

REGIONAL CONSERVATION INVESTMENT STRATEGIES PROGRAM (AB 2087)

**California's New Conservation & Advance
Mitigation Program**

**Central Valley Flood Protection Plan
Coordination Committee Meeting
October 25, 2017**

**Rick Macedo, Chief
Habitat Conservation Planning Branch**

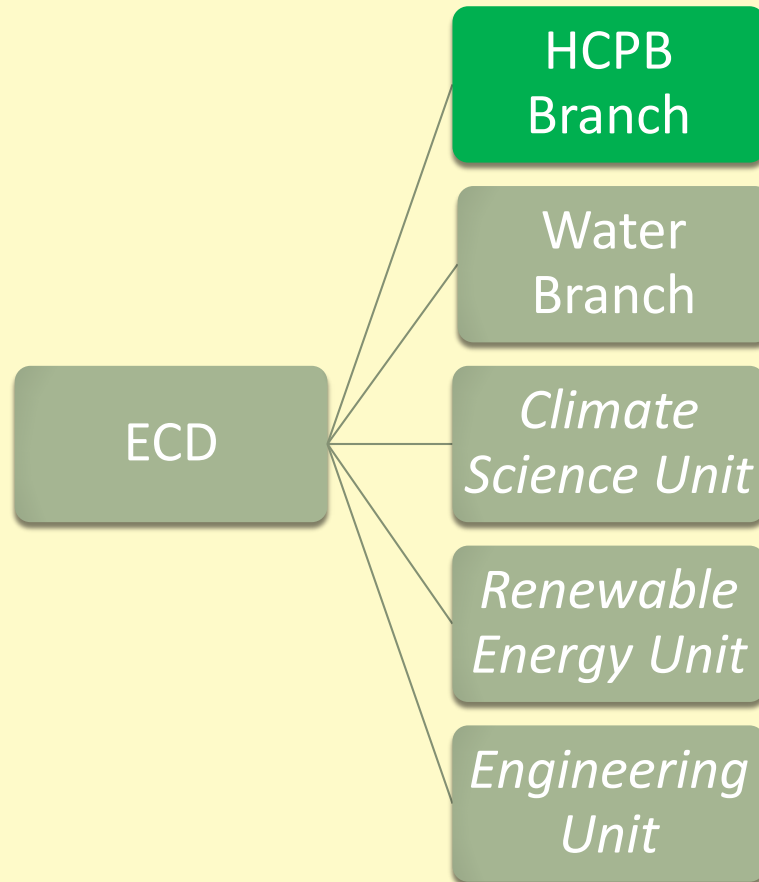




*“It is a singular fact,
illustrating the inaptness with which
names are often given to natural objects,
that the water of Clear Lake is never clear”*

*Livingston Stone
1874*

ECOLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION (ECD)



HABITAT CONSERVATION PLANNING BRANCH

6 PROGRAMS

- Environmental Review and Permitting Program
- Invasive Species Program
- Landscape Conservation Planning Program
- Native Plant Program
- Timberland Conservation Program
- Administrative Services Program



CALIFORNIA:

- 6,000 native plants, 25% endemic
- 200 mammals
- 115 fish taxa
- 650 bird, 2 endemic
- 140 reptiles & amphibians
- 30,000 insects
- 300 threatened or endangered species



REGIONAL CONSERVATION INVESTMENT STRATEGIES PROGRAM

- AB 2081 effective January 1, 2017
- Ecologically based program
- Strategy
- 3 Components



RCIS PROGRAM PURPOSE

- Achieve strategic, effective conservation
- Promote resiliency to climate change & other pressures
- Support infrastructure & other projects by providing a path toward efficient mitigation



