

PRRIP Governance Committee (GC) Meeting

December 6, 2023

Executive Director's Office (EDO)

Jason Farnsworth – Executive Director

Chadwin Smith, Ph.D. – Science Policy Coordinator

PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

Objectives for today:

- Provide historical PRRIP context for the GC and relate that context to structure and function of PRRIP today (in Extension)
- Discuss PRRIP organizational structure and decision-making processes
- Discuss Land Plan, Water Plan, and Science Plan implementation integration

Plan for today:

- EDO presentation
- Q&A with GC

PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

PRRIP First Increment – Negotiating a Program:

- Program negotiated as a Recovery Implementation Program (RIP)
- Established Increment approach
- Focused on “defined contributions”
- Set of 10 Milestones – get water, get land, do science
- No species targets (like fledge ratios or crane use days)

PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

Milestone	Program Status (as of November 2016)
1. The Pathfinder Modification Project will be operational and physically and legally capable of providing water to the Program by no later than the end of Year 4 of the First Increment.	Achieved
2. Colorado will complete construction of the Tamarack I and commence full operations by the end of Year 4 of the First Increment.	Achieved
3. CNPPID and NPPD will implement an Environmental Account for Storage Reservoirs on the Platte System in Nebraska as provided in FERC licenses 1417 and 1835.	Achieved
4. The Reconnaissance-Level Water Action Plan, as may be amended by the Governance Committee, will be implemented and capable of providing at least an average of 50,000 acre-feet per year of shortage reduction to target flows, or for other Program purposes, by no later than the end of the First Increment.	Not Achievable by end of 2019
5. The Land Plan, as may be amended by the Governance Committee, will be implemented to protect and, where appropriate, restore 10,000 acres of habitat by no later than the end of the First Increment.	Achieved
6. The Integrated Monitoring and Research Plan, as may be amended by the Governance Committee, will be implemented beginning Year 1 of the Program.	Achieved
7. The Wyoming Depletions Plan, as may be amended with the approval of the Governance Committee, will be operated during the First Increment of the Program.	Achieved
8. The Colorado Depletions Plan, as may be amended with the approval of the Governance Committee, will be operated during the First Increment of the Program.	Achieved
9. The Nebraska Depletions Plan, as may be amended with the approval of the December 7, 2005 Milestones Document 2 Governance Committee, will be operated during the First Increment of the Program.	Not Achievable by end of 2019
10. The Federal Depletions Plan, as may be amended with the approval of the Governance Committee, will be operated during the First Increment of the Program.	Achieved

PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

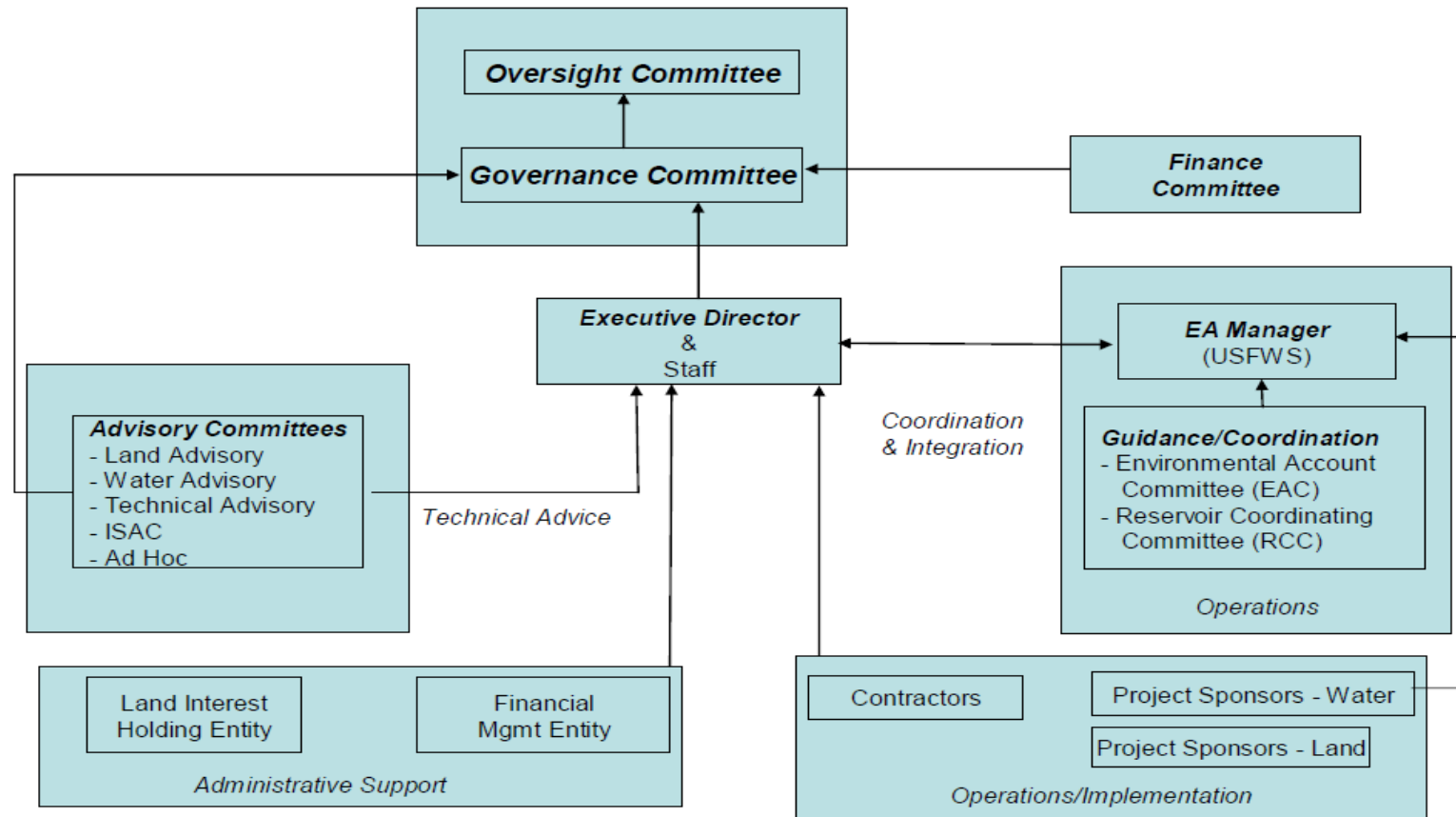


Figure 1. Organizational Structure for the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program.

PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

Key Features of PRRIP Organizational Structure:

- GC makes all decisions – includes stakeholders
- **Independence** = Executive Director and staff (Headwaters); Financial Management Entity (NCF); Land Holding Interest Entity (PRRIF)
- **Collaboration** = informal consensus; Finance Committee; standing Advisory Committees (Land, Water, Technical, ISAC); EA Manager; contractors, project sponsors
- Charters for GC, Advisory Committees, selecting members, Peer Review Guidelines, etc.

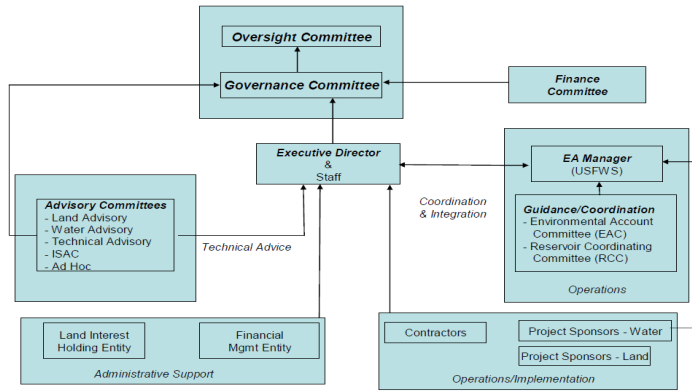


Figure 1. Organizational Structure for the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program.

