

United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service



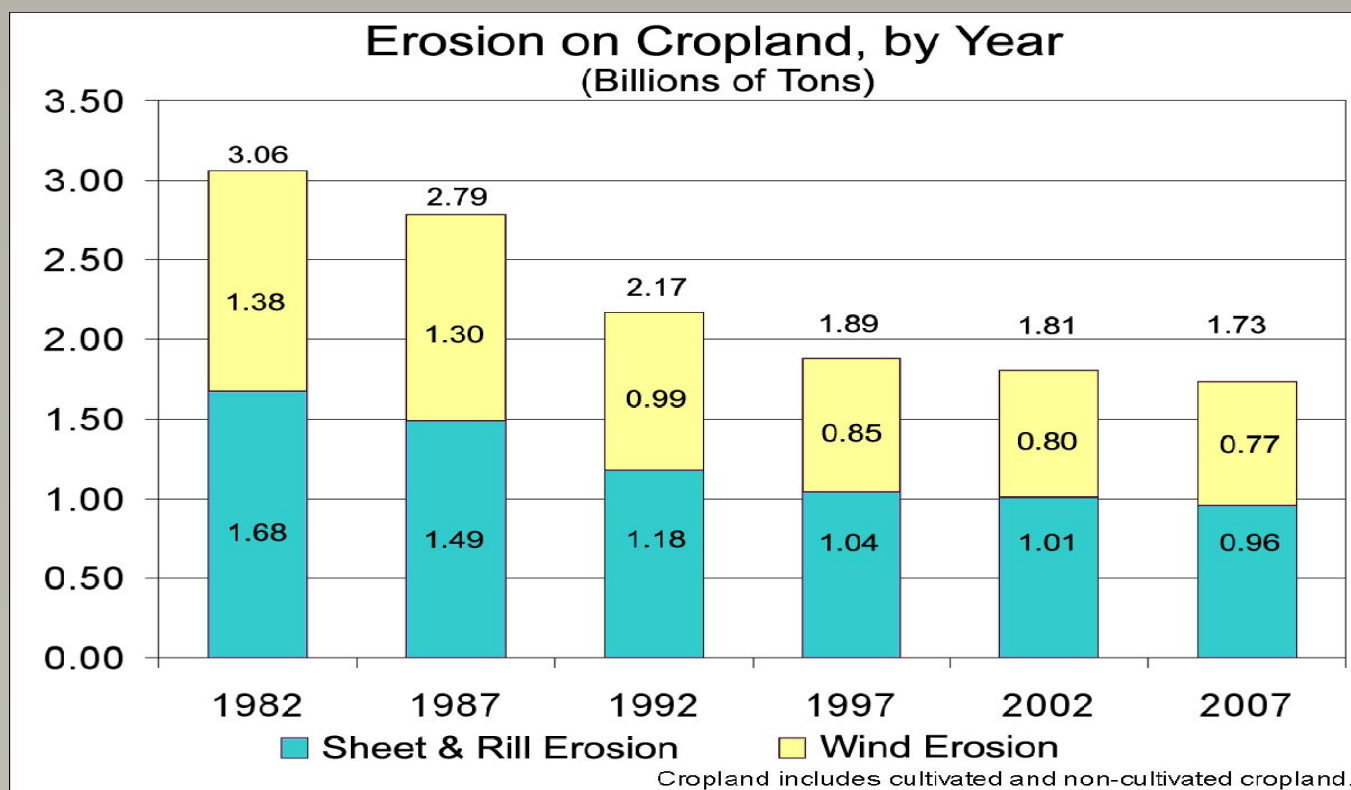
Jason Weller  
NRCS Chief of Staff  
September 2012



## Conservation Programs Deliver Results

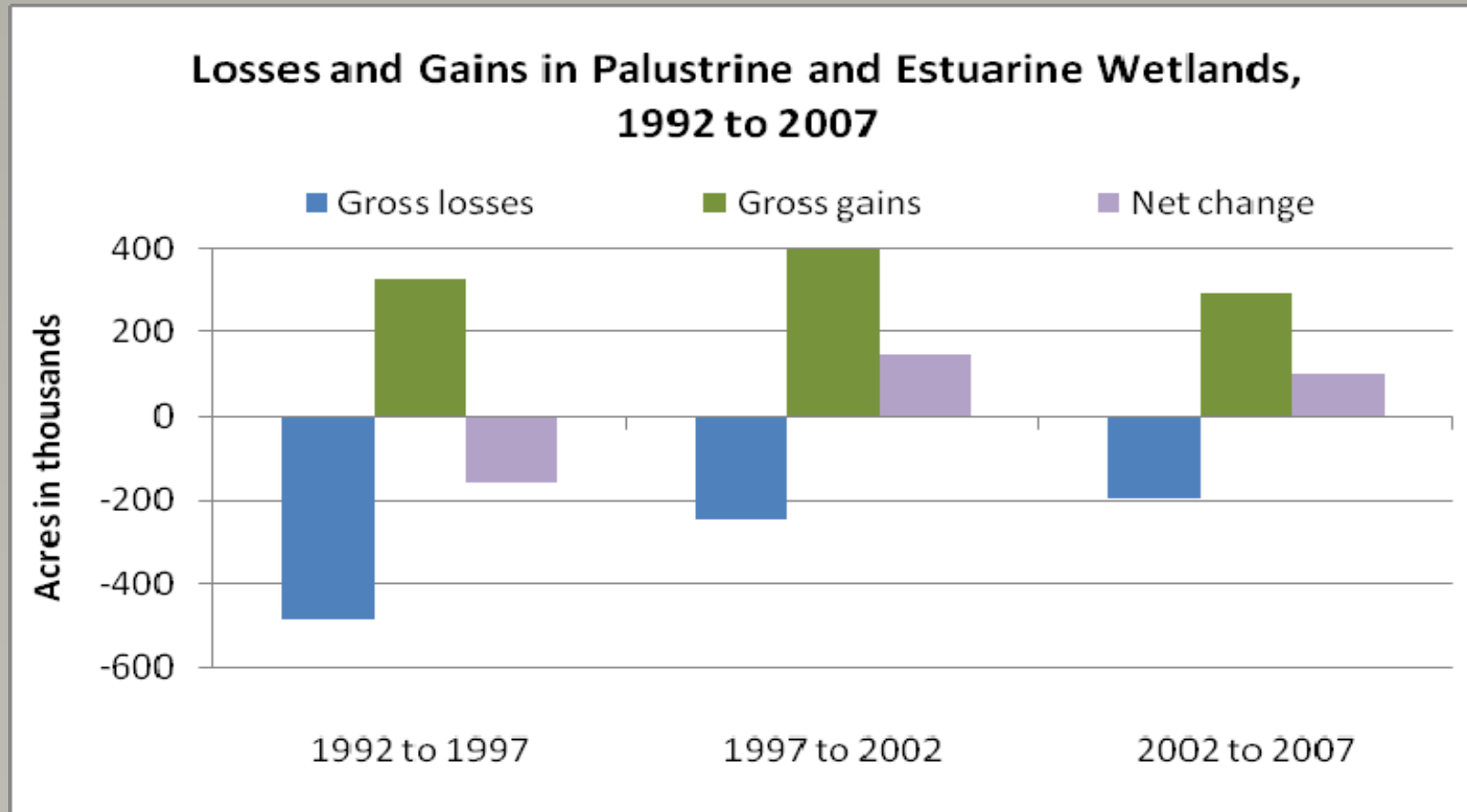
- NRI results
- CEAP results
- CEAP lessons
- Storm damage protection

