

# Increasing Restoration on Private Lands through Programmatic Permitting – Local Versus Statewide Approach

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Sustainable Conservation



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# OVERVIEW

- Local consolidated permitting programs (PIR)
  - ✓ Examples, success rates, how to get one going
- Statewide approach to programmatic permitting
  - ✓ Sustainable Conservation's Progress
- Decision factors: pursuing your own program



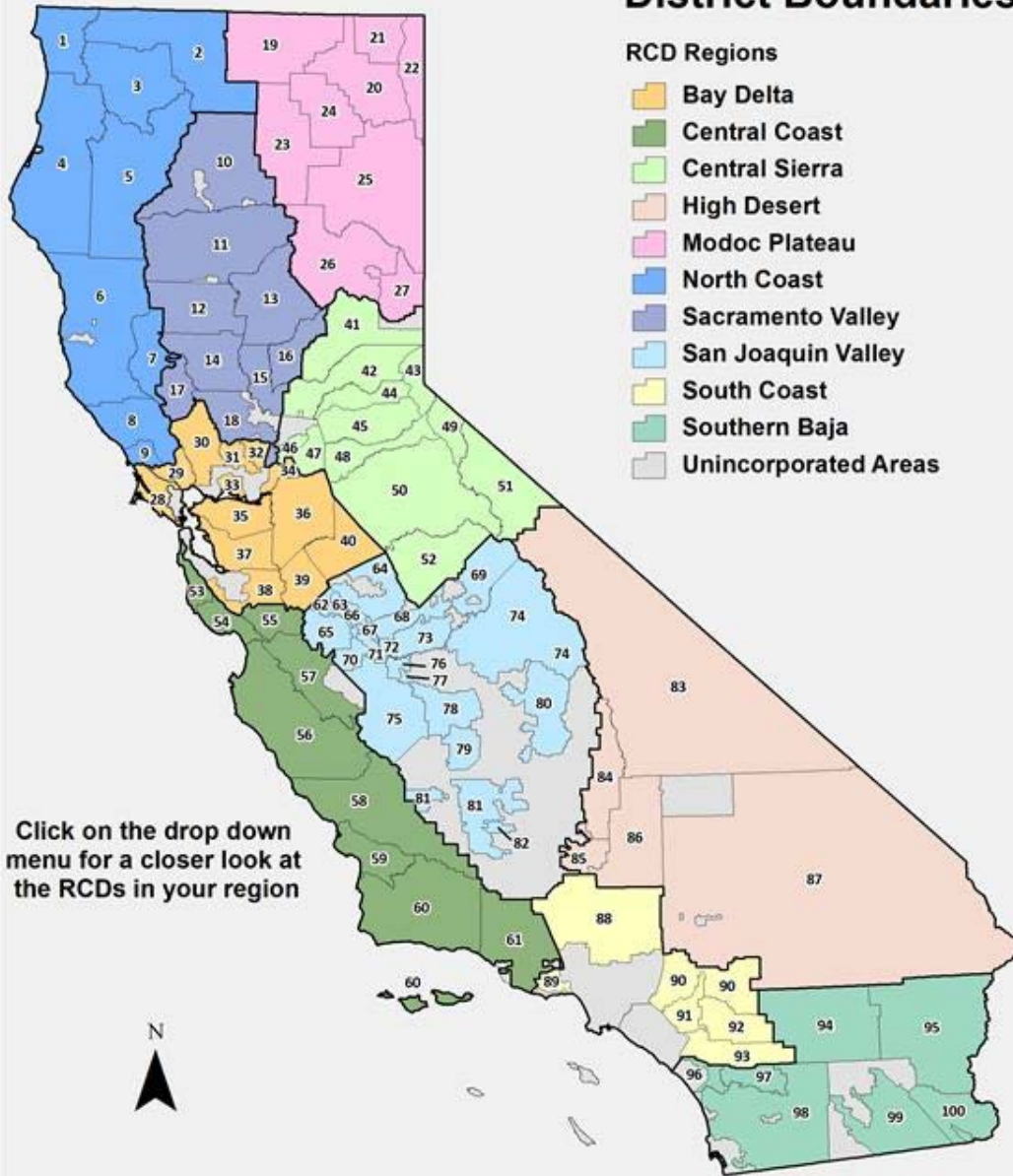
# Sustainable Conservation

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Sustainable Conservation advances the stewardship of natural resources using innovative strategies that actively engage private landowners in conservation.



