



SECAS and Southeast Conservation Blueprint: What's new for 2023

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SECAS geography



SECAS Points of Contact

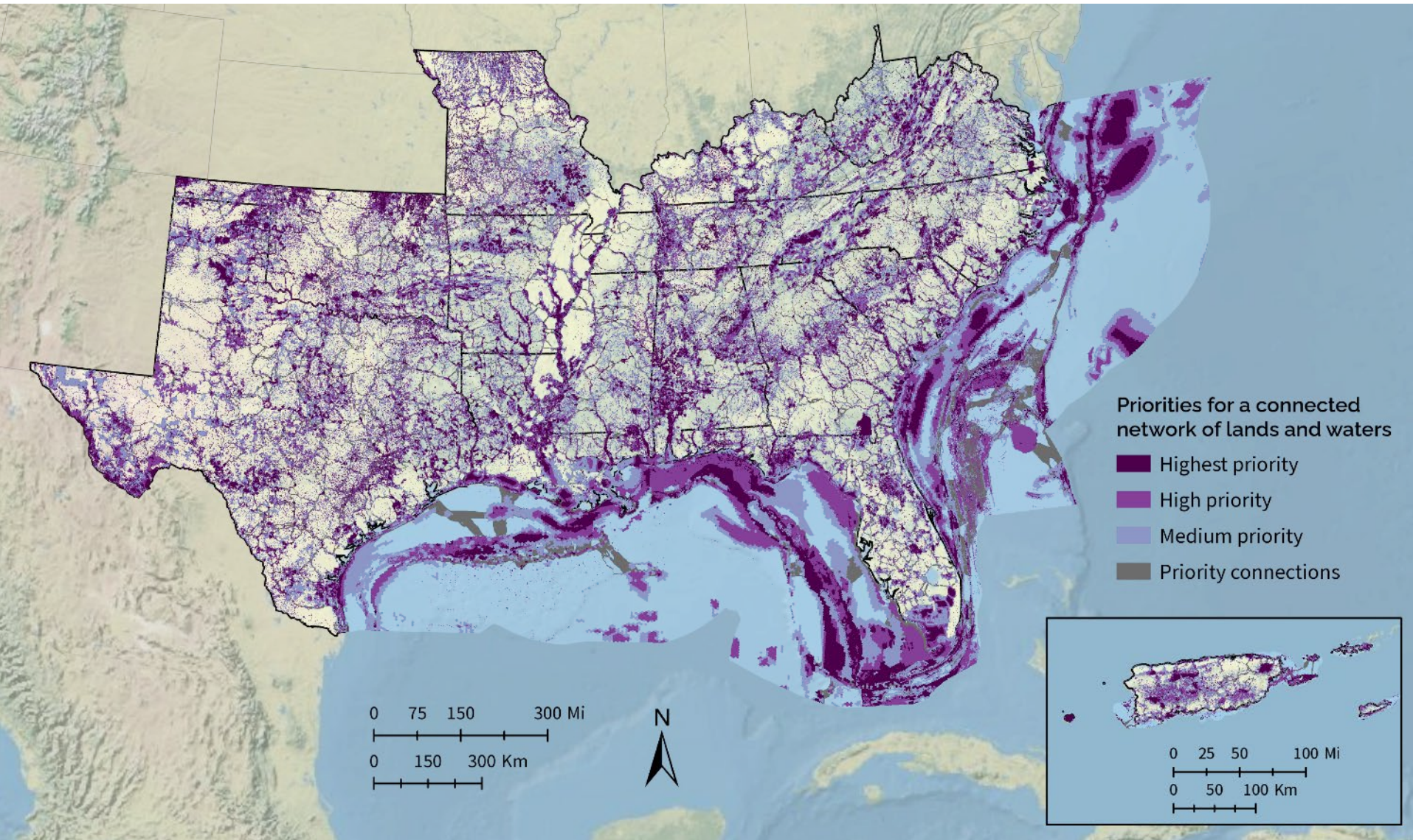




What does SECAS do?

- Set a bold vision and ambitious goal
- Design a Blueprint for action
- Clear barriers to cross-state collaboration

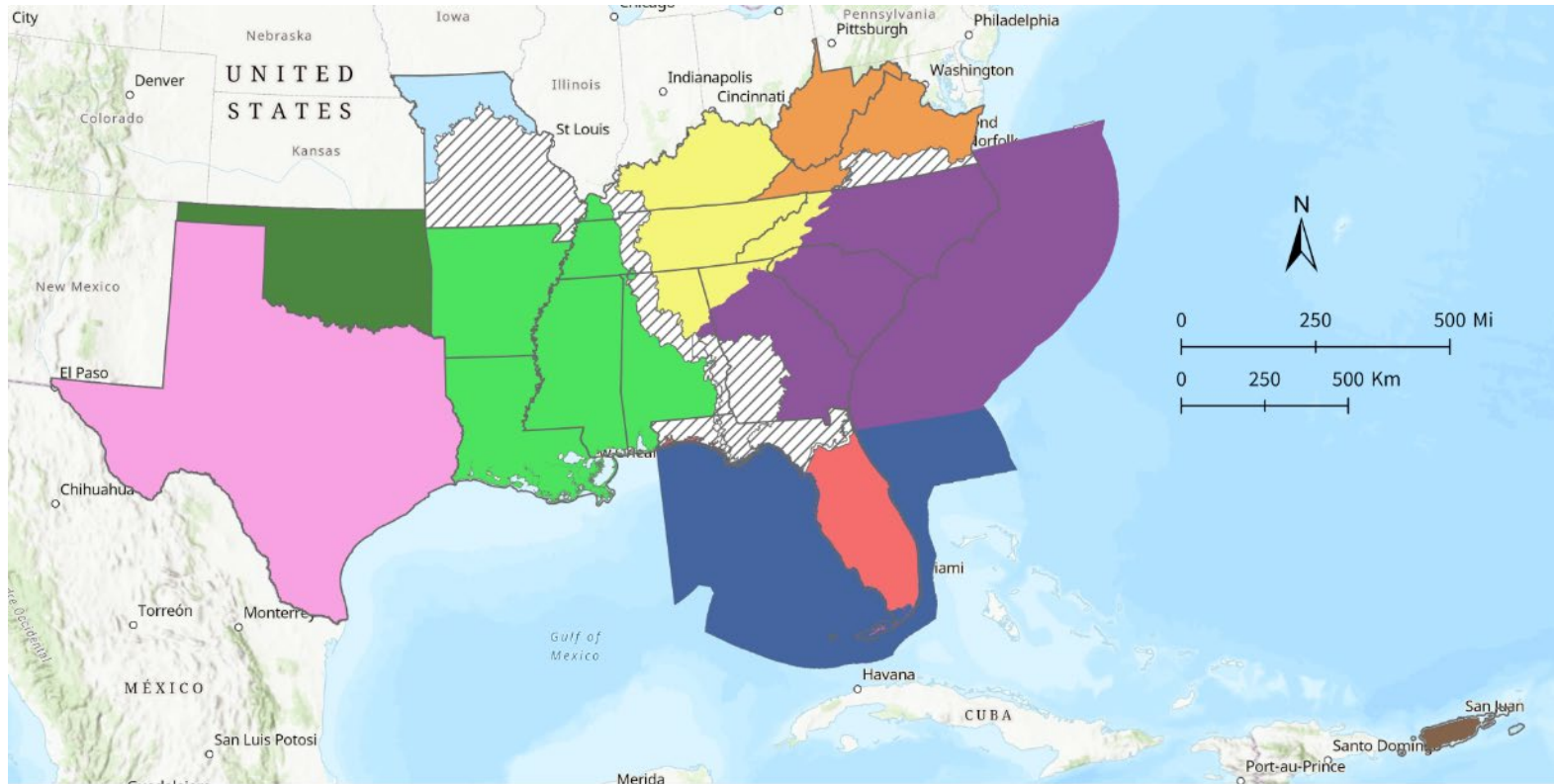
Southeast Conservation Blueprint 2023



Keep in mind as you explore the Blueprint...