# Cropland erosion has been reduced by 43% between 1982 and 2007.



*SOURCE: 2007 National Resources Inventory, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA*

## Wetlands Gains and Losses



SOURCE: 2007 National Resources Inventory, Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA

# Conservation Effects Assessment Project

## Regional Reports

Upper Mississippi

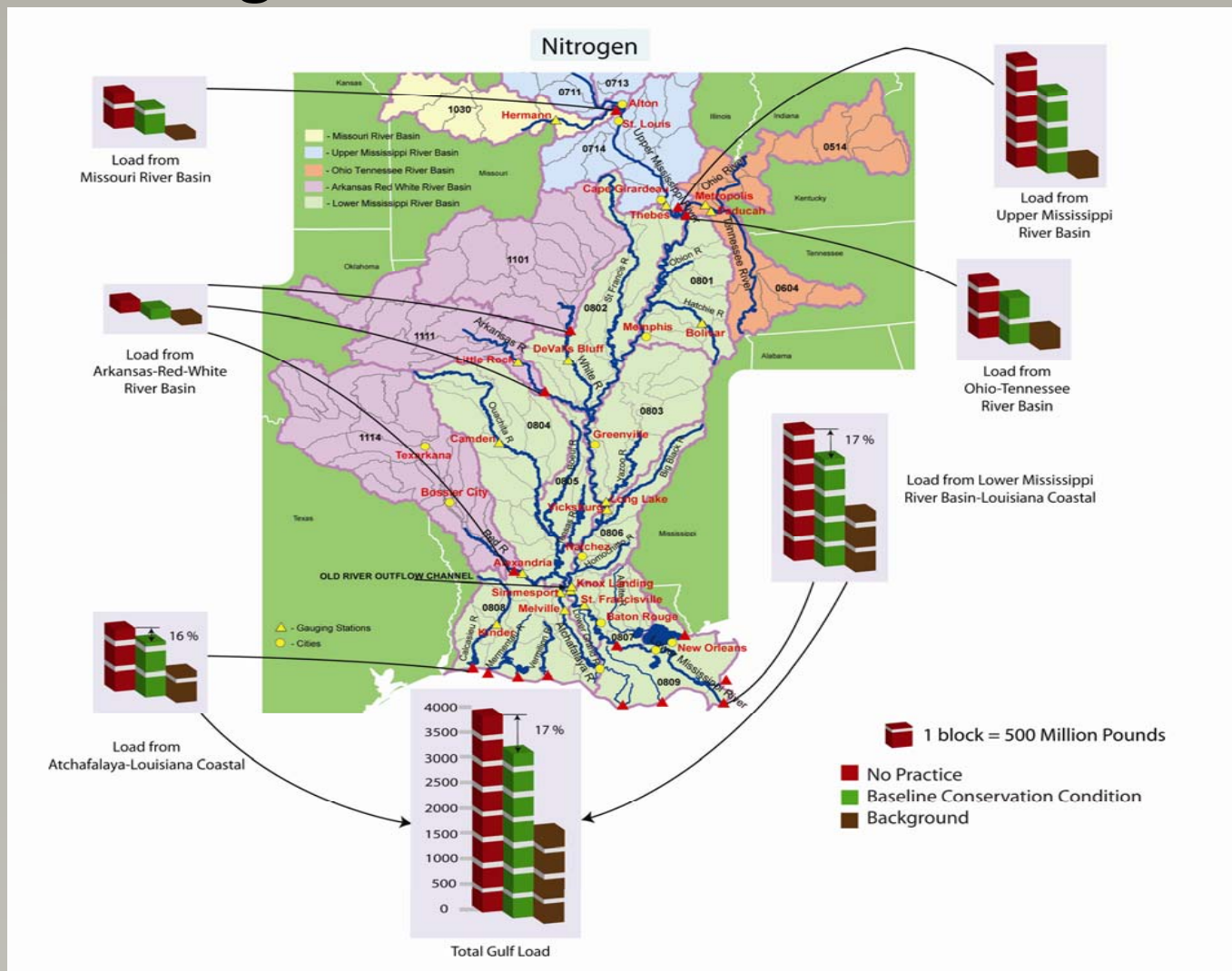
Chesapeake Bay

Ohio/Tennessee

Great Lakes