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

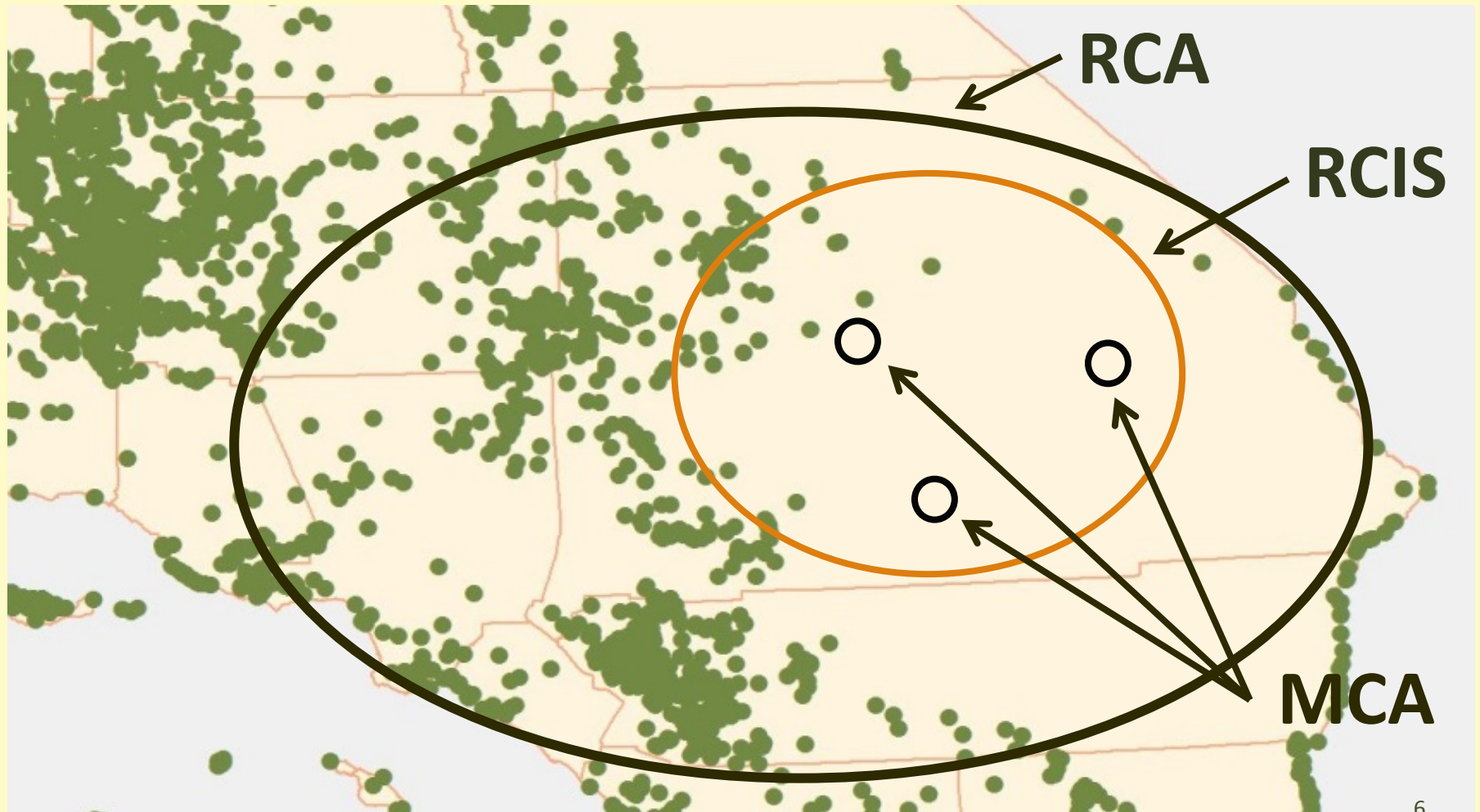
