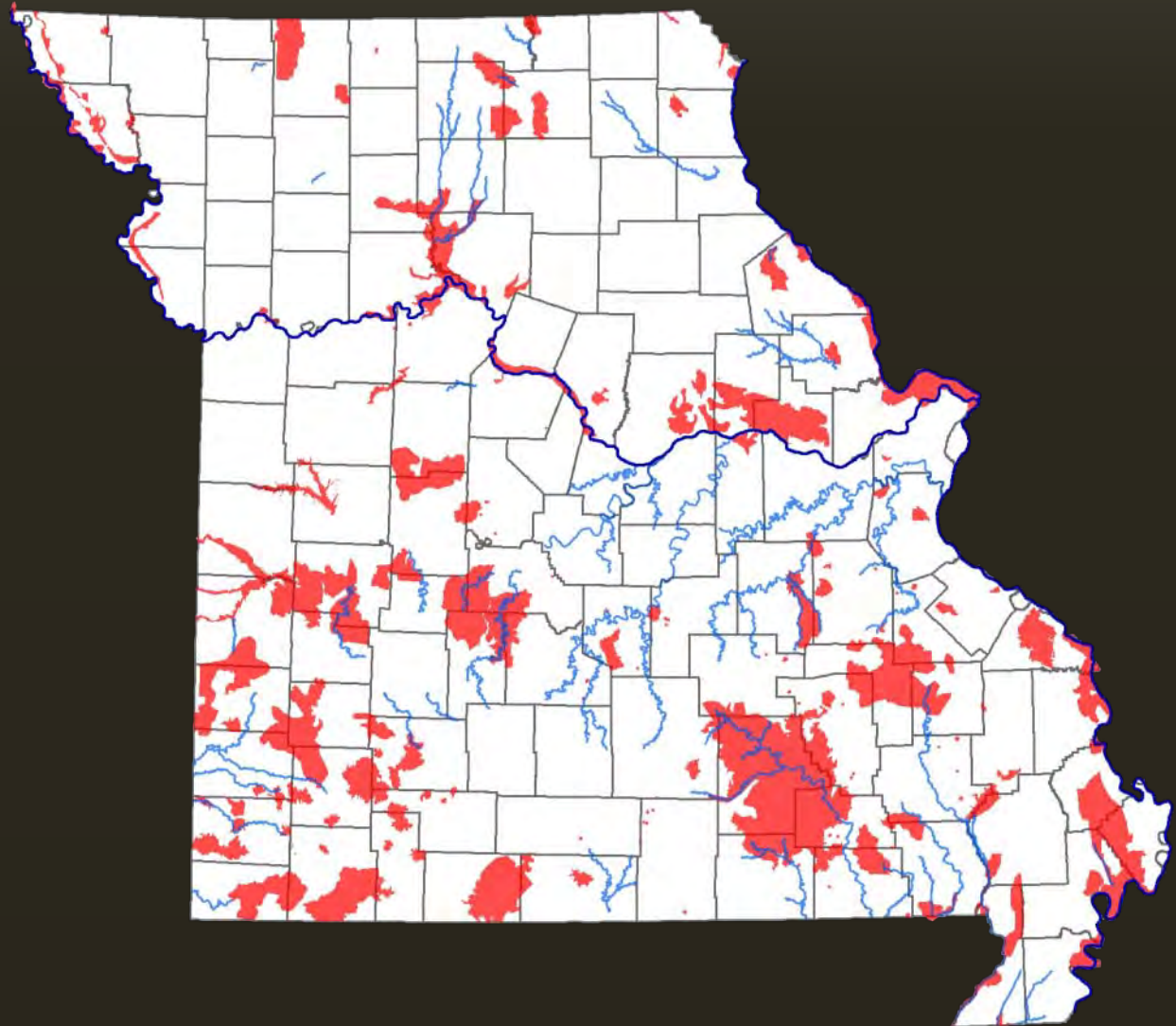
Very cool graphics...but what does all this mapping and planning mean?

What's the resulting action?

Putting Focused/Strategic Management on the Ground =

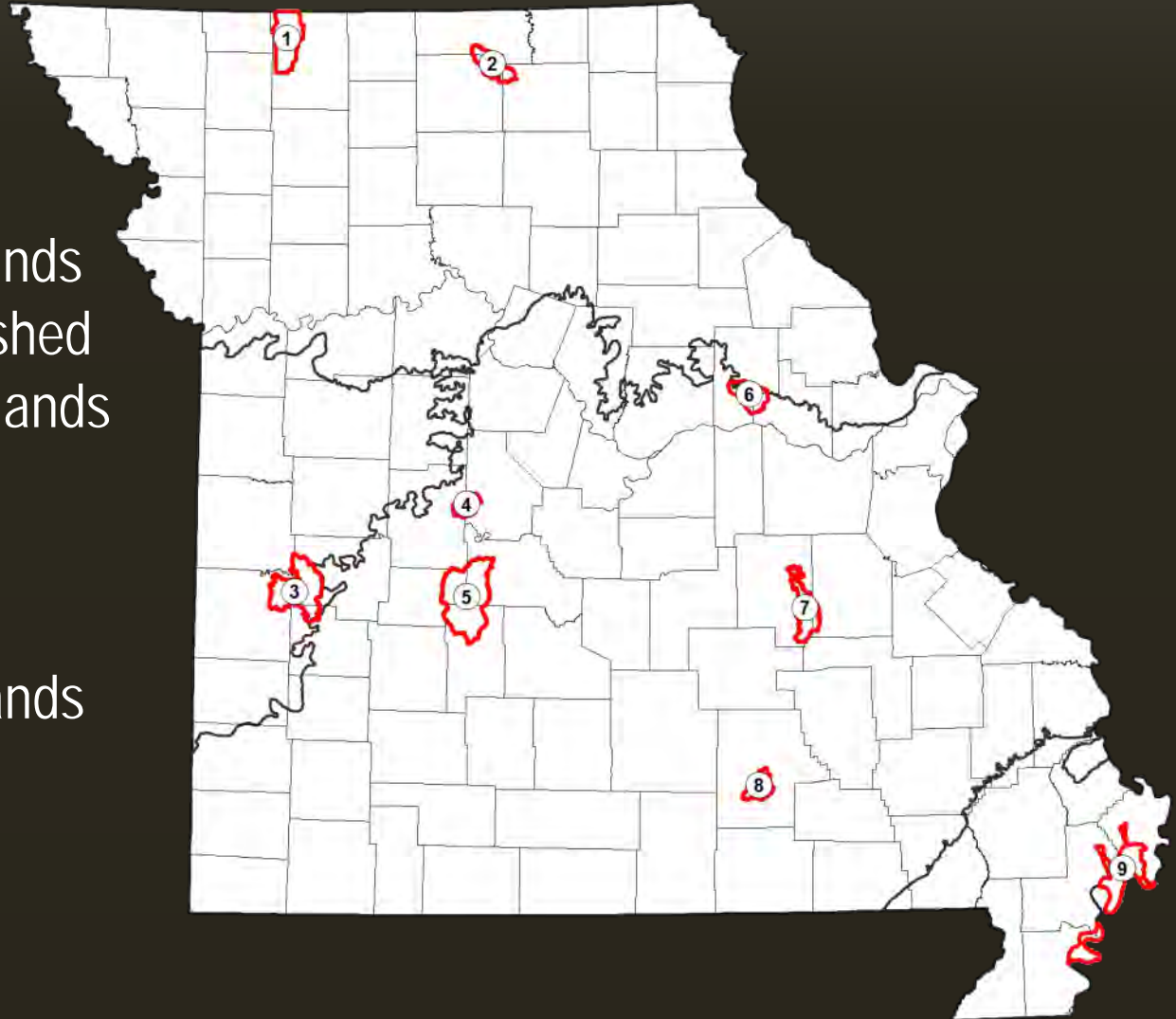
The creation of Priority Geographies from the identified COAs

Landscape Approach – Priority Geographies (Putting Management on the Ground)



Landscape Approach – Priority Geographies (Putting Management on the Ground)

1. Grand River Grasslands
2. Spring Creek Watershed
3. Upper Osage Grasslands
4. Big Buffalo Creek
5. Little Niangua River
6. Missouri River Hills
7. Shoal Creek Woodlands
8. Mahan's Creek
9. River Bends