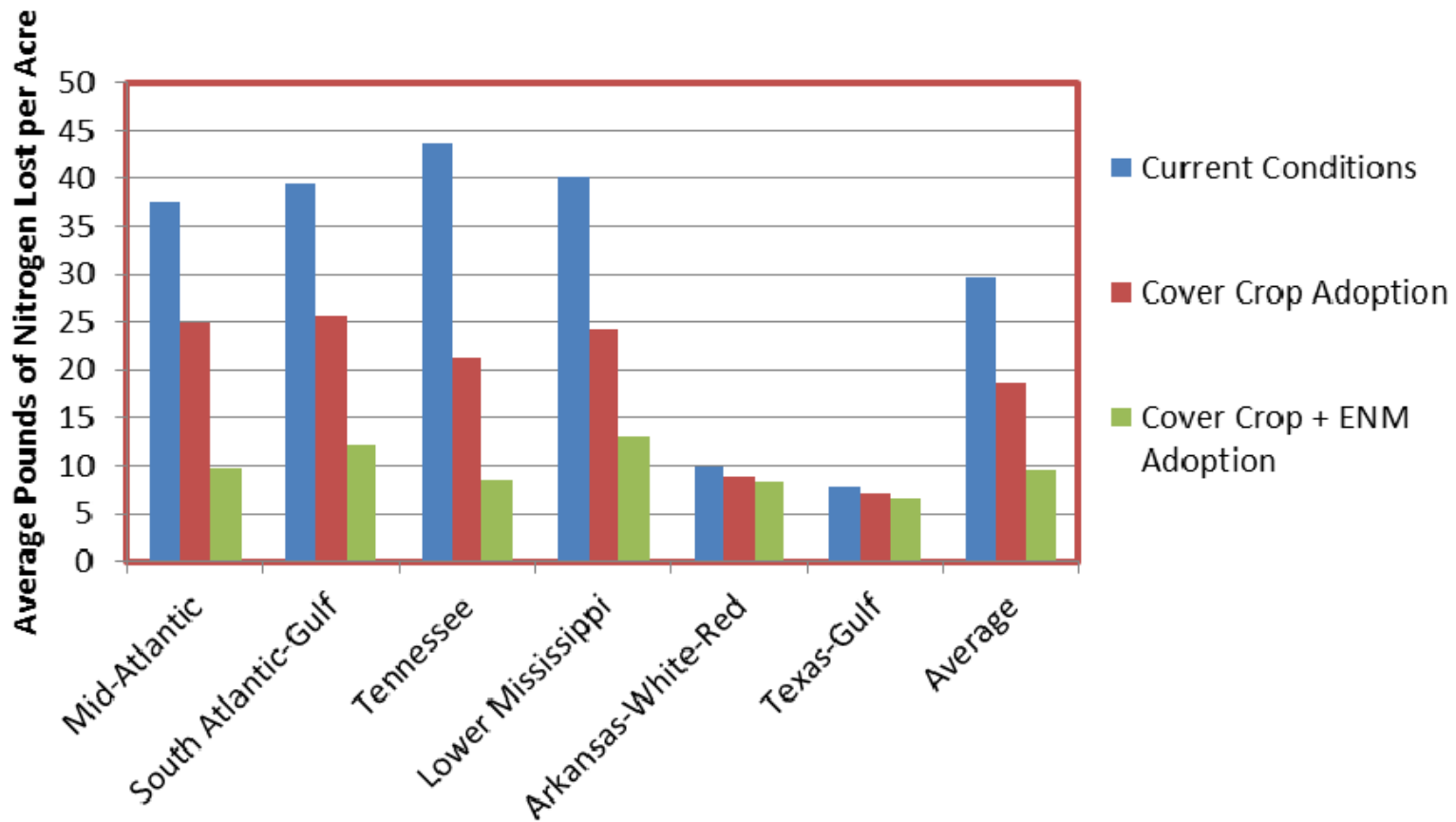
Missouri

# Cropland Conservation: In-Stream Reduction in Nitrogen Loads from all sources



# Benefits of Multiple Practices

Simulation of Impacts of Adoption of Cover Crop and Cover Crop + Erosion Control and Nutrient Management (ENM) on Average Nitrogen Loss

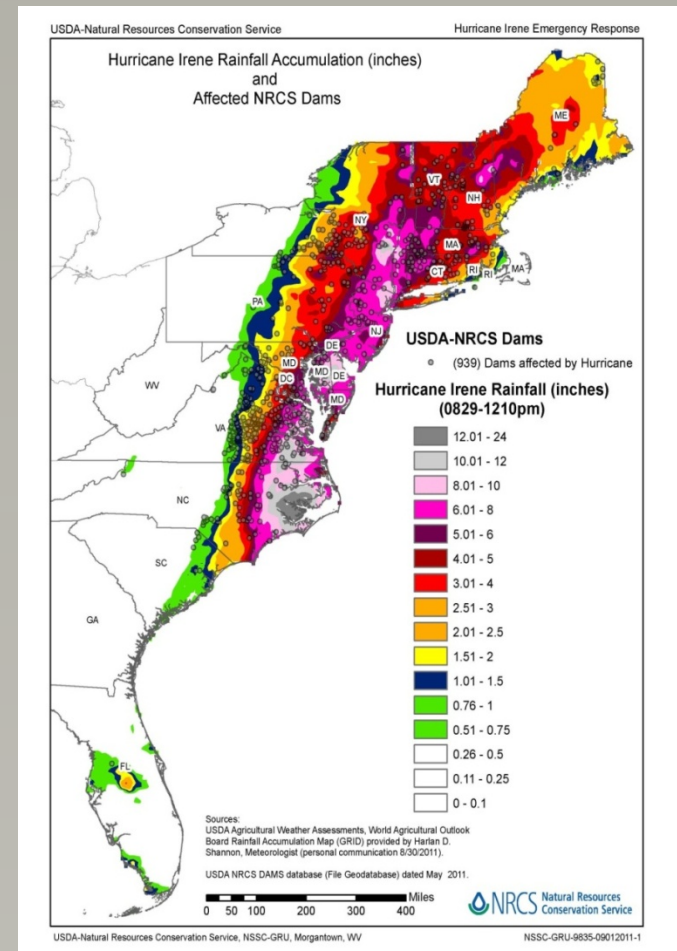




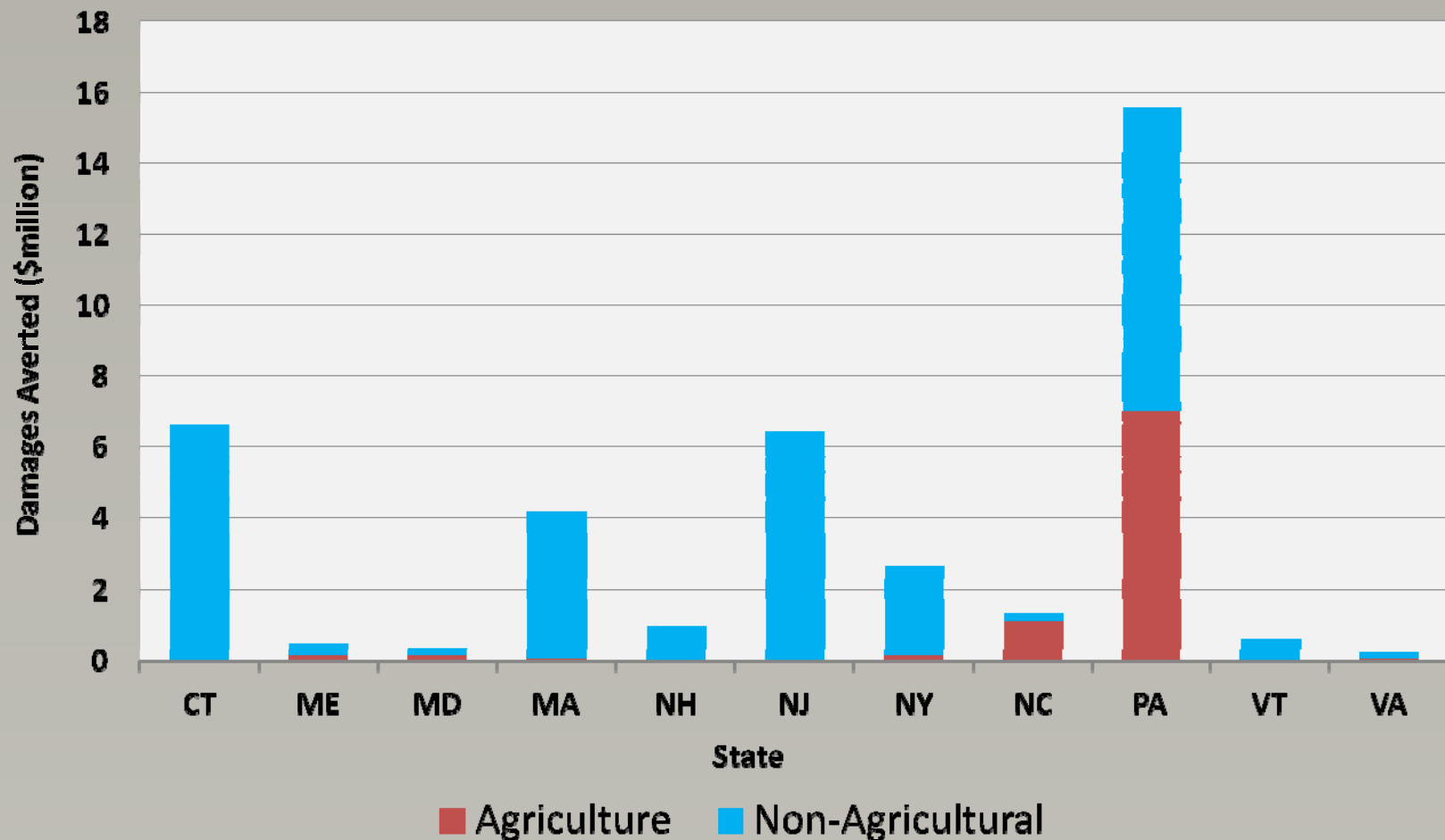
## Estimating Flood Damages Averted from NRCS Watershed Projects



