

Northwest Arkansas OPEN SPACE PLAN



Project Introduction & Overview | December 2014

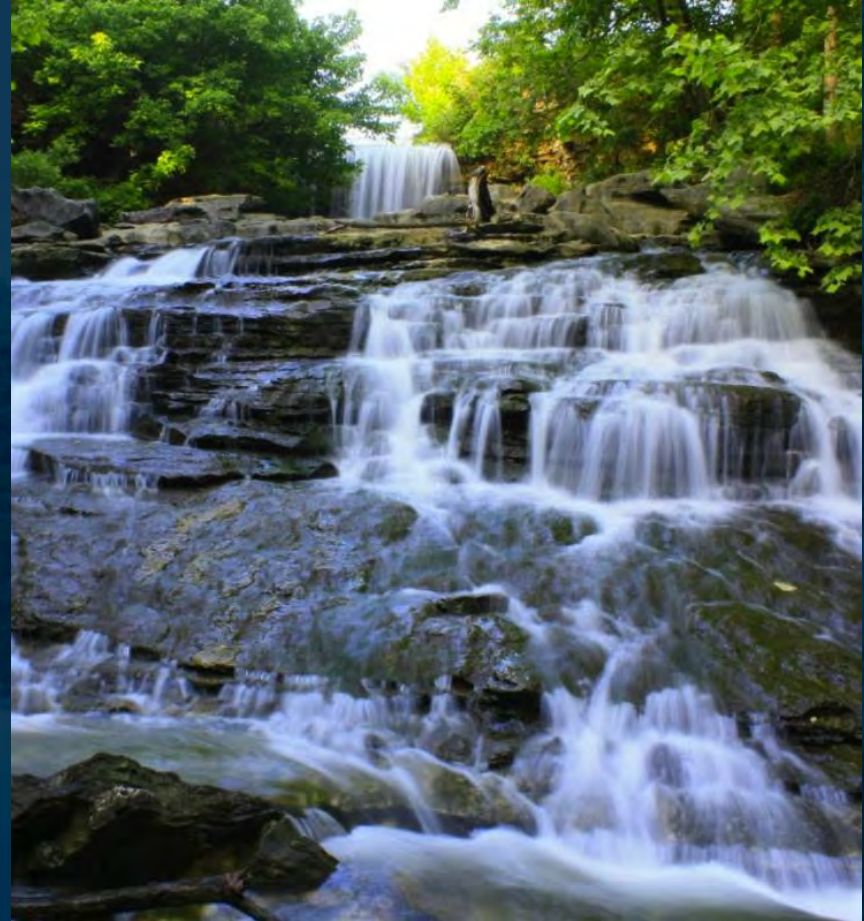
Presentation Outline

1. The Big Picture
2. Project Scope & Schedule



The Big Picture

- Project purpose:
 - To develop a coordinated, voluntary program for stewardship of the region's natural heritage.
 - To improve quality of life in NWA for residents and to capitalize on the economic benefits of open space.



The Big Picture: Quality of Life

- Parks promote physical and mental health for people of all ages
- Open spaces reduce stormwater management costs, and protect water sources
- Open space includes lands for hunting, wildlife, farms, and scenic landscapes, all increasing quality of life



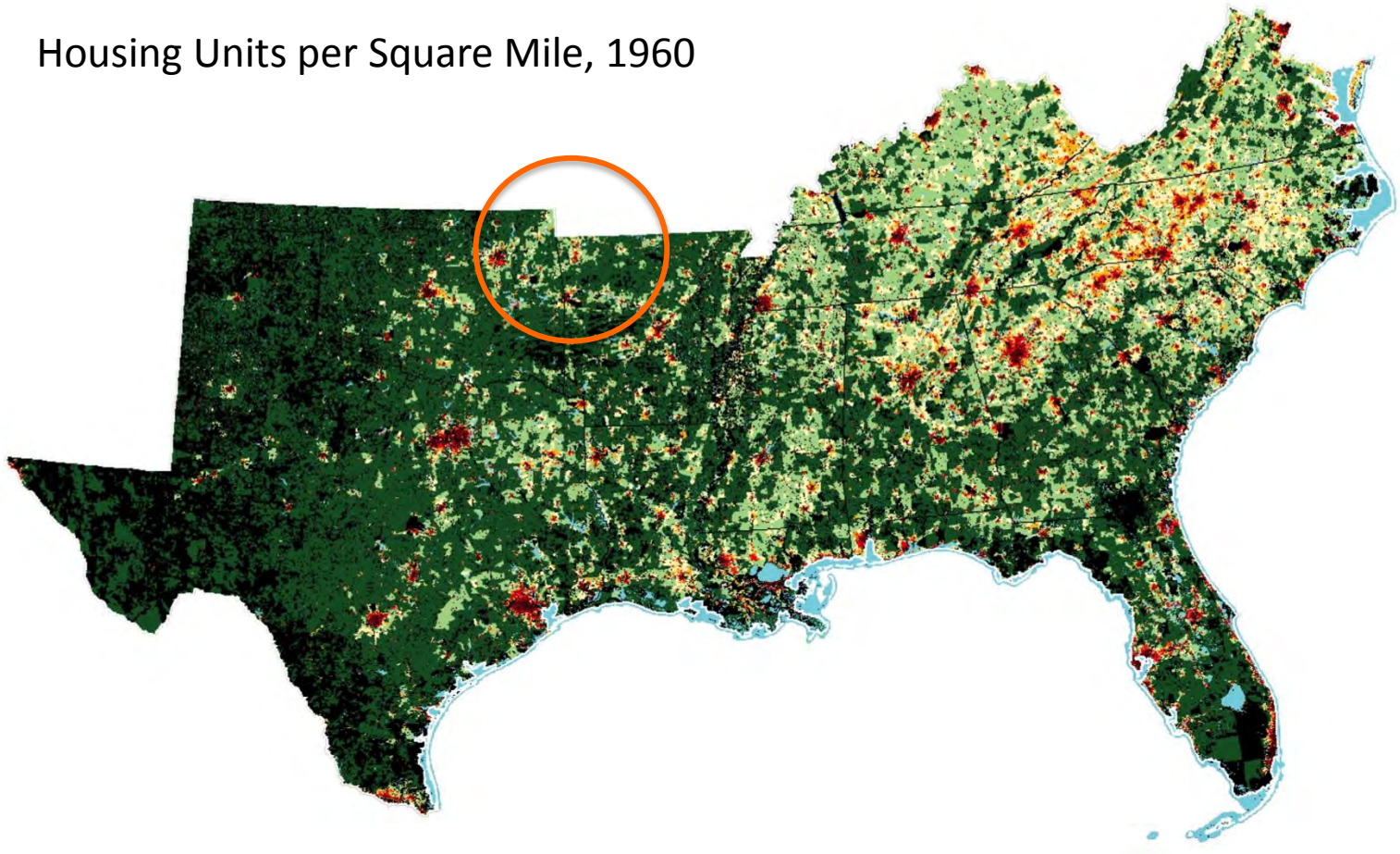
The Big Picture: Economic Benefits

- Proximity to parks and open space enhances the value of residential properties
- Parks attract non-resident visitors who put new dollars into local economies.
- Quality parks and scenic landscapes help attract and retain a high quality workforce