Priority Geography Fundamentals

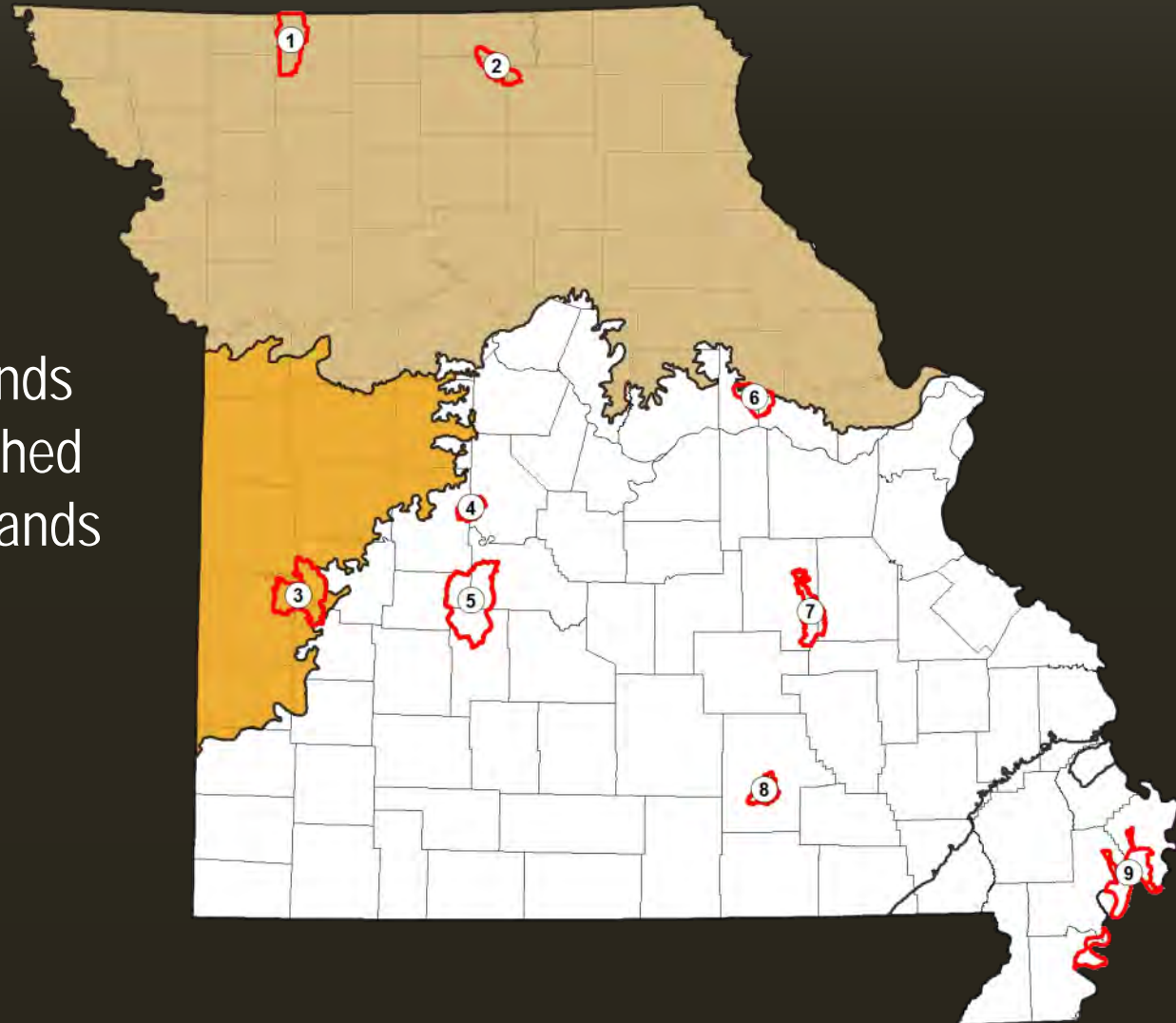
- Dedicated Interdivisional Team with a Selected Team Lead
- Defined Mission Statement
- Identified Desired Future Condition
- Conserve Natural Communities through Managing Public Land and Assisting Private Landowners
 - Outreach and Education
 - Active Partner/Stakeholder Engagement



Landscape Approach – Priority Geographies (Putting Management on the Ground)

The Plains

1. Grand River Grasslands
2. Spring Creek Watershed
3. Upper Osage Grasslands



Natural Community Management Practices

Grasslands (includes Savanna)

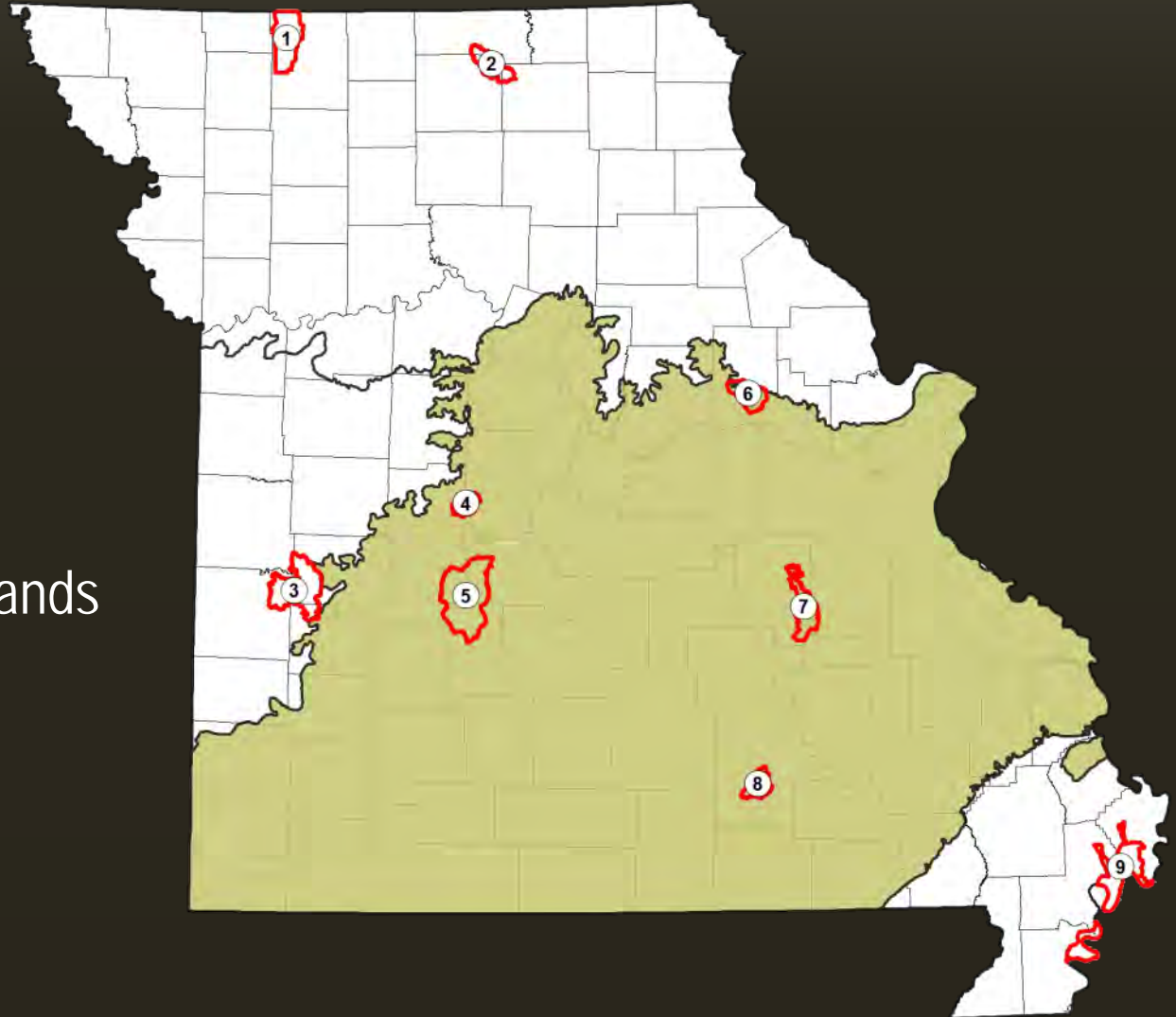
- Remnant Prairie Inventories
- Tree Removal & Thinning
- Prescribed Fire
- Grazing
- Seed Collection & Planting
- Invasive Species Management



Landscape Approach – Priority Geographies (Putting Management on the Ground)

