

Permit Coordination

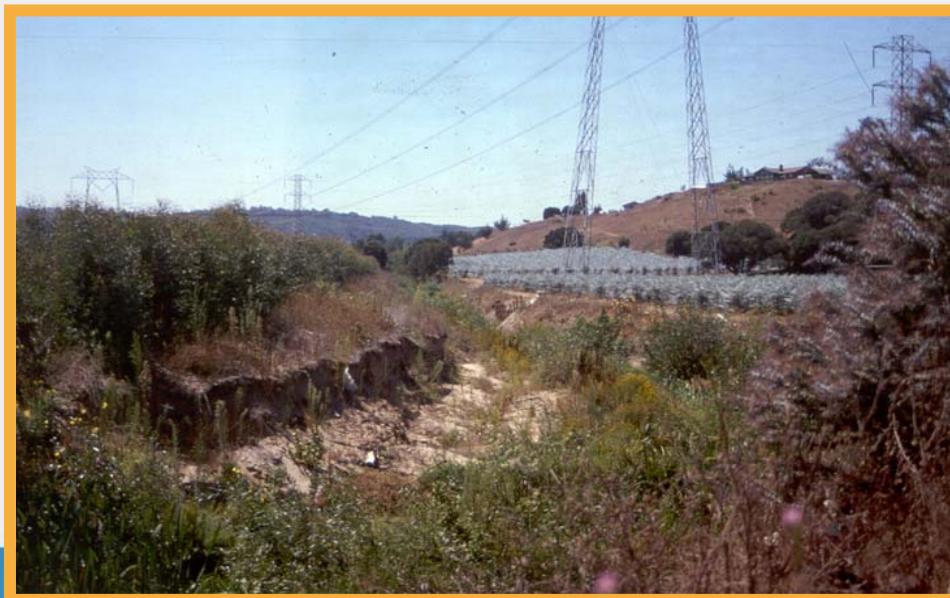
Phill Blake and Daniel Mountjoy, NRCS

Watershed Information Center and Conservancy of Napa County
Board Meeting
March 24, 2005