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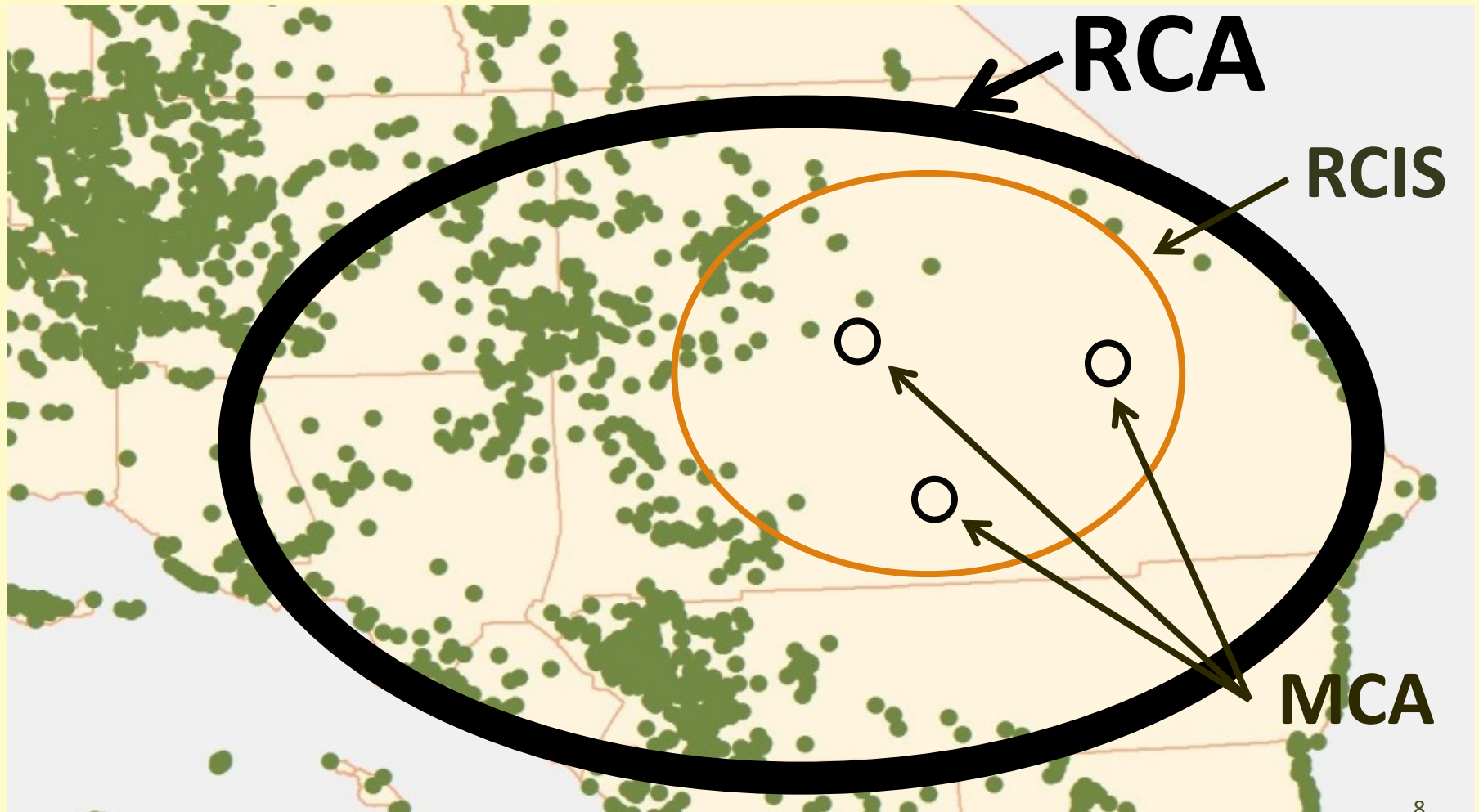
REGIONAL CONSERVATION SCALES