The Big Picture

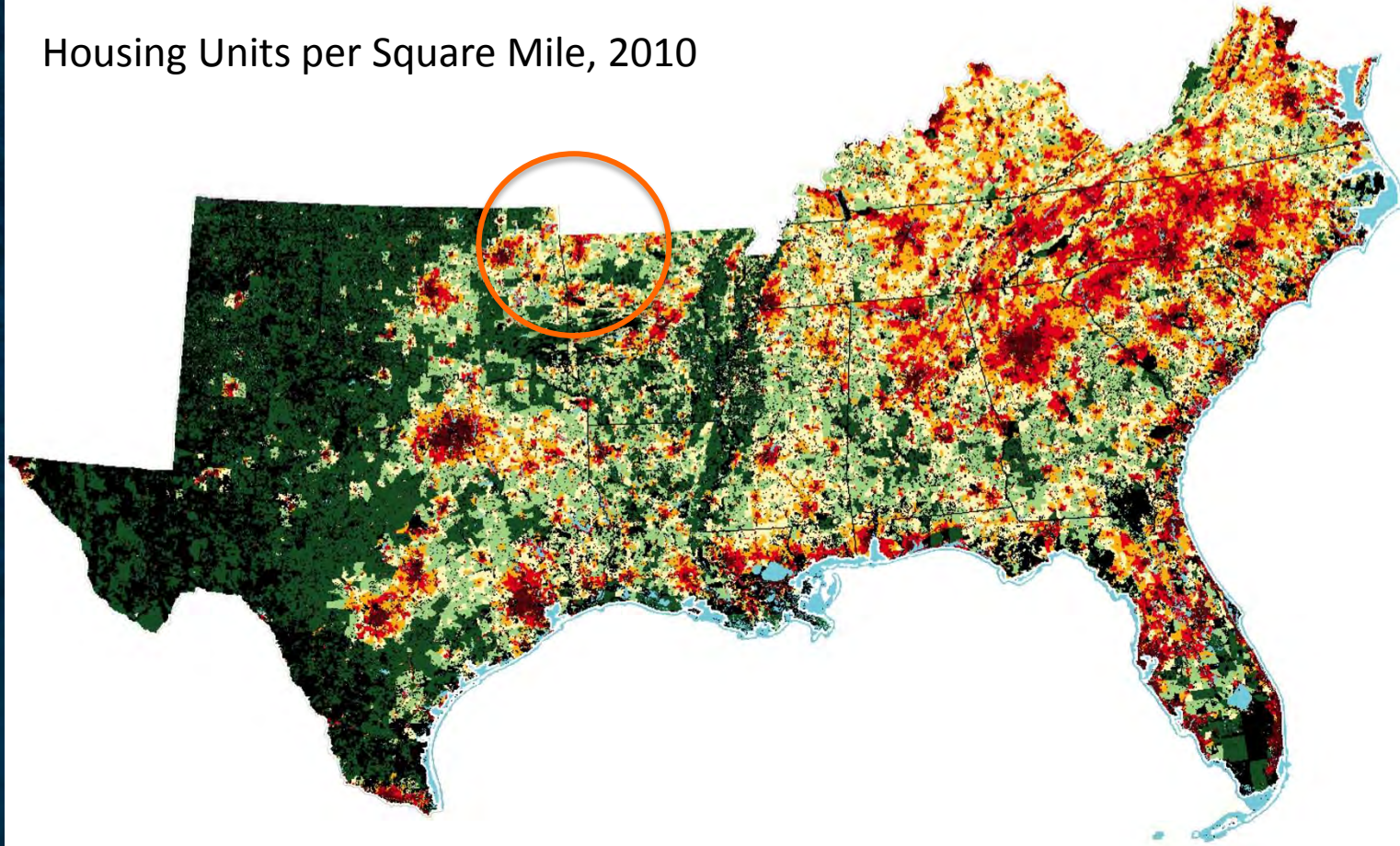
Housing Units per Square Mile, 1960



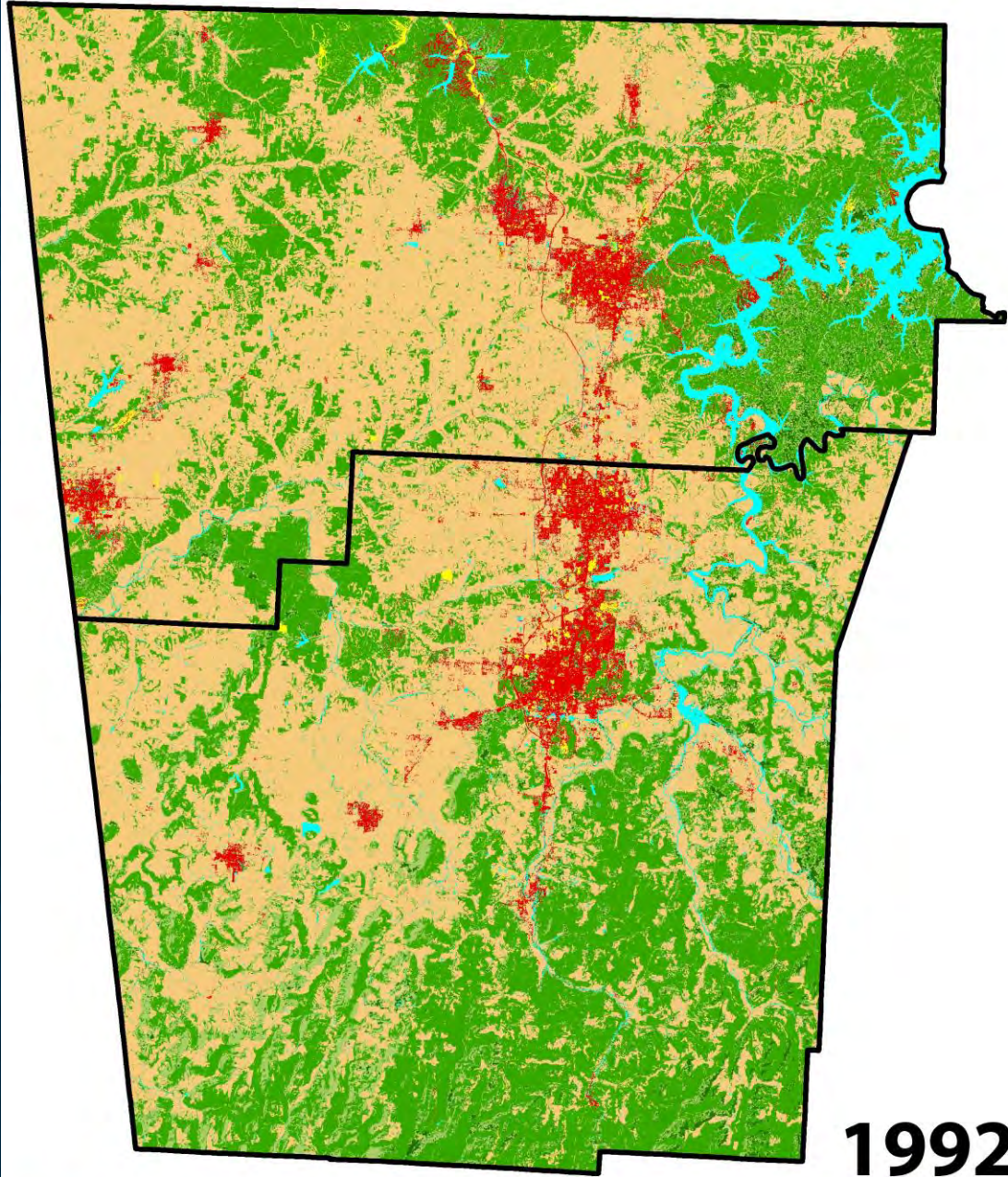
Source: USDA Forest Service; Volker Radeloff (University of Wisconsin) and Ann Ingerson (The Wilderness Society).