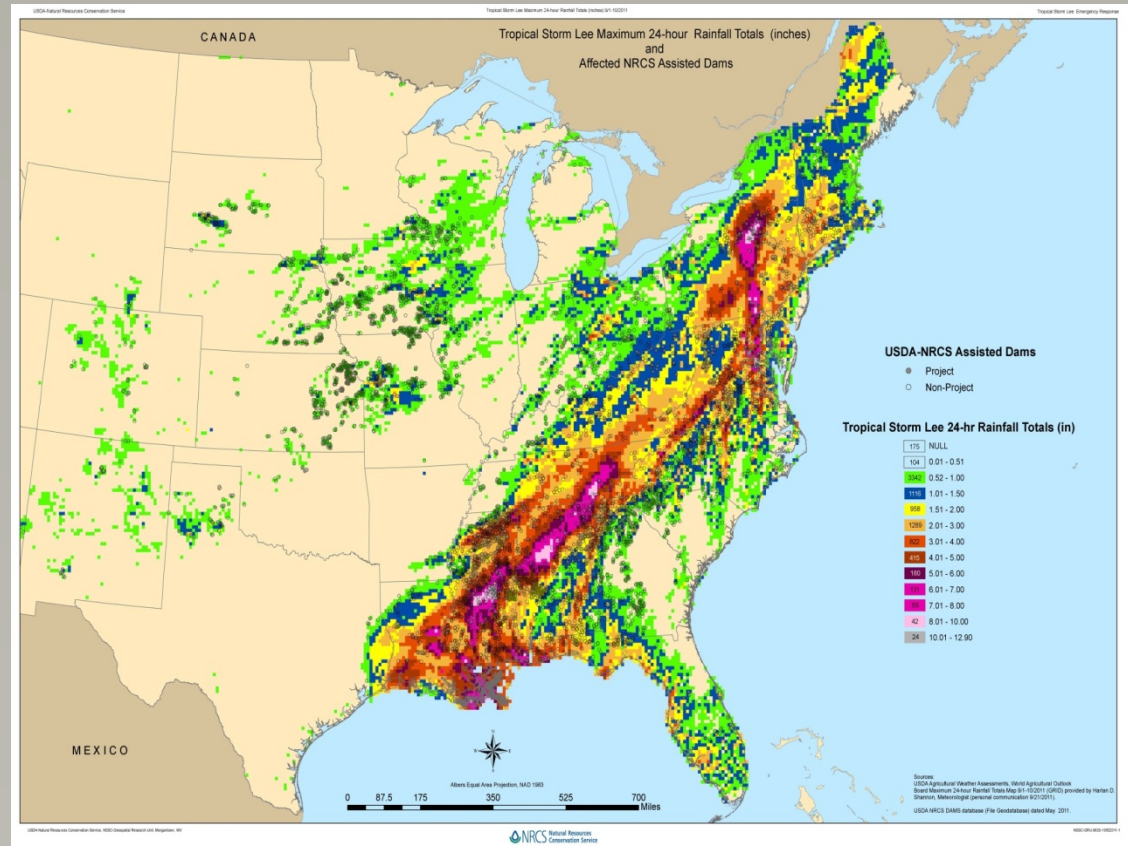
# Hurricane Irene Rainfall Accumulation (August 27-29, 2011)



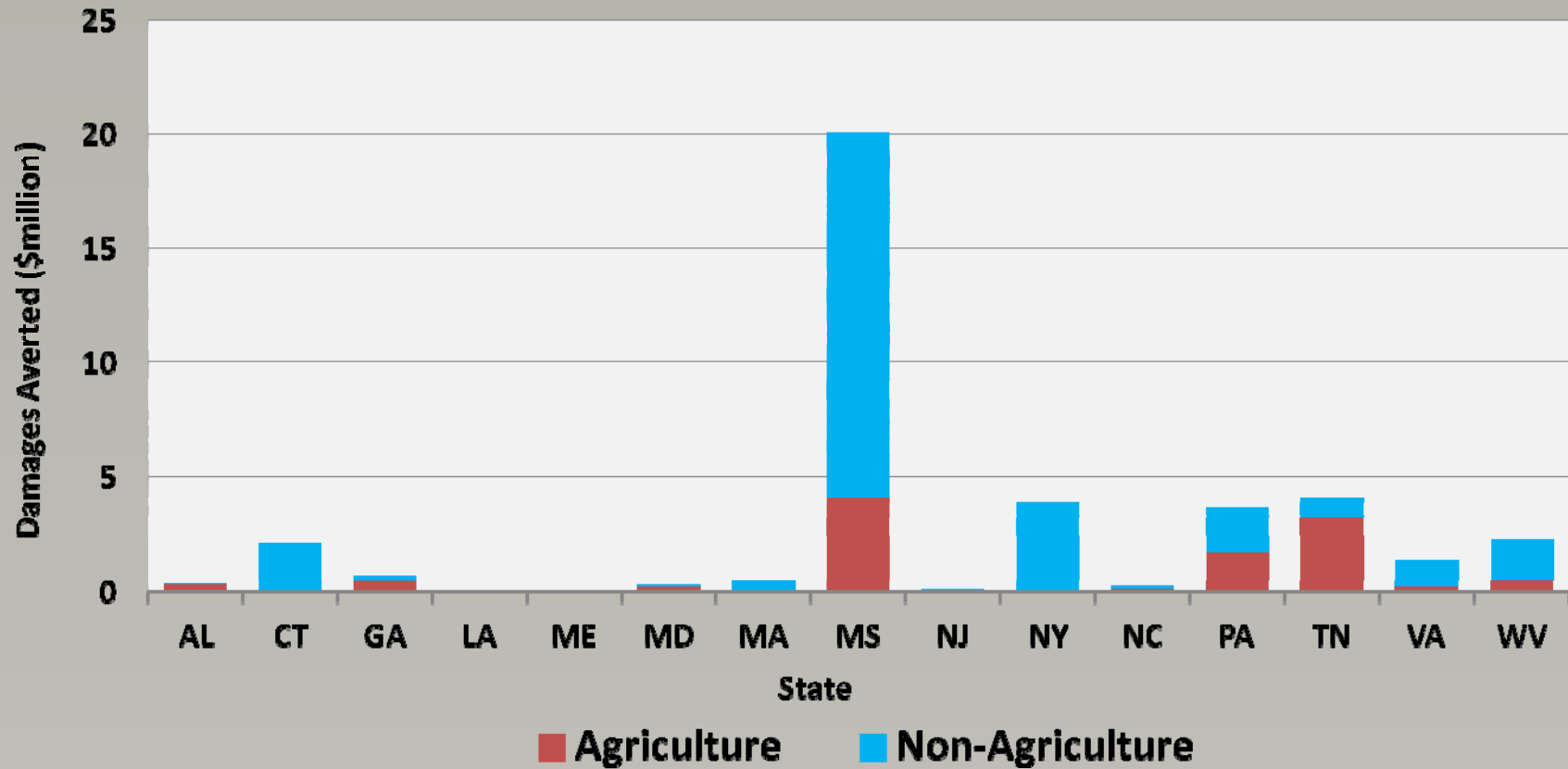
## Estimate of flood damages averted in NRCS watersheds—Irene