- It identifies potential areas for a range of conservation actions, such as management, economic incentives, and protection
- It's a work in progress that regularly incorporates new data, partner input, and information about on-the-ground conditions
- It provides a regional perspective and can be used in combination with local data and knowledge

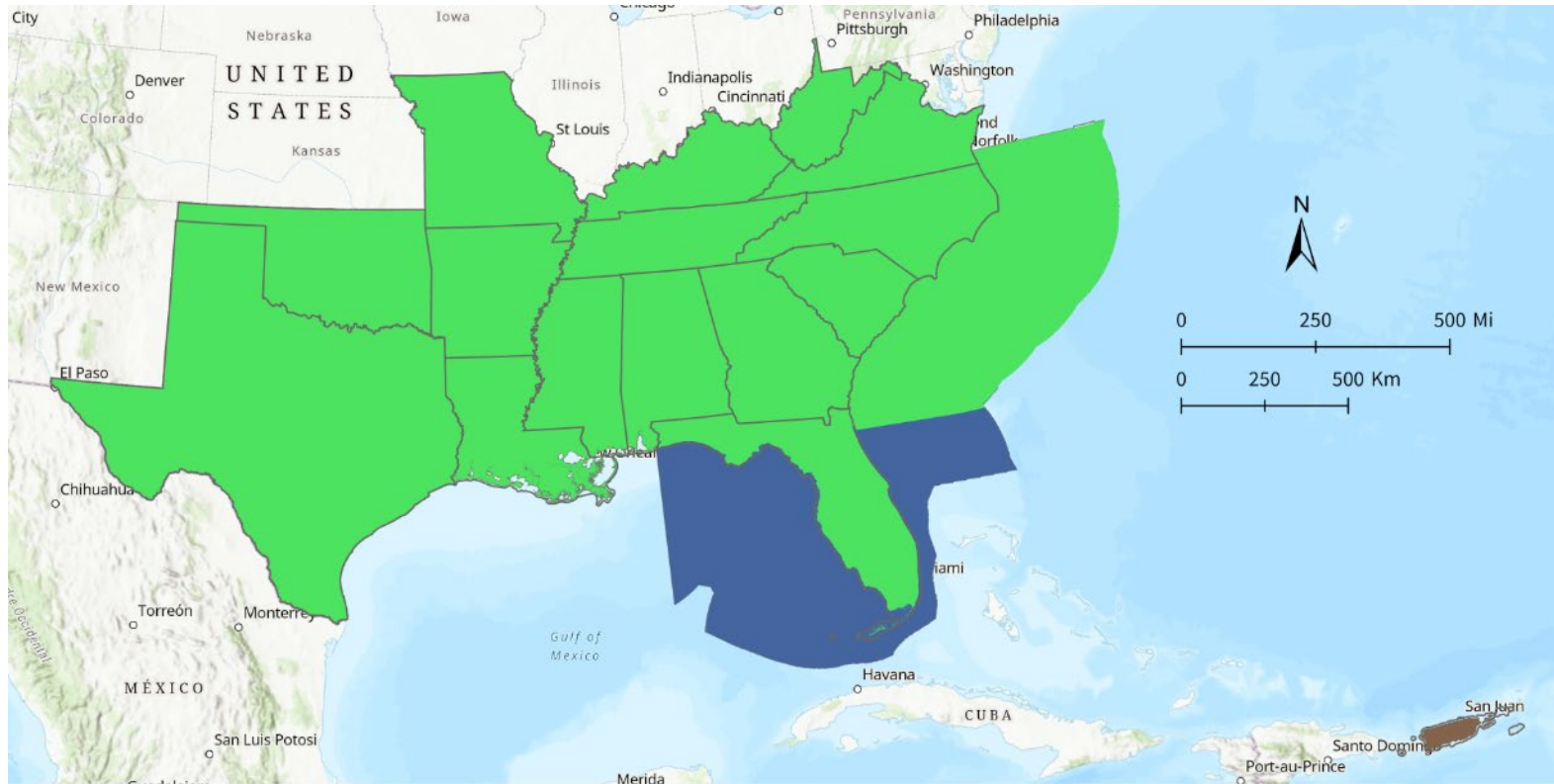
Blueprint over time - 2020



Southeast Blueprint Input (2020)

- Appalachian NatureScape Design
- Caribbean Landscape Conservation Design
- Florida Blueprint
- Overlap zone between multiple inputs
- Florida Marine Blueprint
- Gulf Hypoxia Blueprint
- Middle Southeast Blueprint
- North Atlantic Nature's Network
- Oklahoma CHAT
- South Atlantic Blueprint
- Texas CHAT

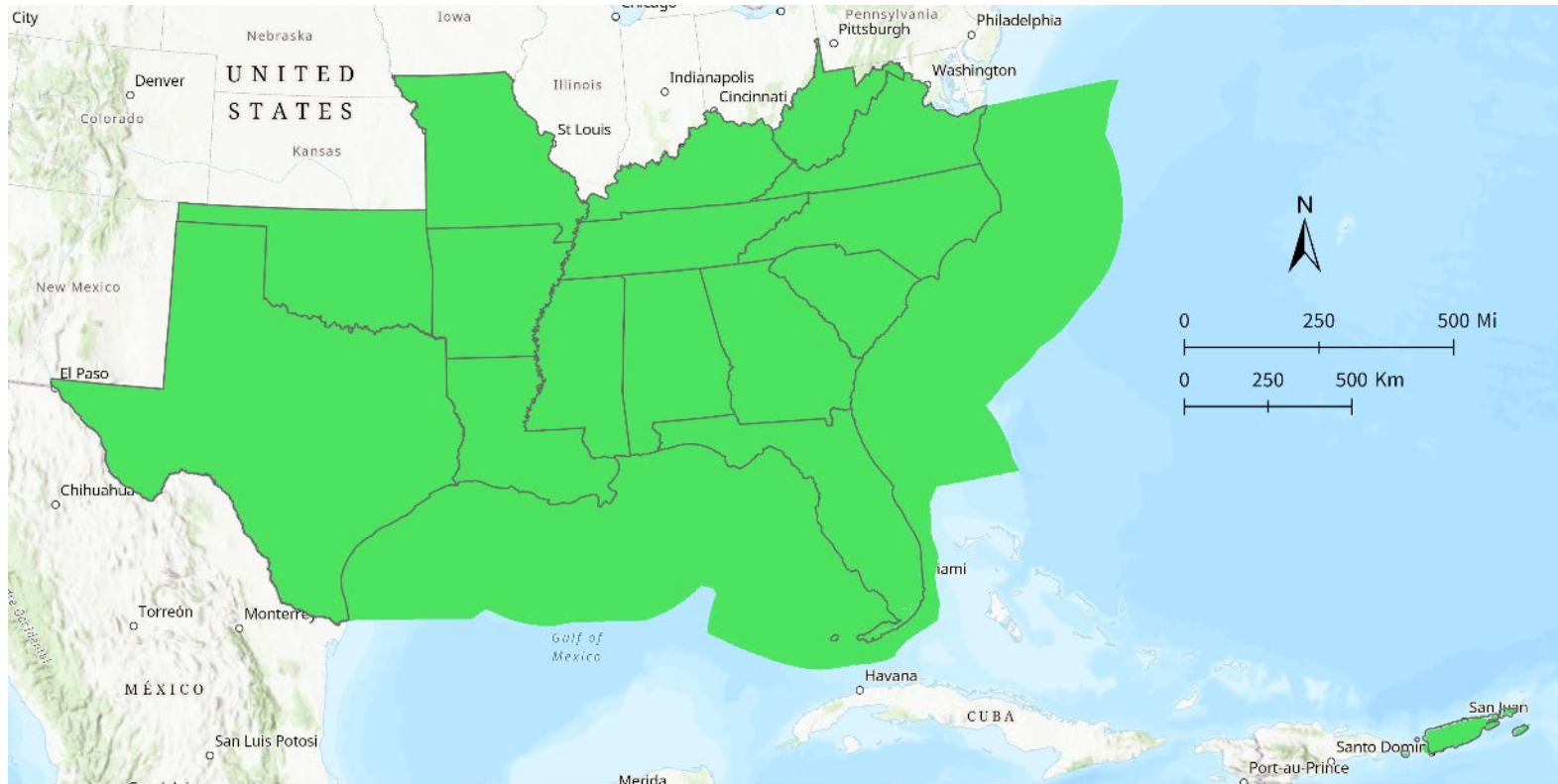
Blueprint over time - 2022



Southeast Blueprint Input (2022)