The Big Picture

Housing Units per Square Mile, 2010

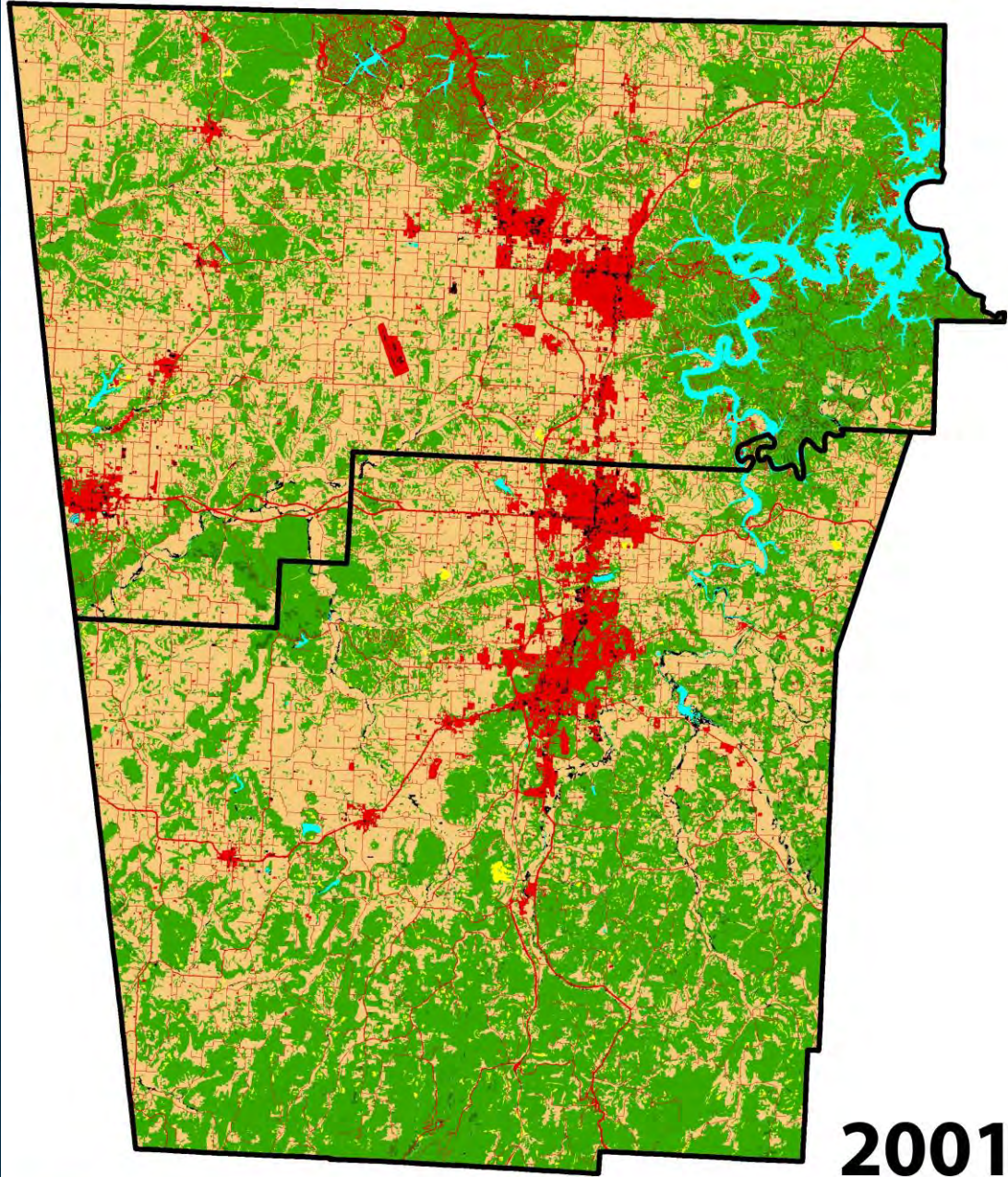


Source: USDA Forest Service; Volker Radeloff (University of Wisconsin) and Ann Ingerson (The Wilderness Society).