December 7, 2005

Organizational Structure

9

PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

PRRIP Decision-Making:

- All decisions rest with the GC
- **GC** = 11 members, 10 votes; informal consensus, but need all Signatory votes
- **Standing Advisory Committees** (Land, Water, Technical, ISAC) provide input and recommendations to GC; “review and advise”
- **EDO** – carry out directions of the GC, day-to-day Program operations, provide staff support for and collaborate with all PRRIP Committees, contractor oversight, contracts, budget, recommendations and advice to GC

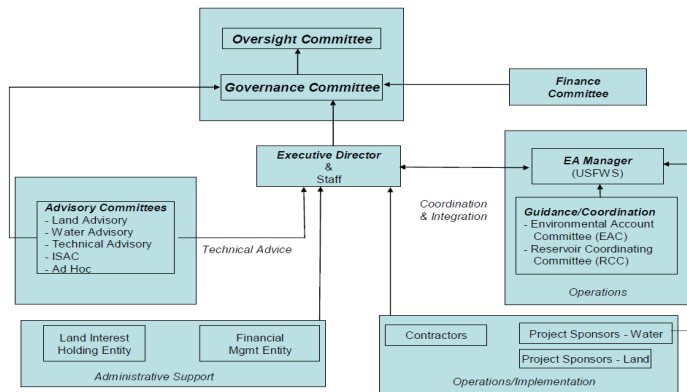


Figure 1. Organizational Structure for the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program.

December 7, 2005

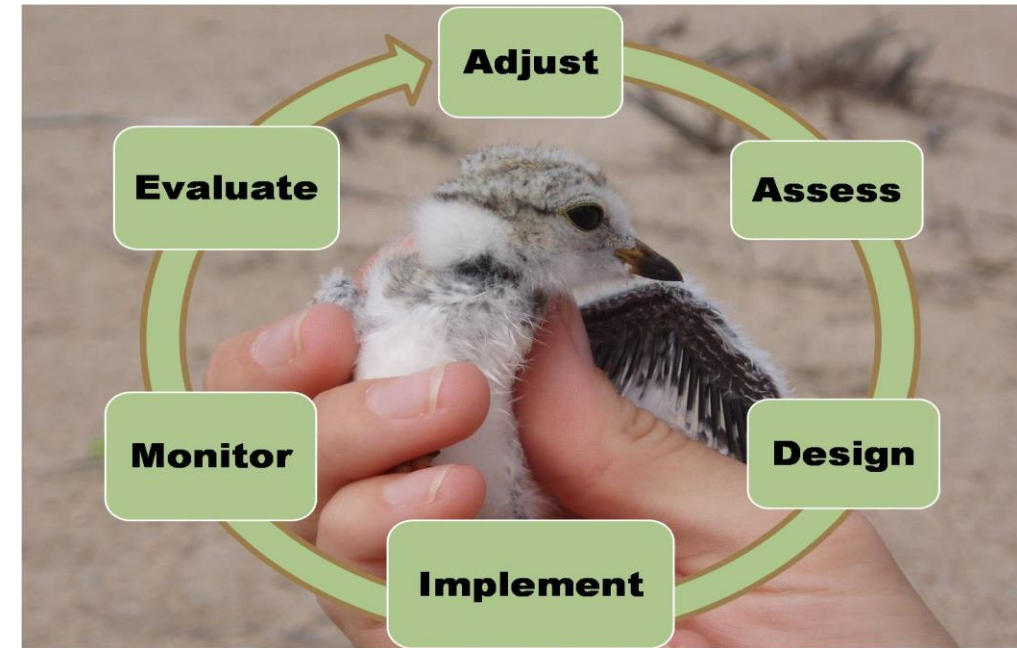
Organizational Structure

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PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

PRRIP First Increment – The Role of Adaptive Management (AM):

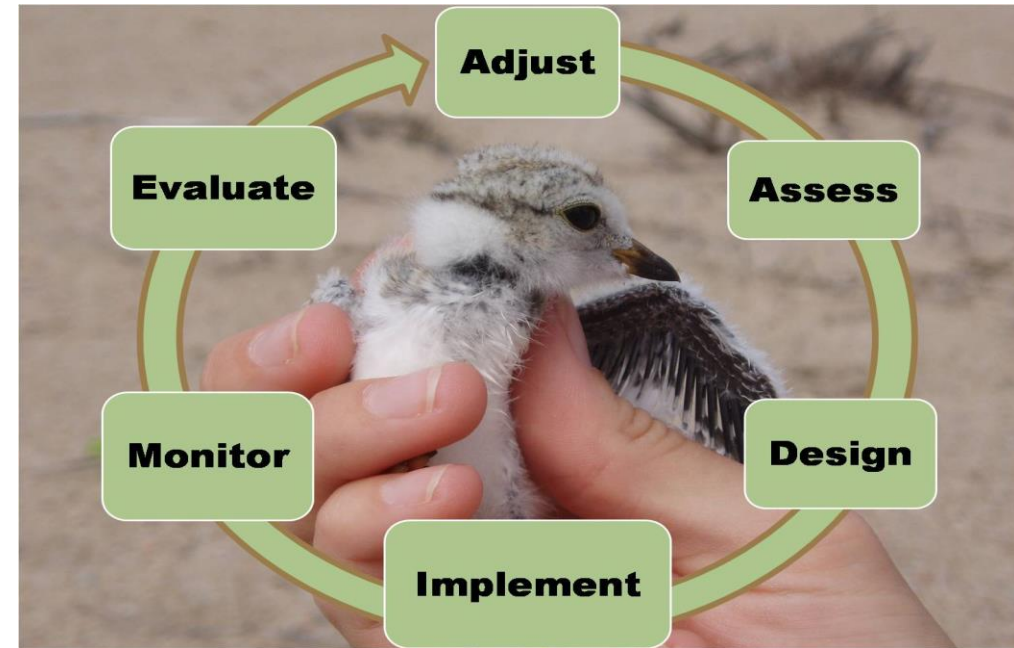
- Intended to be “learning increment”
- Negotiated AM Plan; monitoring protocols, research to fill information gaps, “experiments,” Big Questions + reporting
- GC SDM process (terns/plovers + flow management) = AM loop
- Most Milestones met and most BQ addressed by 2017



PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

PRRIP First Increment – The Role of Adaptive Management (AM):