REGIONAL CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT (RCA) OVERVIEW

RCIS
Program
Overview

RCA OVERVIEW



RCIS PROGRAM KEY POINT

RCA is an ***assessment*** to identify areas for long-term ecosystem conservation success

RCA OVERVIEW

- RCA is voluntary, non-regulatory
- Non-binding on land use authorities
- Proposed by any public agency
- Public review not required, but recommended
- ***RCA not required to do an RCIS***
- ***RCIS must be consistent with approved RCA***



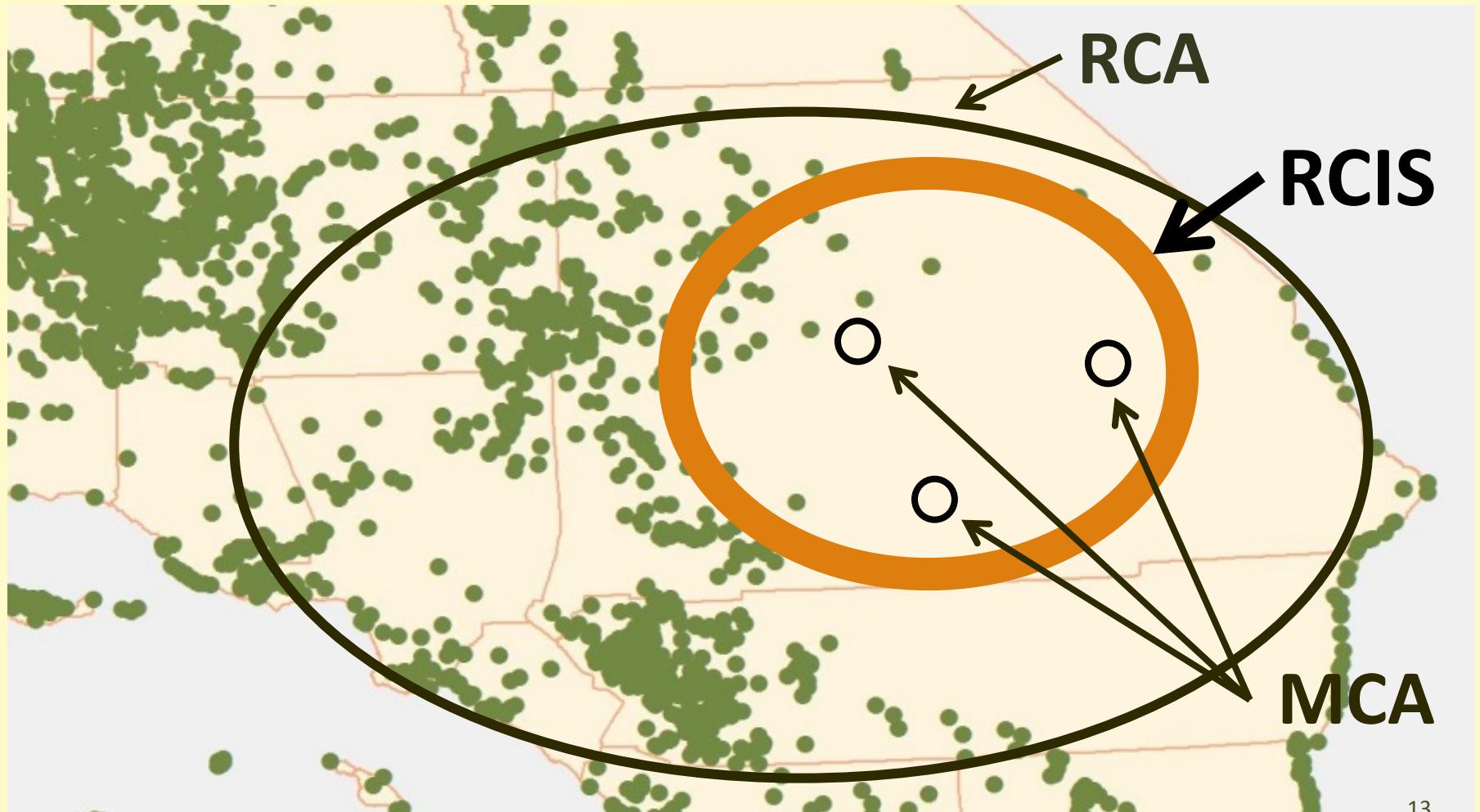
RCA COMPONENTS

- Ecological Information
Biodiversity, sensitive species & habitats, connectivity
- Pressures & Stressors
Climate change, invasive species, others
- Major Existing and Foreseeable Land Uses
Conservation areas, infrastructure & development
- Consistency with NCCP, HCP, other plans

REGIONAL CONSERVATION INVESTMENT STRATEGY (RCIS) OVERVIEW

RCIS
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Overview

RCIS OVERVIEW



RCIS PROGRAM KEY POINT

RCIS is a ***strategy*** with ***actions*** to
achieve regional conservation

RCIS OVERVIEW

- Voluntary, non-regulatory
- Non-binding on land use authorities
- Proposed by any public agency
- Good for up to ten years
- Can be extended, updated or amended
- ***RCIS required for MCAs***