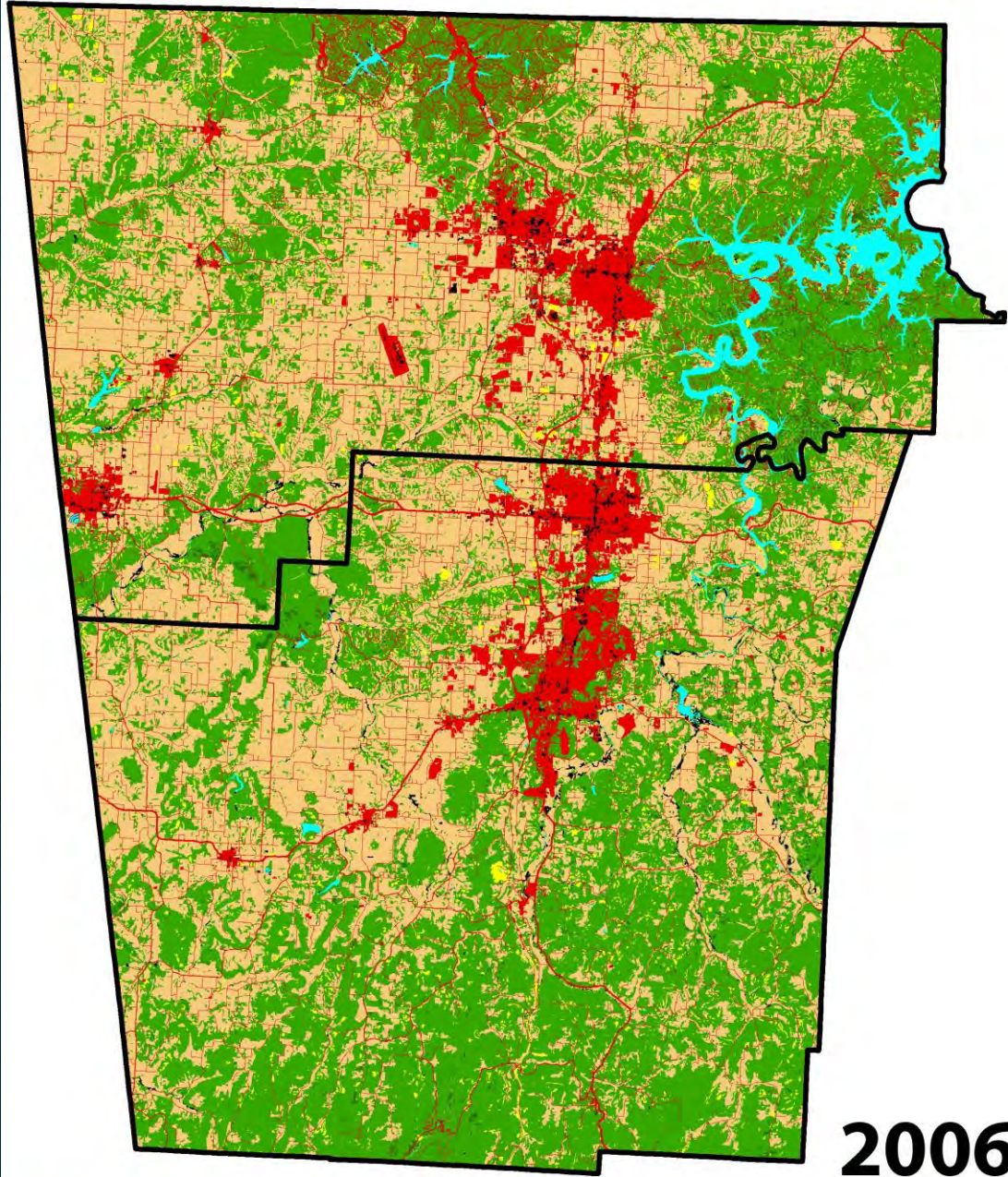
1992





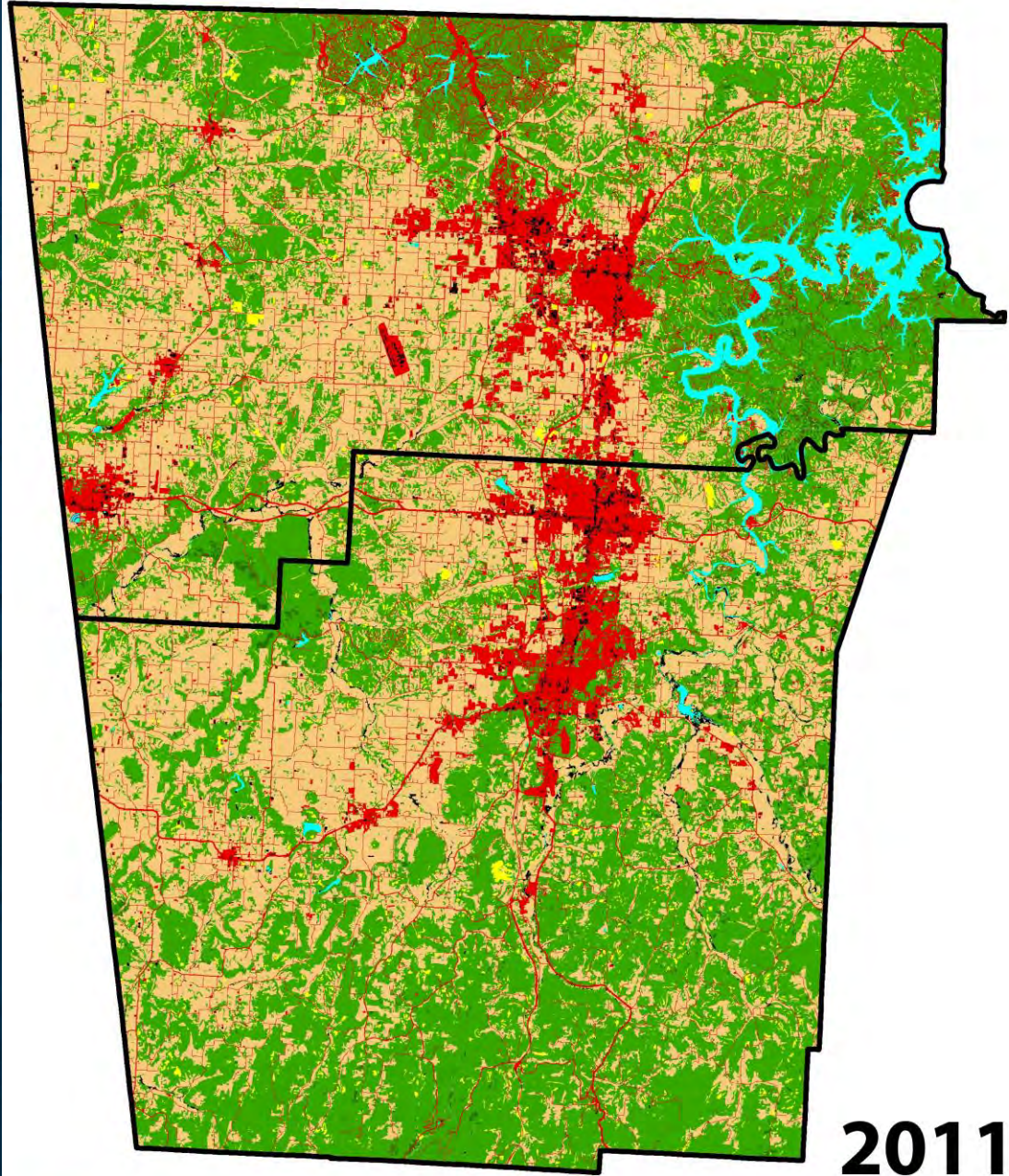
2001

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Developed |  Deciduous Forest |  Water/Wetland |  Open |
|  Evergreen Forest |  Mixed Forest |  Agriculture | |



2006



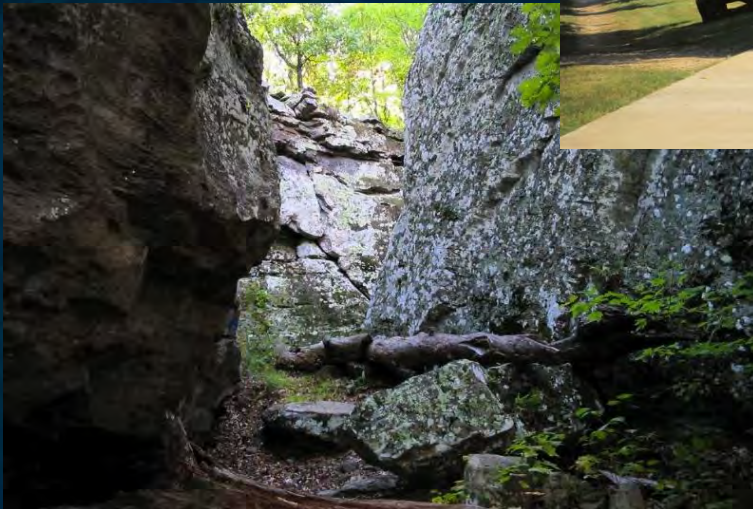


2011

- | | | | |
|------------------|------------------|---------------|------|
| Developed | Deciduous Forest | Water/Wetland | Open |
| Evergreen Forest | Mixed Forest | Agriculture | |

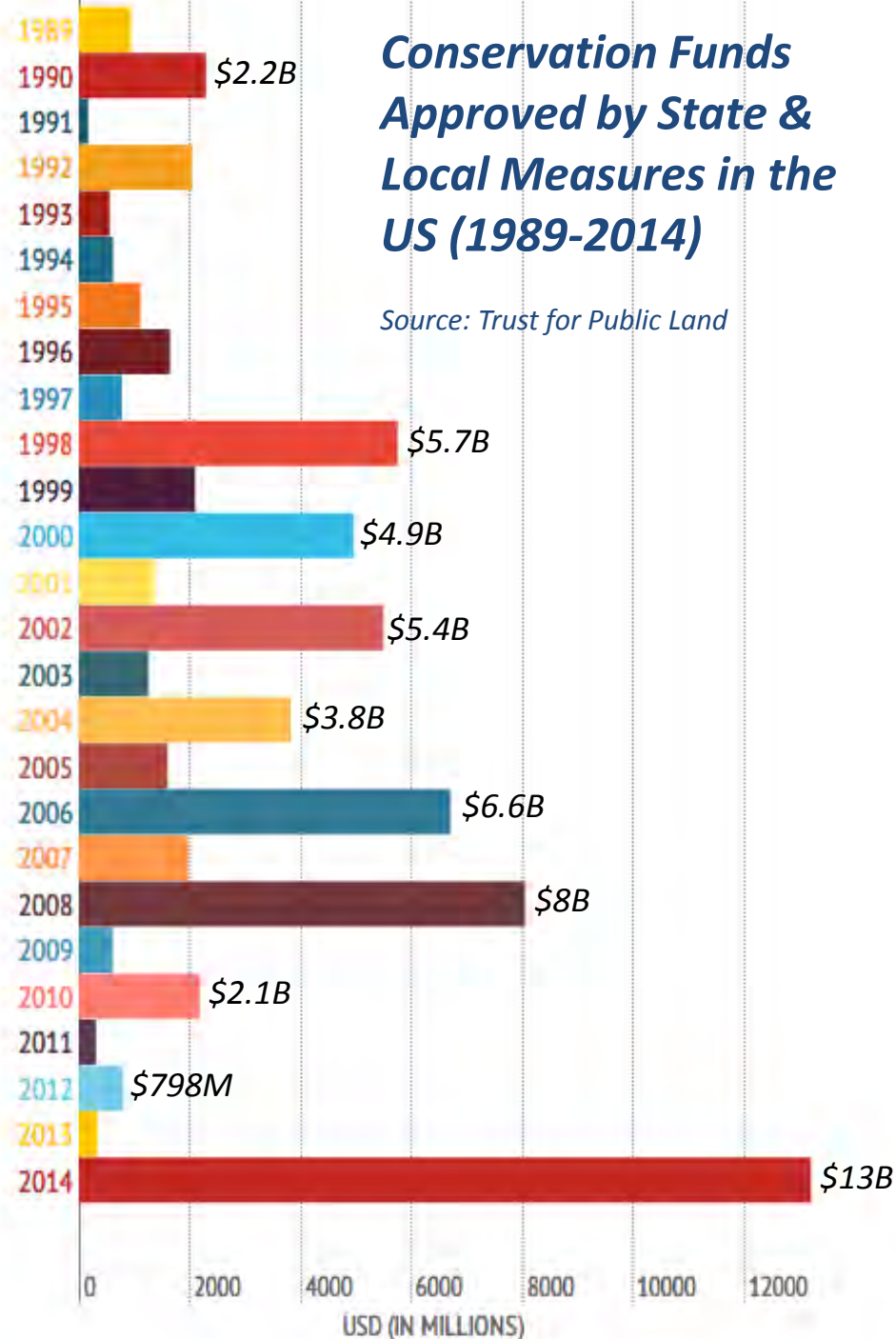
The Big Picture

Open Space Plan as a 'Blueprint' for the Region's Greenspace



The Big Picture

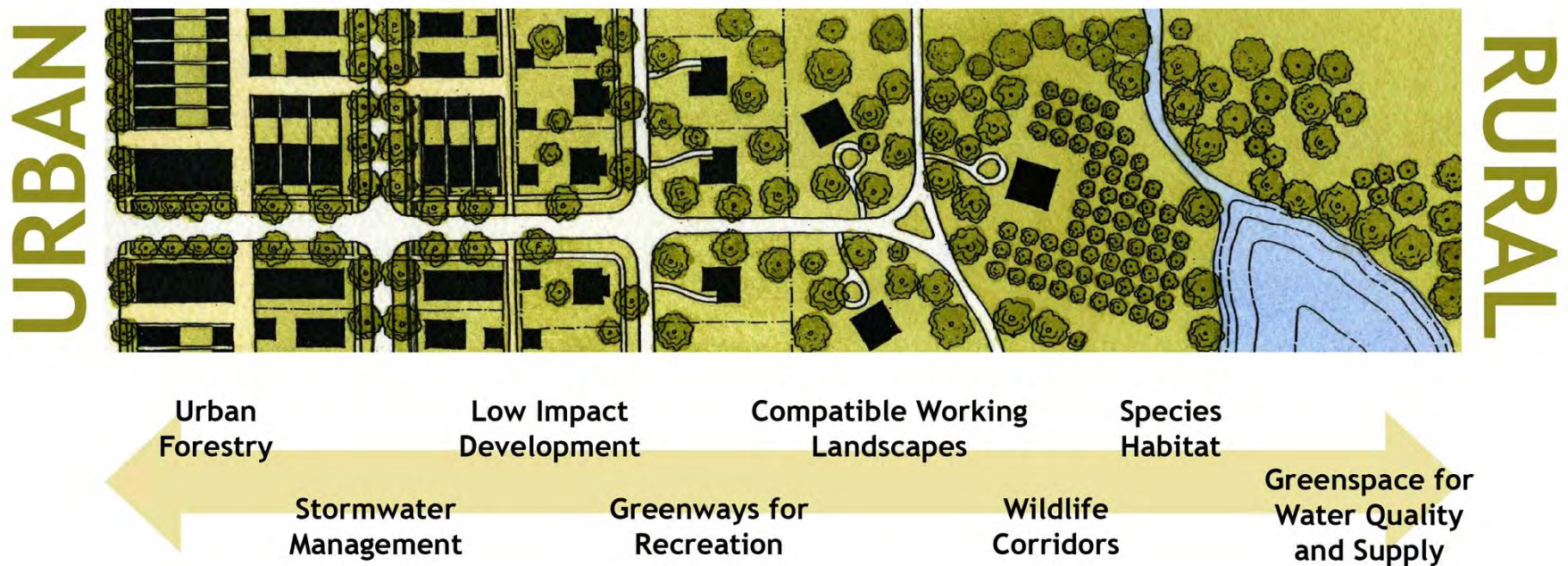
- 2014 General Election:
 - Voters approved 35 local and statewide measures, generating a record \$13 billion in funding for conservation purposes.