# Tropical Storm Lee Rainfall Accumulation (September 2- 10, 2011)



# Estimate of flood damages averted in NRCS watersheds—Lee



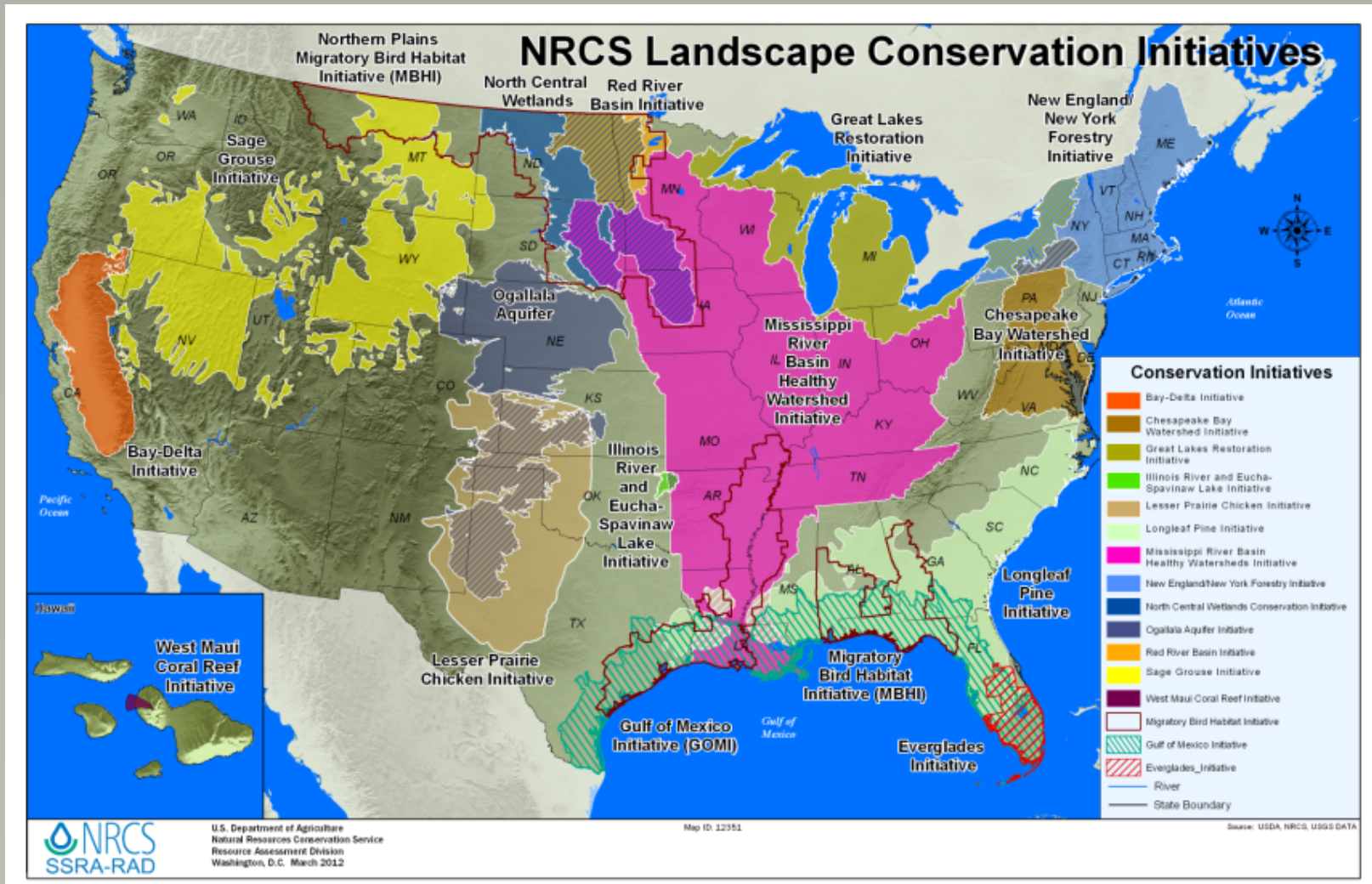
An aerial photograph showing a large reservoir or dam structure in a rural landscape. The reservoir is surrounded by green grass and trees, with a road and some buildings visible in the upper left. The surrounding fields are mostly brown, indicating they have been plowed or are in a dormant state. The text "Damages-averted estimates" is overlaid in yellow on the reservoir.

**Damages-averted estimates**

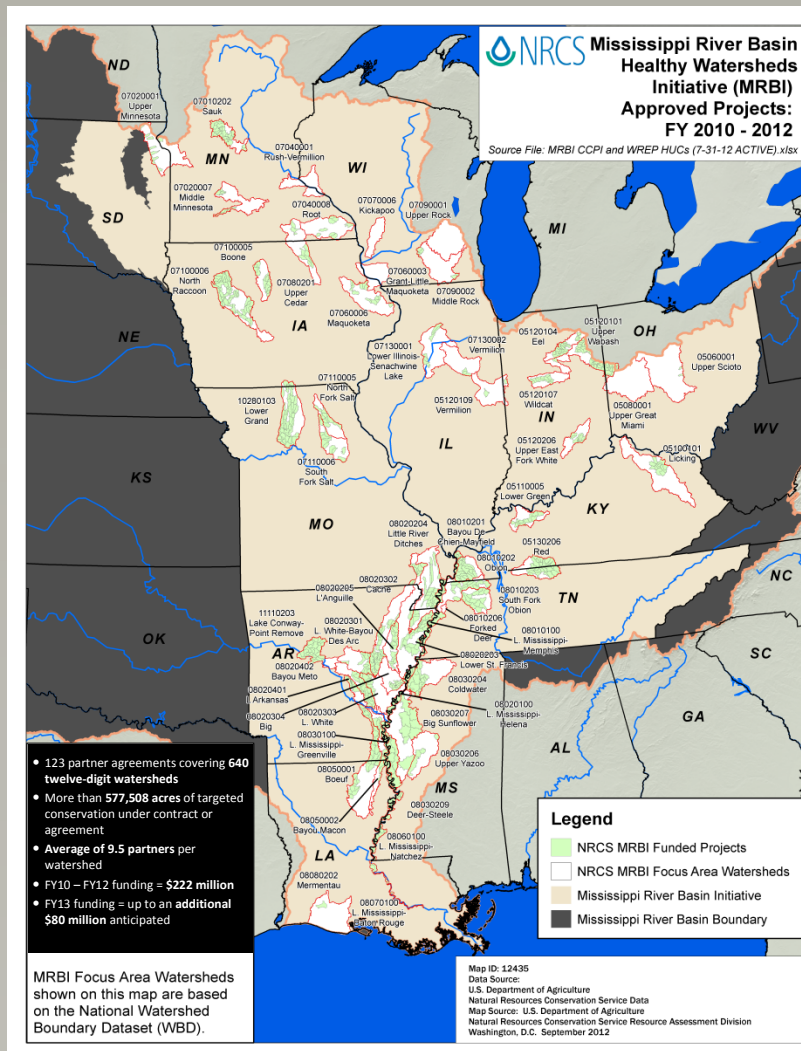
## New Paradigm for Achieving Conservation Results