- Base Blueprint
- Florida Marine Blueprint
- Caribbean Landscape Conservation Design

Blueprint over time - 2023

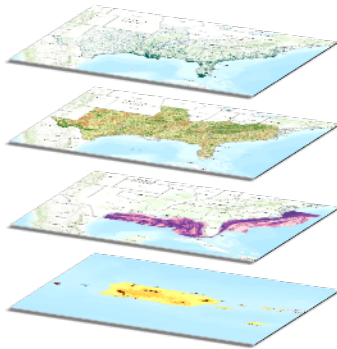


Southeast Blueprint Input (2023)

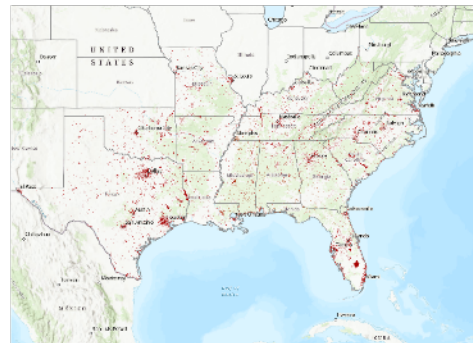
■ Southeast Blueprint 2023

Process for developing the Southeast Blueprint

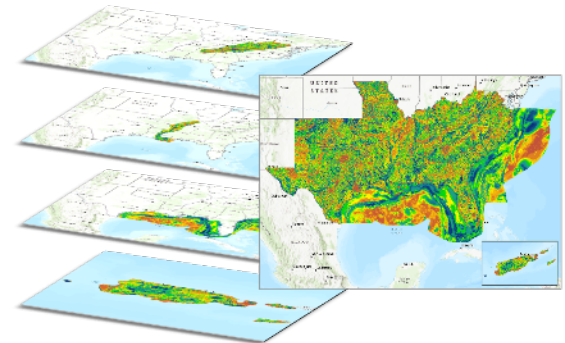
Step 1: Start with natural and cultural resource indicators



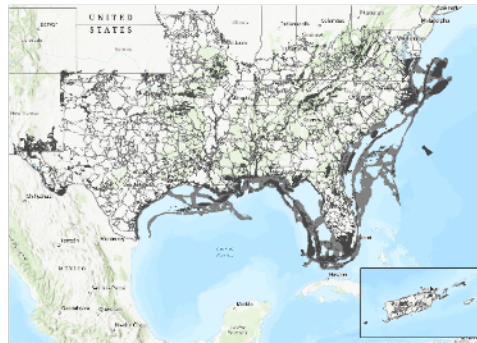
Step 2: Remove highly altered areas in the inland continental region



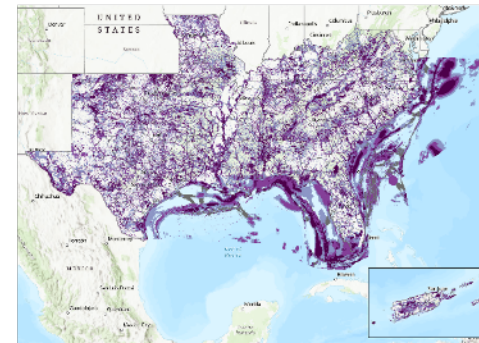
Step 3: Use indicators to rank areas within subregions



Step 4: Add connectivity by identifying corridors linking hubs



Step 5: Combine priority areas and corridors in the Blueprint



New & improved indicators in 2023

- 18 new Caribbean indicators for land, freshwater, and marine
- 9 new or improved indicators in the continental marine area



Atlantic Coral & Hardbottom (Southeast...

This indicator predicts the presence of coral and hardbottom in the Atlantic Ocean based on direct...

Explore



Atlantic Deep-Sea Coral Richness (Southeast...

This indicator measures the number of deep-sea coral genera predicted to occur in the Atlantic Ocean at...

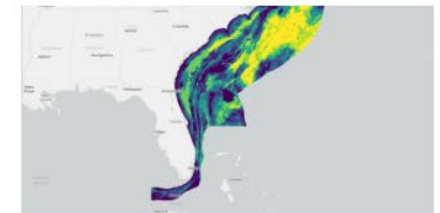
Explore



Atlantic Estuarine Fish Habitat (Southeast...

This indicator measures the condition of estuarine fish habitat along the Atlantic coast using...

Explore



Atlantic Marine Birds (Southeast Blueprint...

This indicator identifies important areas in the Atlantic Ocean for birds that feed exclusively or mainly at...

Explore



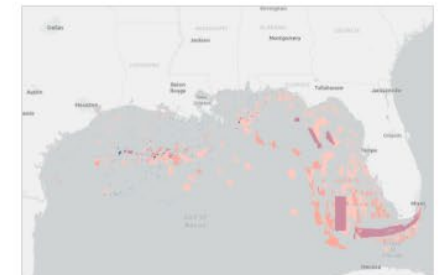
Atlantic Marine Mammals (Southeast Blueprint...



Coastal Shoreline Condition (Southeast...



Estuarine Coastal Condition (Southeast...



Gulf Coral & Hardbottom (Southeast Blueprint...

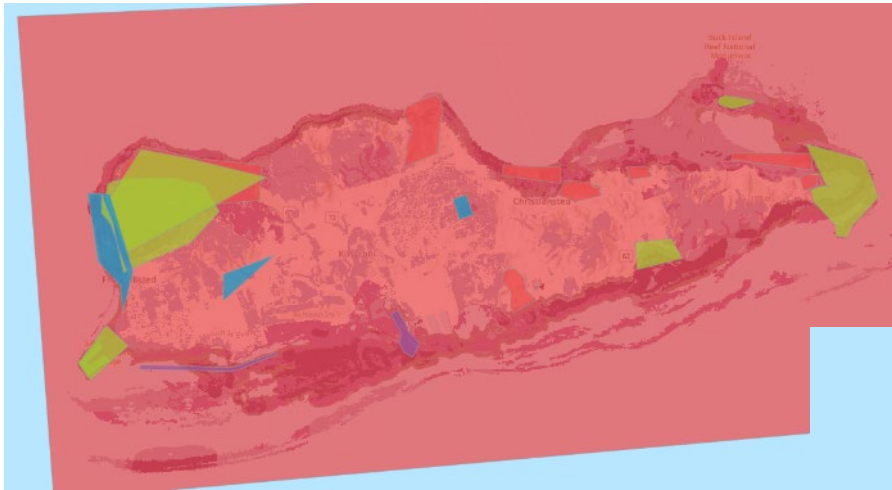
New and improved indicators in South Atlantic

- Marine Highly Migratory fish – Integrates monthly density from bluefin tuna, skipjack tuna, and blue shark in multiple life stages
- Atlantic Coral and Hardbottom – Multiple improvements including new cold water coral mound data in Blake Plateau from Derek Sowers
- Atlantic Deep-sea coral richness – Updated models from Matt Poti
- Atlantic Marine Birds – Uses updated models
- Atlantic Marine Mammals – Uses updated models