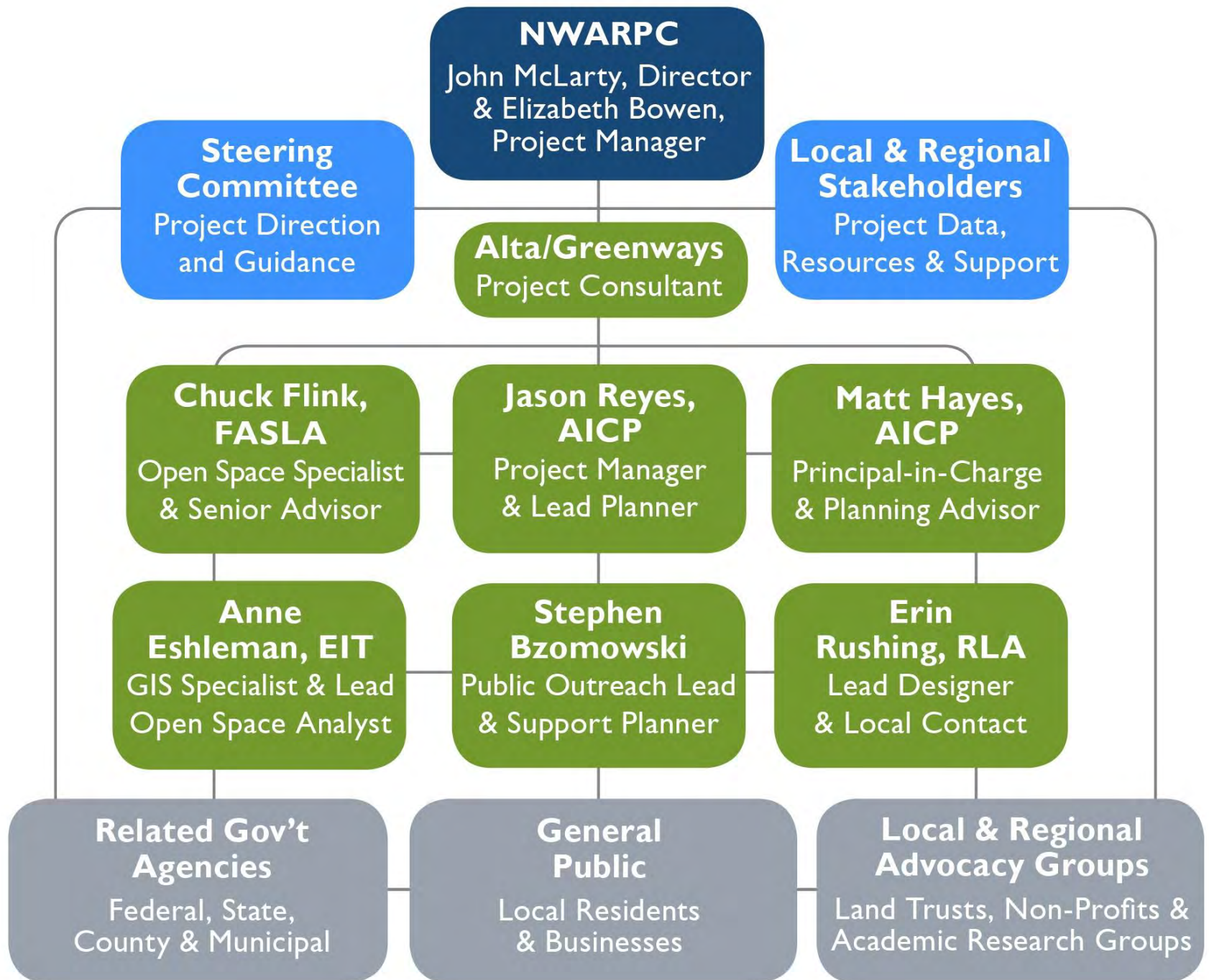


Outcomes:

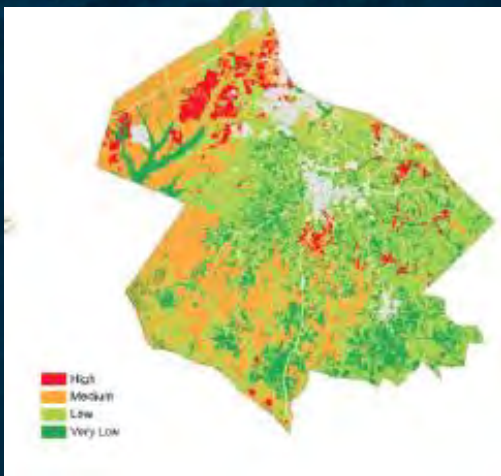
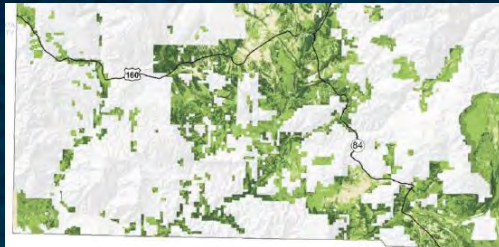
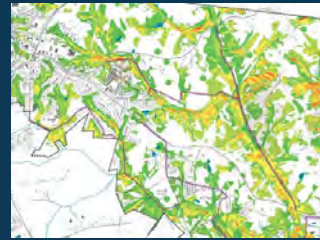
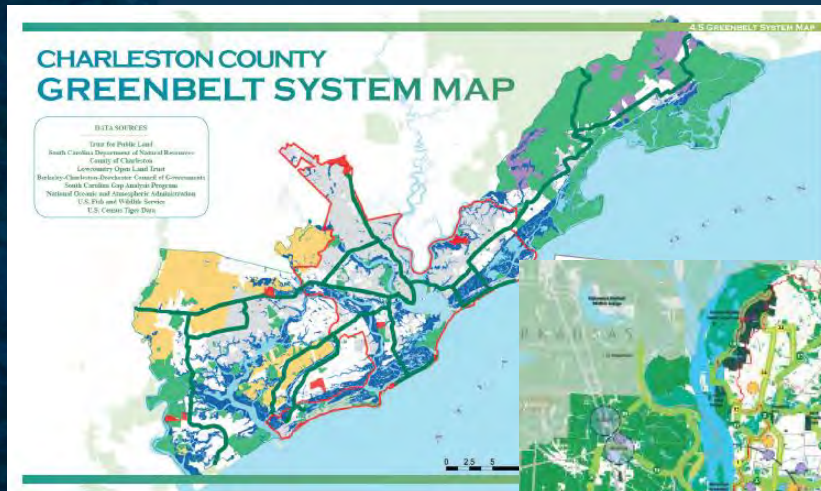
1. Community buy-in of resource stewardship
2. A real-word check list of actions for program implementation
3. A connected system of open spaces for NWA