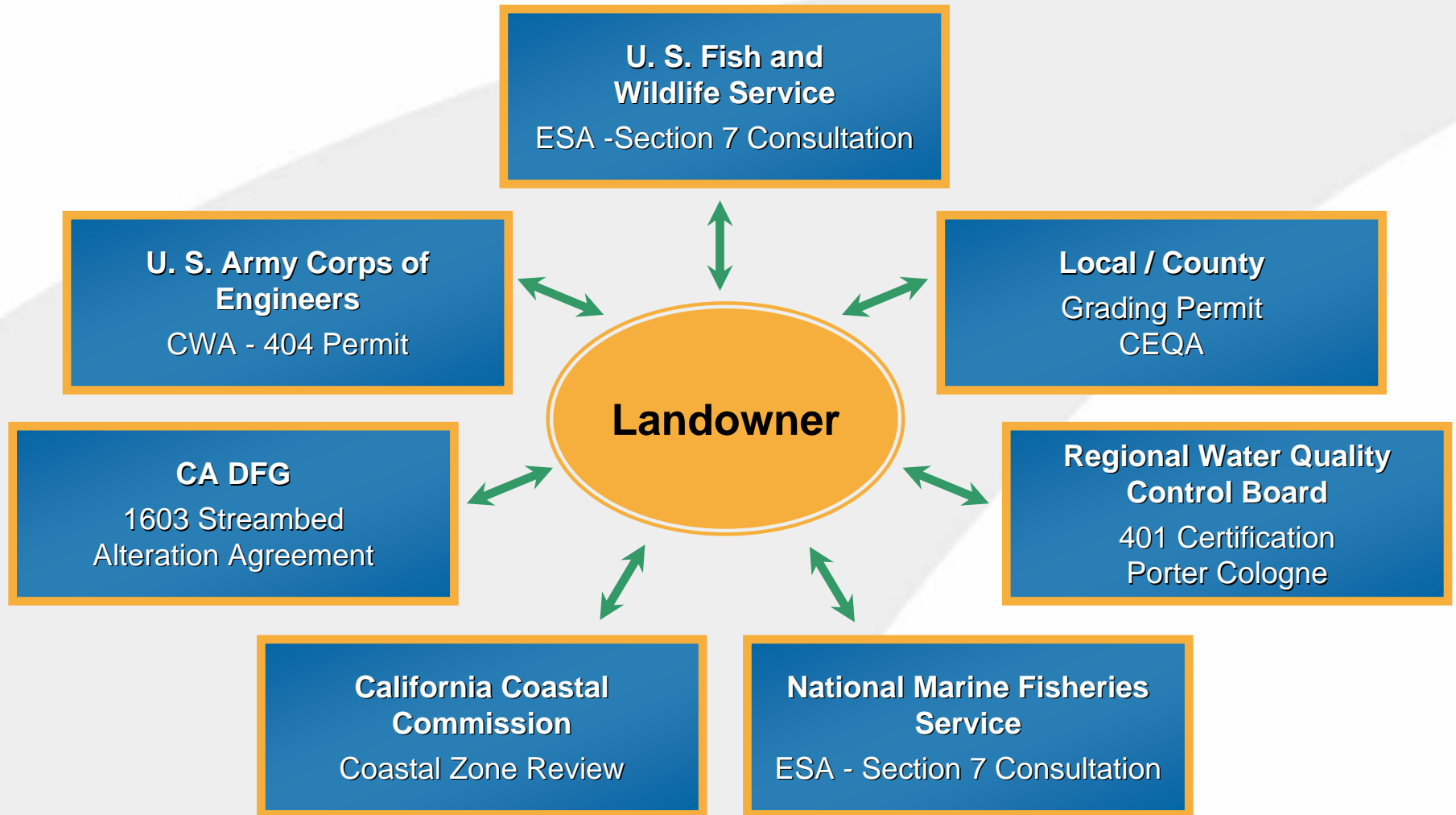


The Problem

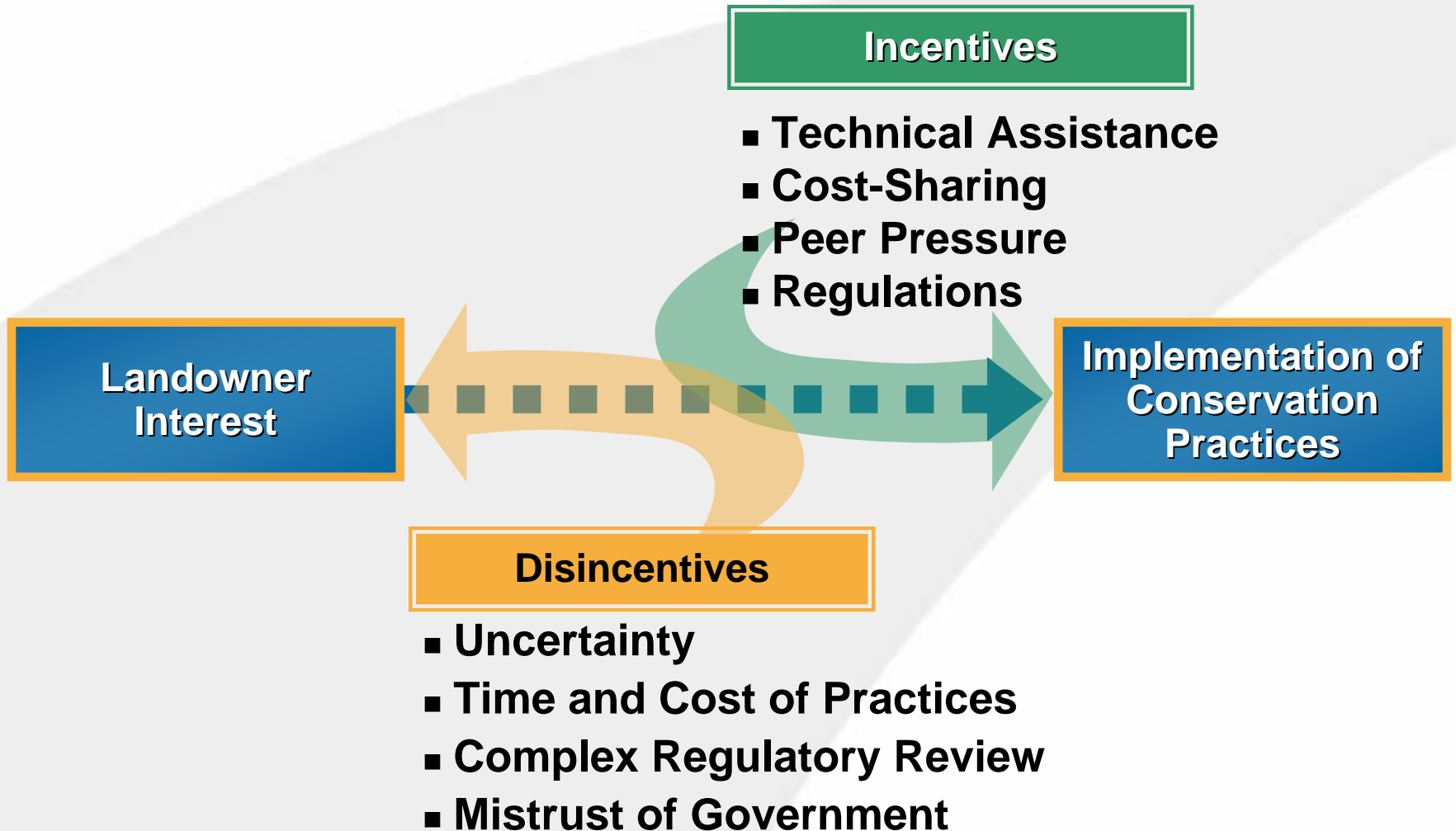
Farmers and ranchers are refraining from performing conservation work because environmental compliance for these projects is too costly and complex



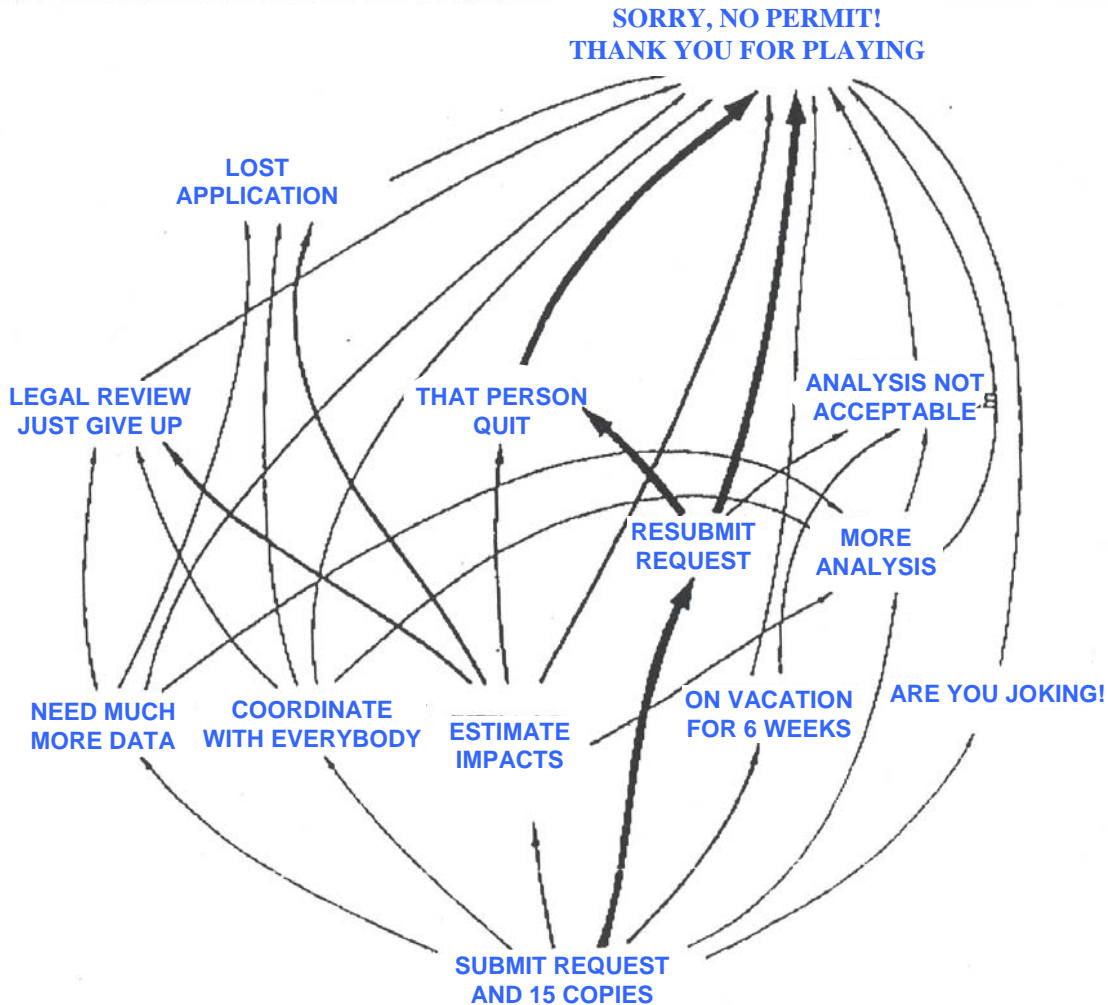
Permits Required to Restore a Stream Bank



Incentives and Disincentives for Voluntary Conservation



The Permit Process – Revealed!