The Ozarks

- 4. Big Buffalo Creek
- 5. Little Niangua River
- 6. Missouri River Hills
- 7. Shoal Creek Woodlands
- 8. Mahan's Creek



Natural Community Management Practices

Forests & Woodlands

- Selective Harvest & Thinning
- Reforestation
- Prescribed Fire
- Invasive Species Management



Natural Community Management Practices

Glades

- Cedar Removal
- Prescribed Fire
- Removal of Grazing
- Invasive Species Management



Natural Community Management Practices

Caves/Karst

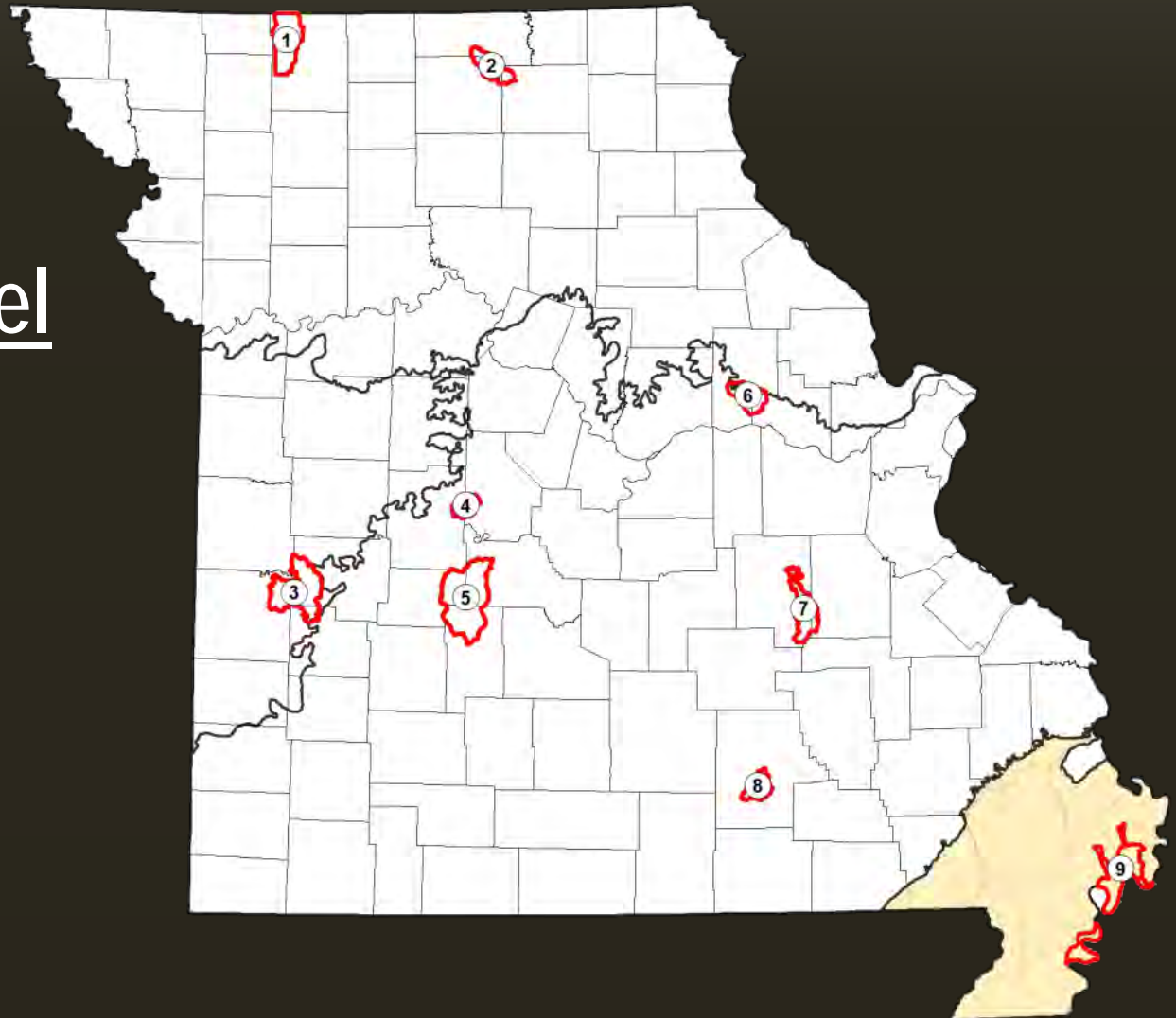
- Land Use Practices w/n Recharge Area
- Sinkhole Cleanup
- Spring Protection
- Cave Gating
- Invasive Species Management



Landscape Approach – Priority Geographies (Putting Management on the Ground)

The Bootheel

9. River Bends



Natural Community Management Practices

Wetlands

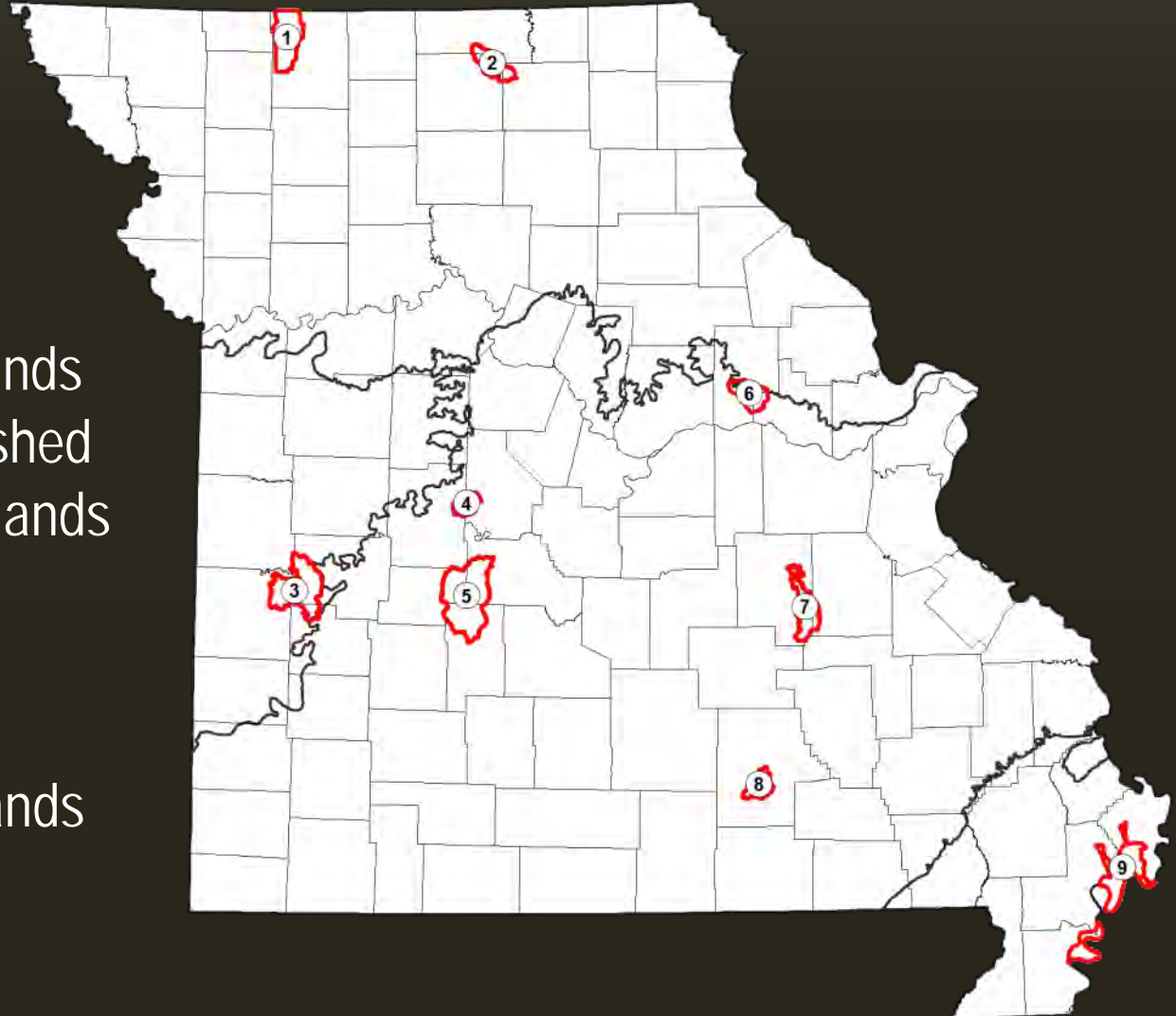
- Promote Reconstruction, Restoration and Management of Bottomland Forest
- Restore Hydrologic Connection
- Promote a Variety of Wetland Habitat (Succession)
- Invasive Species Management



Landscape Approach – Priority Geographies (Putting Management on the Ground)

Aquatic

1. Grand River Grasslands
2. Spring Creek Watershed
3. Upper Osage Grasslands
4. Big Buffalo Creek
5. Little Niangua River
6. Missouri River Hills
7. Shoal Creek Woodlands
8. Mahan's Creek
9. River Bends



Natural Community Management Practices

Rivers & Streams

- Watershed Approach
- Land Use Practices
 - Livestock Exclusions
 - Ag BMPs
- Riparian Corridor
- Aquatic Organism Passage
- Invasive Species Management



The Path Forward



These 9 geographies represent the initial stepping stones in a strategic approach to investing in the *implementation* of landscape-scale conservation in Missouri.