Example Components of Open Space Planning





Alta/Greenways' Open Space Planning



- »» Mid-South Regional Greenprint
- »» Charleston County Comprehensive Greenbelt Plan
- »» Arapahoe County Open Space Plan
- »» Archuleta County Open Space Plan
- »» Southwest Area Study Greenprint
- »» Wake County Open Space Plan
- »» Raleigh Greenprint
- »» Las Vegas Northwest Open Space Plan
- »» Davidson Natural Assets Inventory & Open Space Plan
- »» Southern Nevada Regional Open Space Plan
- »» Mount Holly Greenprint
- »» Beargrass Creek Watershed Master Plan Louisville, Kentucky
- »» Hall County Greenspace Plan
- »» Cherokee County Greenspace Plan
- »» Earth Conservancy Open Space Plan
- »» Wake County Open Space Corridors
- »» Hamilton County Open Space Plan
- »» High Point Open Space Plan
- »» North Carolina Estuarine Resources Center Feasibility Study
- »» Durham County Open Space Plan
- »» Governor Barnes Greenspace Commission Report
- »» Gwinnett County Open Space Plan
- »» Poarch Indian Reservation Greenprint
- »» Las Vegas Drainage Basins
- »» Luzerne Lackawanna Parks and Open Space Plan
- »» Chowan-Edenton Open Space & Greenway Plan
- »» Wake Forest Open Space & Greenways Plan
- »» Rolesville Open Space & Greenways Plan
- »» Knightdale Open Space & Greenways Plan
- »» Wendell-Zebulon Open Space & Greenways Plan
- »» Fuquay-Varina Open Space & Greenways Plan
- »» Garner Open Space & Greenways Plan
- »» Cary Park, Open Space and Greenway Plan
- »» Hilton Head Island Open Space and Trails Master Plan



Scope of Work by Task

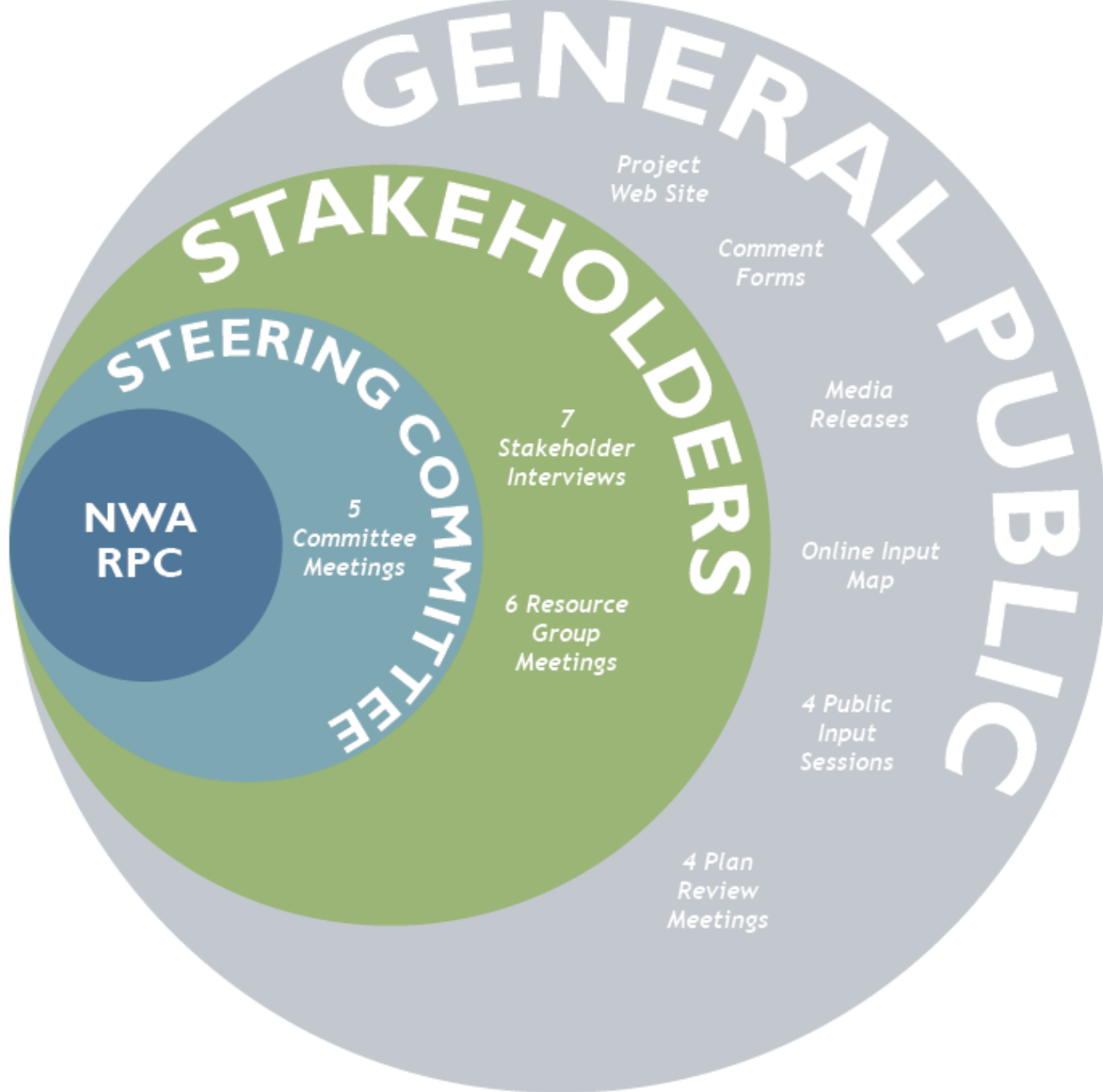
Scope Overview

Late 2014

1. Project Initiation
2. Inventory, Assessment, Mapping
3. Steering Committee Meetings
4. Public Involvement
5. Map Creation, Analysis, and Recs
6. Implementation Program
7. Draft Master Plan
8. Final Master Plan

Early 2016





1. Project Initiation

(Oct 2014 – Jan 2015)

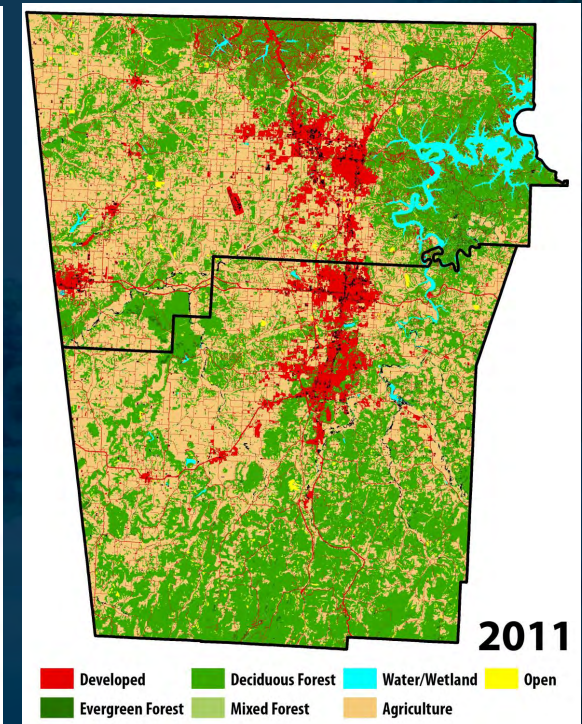
- Kick-Off Meeting
- Review Existing Documents & Plans
- Review Local Jurisdiction Best Practices
- Review Existing Legislation & Policy
- Stakeholder Interviews



2. Inventory, Assessment, Mapping

(Oct 2014 – April 2015)

- Collect Base Mapping Data and Info
- Base Maps of Existing Conditions
- Field/Photo Inventory
- Opportunities & Constraints Summary



3. Steering Committee Meetings

(Dec 2014 – Nov 2015)