Proactive and responsive: focusing resources to  
respond to resource challenges

- Landscape initiatives
- Regulatory certainty



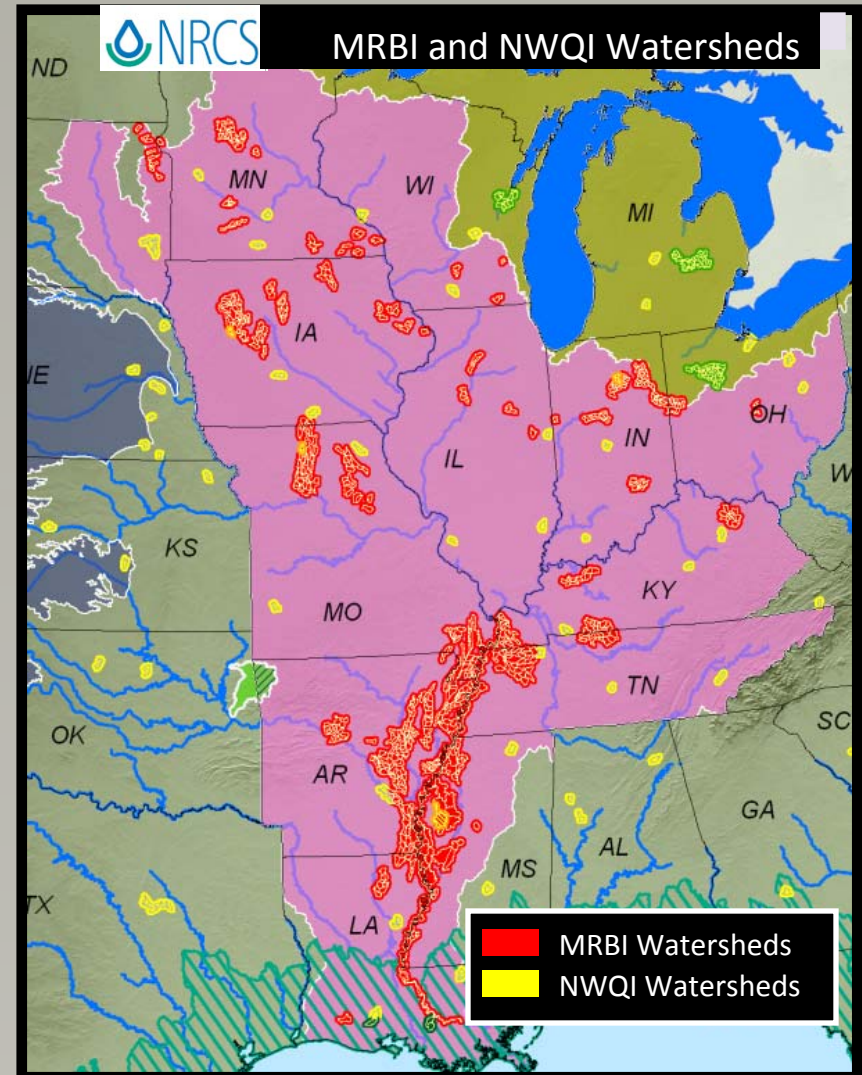
# Progress Through MRBI (September 2012)



- 123 partner agreements covering **640 twelve-digit watersheds**
- More than **577,508 acres** of targeted conservation under contract or agreement
- **Average of 9.5 partners** per watershed
- FY10 – FY12 funding = **\$222 million**
- FY13 funding = up to an **additional \$80 million** anticipated



# 2012 National Water Quality Initiative



# Sage Grouse Initiative

## Beneficial for both

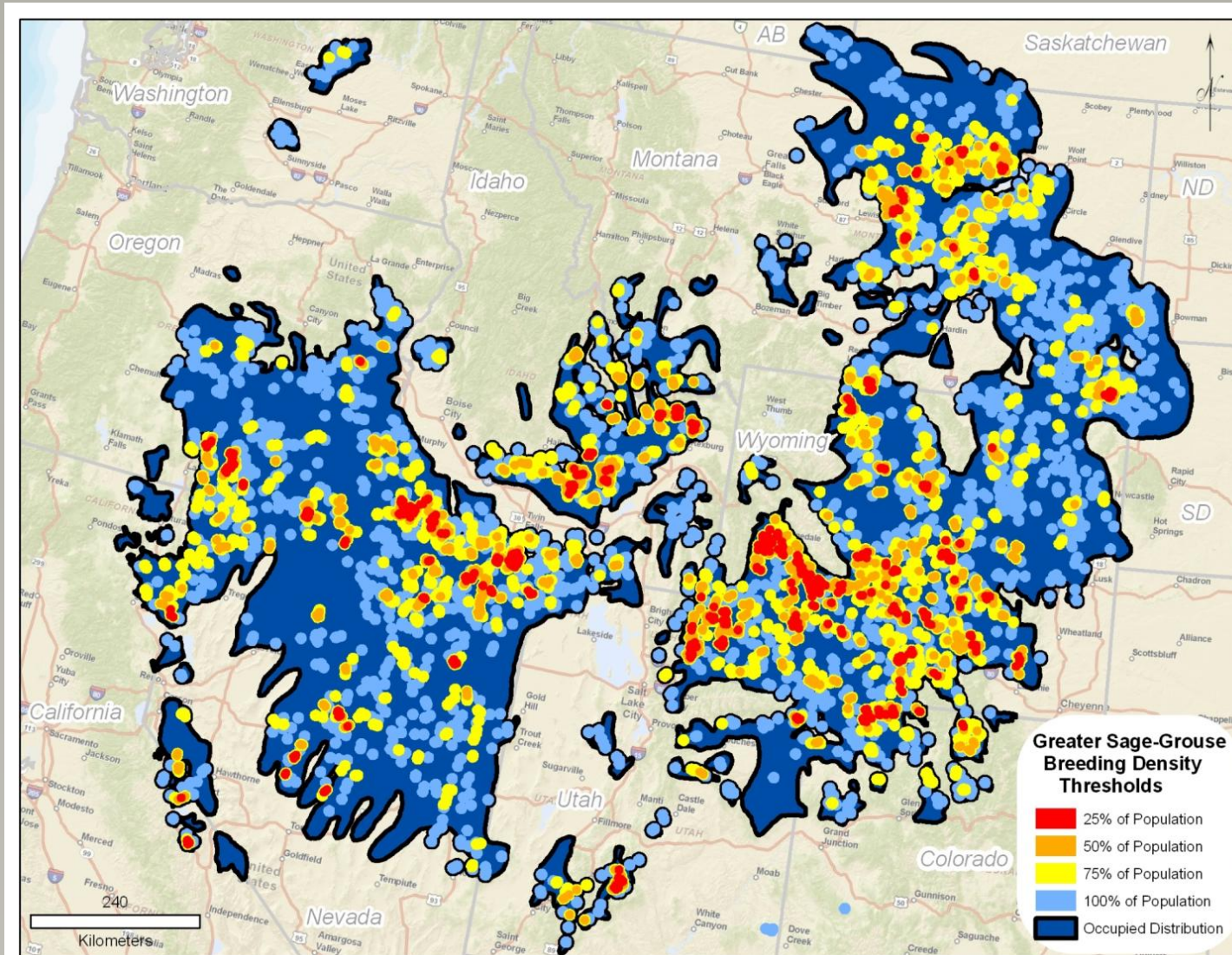
- Large and intact rangeland
- Rangeland plant diversity
- Healthy rangeland