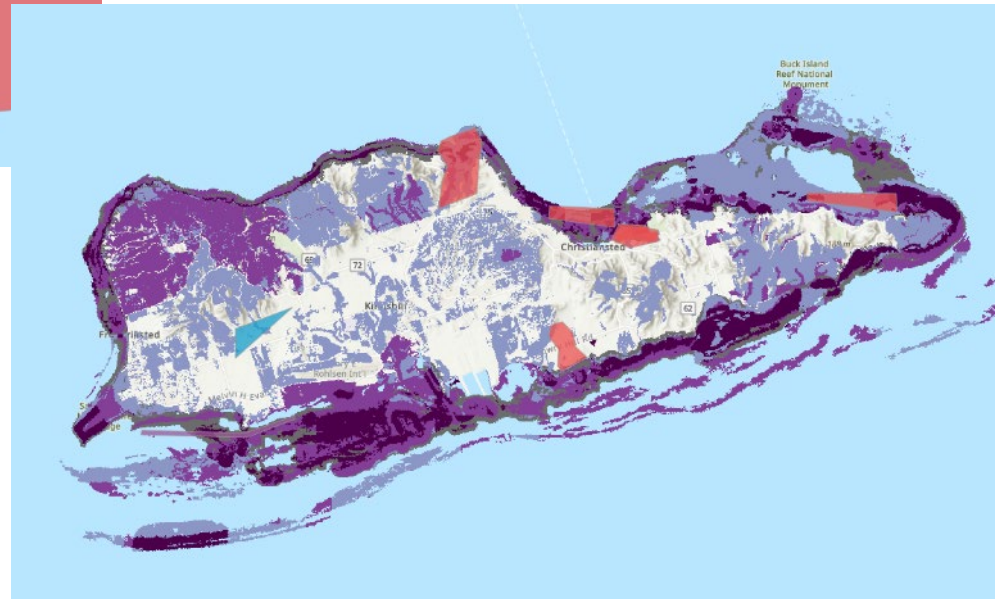
Fixes after Caribbean & Gulf/Atlantic workshops