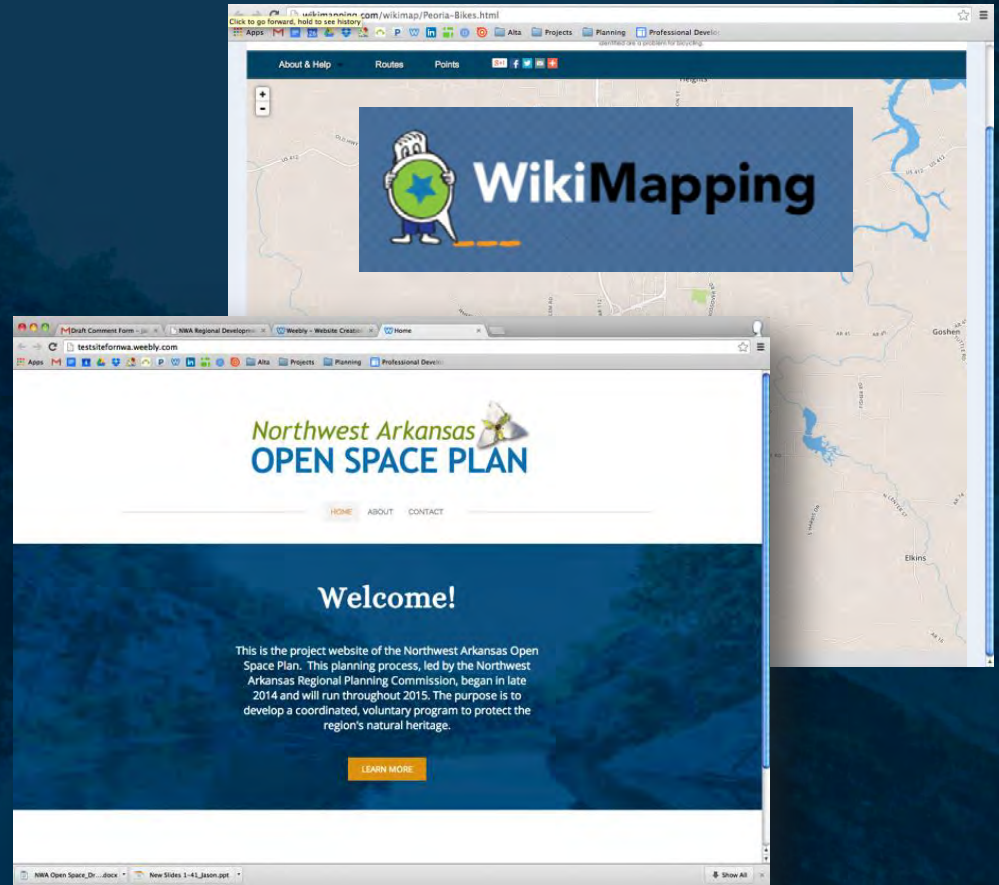
- Five Steering Committee Meetings throughout planning process:
 - Dec 2014
 - Mar 2015
 - June 2015
 - Sept 2015
 - Nov 2015
- The March meeting will feature a Committee Open Space Tour



4. Public Involvement

(Dec 2014 – Nov 2015)

- Media releases
- Project website
- Comment form
- Online mapping tool
- Outreach through email, phone, and Facebook
- Presentations by request



4. Public Involvement

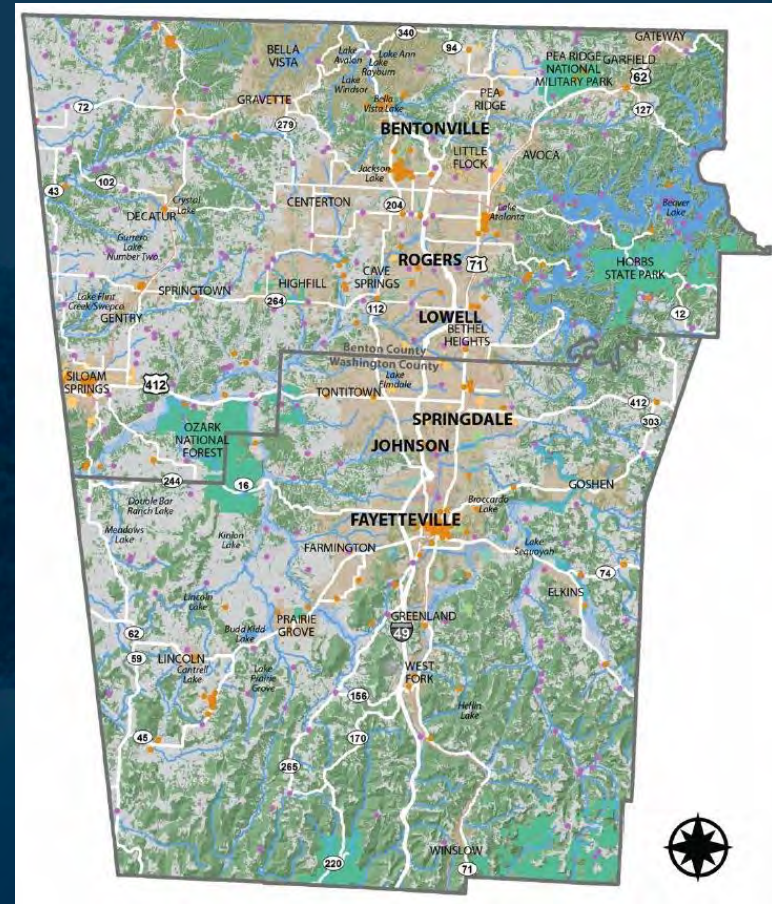
(Dec 2014 – Nov 2015)

- Needs Assessment Public Meetings (2)
- Resource Group Meetings (6)
- Recommendations Public Meetings (2)
- Draft Plan Public Meetings (2)
- Final Plan Public Meetings (2)



5. Map Creation, Analysis, and Recommendations *(March 2015 – Dec 2015)*

- Series of Open Space Maps
- Analysis, Recommendations, and Prioritization
- Best Practices for Open Space Resources



Cultural Resources	Forest Cover	Hydrography	Land Ownership
Historical Feature	Evergreen Forest	Stream	Park
National Register Feature	Deciduous Forest	Lake	Open Space
	Mixed Forest	Floodplain	Private Open Space
			University
			Other Public Land
			City Limits
			County Boundary

6. Implementation Program

(July 2015 – September 2015)

- Organizational Framework
- Prioritization and Action Steps
- Funding
- Conservation Toolbox:

DESCRIPTION OF STRATEGY

Development Impact Fee: Impact fees are also known as exactions. In its simplest form, the developer is charged an easy to calculate fee. A formula may be created to decide the cost that development will impose on the community. The formula can account for the area of land affected, the number of units built, the expected market value of those units, the distance from the fire and police stations, costs of building roads, and the expected population growth resulting from the construction. The exaction can come in forms other than money. The developer can be required to provide streets, sewers, street lights, parks, or other infrastructure or amenities. The developer might also be required not to develop some portion of the land. In some cases, builders of expensive homes have been required to build some proportional number of low cost homes. The town or county can develop a comprehensive system or formula or exactions can be formulated on a case by case basis from more general criteria.

Transfer of Development Rights: In some cases, a local government may want to steer development toward areas where it is more appropriate and easier to serve. Generally, the intent is to steer development away from rural areas, agricultural preservation zones, and environmentally sensitive areas and guide it towards existing cities and towns. Transferable Development Rights (TDR) programs are one way to do that. In a voluntary TDR program, the county would designate certain parts of its territory as "sending zones" and other areas as "receiving zones." Landowners in the sending zones can sell their rights to develop houses or commercial uses to other landowners in the receiving zones, or to a third party who will eventually buy land in the receiving zone. Or, landowners in the receiving zone can buy additional development rights from someone in the selling zone.

Right To Farm: Since the 1970s, all fifty states have enacted "Right to Farm" laws to help protect existing agricultural operations from suits brought by people who move nearby, then claim the neighboring farm is a nuisance. Common complaints revolve around odor, noise, dust, flies, application of agricultural chemicals and slow moving machinery. Most statutes have exemptions that do not protect farms and ranches that 1) begin operation after other neighboring land uses already exist; and/or 2) are out of compliance with local, state or federal regulations. Most statutes have not been challenged in court.

BENEFITS

A "pay-as-you-grow" program that really has been proven to help cities keep pace with rapid land development. A particularly useful tool for Archuleta County, due to its fast pace of growth and rate of change.

Potentially an effective growth management tool. Resources can be protected without huge capital expenditures. Large tracts of protected land can be created in "sending" areas. Model programs: Montgomery County, Maryland and City of Austin, TX. Local Example: Boulder County, Colorado; Boulder County Land Use Department

Good program for protecting farm land in rapidly growing communities. Encourages farmers to continue their operations and offers legal protection for these land uses.

DRAWBACKS

Can be difficult to implement, as it must meet Supreme Court rulings on "essential nexus," fair and equitable implementation. Politically challenging because impact fees are generally not favored by the development community.

Complicated program to establish and administer. High administrative overhead; requires professional staff assigned to program. Landowner resistance to downzoning in "sending" or higher densities in "receiving" areas. An unproven technique. Requires state enabling legislation.

Depends on farmers to continue their operations, so it is not a method for long term protection of this greenspace resource.