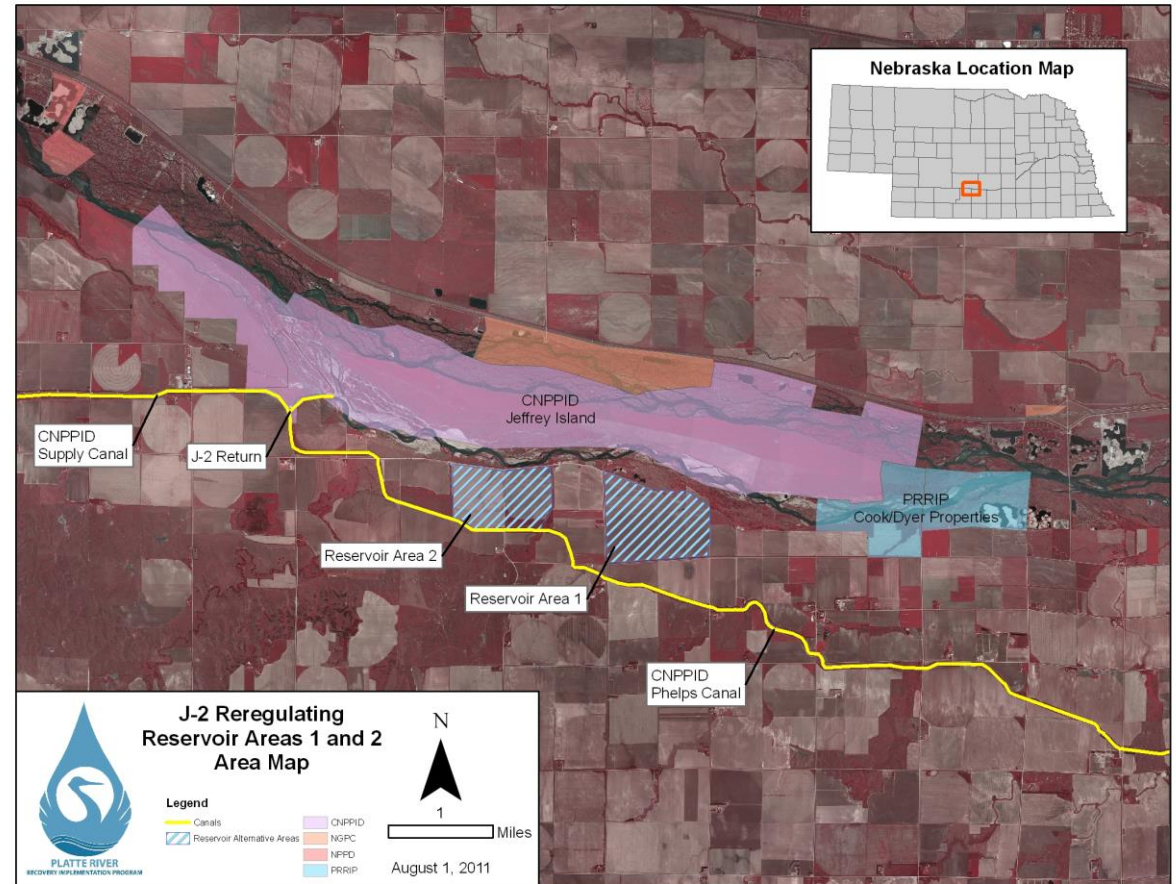
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PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

J-2 Reregulating Reservoir

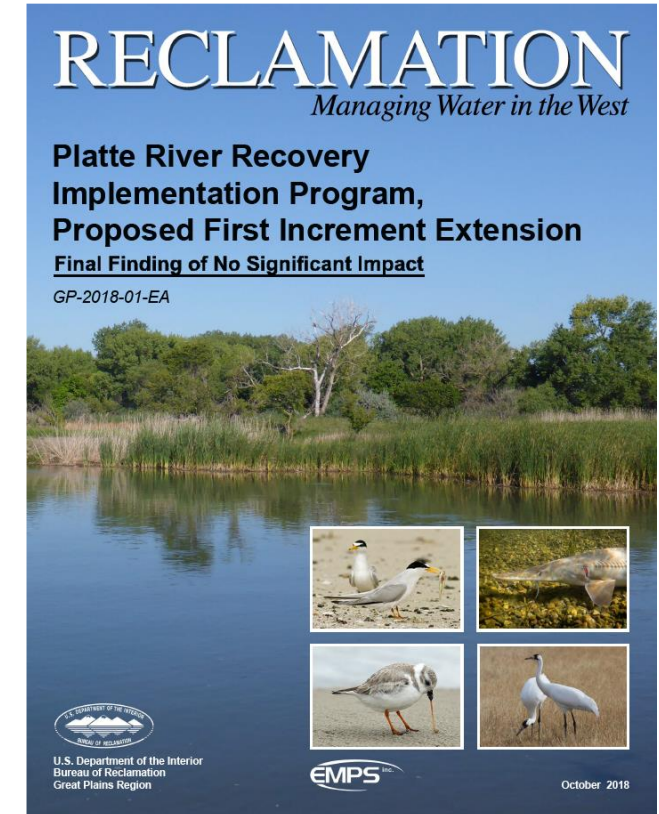
- Controllable releases (Short Duration High Flows (SDHF) and other flow management actions)
- Agreement with CNPPID
- Feasibility, design, land acquisition
- Key landowner sought high price
- Project officially shelved in 2019
- Need more time to meet PRRIP Water Milestone



PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

2017 – GC negotiates First Increment Extension:

- Program Document has provision for Extension
- Objective = 13 more years and more \$ to:
 - 1) Achieve Water Milestones (+ 1,500 acres)
 - 2) Continue focused learning
- NEPA:
 - Final EA + FONSI (instead of full EIS)
 - Supplemental BO (stand-alone) = “keep doing what you are doing”
- What will the Program do?
 - 1) Management Actions
 - 2) Integrated Monitoring & Research
 - 3) Independent Science Review



PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

Preparing for the Extension – Step #1:

- March 2019 – GC re-instated the AMWG
 - Started process of updating AMP (became the Extension Science Plan); identify BQs and associated implementation and assessment activities
 - Quickly stalled – what does it mean to “test” target flows?
 - GC directed AMWG to hold off until after Extension authorized
- Late 2020 – AMWG re-boot, small stakeholder-led group focused on:
 - Review Conceptual Models
 - Explore uncertainties
 - Develop new BQs
 - Communicate to GC

PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

Preparing for the Extension – Step #2:

- Second Increment Mock Negotiation & Policy Frame (facilitated by Compass)
 - Policy Frame finalized in December 2020
 - No new species
 - Defined contribution negotiation for Second Increment
 - Use SDM later in Extension to help consider resource allocation
- What information do we need to negotiate the Second Increment?
- Idea was to give direction on how to focus Extension science implementation on information the GC believed would be necessary to help Second Increment negotiations

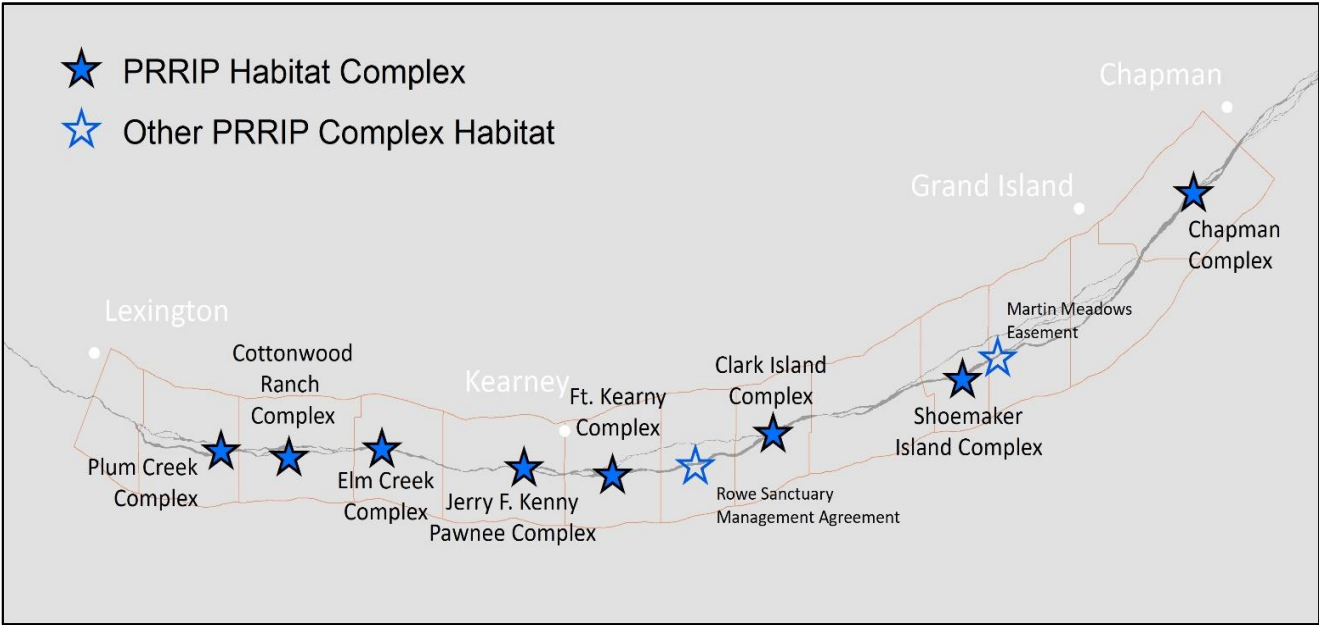
Land Plan Implementation

- First Increment Land Milestone: 10,000 ac post-1997
 - OCSW Round Out: 60 ac sand
 - Extension Plus-Up: 1,500 ac (new habitat complex)
- Platte River Recovery Implementation Foundation, Trustee
- Current Status: 13,810 ac
 - Interest
 - 9,600 ac owned
 - 2,700 ac sponsorship/lease
 - 1,500 ac management agreements
 - 183.5 ac remaining
 - ~3,000 ac pre-1997 conservation land