The Role of Environmental Regulations



Napa County Coordinated Stream Restoration Permit Program Napa Co Conservation Information Group (2002 Draft Proposal)

CIG Cooperating Agencies:

- California Department of Fish and Game
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- SF Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Napa County RCD
- Napa County Flood Control District
- Napa County Conserv Dev Planning Dept.
- California Conservation Corp.



Purpose:

1. The process of acquiring multiple agreements/permits for riparian projects discourages applicant participation in restoration projects.
2. A simpler, consolidated, local process would provide a significant incentive for landowners to select measures that restore Napa River fisheries, enhance riparian habitat, and protect water quality.



Scope:

- Limited to projects with the potential to restore and enhance riparian functions and values.
- Site conditions and scope of project must meet Class IV CEQA Cat-X standards, as specified.
- Encompasses use of 40 different NRCS/ CA Fish & Game listed stream restoration measures.

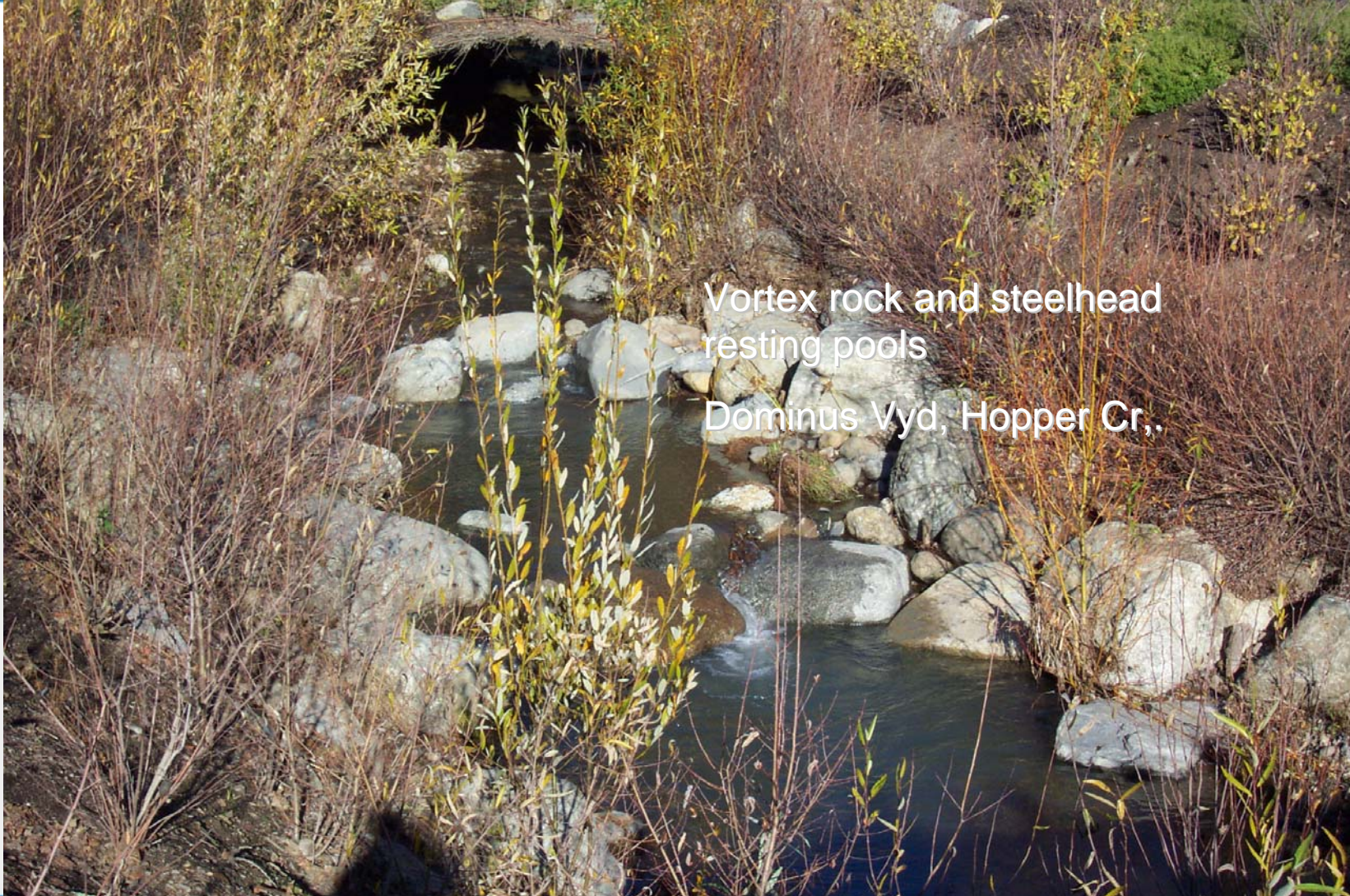


Project Processing:

- Applications would be initiated locally at the RCD/NRCS office.
- Proposals screened in the field by NRCS and RCD staff.
- Project descriptions would be forwarded to CA Fish and Game, SF RWQCB via electronic form format, or other acceptable means for comment
- NRCS biologist handles federal agency consultation
- Periodic project status reports filed with CA Fish and Game and SF RWQCB.



Examples.....