The Path Forward

Challenges to a Landscape Approach to Natural Community Conservation

- Resources
- Public Perception and Messaging
- Monitoring (Species, Natural Community, Landscape)
- Linking Landscapes
 - Transcending State and Regional Boundaries.... LCCs, JVs, etc.



The Path Forward - Success

- To be successful at the landscape conservation level, it is paramount we exhibit exemplary public land management and effective private lands assistance and management.



Thank you for your time!



Serving nature and you[®]



Looking to the Future of Bird Conservation:

Engaging a Broader Constituency



Judith Scarl

AFWA Bird Conservation Program Manager
Coordinator, North American Bird Conservation Initiative

June 2016

jscarl@fishwildlife.org



Photo Credits
Bald Eagle: Ryan McFarland
Red-Tailed Hawk: Steve Corey
Wood Ducks: Bill Gracey
Plover: USFWS NE



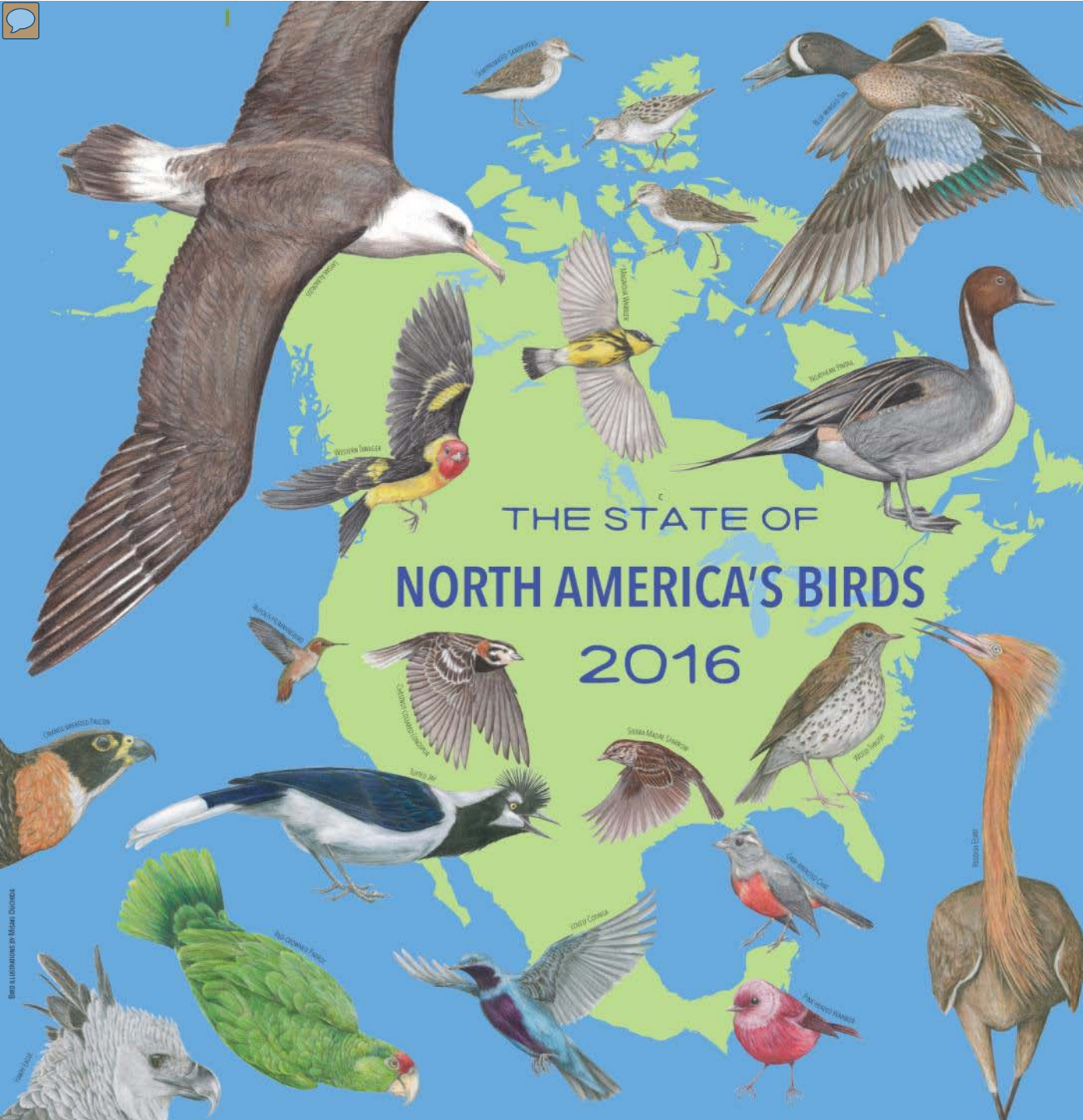
nabci



What is the North American Bird Conservation Initiative?

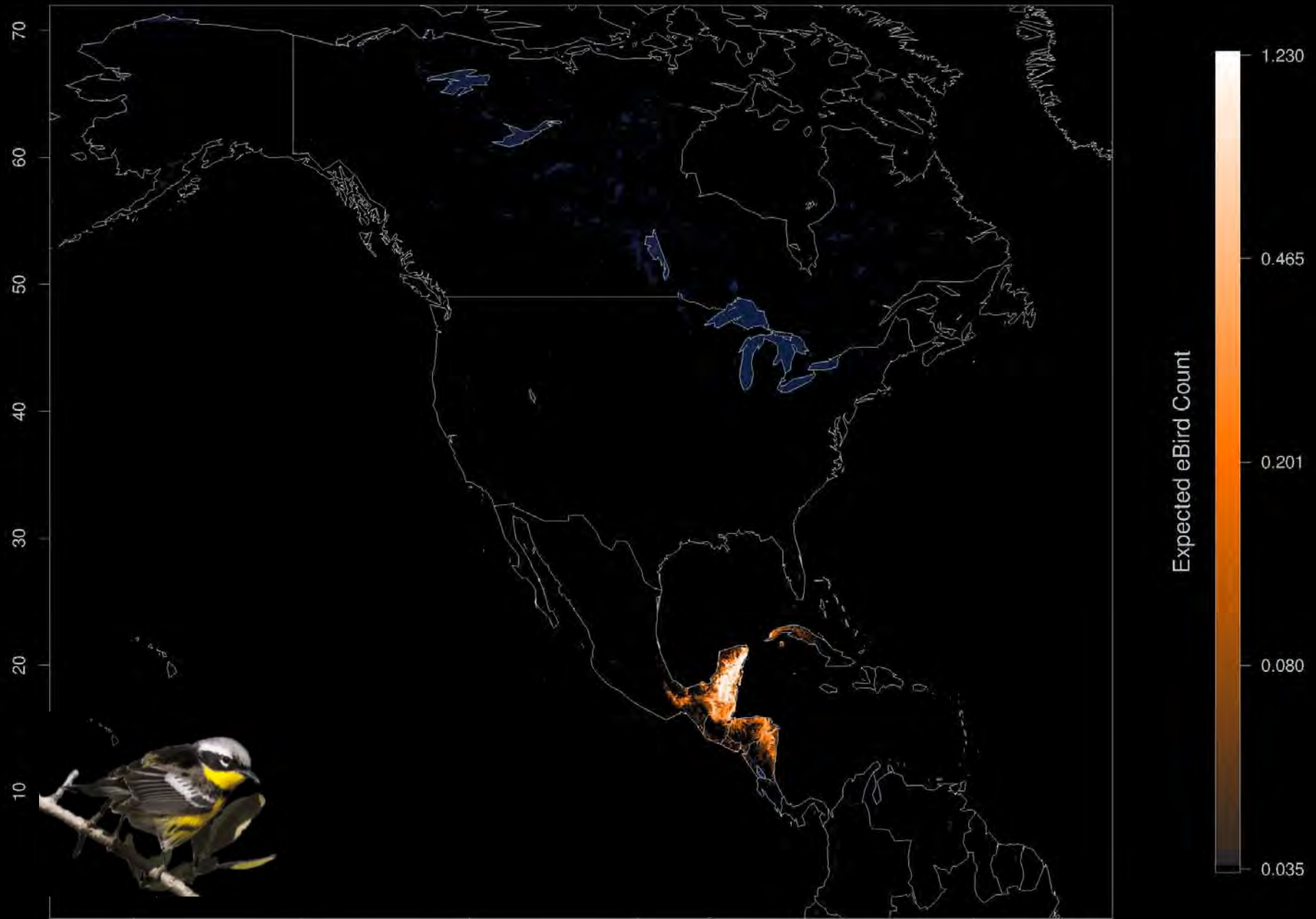
US: 28-member partnership of federal agencies, state agencies, NGOs, and partnerships working on national bird conservation issues