## Negative for both

- Urbanization/subdivision
- Encroached conifer



# Sage Grouse Initiative






Grazing systems on  
1.3 million acres



Marked or moved 350 miles of  
'high risk' fence



Removed encroached conifers on  
105,000 acres



Helped secure conservation easements on  
208,000 ac

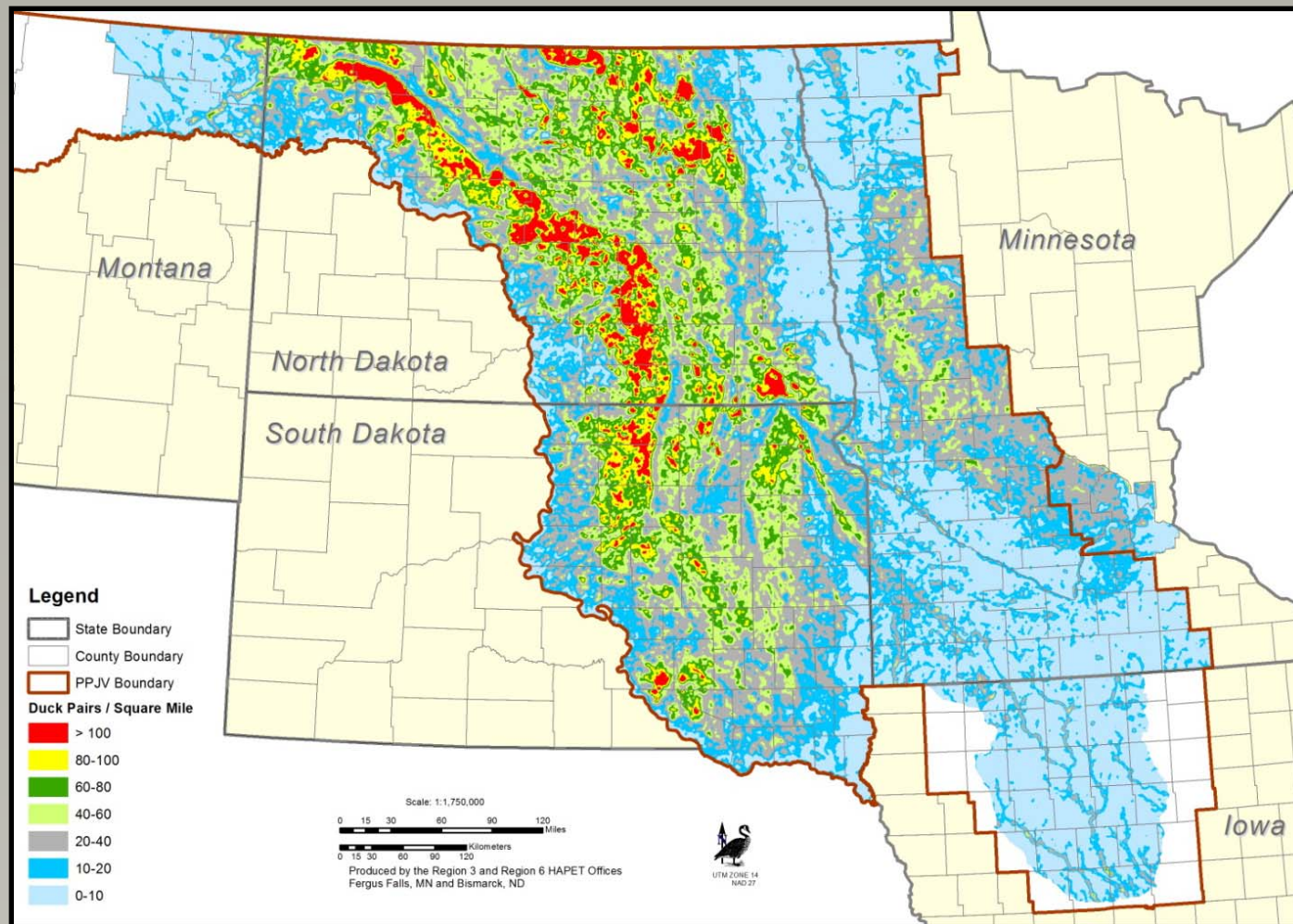
# Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative

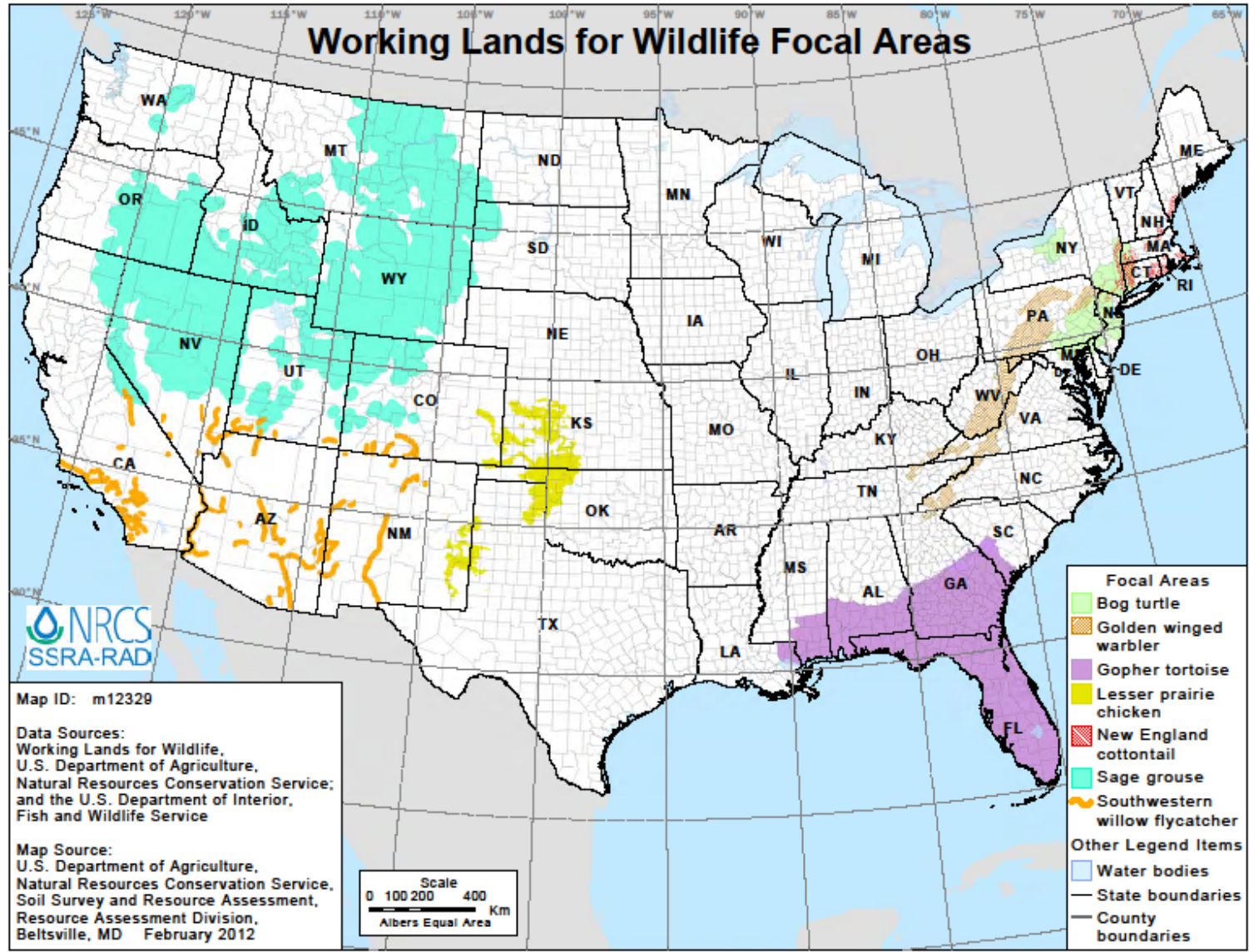
## *Deepwater Horizon*



# Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative

## *Northern Plains*





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# Minnesota Ag Water Quality Certification Program