- ~ 40% of workshop issues fixed in final Blueprint

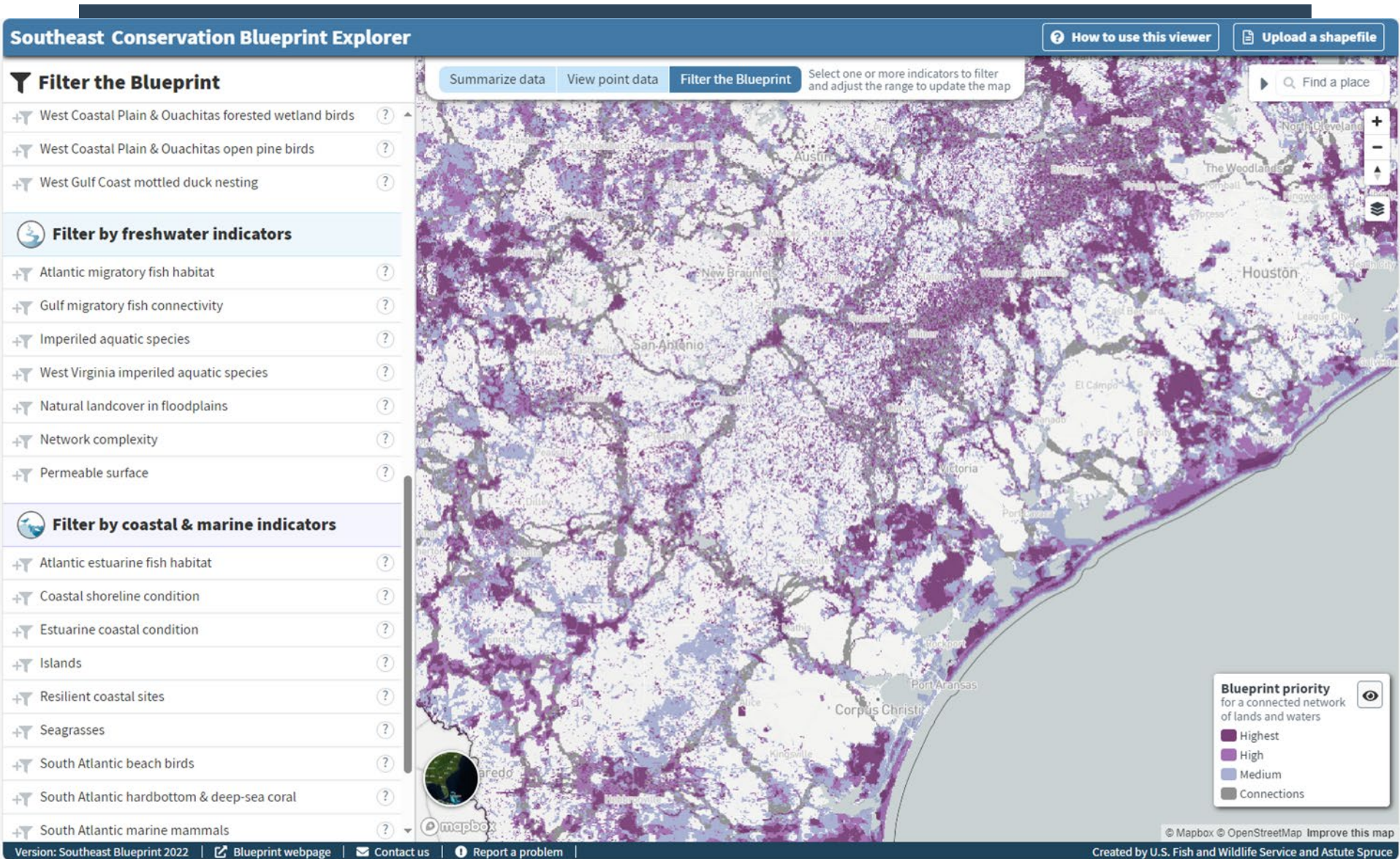
All workshop comments in St. Croix



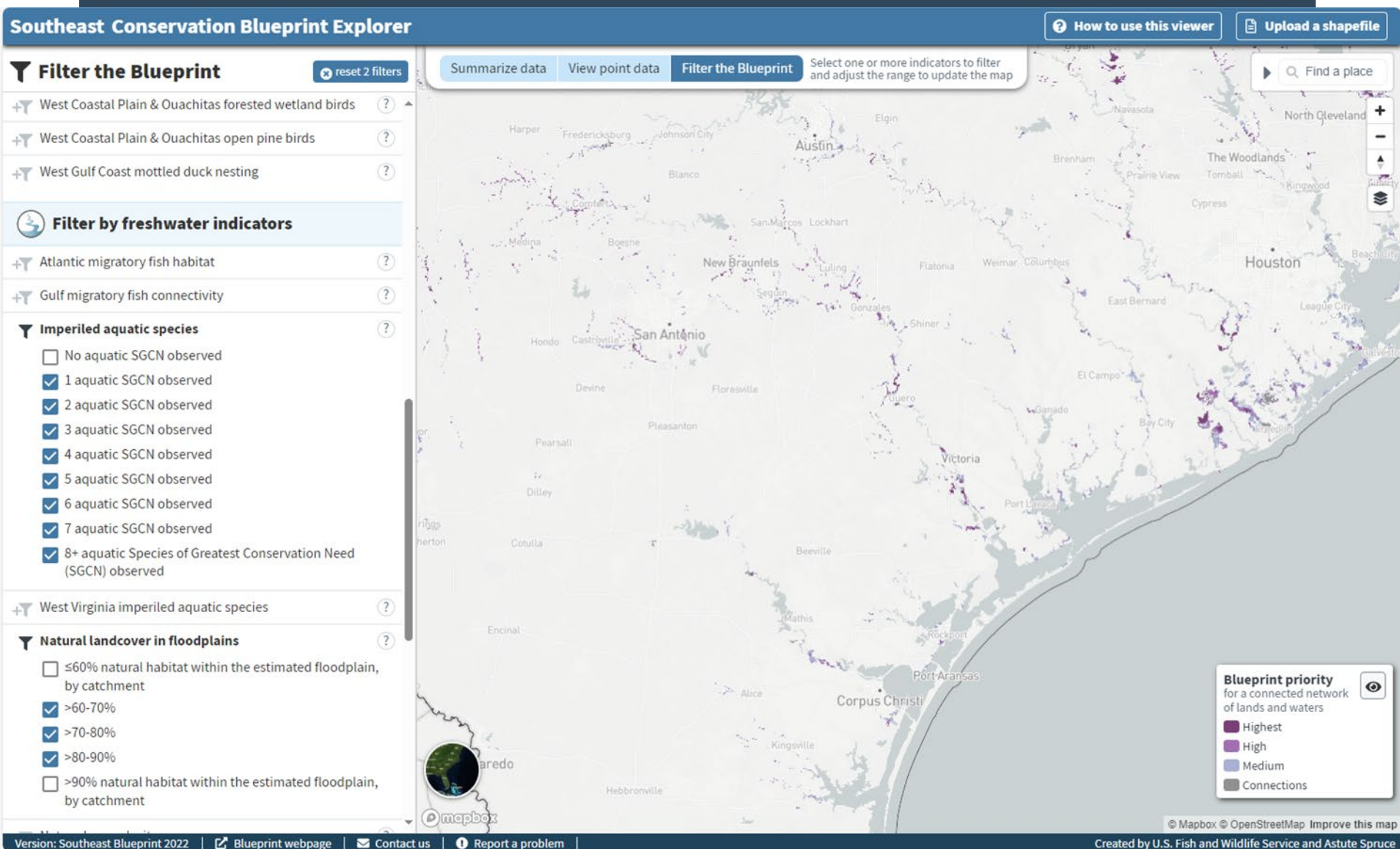
Final known issues in St. Croix



Filtering in the Blueprint Explorer



Filtering in the Blueprint Explorer



The SECAS Goal

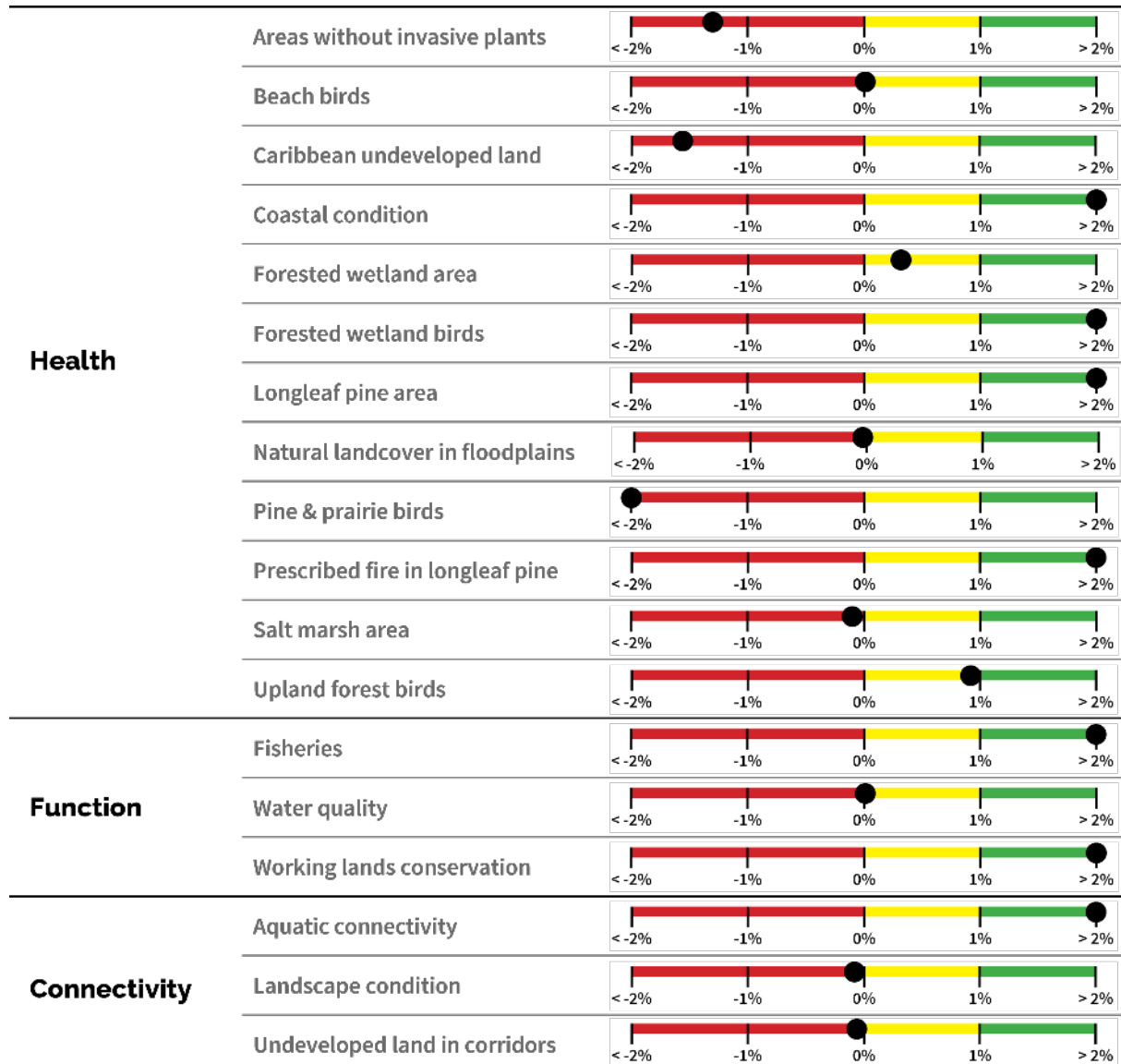
A 10% or greater improvement in the health, function, and connectivity of southeastern ecosystems by 2060

Metrics:

- 1% improvement every 4 years (ecosystem assessments)
- 1% increase in conservation actions within the Blueprint every 4 years (efficient use; new resources)