Mission: The U.S. NABCI Committee facilitates collaborative partnerships that advance biological, social, and scientific priorities for North American bird conservation.





Magnolia Warbler : January 4





How does citizen science benefit state wildlife agencies?

“It’s good PR, gets people thinking about their environment, it’s a positive thing to think about when they think about DFW”

–Kate Fleming, Delaware DFW

“Builds relationships and trust with the public”

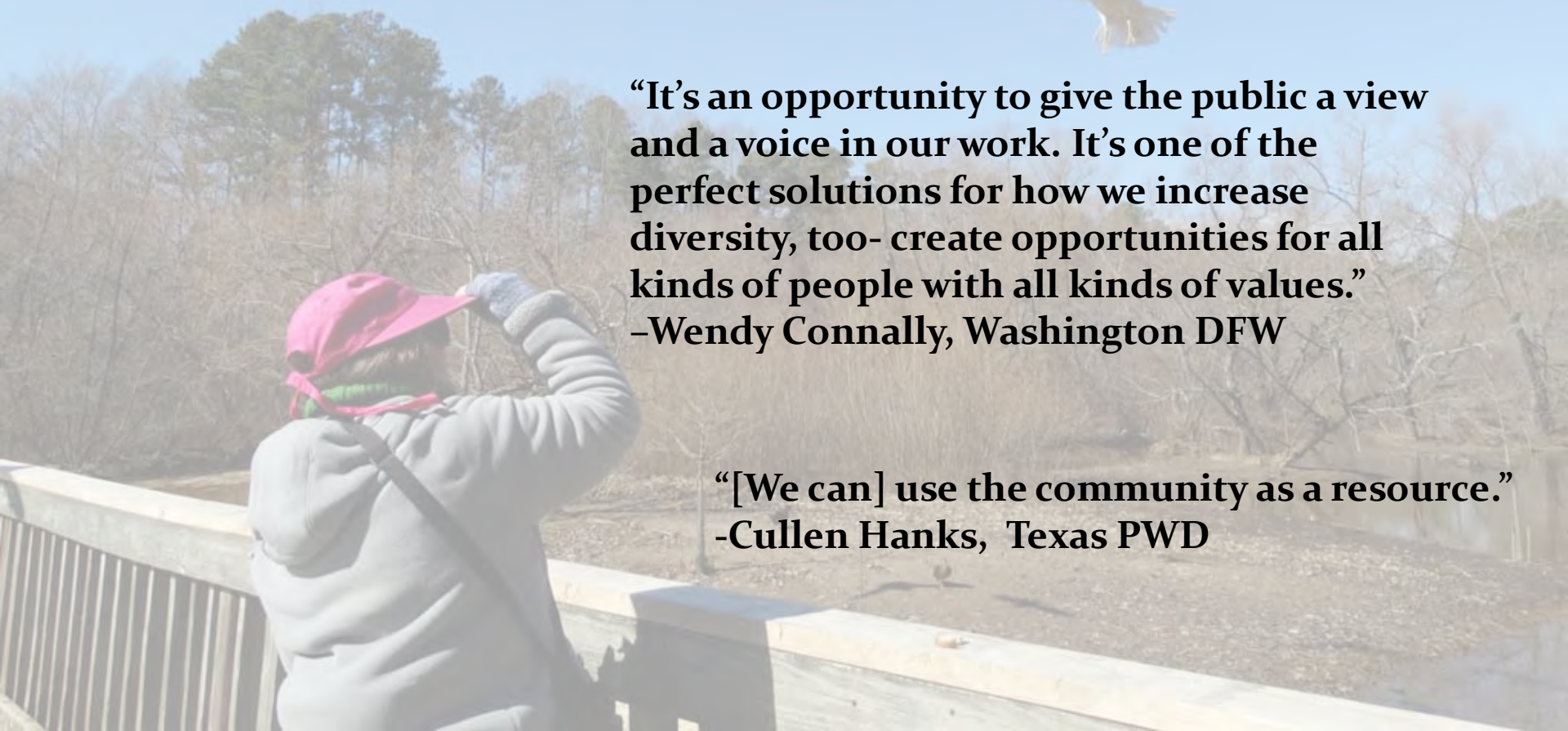
–Russell Norvell, Utah DNR

“It’s an opportunity to give the public a view and a voice in our work. It’s one of the perfect solutions for how we increase diversity, too- create opportunities for all kinds of people with all kinds of values.”

–Wendy Connally, Washington DFW

“[We can] use the community as a resource.”

–Cullen Hanks, Texas PWD



A background image showing a person in a field, possibly a citizen scientist, with a camera on a tripod. The person is wearing a green shirt and a hat. The field is open and grassy, with hills in the distance under a blue sky with some clouds.

How are states using citizen science?

- **Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas-** 700+ observers, 24,000 checklists, 1.7 million birds, 229 species
 - Document success stories (Trumpeter Swan, Peregrine Falcon, Bald Eagle), change in populations of game species, identify at-risk taxa (aerial insectivores)
- **Utah Riparian Bird Survey-** Built connections with “Angry Birders” while developing active volunteer network
- **Missouri Native Seed Collection-** Master Naturalists collect seeds for:
 - prairie restoration/reconstruction projects
 - Planting milkweed on public lands to benefit Monarchs





Citizen Science: Keys to Success

- **Citizen Science is cheap but not free- a small investment can yield major benefits**
- **Training and Communication are critical**
- **Dedicated Coordinator**
- **Select projects appropriate to level of training and skills of volunteers**
- **Consider Objective: solid data, engaged citizens, or both?**