Vortex rock and steelhead
resting pools

Dominus Vyd, Hopper Cr.,



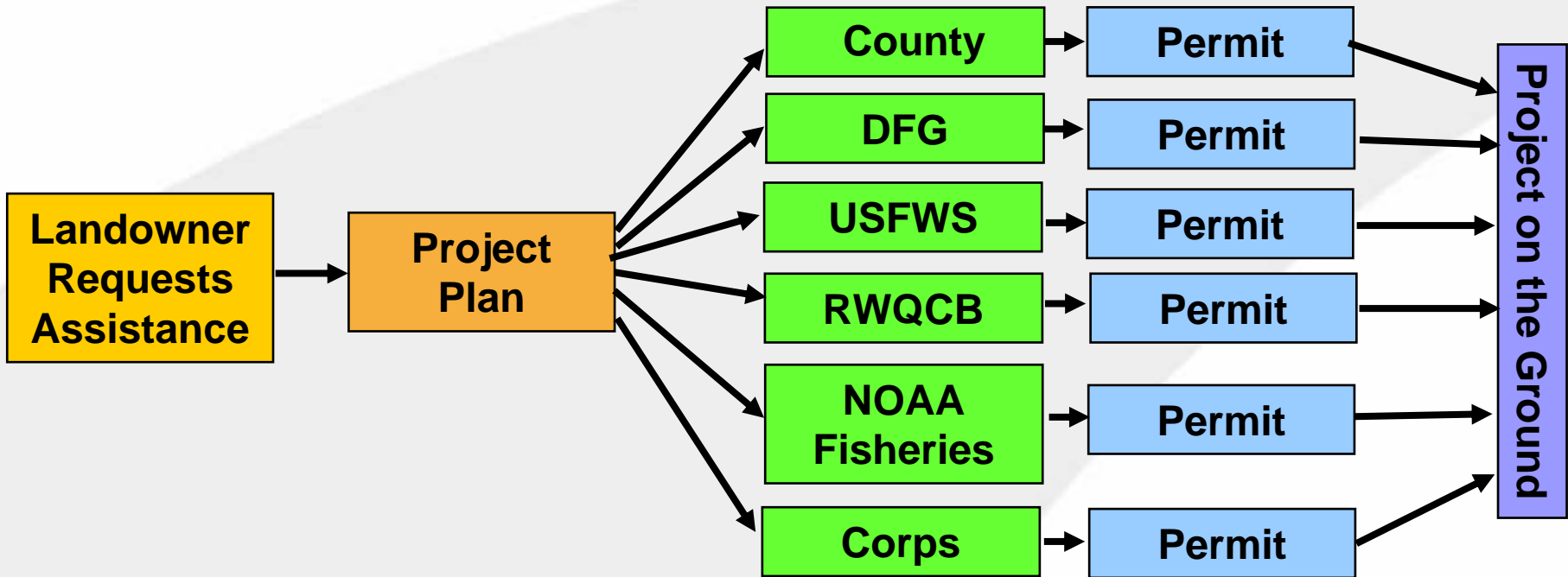
NRCS
Natural Resources
Conservation
Service

Sustainable Conservation

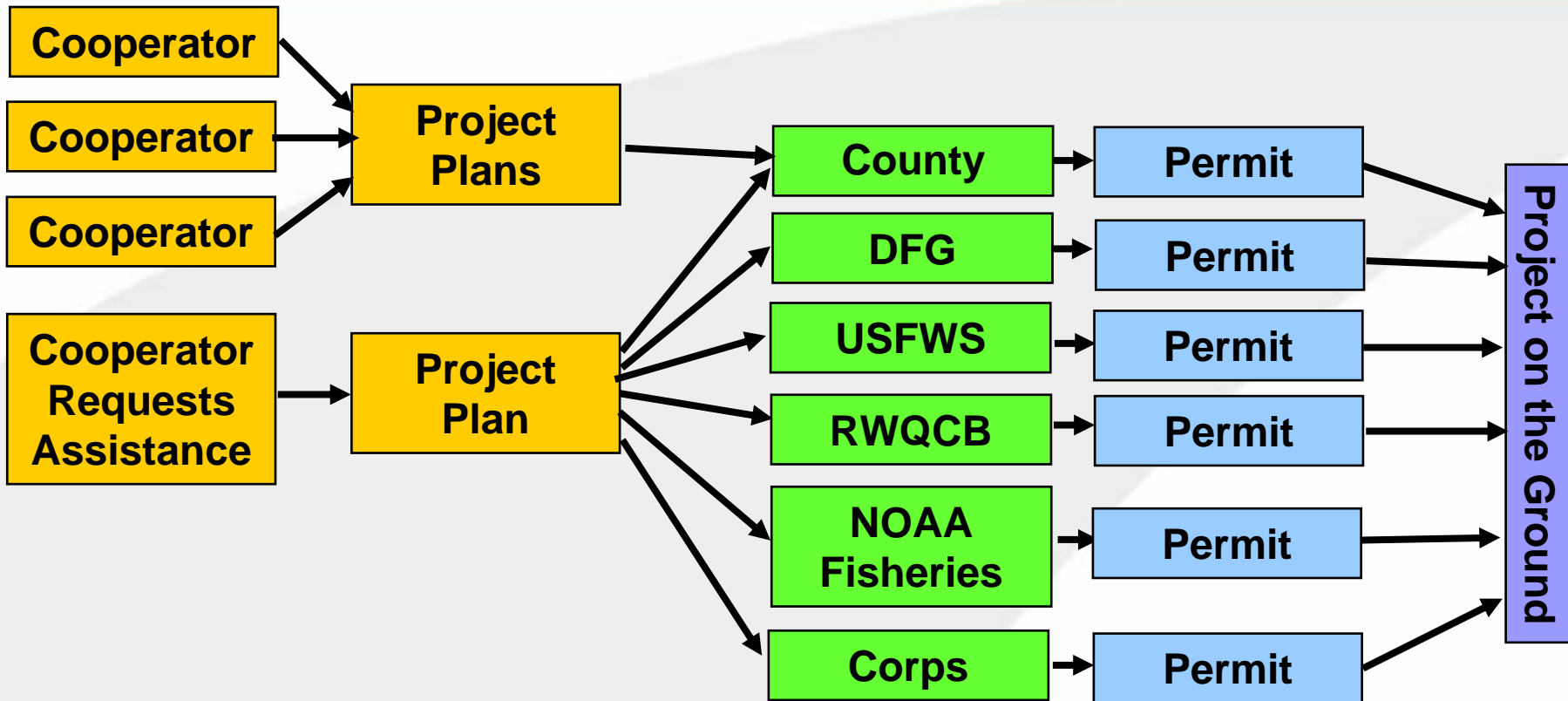
The Goal: Natural, stable riparian areas