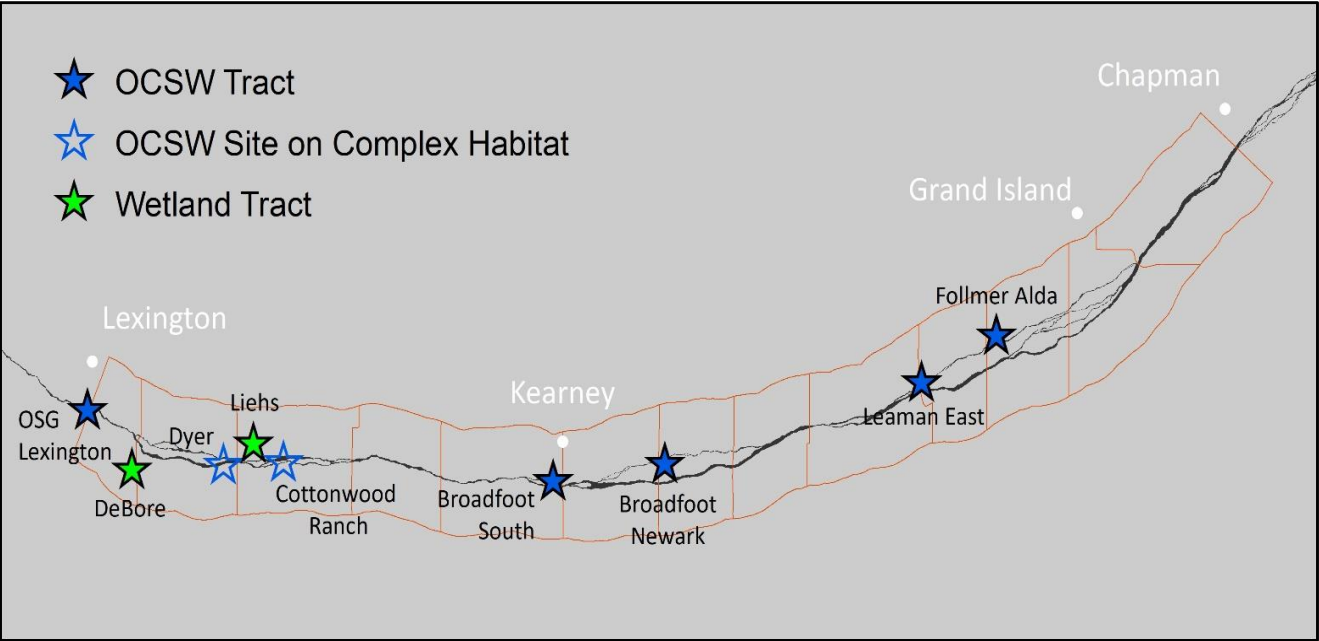


PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

COMPLEX HABITAT



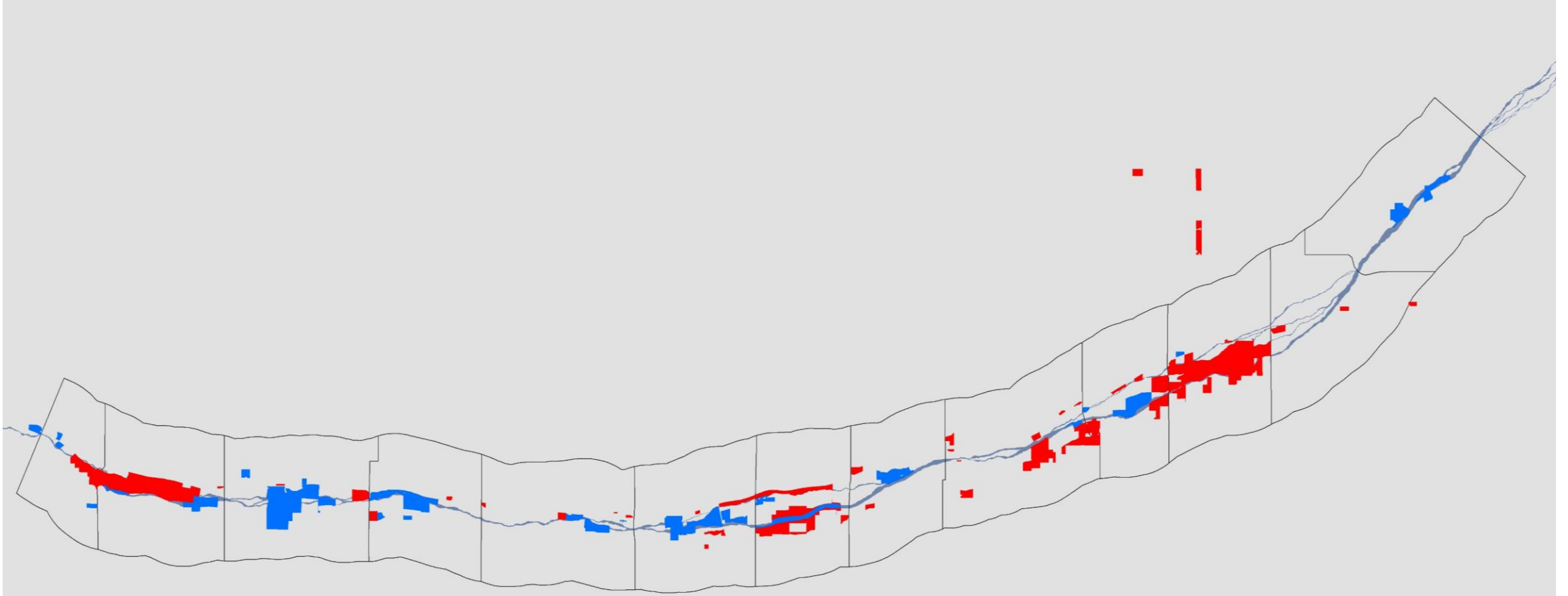
NON-COMPLEX HABITAT



Land and Habitat Management

- Management ~\$600,000
- Property Taxes ~\$165,000
- Farm Income ~\$200,000
- Staffing
 - Land Coordinator with assistance from junior biologists
 - Farm Managers – lease negotiations (\$)
 - Stewardship work done by contractors
 - Civil design of habitat restoration projects – EDO
 - Permitting - HDR