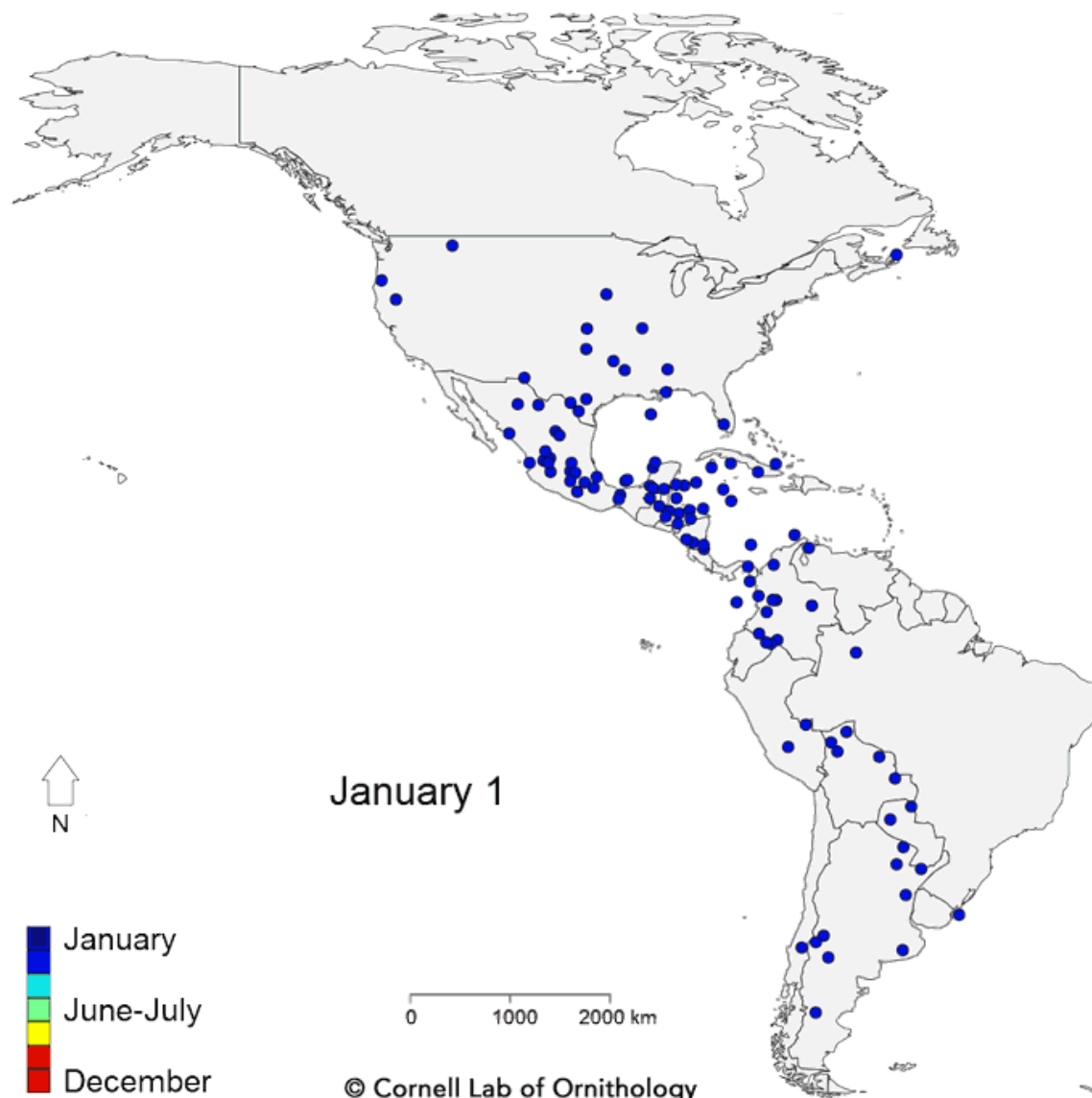


Beyond Birds:

Aligning Conservation Priorities to Engage a
Broader Constituency



Developing a
Hemispheric Vision
for Bird Conservation





“Everyone Wins with Bird Conservation”

Not everyone will adopt our priorities BUT...

...We can find areas of overlap to work together

“What’s good for the herd is good for the birds”





Questions to Consider

Do you have concerns about engaging and representing constituents beyond hunters and anglers? If so, how can we overcome those concerns?



In what new areas can we align our wildlife management or conservation goals with economic or human health priorities?



Thank you!



Judith Scarl
AFWA Bird Conservation Program Manager
Coordinator, North American Bird Conservation Initiative

June 2016

jscarl@fishwildlife.org



Photo Credits

Bald Eagle: Ryan McFarland
Red-Tailed Hawk: Steve Corey
Wood Ducks: Bill Gracey
Plover: USFWS NE



nabci

defendant in a wildlife case ever adjudicated. The successful prosecution of these cases would not have been possible without the dedication of many, and in particular Ms. Robinson. She dedicated months to this case, including many late nights and weekends. Over the course of her career, the cases that Prosecutions have resulted in millions of dollars in fines and restitution and years of jail time sentenced.

Ms. Robinson is an advocate for conservation and wildlife and is more than a prosecutor; she is a promoter and an educator. Her professionalism and steadfast commitment to the pursuit of justice should stand as an example for all to follow. In particular, throughout her career, Ms. Robinson has exemplified the dedication, professionalism and passion for conservation that embody the enduring legacy of conservation law enforcement. Indeed, her continuing resolve safeguards the State's natural resources from poaching, pollution, illegal commercialization and exposure to disease.

Award accepted by Ray Petering who will see that she gets the award.

Sagamore of the Forest, Fields and Streams –

“A sagamore is the head of northeastern Native American tribe. The word is generally synonymous with sachem, although sometimes a sachem is considered a chief of the first rank, and a sagamore one of the second rank. Sagamore can also refer to great man among the tribe to whom the chief would look for wisdom and advice.” This honor is bestowed on any Director or upper level staff member that has contributed significant service to MAFWA. To qualify for this recognition, recipients must provide 4 years of service to MAFWA, have a 75 percent meeting attendance and serve on one or more committees. This award goes to:

Ed Boggess, 4 years Minnesota; accepted by Jim Leach.

Bob Ziehmer, 6 years Missouri; accepted by Bob.

Scott Zody, 4 years Ohio - posthumously; accepted by Ray Petering who will see that his family gets the award.

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The Past President's Award is given to **Robert L. Ziehmer, Missouri** who has served as the MAFWA President for the past year. Bob will receive this award at the business meeting on Wednesday.

President's Award – *(presented by Bob Ziehmer, MO)* – **National Wildlife Federation,**
accepted by.



Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Award Nomination Form 2016

Award Categories (check only one per form)

I want to nominate: Indiana Conservation Officer Dustin Whitehead

- ☐ Spirit of the Shack
- ☐ Wildlife Biologist of the Year
- ☐ Excellence in Conservation
- ☐ Fisheries Biologist of the Year
- ☒ Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

Officer Dustin Whitehead is "that" officer a fish and wildlife law enforcement commander is excited to have amongst their ranks. The style, enthusiasm and dedication to service are traits that serve our enforcement community and public in the best possible manner. Natural leaders are often discovered through events that have an opportunity to expose the person to the rank and file. As for Officer Whitehead these leadership traits have been part of his persona for many years. His ability to connect to the community in multiple ways, enforce fish and wildlife regulation appropriately and provide leadership to his fellow officers is refreshing.

Officer Whitehead has established mentoring programs within conservation organization, schools, community groups and officer activities. Of these programs Officer Whitehead participates in multiple youth hunts, demonstrates the benefits of using retrievers for waterfowl hunting, provides a core group of positive role models for youth hunters during deer, dove, turkey and waterfowl youth hunts, assists in hunter education programs through schools, community and civic organizations and supports unique special needs youth during outdoor experiences. All of these activities can be asked of any officer, but these are activities Officer Whitehead has invested in without fanfare or direction by superiors. It is evident that his interaction with these activities is priceless by the joy these youth hunters experience during the hunts and the accolades expressed by family and community members.

Officer Whitehead has developed positive leadership traits through multiple avenues. Through his work with the Training Section as a Drill Instructor, Use of Force Instructor and providing instruction at yearly waterfowl identification training Officer Whitehead has developed a mentality that leading by example and being a positive role model is a necessity for all enforcement officers. These activities allow him to interact with a multitude of officers ranging from new hires to seasoned veterans. Within his patrol duties he has developed a style that supports the Law Enforcement Division and his community very well. He extends these qualities to his fellow officers providing assistance with investigative and patrol activities routinely. It is apparent these traits are desirable due to the fact officers gravitate to Officer Whitehead seeking clarity on investigative issues and his assistance is often requested during non-traditional patrol activities. During a recent patrol I spent with Officer Whitehead he expressed he was more pleased with his enforcement activity this year than past years. He went on to say that although he has produced less enforcement activity, the quality of the activity has been more appropriate targeting violators that purposefully engage in criminal activity verses the accidental violations that seems to trip up some sportsmen. This mentality is a testament to his beliefs and underlying desire to be viewed as a positive mentor and resource.

Officer Whitehead has always been an active member in local and national organizations such as Nappanee Conservation Club, Ducks Unlimited, Waterfowl USA, Wild Turkey Federation, but since becoming an officer he has discovered the ability to dedicate more time and apply his talent to several projects in a multitude of formats. As we all know it is more and more difficult to recruit youth and retain them in the outdoor sporting arena. Often with diverse lifestyles youth hunters fail to stay connected to hunting, fishing and outdoor recreational activities, but Officer Whitehead possesses the formula to retain these youths. Officer Whitehead has developed a positive charge in many of the programs he is affiliated with and youth membership is retained. It is quite apparent that his dedication to these activities is a plus by the way he interacts with the kids and their continued dedication in conservation organizations. Also, many of these organizations develop youth programs through direction of Officer Whitehead. These programs demonstrate to youth and adult membership the benefits and constructiveness of being a part of a productive organization.