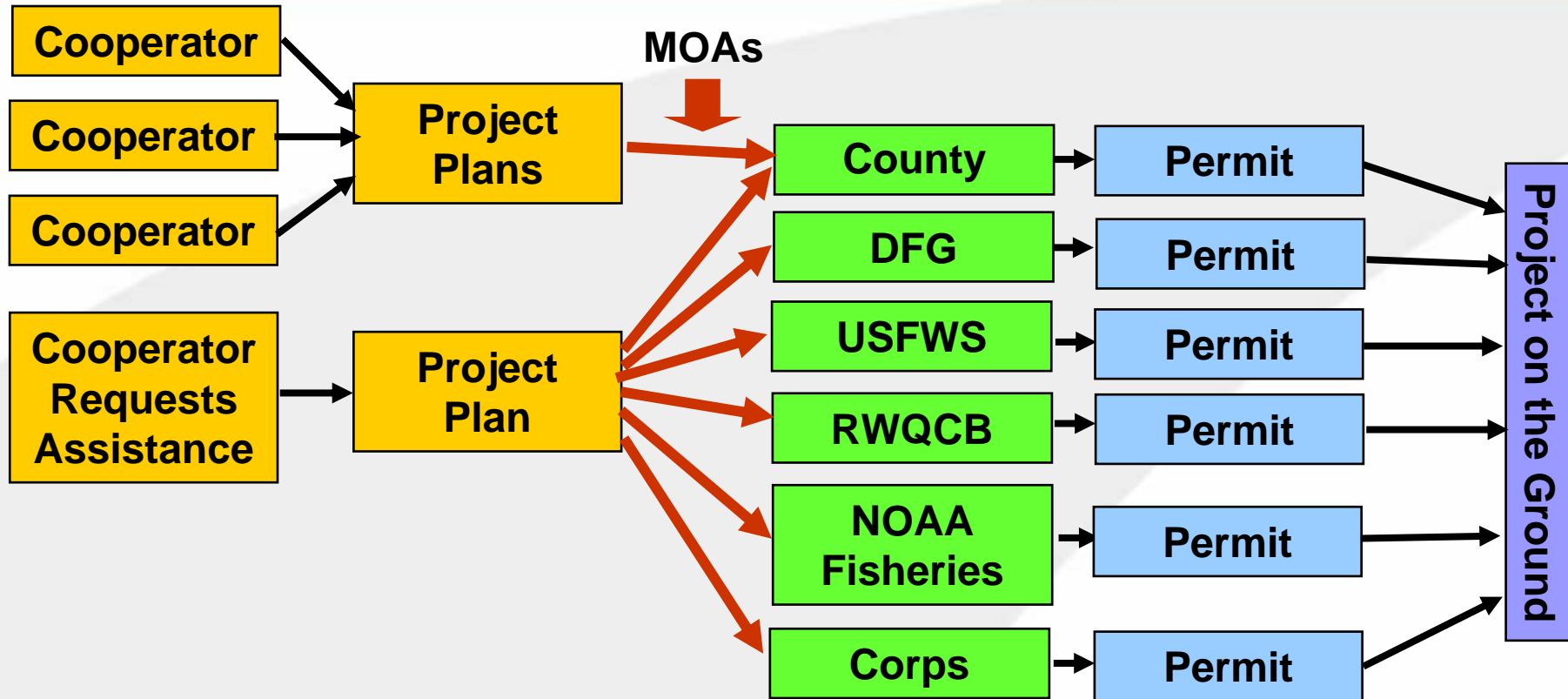
Alternate Pathways to Project Permitting: Individual Permits