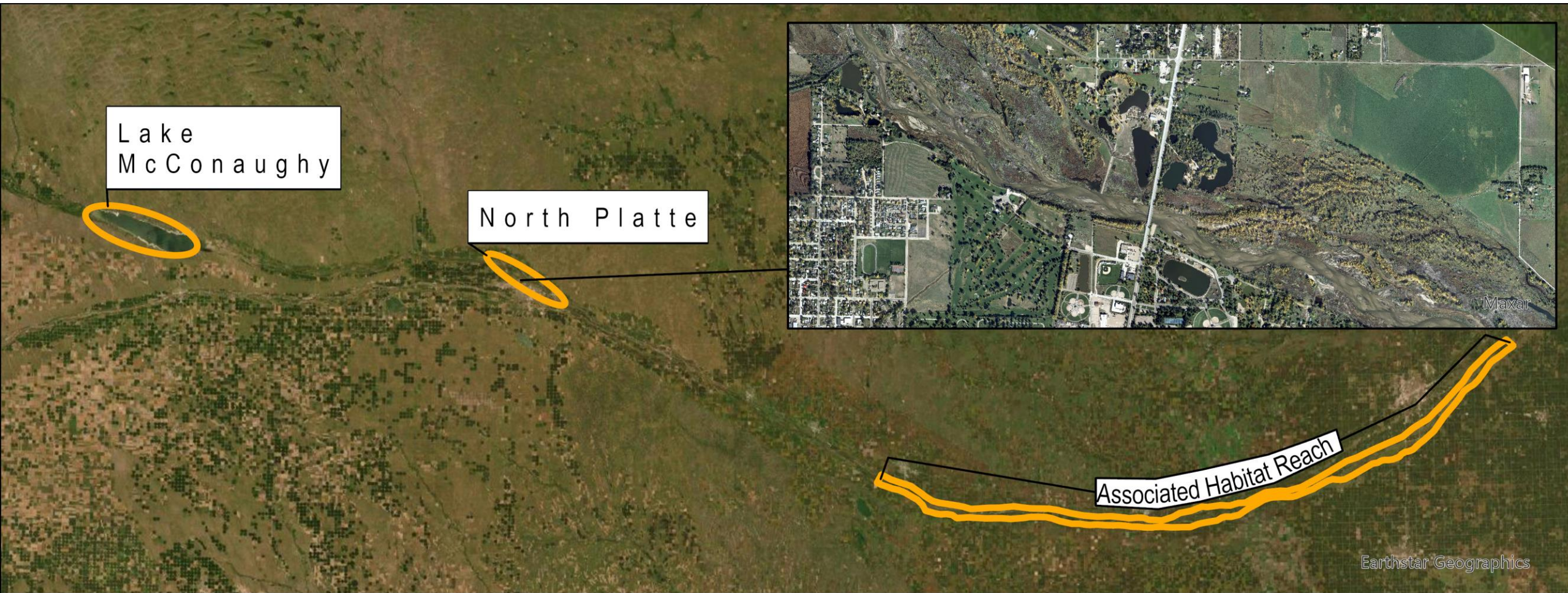
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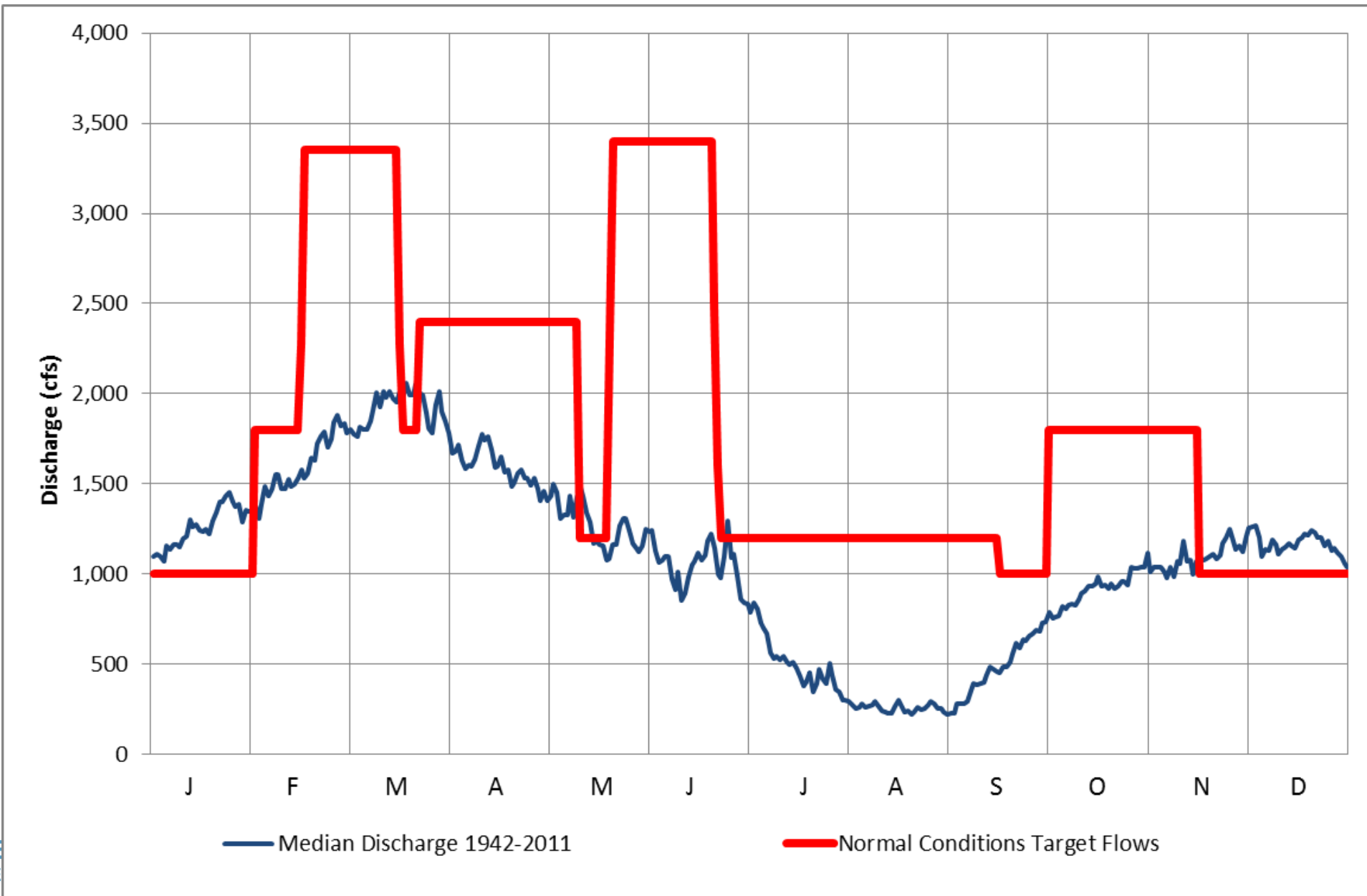
Water Plan Implementation