Progress toward achieving the goal



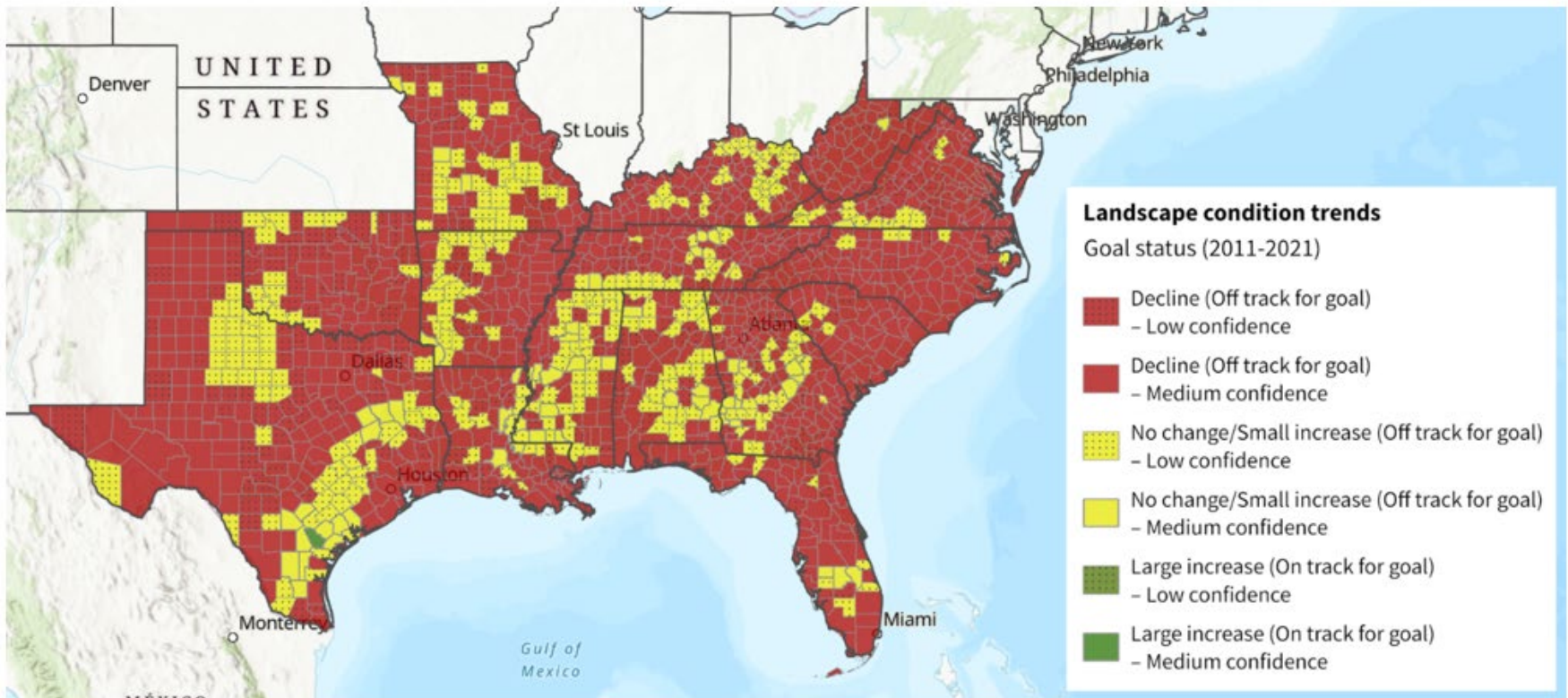
Data from the 2023 goal report

Estimated percent change in each indicator every 4 years, using the best available data since SECAS was established in 2011

Goal report improvements for 2023

- New indicators
 - Natural landcover in floodplains, landscape condition, Caribbean undeveloped land

Landscape condition



Goal report improvements for 2023

- Updated data and methods for existing indicators
 - Forested wetland area, prescribed fire in longleaf pine, undeveloped land in corridors, aquatic connectivity, and fisheries

Aquatic connectivity

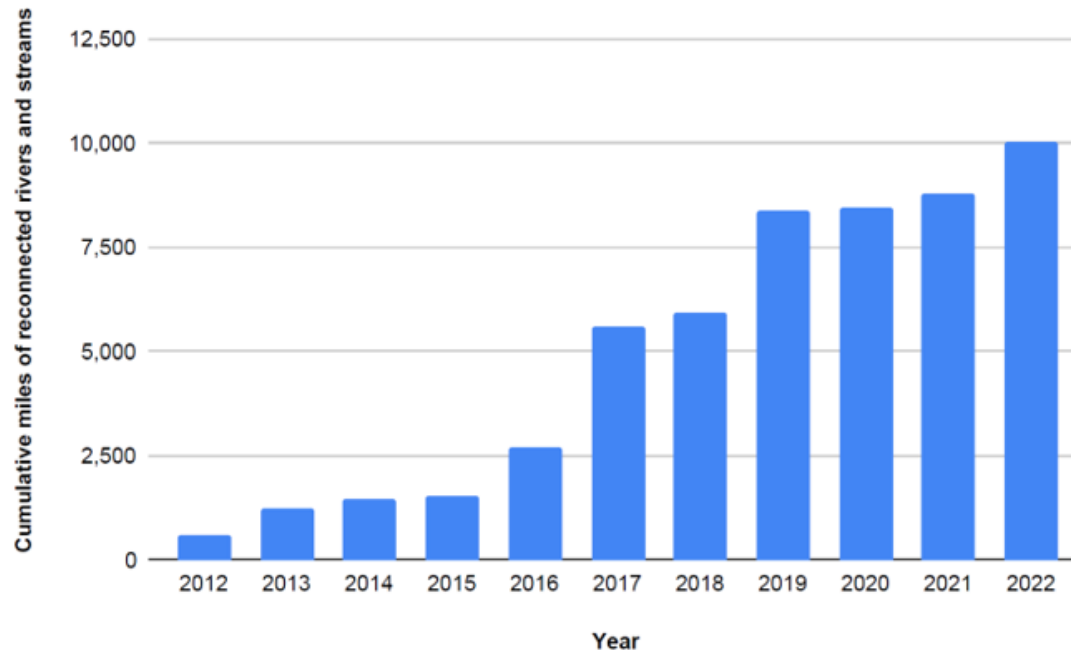
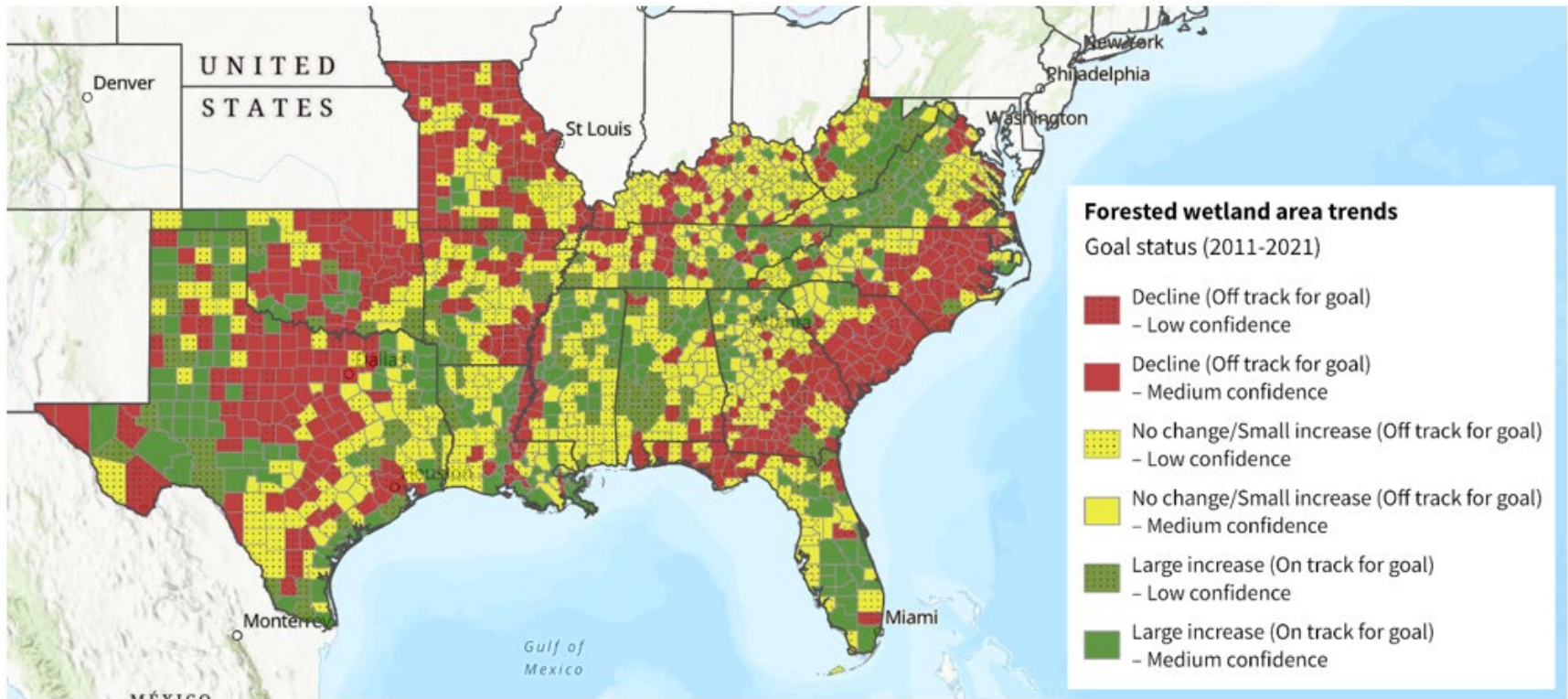


Figure 17. Miles of reconnected rivers and streams from 2012-2022. This estimate includes both dams and road-related aquatic barriers (e.g., culverts) across the full SECAS geography (including the Caribbean).