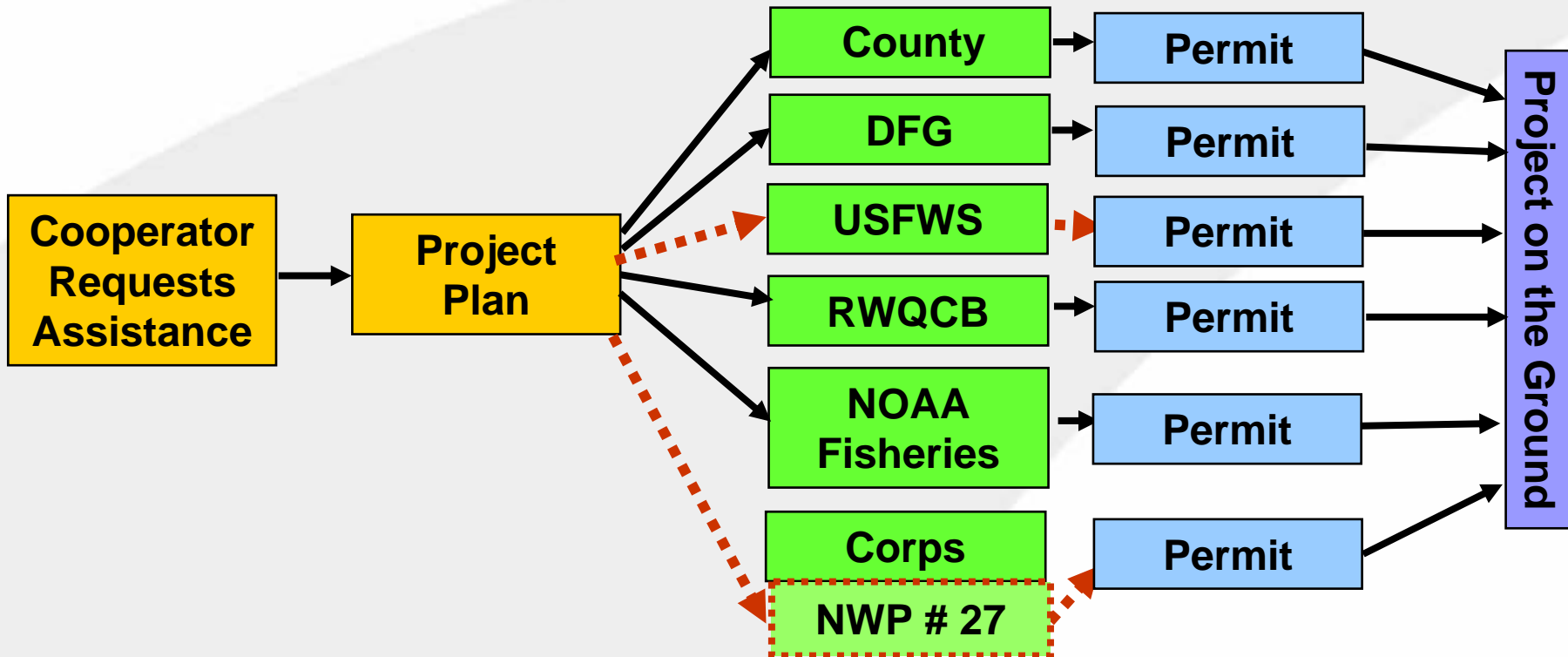
Batching Individual Permits



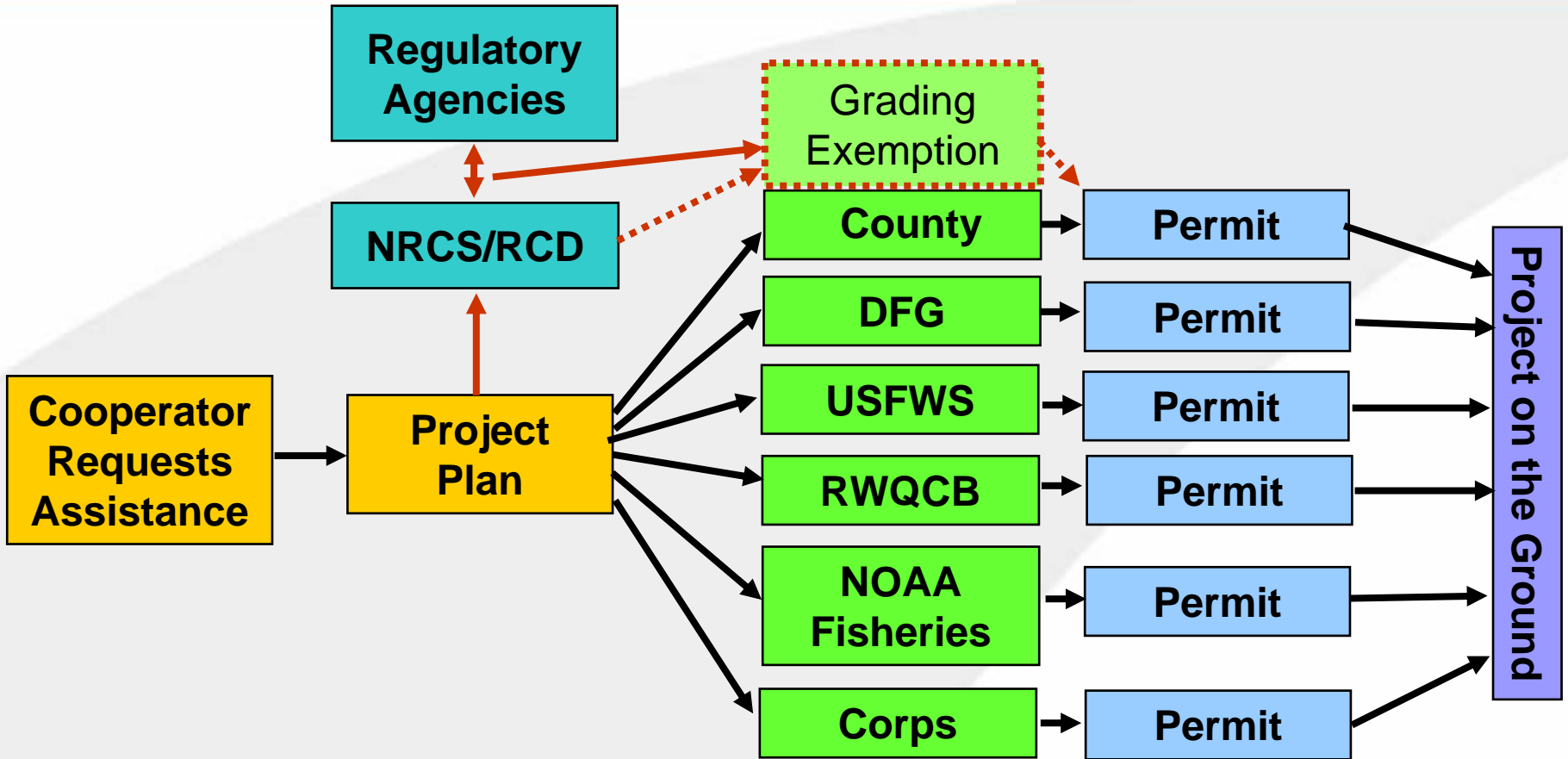
Memorandums of Agreement and Template Permits