- CDFW can approve eight* RCISs
 - *but unlimited, with support letter from State water or transportation infrastructure agency***

RCIS COMPONENTS

RCA components, plus:

- Focal Species & Other Conservation Elements
- Summary of Existing Banks within RCIS Area
- Consider working lands conservation
- ***Identify conservation & enhancement actions***



RCIS COMPONENTS

To create an MCA, RCIS must include:

- Adaptive management & monitoring strategy
- Process for updates
- Process to evaluate RCIS effectiveness



RCIS COMPONENTS

- Focal Species
 - SWAP Species of Greatest Conservation Need
 - Native vulnerable species
 - Indicator species and wide-ranging species
 - Special-status species
- Other Conservation Elements
 - Natural communities
 - Water resources



POTENTIAL CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT ACTIONS

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



RCIS PROGRAM KEY POINT

RCISs provide a basis for conservation investments – philanthropic or mitigation

MITIGATION CREDIT AGREEMENT OVERVIEW

RCIS
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RCIS PROGRAM KEY POINT

MCA^s * *implement* the conservation strategy!

*** MCA guidelines not released yet**

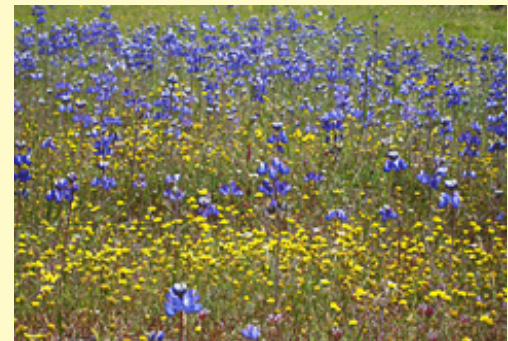
MCA ENABLES:

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



MCA OVERVIEW

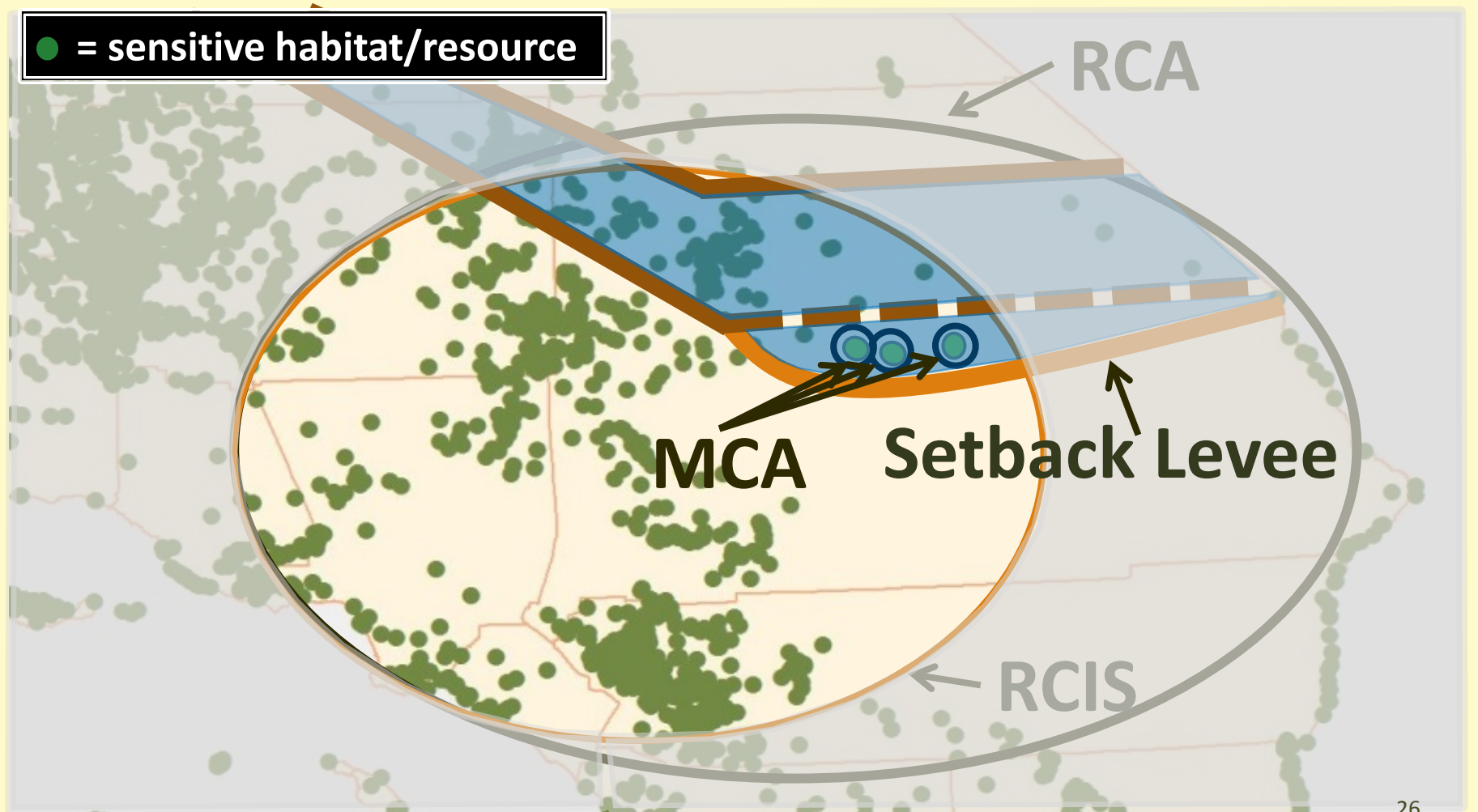
- Anyone may apply for an MCA
- Based on conservation & habitat enhancement actions in an approved RCIS
- Consistent with CDFW's Banking Program
- NCCP Implementing Entity approval required
- Not allowed for Delta water conveyance facilities



RCIS PROGRAM POTENTIAL USERS

- State agencies
- Infrastructure agencies
- Local governments and public agencies
- Non-governmental organizations
- Mitigation and conservation bankers
- NCCP Implementing Entities
- Other public and private entities



PROGRAM USES – FLOOD CONTROL



POTENTIAL FUNDING AND COLLABORATION

- SB 1 & SB 103 - Transportation & Advance Mitigation funding
- SB 5 - California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, Outdoor Access Act
- Transportation and water agencies
- Non-profit organizations
- Local planning agencies
- Others

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 \(PDF\)](#)

28

FOR FURTHER RCIS PROGRAM INFO...

wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning/Regional-Conservation

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QUESTIONS?

RCIS
Program
Overview