Goal report improvements for 2023

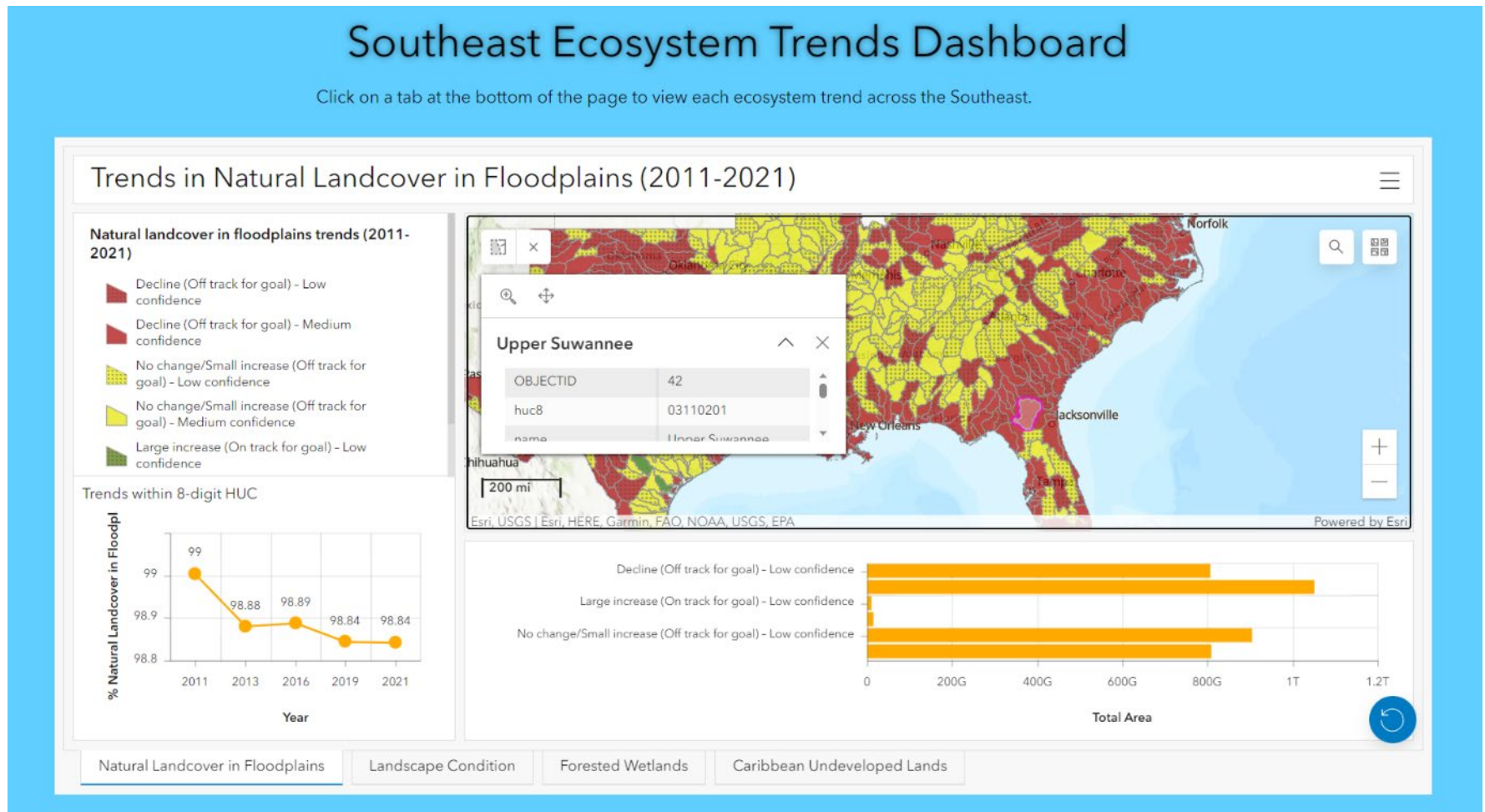
- New quantitative approach for estimating uncertainty

Forested wetland area



Goal report improvements for 2023

- Prototype dashboard to explore trend data



Goal report improvements for 2023

- Blueprint user support can help with trends in your focus area(s) for:
 - Natural landcover in floodplains
 - Landscape condition
 - Forested wetland area

2023 results

- Most indicators improved
- Pine and prairie birds still most off track

Ecosystem	Type	Indicator	Yearly % change	Page
Terrestrial				
	Health	Areas without invasive plants	0.33% decline	5
		Beach birds	0.003% increase	7
		Caribbean undeveloped land	0.39% decline	8
		Forested wetland area	0.08% increase	9
		Forested wetland birds	2.1% increase	10
		Gopher tortoise (Eastern population)	Increasing but % change unknown	12
		Longleaf pine area	4.5% increase	13
		Pine & prairie birds	2.9% decline	14
		Prescribed fire in longleaf pine	4.4% increase	16
		Salt marsh area	0.03% decline	17
		Upland forest birds	0.23% increase	18
	Function	Working lands conservation	11% increase	20
	Connectivity	Landscape condition	0.02% decline	22
		Undeveloped land in corridors	0.016% decline	23
Freshwater				
	Health	Natural landcover in floodplains	0.008% decline	25
	Function	Water quality	0.003% increase	27
	Connectivity	Aquatic connectivity	16% increase	29
Marine & Estuarine				
	Health	Coastal condition	0.56% increase	31
	Function	Fisheries	1.1% increase	33

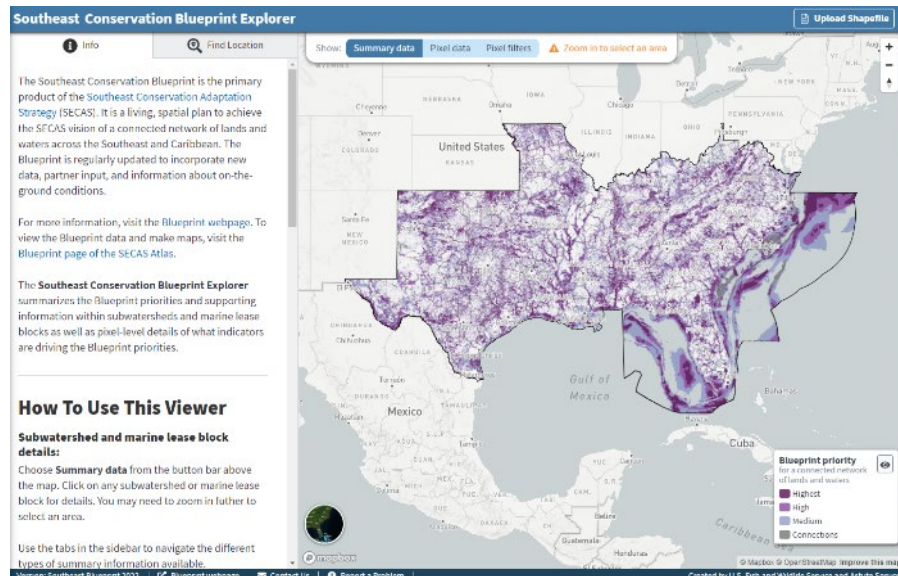
Accessing goal report data

- Visit the dedicated goal page at <https://secassoutheast.org/our-goal>
- Access the 2023 goal report at <https://secassoutheast.org/pdf/SECAS-goal-report-2023.pdf>