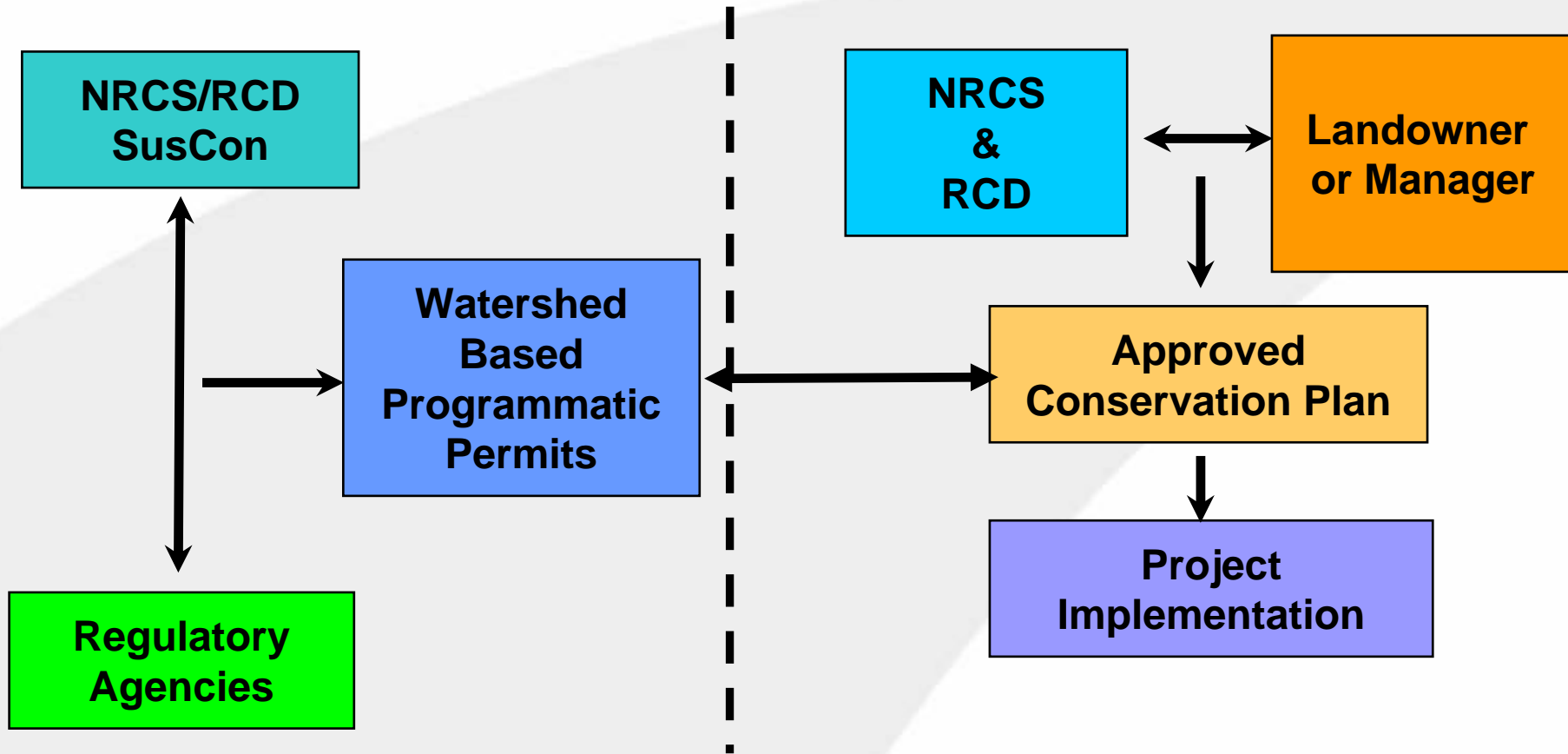
Use Existing Programmatic Permits



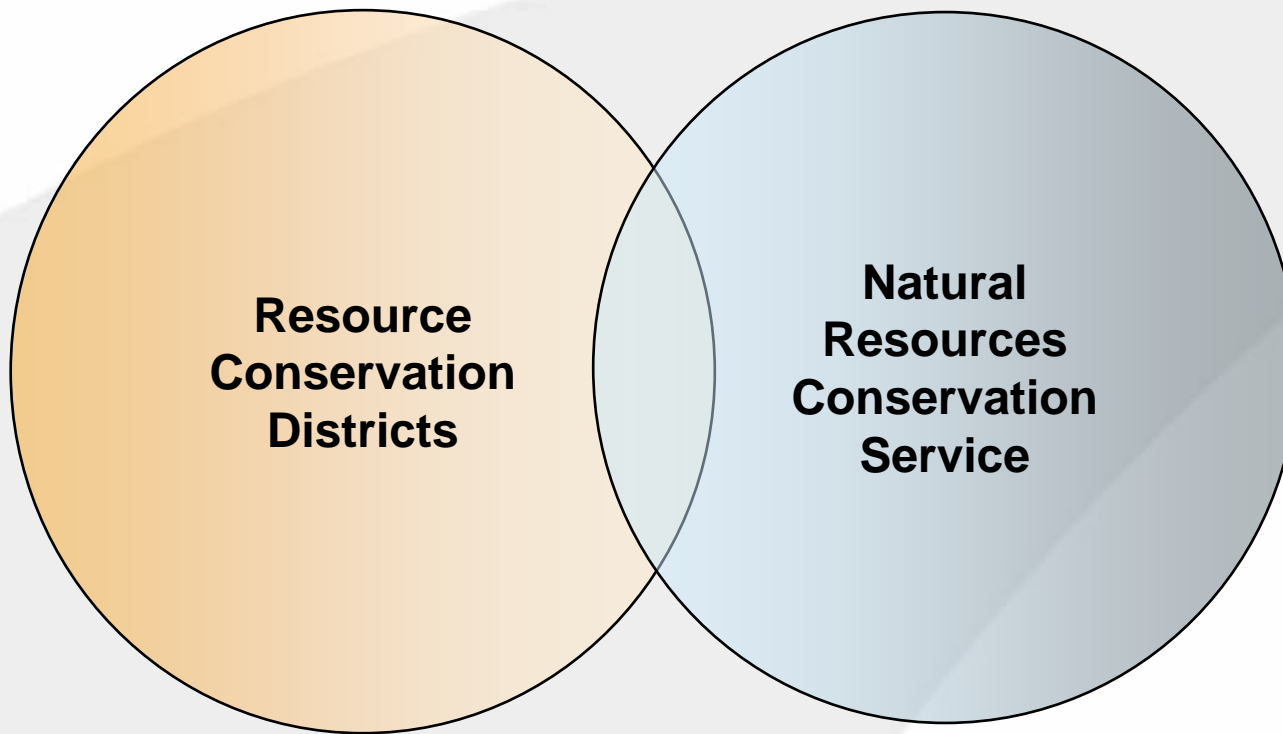
Develop Programmatic Permits



Permit Coordination



RCD – NRCS Partnership



**State and Local
Authorities**

**National
Authorities**

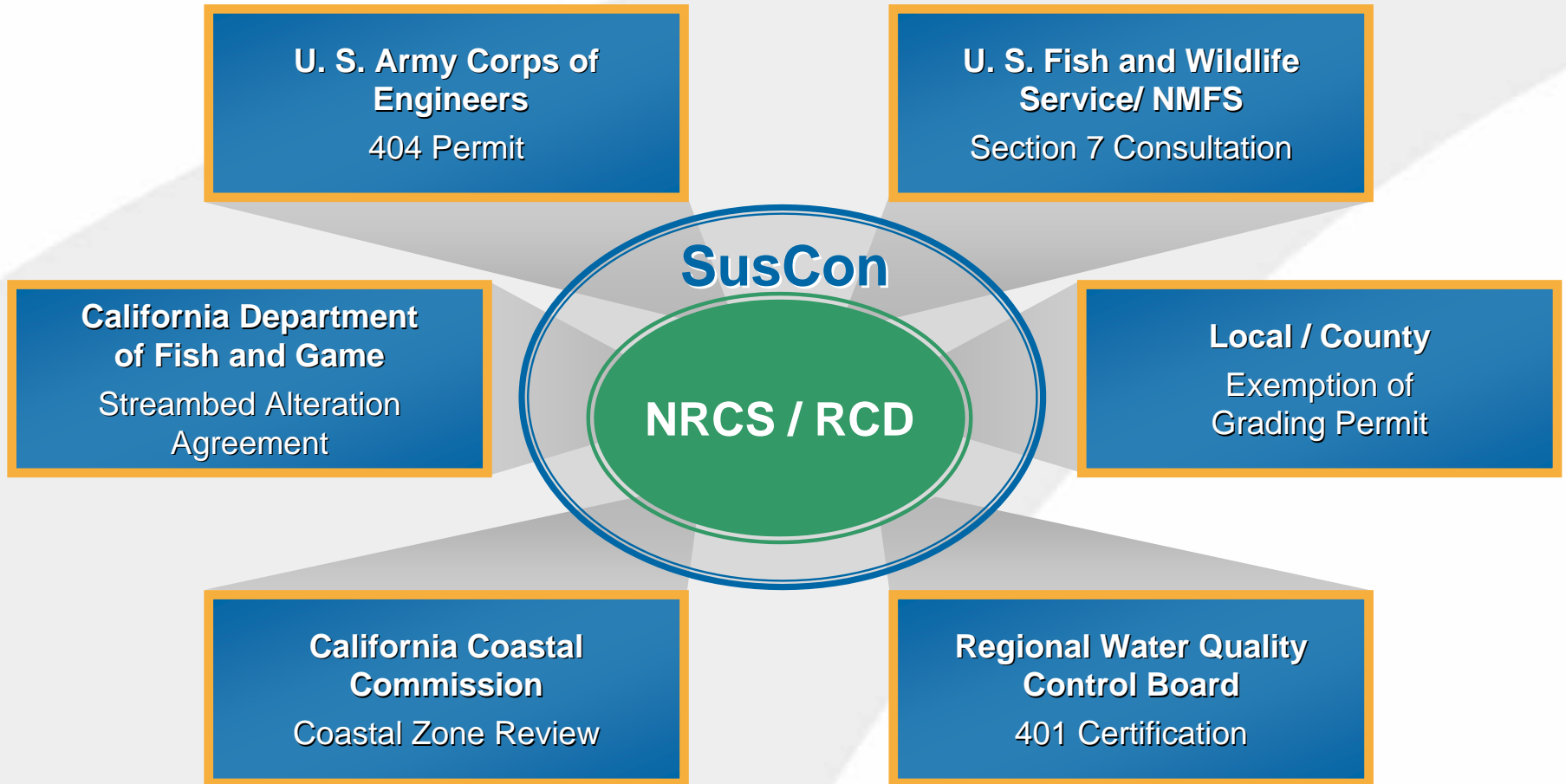


Programmatic Approvals

- **Cover conservation work on private lands when done in partnership with the NRCS/RCD.**
- **Cover only specific conservation practices that have a net beneficial environmental impact.**
- **Have conditions established by each agency that guide design and construction.**
- **Require additional oversight and reporting by the NRCS/RCD.**
- **Build on existing NRCS planning process**



Facilitating Watershed-Based Approvals



How the Program Works for Landowners

- Landowner requests assistance from NRCS/RCD.