As Officers Whitehead's commander I am very proud of his performance, his dedication to his community and the mature manner he enforces the fish and wildlife regulation. The level of excellence he puts towards his job duties, community involvement and conservation minded programs is a true testament to who Dustin Whitehead is; highly respected, admirable and a compassionate community leader and law enforcement officer.

Lt. John Karris
District One Commander

Additional note from:

Danny L. East, LED Director
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
402 W. Washington Street Rm. W-255D
Indianapolis, IN 46204
Office: [317 232-4009](tel:317-232-4009)

ICO Whitehead is the recipient of our agency's highest recognition award for his demonstration of exemplary conservation law enforcement duties and responsibilities during 2015. This award will be presented to him May 19, 2016.



Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Award Nomination Form 2016

Award Categories (check only one per form)

I want to nominate: Dan Halstead, District Wildlife Supervisor , ND

- ☐ Spirit of the Shack
- ☒ Wildlife Biologist of the Year
- ☐ Excellence in Conservation
- ☐ Fisheries Biologist of the Year
- ☐ Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

Dan Halstead, District Wildlife Supervisor – North Dakota Game and Fish Department, Riverdale. He is being nominated for this award due to his professional networking, project creativity, and resourcefulness.

Dan has been a Wildlife Resource Supervisor for the North Dakota Game and Fish Department for 17 years stationed at the Riverdale District. Dan is integral to the Department and conducts numerous wildlife surveys, supervises wildlife depredation response, and co-supervises the Private Lands Initiative in his district.

Dan coordinates with a three-person staff to supervise and manage 23 WMA's consisting of 37,000 acres in 5 counties. Dan manages WMA's that are owned by the Department, or owned by other entities including the US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and the Department of Transportation - that are managed by the Department under lease agreements.

Dan's aggressive management philosophy includes establishment of high quality food plots, tree and shrub plantings, grass and forb seedings, haying and grazing rotations, as well as the use of prescribed burning to enhance the habitat for wildlife production and hunting opportunities.

A highlight of Dan and the Department's recent accomplishment is the completion of the Coal Lake WMA located near Underwood. The WMA is the result of a unique partnership between numerous state and public agencies and coal mining businesses. The project includes 730 acres of pristine habitat that was donated by Falkirk Mining Company and Great River Energy to the ND Department of Transportation to be managed by the ND Game and Fish Department.

Dan was the key cog representing the Department over numerous years to keep the lines of communication open, developing agreements, securing funding, and maintaining partnerships with entities including Falkirk Mining Company, Great River Energy, North American Coal Corporation, North Dakota Public Service Commission, Federal Highway Administration, ND Department of Transportation, McLean County Commission, McLean County Planning and Zoning, State Historical Society, McLean County States Attorney, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. A Dedication of Coal Lake was held in September to recognize the partnerships and to signify the Department will now manage this gorgeous piece of habitat for perpetuity.

Dan Halstead's unwavering commitment to the ND Game and Fish Department and to the fish and wildlife resources he is entrusted to manage are to be commended. His professional dedication, eye for detail, and commitment make him a worthy recipient of this award.



Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Award Nomination Form 2016

Award Categories (check only one per form)

I want to nominate: Jonathan Meerbeek, Iowa DNR

- ☐ Spirit of the Shack
- ☐ Wildlife Biologist of the Year
- ☐ Excellence in Conservation
- ☒ Fisheries Biologist of the Year
- ☐ Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

I would like to nominate Jonathan Meerbeek for the 2016 MAFWA Fisheries Biologist of the Year award. Jonathan has been the Fisheries Research Biologist in Spirit Lake, Iowa since 2010. He is responsible for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Natural Lake Fisheries Research Program which aims to improve fishing in Iowa's glacial lakes.

Over the past six years, Jonathan's research has primarily focused on Walleye and Muskellunge population dynamics, age and growth assessments, and evaluating contribution of stocked fishes. He does an excellent job designing research projects that will answer questions posed by the district fisheries biologists that manage fisheries in Iowa's natural lakes. He maintains open lines of communication with these managers and works closely with them to identify and prioritize their research needs. His research doesn't just end up on a shelf – rather it yields useful information that is integrated into natural lakes management. Consequently, Jonathan has gained the trust of our management biologists and his research program is well supported by the teams that he serves. A good testament to this is the Muskellunge Management Plan that was revised in 2014. This plan incorporates research from Jonathan's program as well as information he compiled from a thorough literature review and by surveying Muskellunge managers in other states. Jonathan took the lead role in revising this plan and the final product was well received by the managers that will use it.

Jonathan also maintains an excellent rapport with the fishing clubs in Northwest Iowa. He presents annually at their meetings and contributes regularly to their newsletters. Early this year, the Upper Great Plains Chapter of Muskies, Inc approached the DNR about funding more Muskellunge research. Jonathan worked closely with Chapter leadership and the Spirit Lake Management Biologist to design a project that would yield useful information for Muskellunge management in Iowa. Ultimately, the Chapter contributed \$6,500 worth of telemetry equipment for this project and, with Jonathan's help, they also applied for and received a \$7,000 grant from the Hugh C. Becker Foundation to purchase additional equipment. After hearing about the project, the Heartland Chapter of Muskies Inc contributed another \$1,980 worth of equipment. This is an excellent example of how Jonathan has been working closely with our partners and customers to conduct quality research that will aid fisheries management and, in turn, fishing for Iowa anglers.

The 2016 Muskellunge telemetry project is not the first time Jonathan has leveraged outside funds for natural lakes research. Since 2014, Jonathan has been collecting data to assess the effects of the looming zebra mussel infestation on the vegetation community in the Iowa Great Lakes. Jonathan and his team are conducting the mapping, vegetation sampling, and analysis; however, much of the equipment and software for this project was provided by the Iowa Board of Regents' Lakeside Lab located on West Okoboji Lake and their friends group, Friends of Lakeside Lab. Again, Jonathan has formed a strong partnership with these two groups and worked closely with them to design a project that aims to assess the vegetation community in the Iowa Great Lakes system. This project will allow Jonathan to document changes as zebra mussels infest this system. The information gained from this project will allow lake managers to plan and prepare for future zebra mussel infestations in other lakes.

Jonathan's contributions to the DNR's Fisheries Bureau are not limited to his role in the Research Section. He frequently assists the management and culture teams in Spirit Lake, as well as other teams around the state. He is always willing to do what needs to be done for the good of the resource and doesn't let section or bureau lines limit his contributions. In fact, last year from March through September 2015, Jonathan stepped up in a big way for the Fisheries Bureau by serving as the Interim Hatchery Manager during an extended vacancy following a retirement at Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery. He did this on top of his normal research duties and took both assignments very seriously. He was able to keep all of his research projects on track even though his interim assignment encompassed most of the hectic sampling and production seasons for both teams. Production from the hatchery did not wane under his leadership – in fact, 2015 was one of the best Walleye and Muskellunge production seasons on record for the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery. This was no small feat and would not have been possible if it wasn't for Jonathan's dedication and hard work.

Jonathan also goes above and beyond what is expected of him to ensure that his work is contributing to the advancement of fisheries science. In his six years with the Iowa DNR, Jonathan has presented 24 papers at local, regional, and national AFS and other professional meetings and published four manuscripts in the AFS's North American Journal of Fisheries Management. He is very active with the North Central Division of the American Fisheries Society's Esocid Technical Committee. He attends and contributes to all of their meetings and served as Chair of this committee for two terms (2010-2012).

I believe these accomplishments make Jonathan very deserving of consideration for MAFWA's Fisheries Biologist of the Year award.

Sincerely,

George Scholten, Research Section Supervisor
Fisheries Bureau, Iowa Department of Natural Resources
502 East 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319-0034
Phone: 515-371-6915
Email: George.Scholten@dnr.iowa.gov



Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Award Nomination Form 2016

Award Categories (check only one per form)

Director William Moritz nominates: Edward K. Boggess

☒ Spirit of the Shack

☐ Wildlife Biologist of the Year

☐ Excellence in Conservation

☐ Fisheries Biologist of the Year

☐ Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

Mr. Edward K. Boggess started at the Minnesota DNR in 1982 as furbearer program leader. Over the course of his 34 year career, he held nearly every important and high profile position with the Division of Fish and Wildlife. During his tenure with DNR, Ed served as wildlife program manager, chief of fish and wildlife policy, deputy director of the fish and wildlife division and, since 2011, the Division's top post - Director.