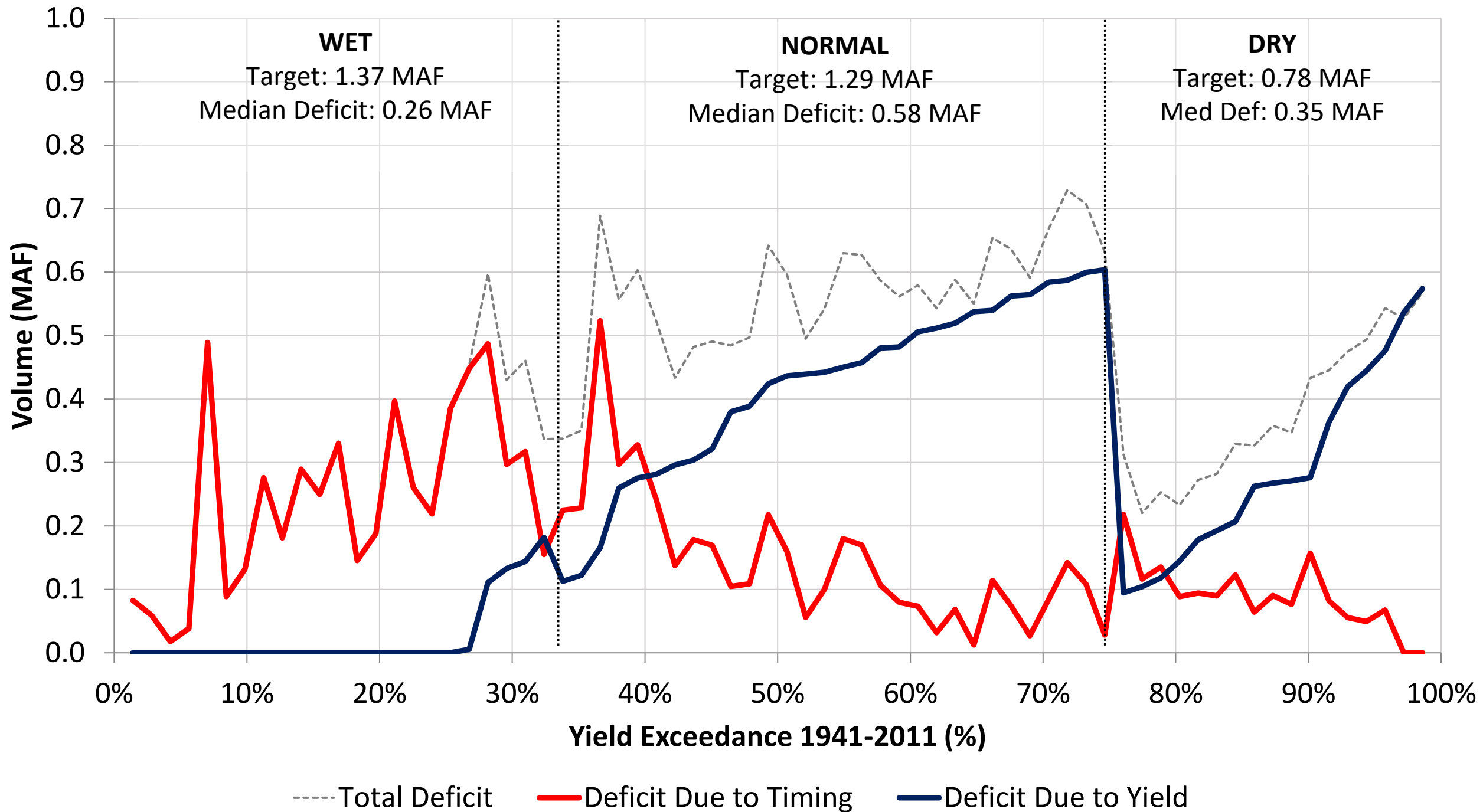
- Water Milestone: Reduce deficits to target flows by 130,000 – 150,000 af
- Water Action Plan: 50,000 af
 - Water Project Sponsors – infrastructure projects
 - J2 Return Reservoir – Good neighbor policy extends to water projects
- Public vs. private approach to water projects
- Extension: Get to 120,000 af and do science necessary: Leasing paradigm
- Staffing
 - Water Plan Coordinator
 - Most project work done by contractors with EDO oversight
 - Operations BSR project – in-house
 - CO technical staff assist: groundwater and surface water modeling/scoring

PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion



PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion





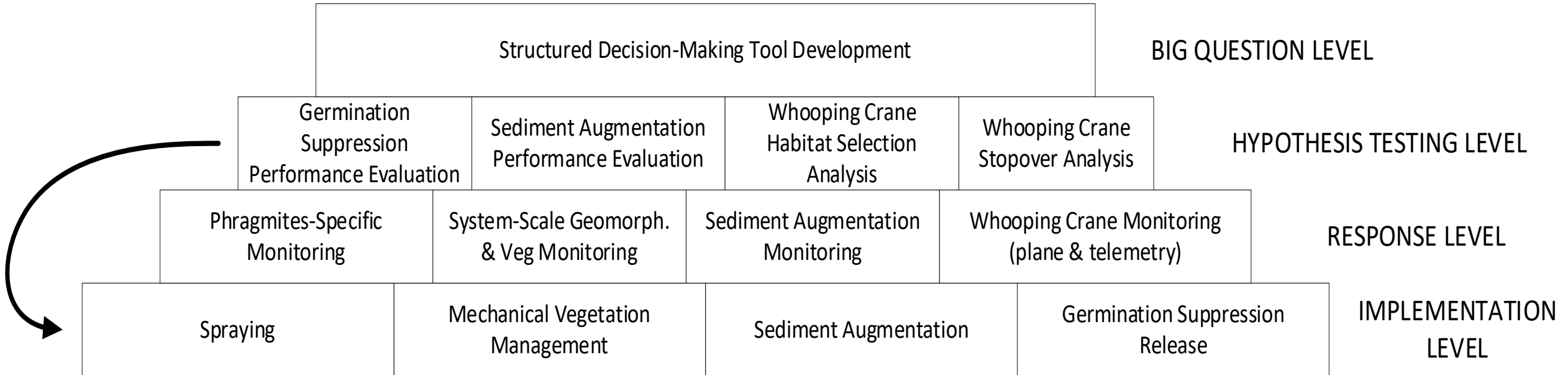
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Extension Science Plan – Active Learning