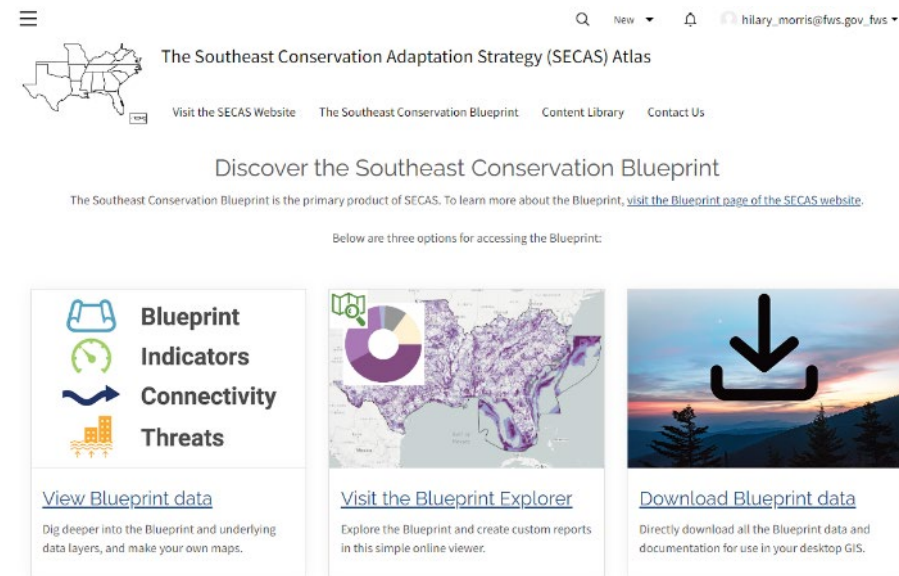
Accessing Blueprint data

- Learn more and access data at <https://secassoutheast.org/blueprint>
- Contact user support for help at <https://secassoutheast.org/staff>

Start simple in the Blueprint Explorer



Dig deeper in the SECAS Atlas





How is the Blueprint being used?

- Helping 350+ people from 140+ organizations bring in new funding and inform their conservation decisions
- Helping bring \$100+ million in conservation funding to protect and restore 200,000+ acres

Examples of how the Blueprint is being used

The Blueprint has been used to help...

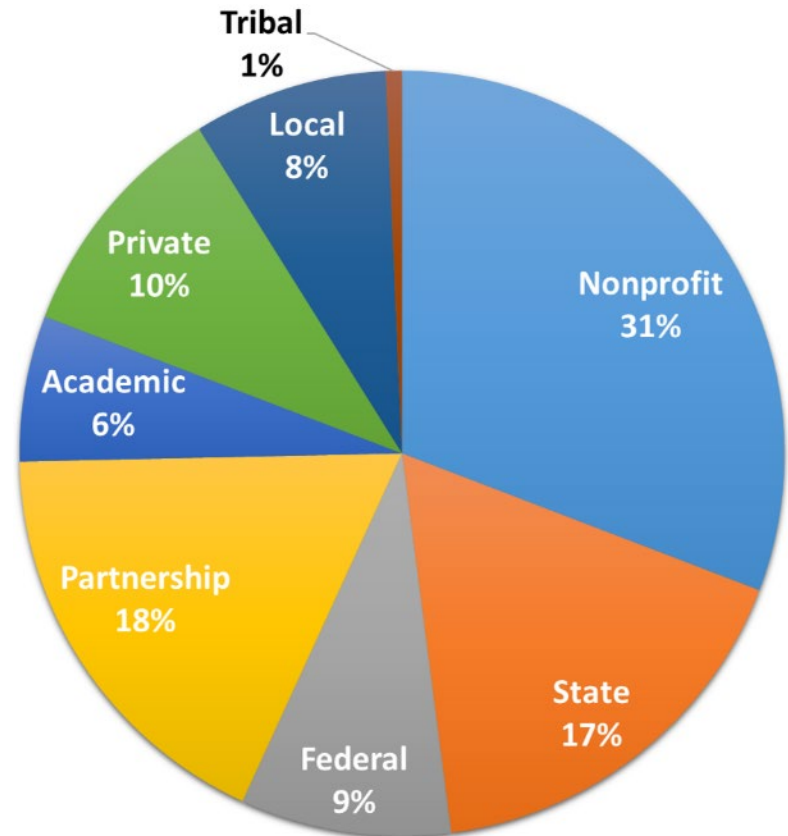
- Strengthen grant applications to protect and restore land
- Establish new partnerships
- Support the reauthorization of conservation funding sources
- Inform city and county planning
- Prioritize longleaf restoration and management
- Communicate the natural resource benefits of cultural heritage work
- Develop land protection strategies
- Site renewable energy projects

...and much more!

Who's using the Blueprint?

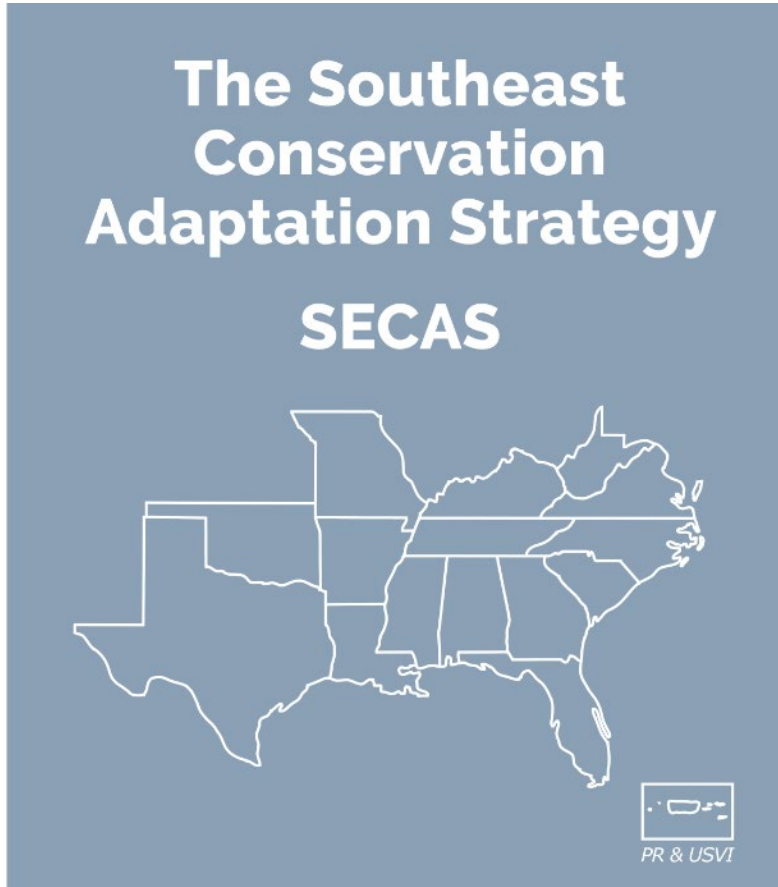
Those 140+ organizations include:

- 25 state agencies
- 1 tribal government
- 9 land trusts
- 13 federal agencies
- 12 local governments and planning organizations
- 36 nonprofits
- 25 conservation partnerships
- 15 private businesses
- 9 universities and academic organizations



Number of unique organizations using the Blueprint as of March 2023

How to get involved



- Join the SECAS newsletter and learn more at secassoutheast.org
- Contact Hilary at hilary_morris@fws.gov