# California Resource Conservation District Boundaries



0 50 100 200 Miles

Data Source: Department of Conservation  
Map created by Sotoyome RCD, June 2012



## **Partners in Restoration**

*Programmatic* permitting for voluntary restoration projects with environmental protection measures included

## Partners in Restoration (PIR) Program



### 8 Implemented

- Elkhorn Slough Watershed
- Morro Bay Watershed
- Navarro River Watershed
- Marin Coastal Watersheds
- Santa Cruz County
- Alameda County
- Yolo County Watersheds
- Calleguas Creek Watershed (Ventura)

### 4 In Development/Almost Done

- San Luis Obispo County
- Santa Barbara County
- Upper Pajaro River Watershed
- Mendocino County

### 4 Unsuccessful/Suspended

- Salinas River Watershed
- SLRR/Santa Margarita Watersheds (SD)
- Humboldt County
- Lake County Watersheds

# Accelerating Restoration in California

## With the Partners in Restoration (PIR) Program

- Goal:** Greatly increase permitted erosion control & habitat enhancement projects implemented voluntarily on private lands
- Method:** Programmatic permitting of specified conservation practices & environmental protection measures
- Focus:** Streams & adjacent uplands on farmland, rangeland, rural residential
- Benefits:** Improved habitat complexity & connectivity, water quality, recovery of listed species, management of working lands
- Partners:**
- Sustainable Conservation
  - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
  - Local Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs)
  - Regulatory agencies
  - Landowners, land trusts, conservancies & others



# Conservation Practices





# Steps to Develop A PIR Program

- ✓ Agree on core set of most common conservation practices
- ✓ Get the agencies on board
- ✓ Find the money
- ✓ Decide who will hold permits and administrate program
- ✓ Complete a CEQA document
- ✓ Keep agencies engaged throughout process
- ✓ Develop a single application for landowners



# PIR Data Analysis

## Overall Program Outcomes

- ✓ 227 projects implemented in 13 years
- ✓ 200,000+ tons of soil loss prevented:
  - Morro Bay PIR: 2,200 tons/yr
  - Navarro River PIR: 9,800 tons/yr  
(each contributing ~ 6% toward TMDL targets)
  - Mendocino PIR: 16,000 tons/5 yrs
- ✓ 17 miles of riparian habitat enhanced



# PIR Data Analysis

## Conservation Practices

- Average # practices **authorized** = 13/program
  - Average # practices **actually implemented** = 7/program
  - Average # practices **commonly implemented** = 4/program
- ➔ Selecting core set of conservation practices is feasible

# PIR Data Analysis

## Individual Program Outcomes

- Average time required to develop PIR = 3.5 years ↑
- Average cost to develop PIR = \$373,000 ↑
- Average # projects installed **before** PIR = 1/year
- Average # projects installed **with** PIR = 5/year





# Sustainable Conservation **Statewide Strategy**

Establish **all** required permits  
on a programmatic basis  
for voluntary restoration projects  
on private lands throughout California

**U. S. Fish and  
Wildlife Service**

**NOAA  
Fisheries Service**

ESA - Section 7

**U. S. Army Corps  
of Engineers**

**U.S. EPA**

CWA -  
404 Permit

**Central Valley  
Flood Protection  
Board**

Flood Encroachment  
Permit

**CA Dept. of  
Fish and Game**

Lake and  
Streambed  
Alteration  
Agreement

CESA



**County**

Grading and  
Encroachment  
Permits

CEQA

**California Coastal  
Commission**

Coastal Act Review

**Regional Water  
Quality Control  
Board**

401 WQ  
Certification Porter  
Cologne Act



# Sustainable Conservation Vision







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- RCDs as primary permit holders
- Any entity or landowner could apply
- Partnerships with other project implementors
- Cooperative Agreements with agencies
- Most common restoration practices covered
- 2-5 year timeline for SusCon's work



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# Statewide Permitting Strategies

AGENCY	PERMIT	PROGRESS?
<i>CEQA</i>	Categorical Exemption	
<i>State/Reg. Board</i>	General 401 WQ Cert.	
<i>DFW</i>	Statewide 1600	In discussions
<i>Coastal Comm/BCDC</i>	Consistency Determination(s)	In discussions
<i>NOAA Fisheries</i>	Programmatic BOs (4 Regions)	 North Coast  Central Coast
<i>Army Corps</i>	3 RGPs (Sac, SF, LA) or SPGP	Supportive
<i>U.S. FWS</i>	Programmatic BOs	 Partners Prog  CRLF



# Decision:

## Develop a Local Program?

- Utilize permits that are already out there!
  - CEQA Exemption, SWRCB 401 Cert, NOAA RC BO, FWS Partners and RLF BOs, Corps NWPs, DFW FRGP
- Obtain all permits for County and create one application
- Combo: Get some permits, wait for others
  - Low hanging fruit; longest wait for SPP