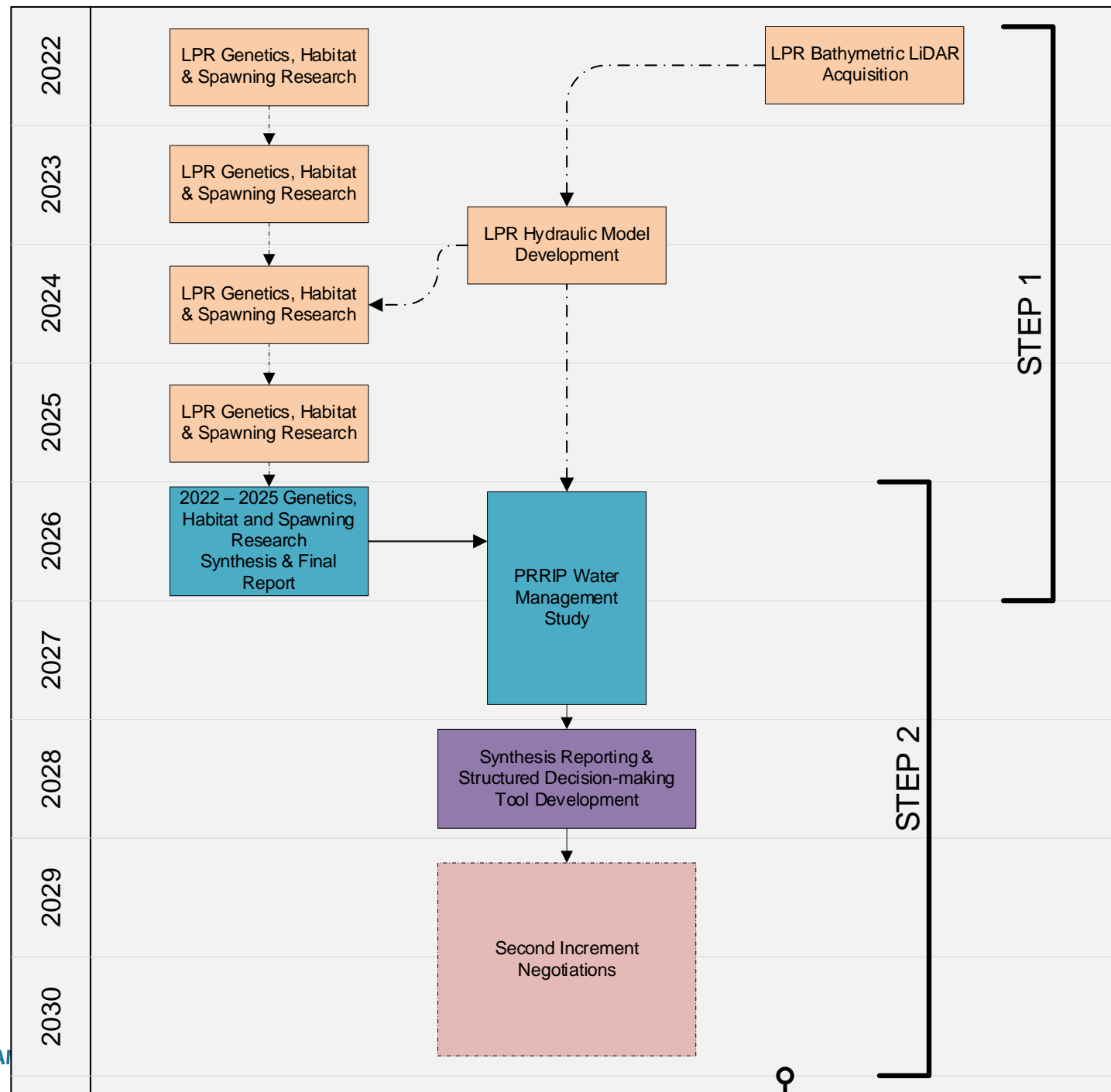
- [EBQ #1](#) – How effective is it to use Program water to maintain [suitable](#)* whooping crane roosting habitat?
- [EBQ #2](#) – How effective is Program management of Phragmites for maintaining [suitable](#) whooping crane roosting habitat?
- [EBQ #3](#) – Is sediment augmentation necessary to create and/or maintain [suitable](#) whooping crane habitat?
- [EBQ #4](#) – What factors influence WC decision to stop or fly over the AHR?
- [EBQ #5](#) – What factors influence WC stopover length within the AHR?
- [EBQ #6](#) – Why is spring WC use of the AHR greater than fall WC use?
- [EBQ #7](#) – What effect do Program flow management actions to benefit WC, PP, and LT in the central Platte River have on pallid sturgeon use of the lower Platte River?*

PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

Active Learning Pyramid



- UNL & SIU pallid sturgeon research



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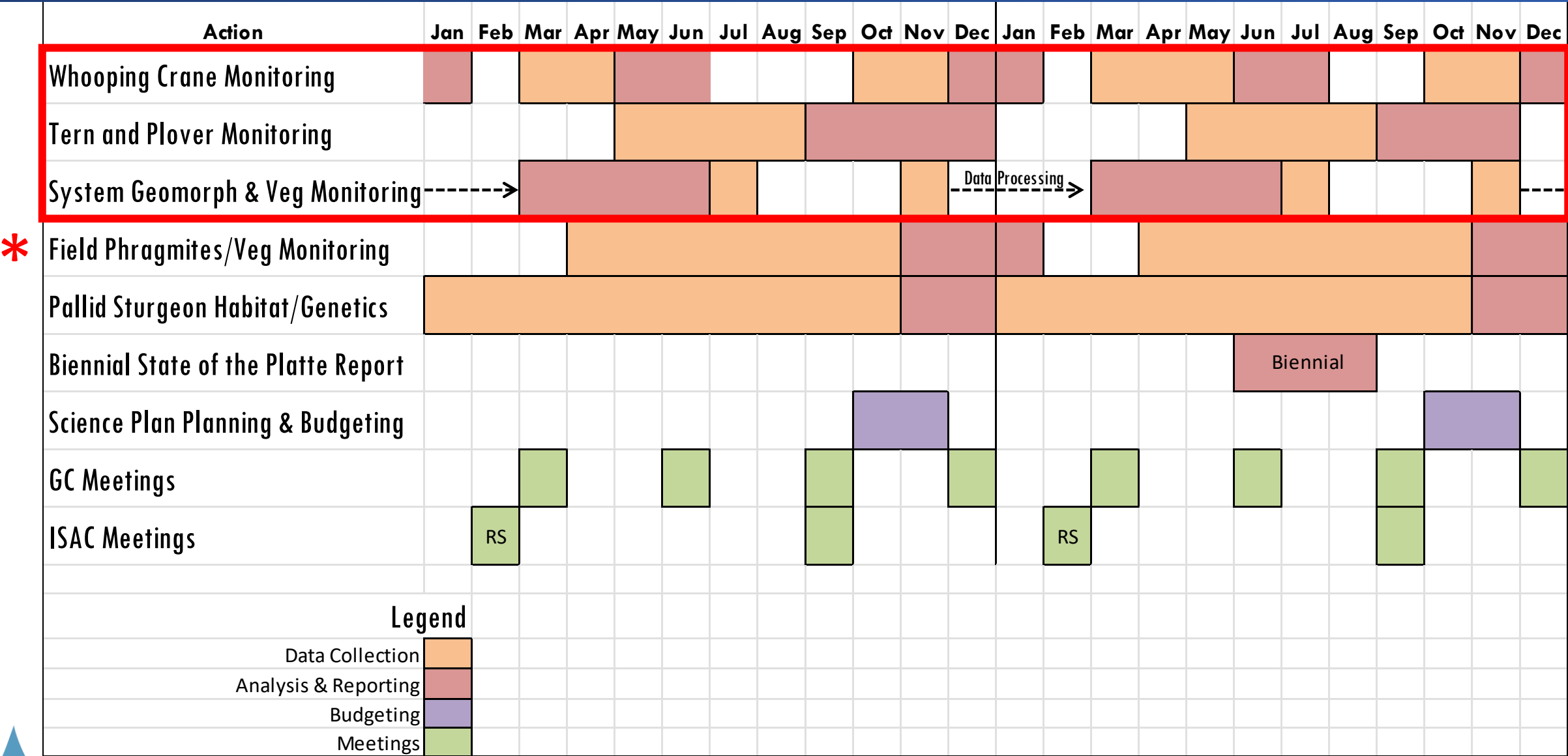
Extension Science Plan – Maintenance Learning

- [EBQ #8](#) – *How much of an effect does predation have on PP productivity (fledging)?*
- [EBQ #9](#) – *How effective is Program management at mitigating losses of PP productivity due to predation?*
- [EBQ #10](#) – *Wet meadows research (carryover task from the First Increment to specifically address the physical processes involved in wet meadow hydrology)*

Maintenance Learning Activities

- Tern and plover monitoring and predation research
- Wet meadows hydrology study
 - Refine (non-regulatory) definition of wet meadows and improve management

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Analysis/Synthesis Effort	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Vegetation Management Performance											
Sediment Augmentation											
WC Riverine Habitat Selection											
WC Telemetry - Stopover											
Pallid Sturgeon Habitat/Genetics											
PRRIP Water Management											
PP Habitat Selection & Predation											
SDM Tool Development											
Biennial State of the Platte Reports											
Required											
Optional											