- NRCS/RCD develops conservation plan to meet landowner needs, enhance natural resources, and comply with Program permits.
- Landowner signs Cooperator Agreement to implement conservation plan.
- Project is covered by Program's watershed agreements.
- No individual permit applications or fees

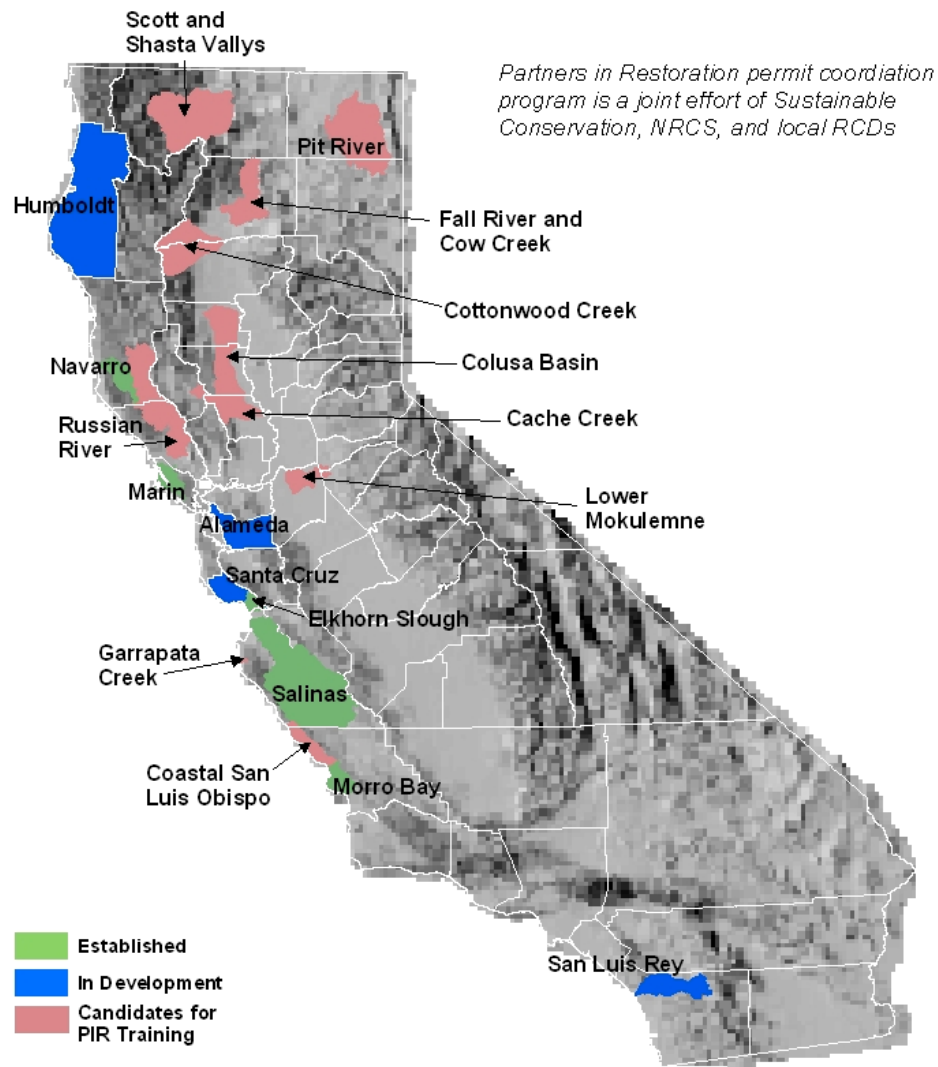


When is Permit Coordination Appropriate?

- Are permits really the problem?
- Do landowners want to do conservation work?
- Is there available staff time?
- Is the benefit worth the time?



Partners in Restoration in California





Permit Coordination Programs

- **Support private landowners to make habitat enhancements**
- **Improve relationships between agencies and land managers**
 - **Remove disincentives to voluntary partnerships**
 - **Result in improved conservation projects**