# Thank you!



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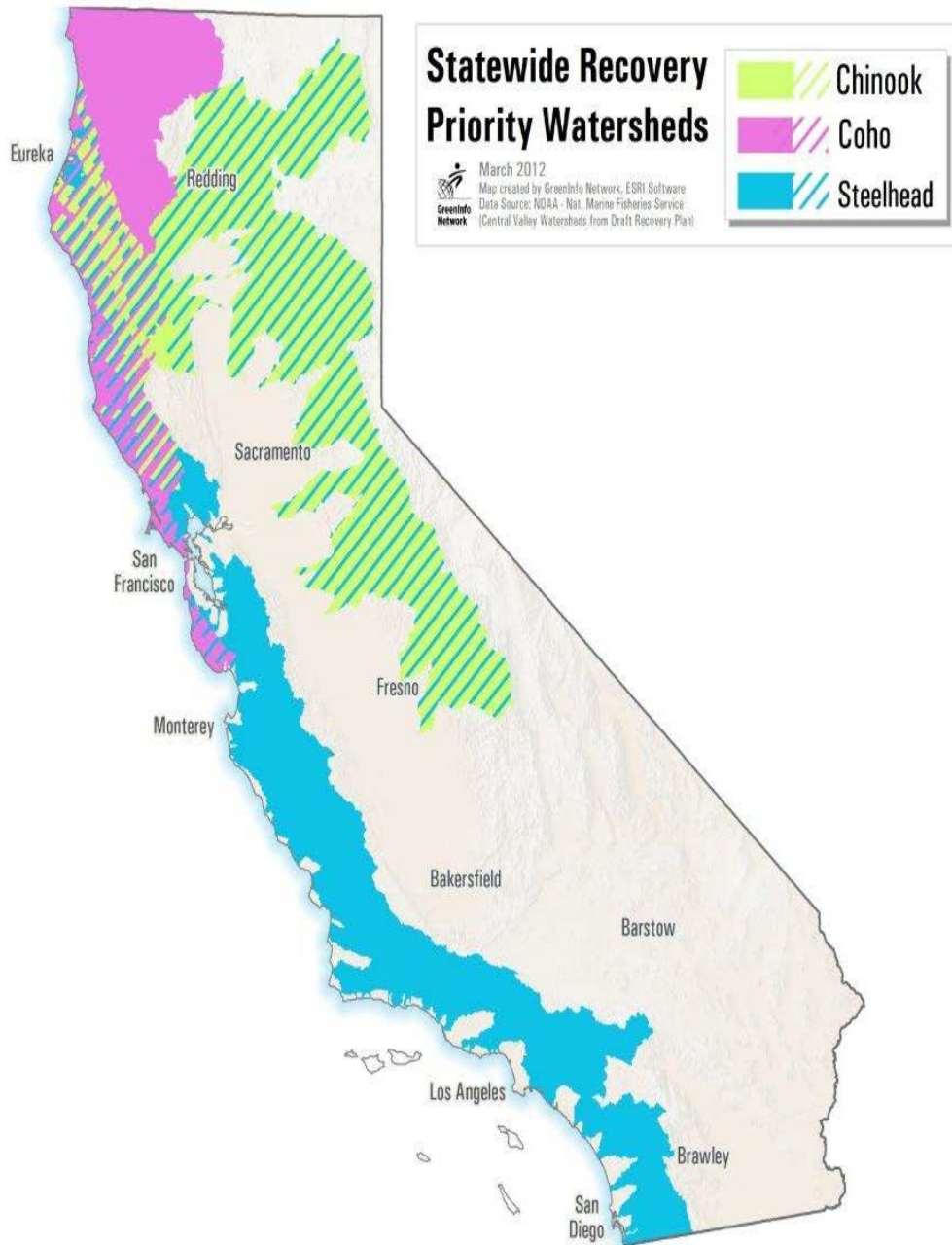
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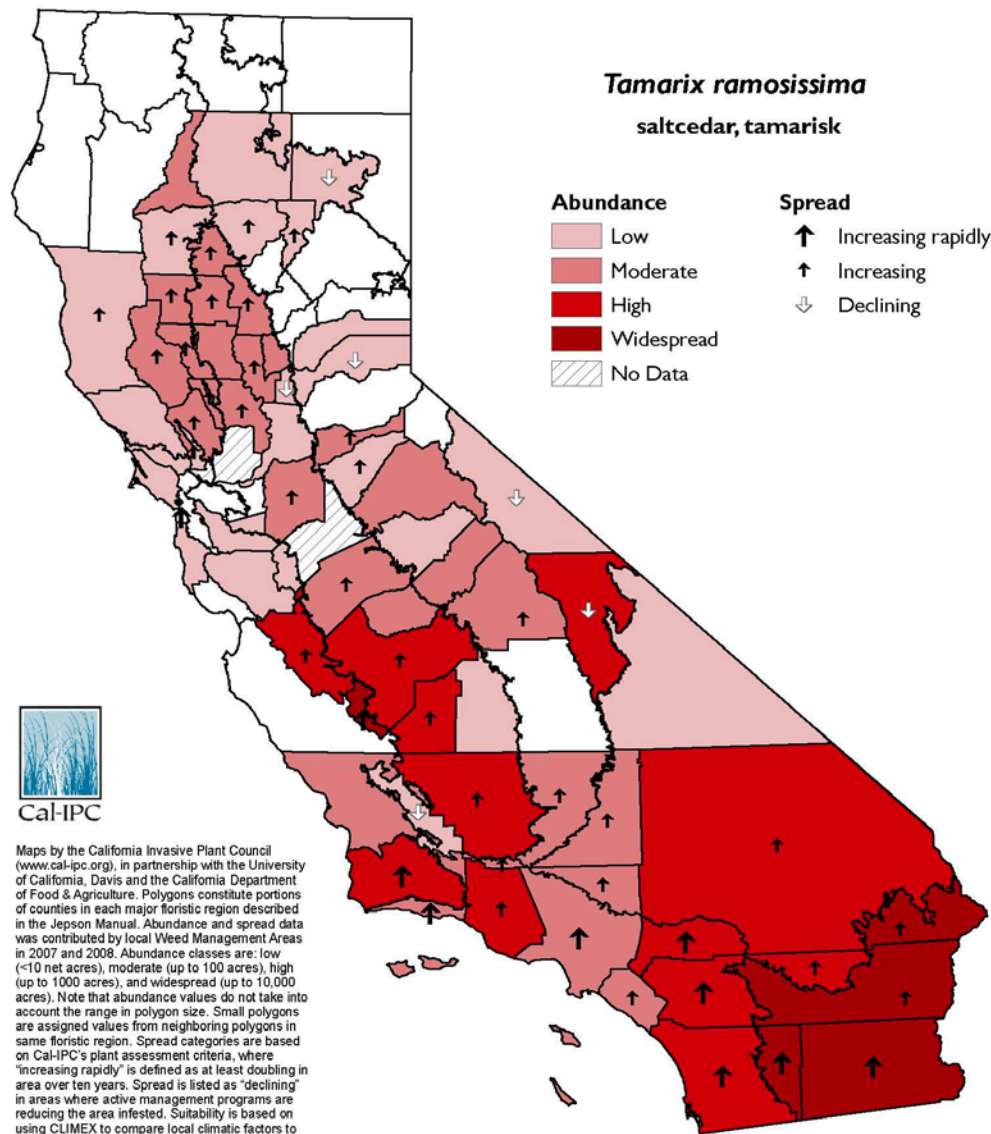