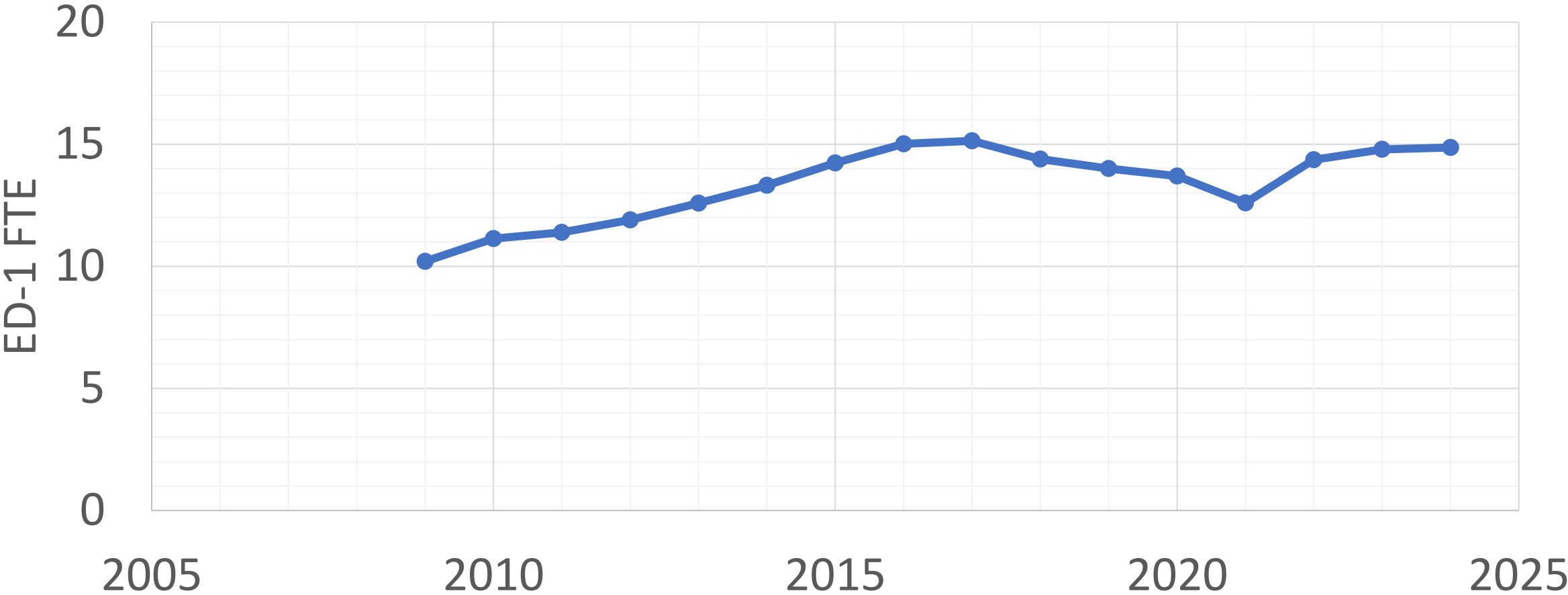
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ROUGH Second Increment Timeline

- 2024: Develop SDM Tool Framework / Architecture
- 2025: Begin Conservation Land “Counting” Discussion
- 2028: Assemble SDM Tools (Implementation and species response)
- 2029 – 2030: SDM Process (Negotiations)
 - Alternative development, trade-off analysis, alternative selection
- 2029-2032
 - NEPA Document Development
 - Synced with SDM Process
 - Legislative Process

PRRIP History, Context, Structure, & Function – GC Discussion

Evolution of the EDO



Program Administration

Leadership Senior Mid-Level Junior



Jason Farnsworth
Executive Director



Chad Smith, Ph.D.
Science Policy
Coordinator



Alicia Uribe
Office Manager



Julie Liakos
Administrative Assistant



Justin Brei, PE
CO Coordinator



Seth Turner, PE
Water Action Plan
Coordinator



Libby Casavant, PE
Hydraulic Engineer



Kristen Cognac, Ph.D.
Hydrogeologist



Ed Weschler, EIT
Civil Engineer

Physical Sciences

Leadership Senior Mid-Level Junior

TBD
Fluvial Geomorphologist

TBD
Geospatial Analyst



Malinda Henry, Ph.D.
Science Coordinator

Biology/Ecology/Habitat

Leadership Senior Mid-Level Junior



Jason Bruggeman, Ph.D.
Endangered Species
Monitoring Coordinator



Patrick Farrell, MS
Statistical Ecologist



Tim Tunnell, MS
Land Coordinator



Mallory Jaymes, MS
Wildlife Biologist
WC Crew Lead



Jonathan Wentz
Wildlife Biologist

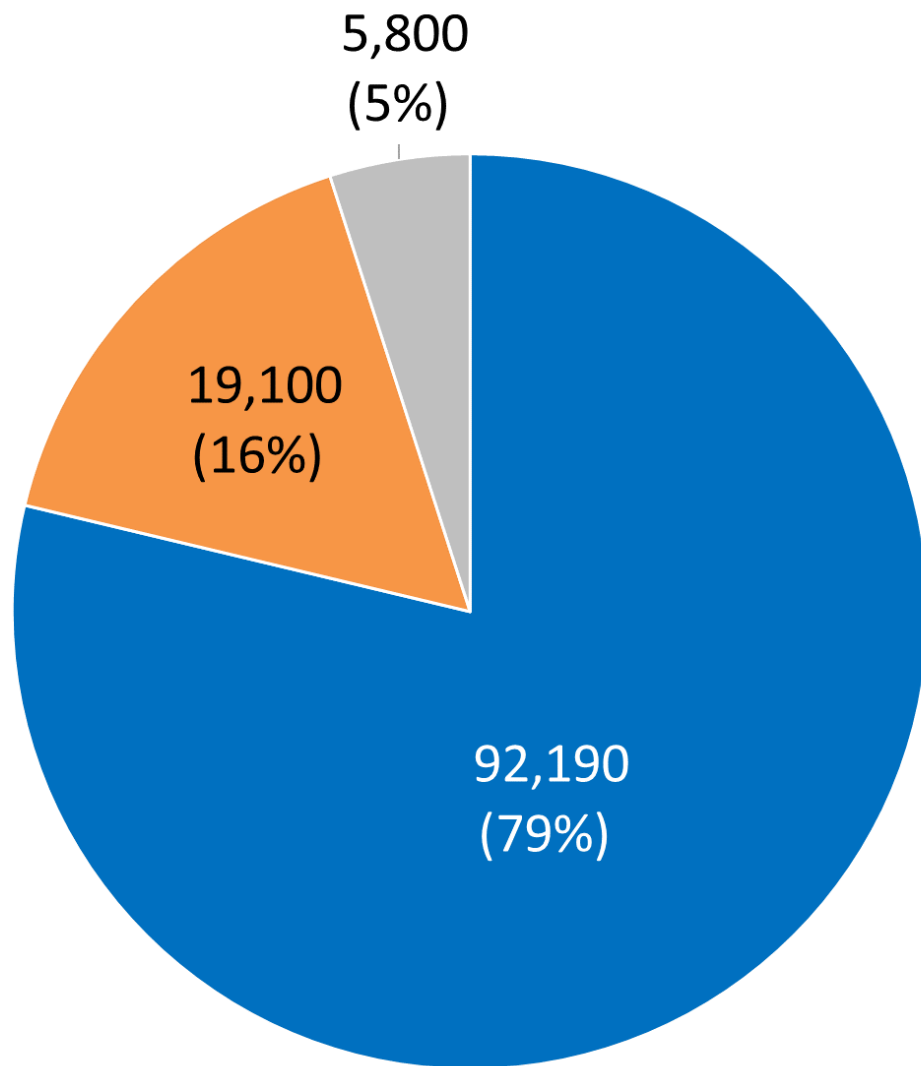
TBD
Wildlife Biologist

WHOOPING CRANE
MONITORING TECHS
(14)

TERN & PLOVER
MONITORING TECHS
(1)

TBD
Wildlife Biologist
Tern & Plover Crew Lead

River Returns: Controllable vs Uncontrollable



Storage:
Controllable



Retiming:
Uncontrollable
(Recharge)

Retiming:
Controllable
(Recapture Wells,
Elwood Outlet)