While his list of accomplishments is long, I will attempt to summarize some of them below. Please know this is not an inclusive list and 1 page cannot do justice to the full measure of Ed's career.

- Ed's grasp of detail, especially as it related to legislation, was unparalleled in the DNR. He helped re-codify the Game and Fish statutes and had an amazing ability to not only cite the statute, but its history as well. Ed not only knows what the statute says, he knows how it was developed, where it came from, and who wrote it. His knowledge of state rules and regulations and ability to navigate the biological and social minefields at the Legislature were true assets to the DNR and the citizens of Minnesota.
- Ed is an expert in American Indian treaties and was frequently called upon as the Department expert on Treaty interpretation and implementation.
- Ed always took a measured and deliberate science-based approaches to decision-making. He is well respected among his peers and was one of the best fish and wildlife directors in the nation. He commanded the respect and admiration of staff both below and above him in the organization.
- Ed had leadership roles in the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). He served not only on the executive committee, but the Federal and Tribal Relations, Fish and Wildlife Health, Fish and Wildlife Trust Funds, International Relations, Legal, Legislative and Federal Budget, Sustainable Use of Wildlife (Chair), and Wildlife Resource Policy committees.
- Ed is a national leader with respect to furbearer management and had a prominent role on the AFWA furbearer conservation and technical working group. He spent most of his career defending and supporting trapping not just in Minnesota, but nationwide.
- Ed also had a leadership role in the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (MAFWA). He served on numerous committees and was the MAFWA President in 2015.
- Ed was instrumental in supporting a national wildlife values study that will take place next year. That study is a national replicate of a western study in 2003 that examined the general public's attitudes towards fish and wildlife.



Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Award Nomination Form 2016

Award Categories (check only one per form)

I want to nominate: The late Willie Suchy, former Research Supervisor, Wildlife Bureau, Iowa Department of Natural Resources

☒ Spirit of the Shack

☐ Wildlife Biologist of the Year

☐ Excellence in Conservation

☐ Fisheries Biologist of the Year

☐ Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

Submitted by:

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Kelley Myers, Conservation Recreation Division Administrator (515-725-8484)

Dr. Dale Garner, Wildlife Bureau Chief (515-725-8494)

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

In November 2015, Iowa's professional Wildlife community lost one of its most valued members. Willie Suchy, Iowa DNR Wildlife Research Supervisor and long-time deer biologist passed away unexpectedly. He left an indelible mark on Iowa's wildlife management.

Willie Suchy was a native Iowan and graduated from Iowa State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology. He earned his Master's degree at the University of Wyoming, and upon finishing his program study there, he returned home to take a position with the Iowa Conservation Commission in 1984 as a Wildlife Technician. He later promoted to a biologist, working with a variety of species including quail, pheasants, wild turkey and deer, and then moved into a leadership position managing Iowa's white-tailed deer herd, a role he would hold for 20 years. During Willie's tenure as Iowa's deer project leader, Iowa's deer herd became nationally recognized as the premiere white-tail herd in the country.

Despite his passion for deer and deer management, Willie accepted a position as head of the Wildlife Bureau's Research Section in 2006; he realized he could do more for Iowa's natural resources and citizenry in that capacity. He initiated a comprehensive strategic planning effort meant to empower the biologists and technicians under his charge. As Wildlife Research Section Supervisor, Willie was committed to providing continuing education and professional development opportunities for his staff, and under his leadership, the Wildlife Bureau developed comprehensive wildlife management plans that took into account all the wildlife resources of the state.

Willie excelled as a highly quantitative biologist and shared his passion for accurate data collection and analysis techniques with many others. He taught statistics and math at Simpson College for 28 years and served as President of The Wildlife Society – Iowa Chapter from 2006 to 2008. He remained active in a number of other organizations.

Willie was highly regarded amongst his peers, the sportsman of the state and decision-makers, alike. He was one of the DNR's most credible experts regarding wildlife resources in the state, providing scientific information on populations, habitat and management efforts in many venues. Willie embraced controversial or contentious meetings with a calm and exacting attitude, helping all involved both be heard and reach the appropriate conclusions. He was committed to educating all citizens about wildlife, often participating in public meetings or live question- and-answer sessions about wildlife and hunting on social media.

Like Iowa's other great conservationist, Aldo Leopold, Willie understood that people make decisions about conservation for more than monetary gain; that a sense of identity, belonging to a community, or aesthetic values may be more important than the bottom line. He recognized Leopold's line, that "conservation is a state of harmony between men and land," approaching his work with the knowledge that, as natural resource professionals, you have to understand the values that drive people, meet people where they are, communicate with them and find ways to connect with them based on shared experiences. He saw that natural resource professionals have a role to play in sustainability of the ecological systems upon which we all depend, and he facilitated stewardship of the land to benefit all wildlife, not just individual species that are hunted or trapped.

Willie lived and breathed wildlife and the wildlife profession in all things. He spent his free time observing wildlife and the natural world. On their small farm in southern Iowa, Willie and his wife Anna often walked and watched the other inhabitants of their woodland community.

Suchy's passion for natural resources and respect for other people's opinions made him a great asset to the wildlife profession. "He based his decisions on scientific data, not personal opinion," Suchy's wife, Anna said. "He was also a man of vision and could see a whole big picture that most of us don't see." Willie has been missed but

he leaves the legacy of the biologists and technicians he trained and the citizens he impacted, who continue to carry on his life's work and passion.



Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Award Nomination Form 2015

Award Categories (check only one per form)

I want to nominate: Ms. Heather Robinson, Ohio

- ☐ Spirit of the Shack
- ☐ Wildlife Biologist of the Year
- ☒ Excellence in Conservation
- ☐ Fisheries Biologist of the Year
- ☐ Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

2. Please list and/or describe specific projects, work or accomplishments relevant to the award. Please limit your information to one page.

Ms. Heather Robinson is the Director of the Environmental Crimes Unit of the Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney's Office in Columbus, Ohio. Ms. Robinson received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Michigan State University and her Juris Doctorate degree from The Ohio State University College of Law. She specializes in the prosecution of environmental crimes,

including air, water, and land pollution; hazardous and infectious waste crimes; and wildlife crimes.

Ms. Robinson has been a prosecutor for 20 years, including 14 years as a special federal prosecutor. For the past 14 years, she has been a member of the Environmental Crimes Task Force of Central Ohio (ECTF). The ECTF investigates approximately 2,200 cases a year involving air, land and water pollution. In addition to prosecuting cases, Ms. Robinson has provided training to law enforcement officers on the investigation of environmental crimes. She has also been a featured speaker at events such as the Ohio Fish and Wildlife Management Association annual meeting and the Wildlife Diversity Conference.

Ms. Robinson prosecuted her first wildlife case in 2000. Highlighting her distinguished career, Ms. Robinson has prosecuted a multi-state ring of criminals poaching reptiles and salamanders from the wild for sale into the pet trade, the massive over-bagging of sport fish species for sale in restaurants, unscrupulous hunting guides who lured out-of-state hunters into Ohio to hunt on private lands without permission, and individuals poaching white-tailed deer to sell as fresh meat, jerky, wall mounts and home furnishings.

Ms. Robinson has also prosecuted state and federal wildlife cases involving the illegal interstate trafficking and commercialization of white-tailed deer. Interstate movement of untested and uncertified deer threatens both wild deer herds and captive livestock. Three of these cases came to a successful completion in 2015, resulting in the largest fines and restitution for an individual defendant in a wildlife case ever adjudicated. The successful prosecution of these cases would not have been possible without the dedication of many, and in particular Ms. Robinson. She dedicated months to this case, including many late nights and weekends. Over the course of her career, the cases that Ms. Robinson has prosecuted have resulted in millions of dollars in fines and restitution and years of jail time sentenced.

Ms. Robinson is an advocate for conservation and wildlife. Ms. Robinson is more than a prosecutor; she is a promoter and an educator. Her professionalism and steadfast commitment to the pursuit of justice should stand as an example for all to follow. In particular, throughout her career, Ms. Robinson has exemplified the dedication, professionalism and passion for conservation that embody the enduring legacy of conservation law enforcement. Indeed, her continuing resolve safeguards the State's natural resources from poaching, pollution, illegal commercialization and exposure to disease.

On behalf of the ODNR Division of Wildlife, and the State of Ohio, I am honored to nominate Ms. Heather Robinson for the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies President's Award.

Respectfully Submitted;

Korey Brown

District Manager

ODNR Division of Wildlife