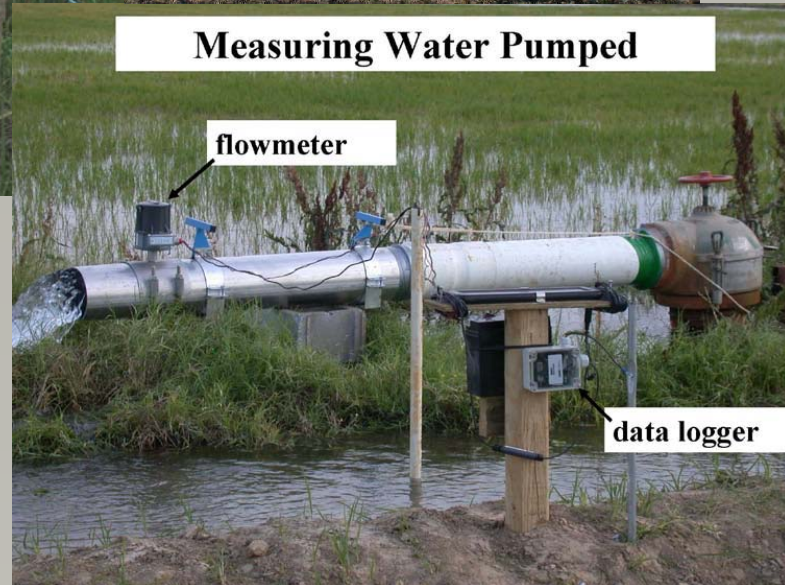
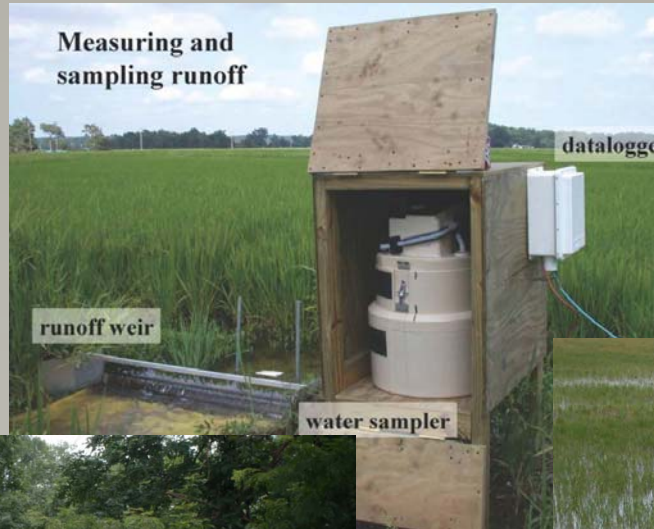
## Minnesota Water Quality

- Minnesota state and federal political leadership is committed to taking the voluntary approach.
- They are looking to farmers and a technical advisory committee to be proactive at creating solutions.

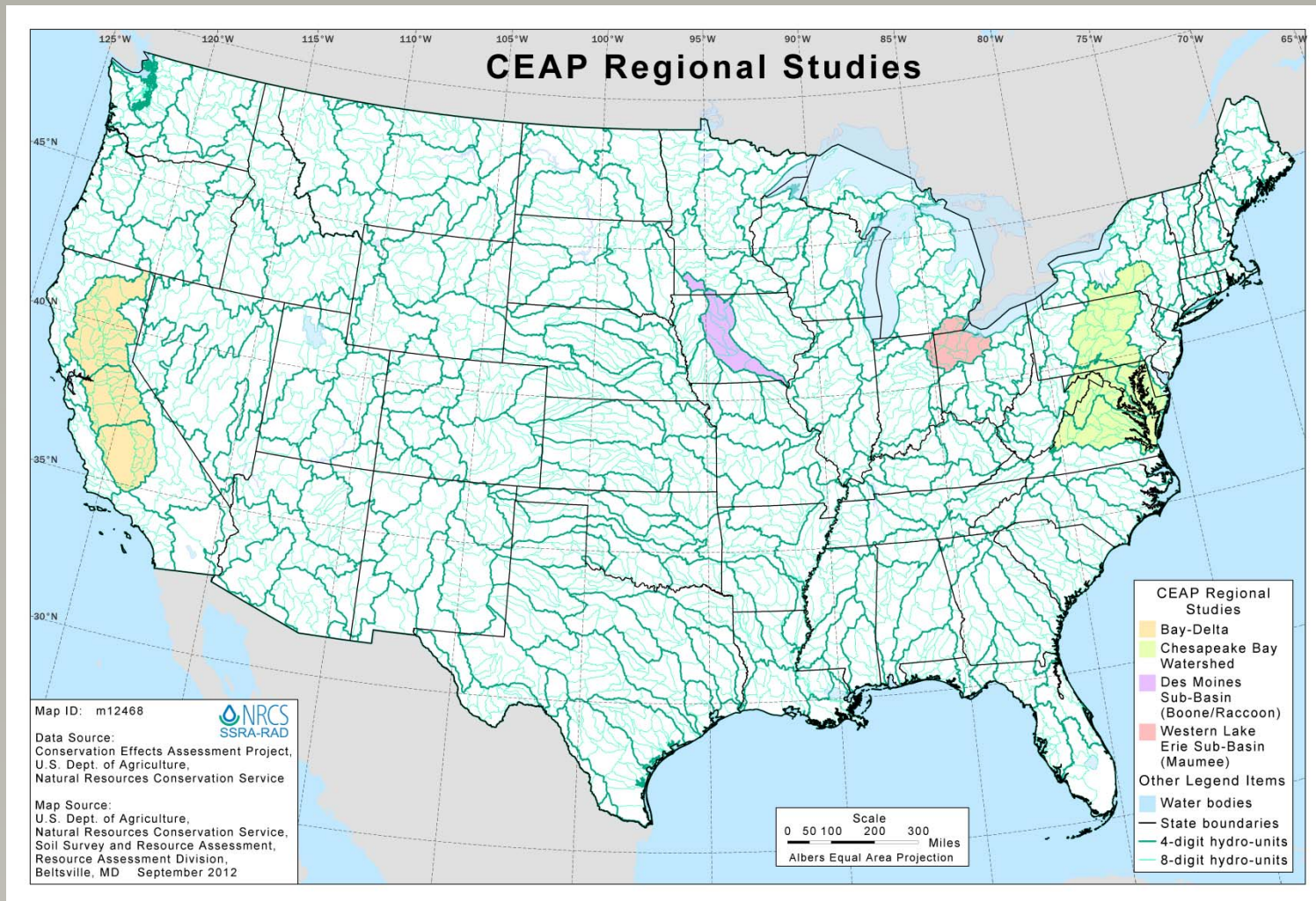


- Conservation tools for the future
  - Monitoring results to help with adaptive management
  - Enhanced CEAP
  - Expanded leveraging of financial resources (agreements – NFWF)

# Monitoring and Evaluation



# Enhanced CEAP





## Partnership Examples:

### CEAP Projects

- Demonstrating the ability to link fine resolution SWAT model (water quality and flow) with fish community data to make spatially-explicit biological predictions

### Technical Assistance