# Assessing Risk of Invasive Plant Spread

## Abundance and Spread



Cal-IPC

Maps by the California Invasive Plant Council ([www.cal-ipc.org](http://www.cal-ipc.org)), in partnership with the University of California, Davis and the California Department of Food & Agriculture. Polygons constitute portions of counties in each major floristic region described in the Jepson Manual. Abundance and spread data was contributed by local Weed Management Areas in 2007 and 2008. Abundance classes are: low (<10 net acres), moderate (up to 100 acres), high (up to 1000 acres), and widespread (up to 10,000 acres). Note that abundance values do not take into account the range in polygon size. Small polygons are assigned values from neighboring polygons in same floristic region. Spread categories are based on Cal-IPC's plant assessment criteria, where "increasing rapidly" is defined as at least doubling in area over ten years. Spread is listed as "declining" in areas where active management programs are reducing the area infested. Suitability is based on using CLIMEX to compare local climatic factors to those in other areas of the world where the plant grows. Suitability is shown only for polygons with no known presence.

# A Winning Team Approach: Marin County PIR

- Strong RCD leadership, broad community support
- Projects selected by technical team w/ cooperative monitoring
- 5 years' implementation, 34 diverse projects
- 35,000' riparian enhanced, 16,000T sedimentation prevented
- \$3.8+ million leveraged for PIR projects
- Cannot meet demand for PIR, and program renewed