7. Draft Master Plan

(April 2015 – January 2016)

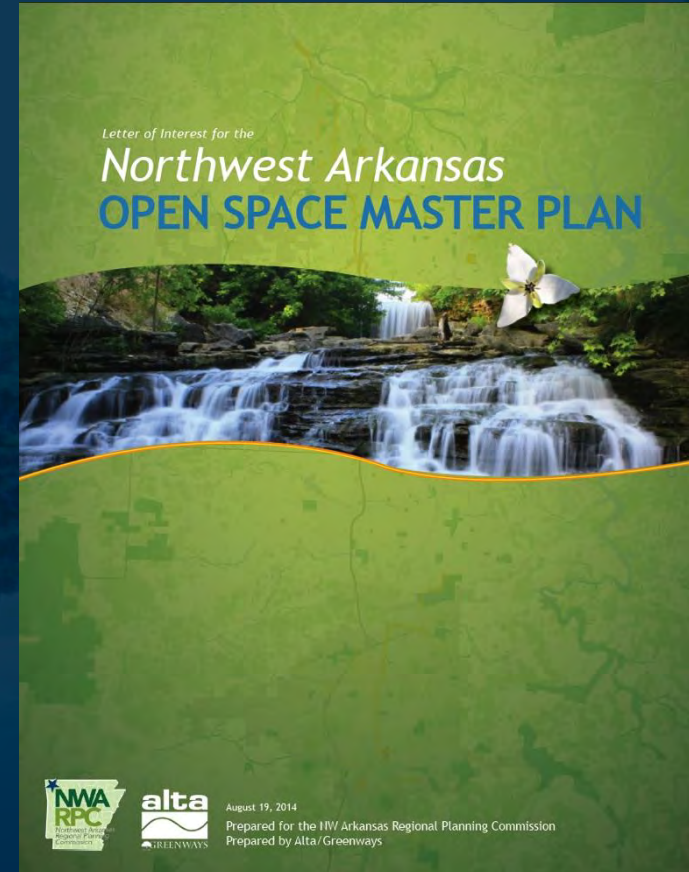
Draft Contents:

1. *Introduction & Overview*
2. *Existing Plans & Related Policies*
3. *Current Open Space Resources*
4. *Open Space Recommendations and Prioritization*
5. *Implementation Program*
 - A. *Summary of Public Input*

8. Final Master Plan

(October 2015 – March 2016)

- Revise draft plan based on comments from NWARPC, Steering Committee, and Public
- Produce final plan
- Final presentation to NWARPC



Estimated Project Schedule

TASKS	Oct 14	Nov 14	Dec 14	Jan 15	Feb 15	Mar 15	Apr 15	May 15	Jun 15	Jul 15	Aug 15	Sep 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15	Jan 16	Feb 16	Mar 16
Project Management																		
Task 1 - Project Initiation		KO SI (3)		SI (4)														
Task 2 - Inventory, Assessment, Mapping																		
Task 3 - Steering Committee Meetings			SC (1)			SC (1)			SC (1)			SC (1)		SC (1)				
Task 4 - Public Involvement				PI (2)		TR (3)			PI (2) TR (3)									
Task 5 - Map Creation, Analysis, and Recs																		
Task 6 - Implementation Program																		
Task 7 - Draft Master Plan												DP (2)						
Task 8 - Final Master Plan														FP (2)				AI

KO = Kick-Off Meeting

SI = Stakeholder Interviews (7 total)

SC = Steering Committee Meetings (5 total)

PI = Public Input Sessions (4 total)

TR = Targeted Resource Group Input Sessions (6 total)

DP = Draft Plan Review Public Meetings (2 total)

FP = Final Plan Review Public Meetings (2 total)

AI = Action Item Initiation



Scope of Work Questions & Comments



Your Vision & Goals



Project Tagline Discussion

- FHNA's Report
 - “Linking Arkansas Communities”
- Charleston County Greenbelt Plan:
 - “Protecting the Low Country Lifestyle”
- Carolina Thread Trail:
 - “Weaving Communities Together”
- Wilmington/New Hanover Greenway Plan:
 - “Move. Play. Connect,”

Project Tagline Discussion

- NWA Land Trust
 - “Conserving Land & Water”
- Nature Conservancy:
 - “Protecting Nature, Preserving Life”
- Trust for Public Land:
 - “Protecting open space and creating close-to-home parks.”

Vision Statement Discussion

- Potential key words for use in NWA:
 - “The Natural State”
 - “The Ozark Highlands”
 - “Natural Heritage”
 - “Voluntary Program”
 - “Protecting the Natural State”
- Other phrases & key words?



Stakeholder Involvement & Public Process



Northwest Arkansas **OPEN SPACE PLAN**

[HOME](#)[BENEFITS OF OPEN SPACE](#)[PLANNING PROCESS](#)[COMMENT FORM](#)[INPUT MAP](#)[RELATED RESOURCES](#)[CONTACT](#)

Welcome!

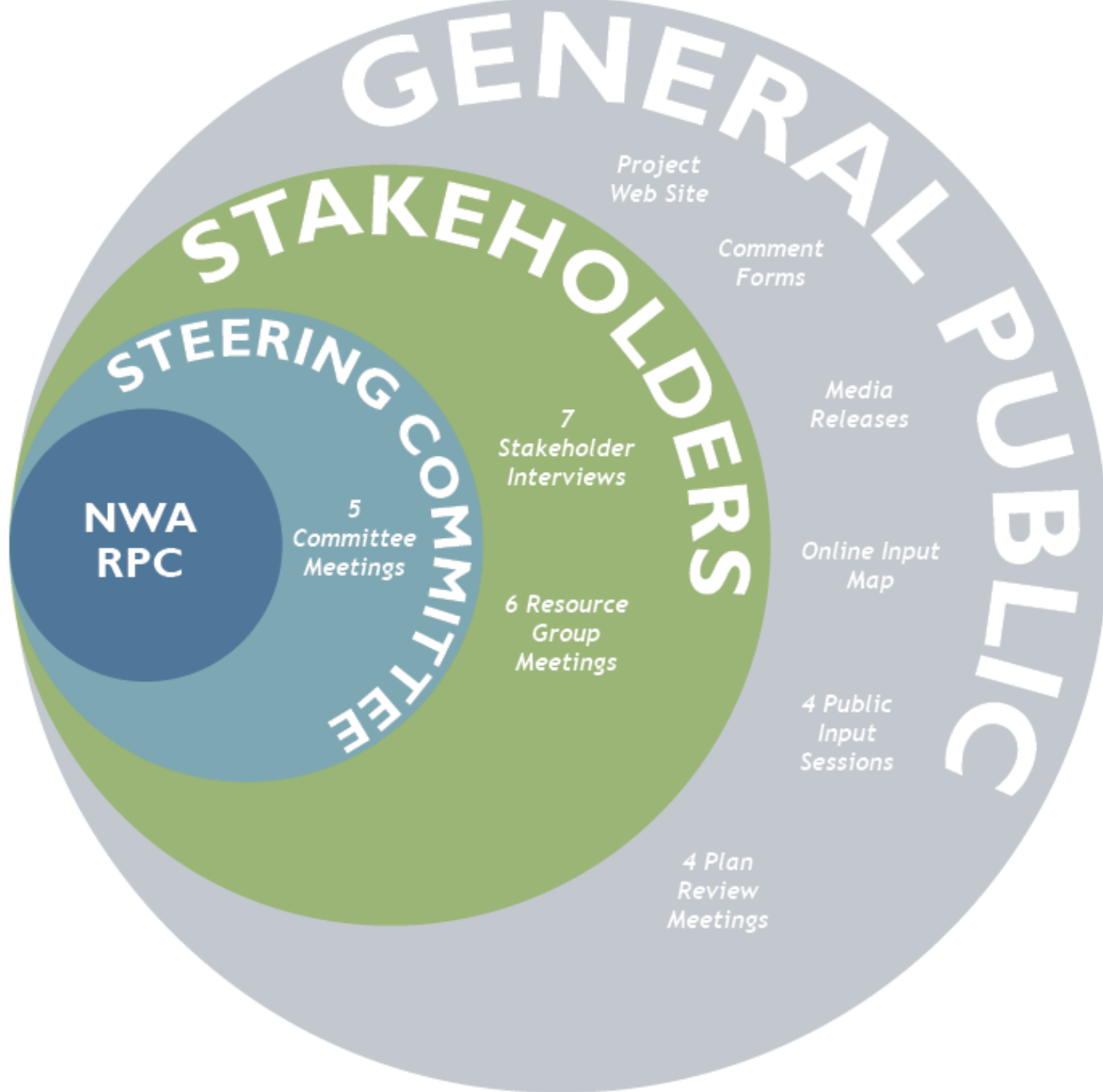
This is the project website of the Northwest Arkansas Regional Open Space Plan. This planning process, led by the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission, began in late 2014 and will run throughout 2015. The purpose of the plan is to develop a coordinated, voluntary program to protect and promote the region's natural landscapes and open spaces.

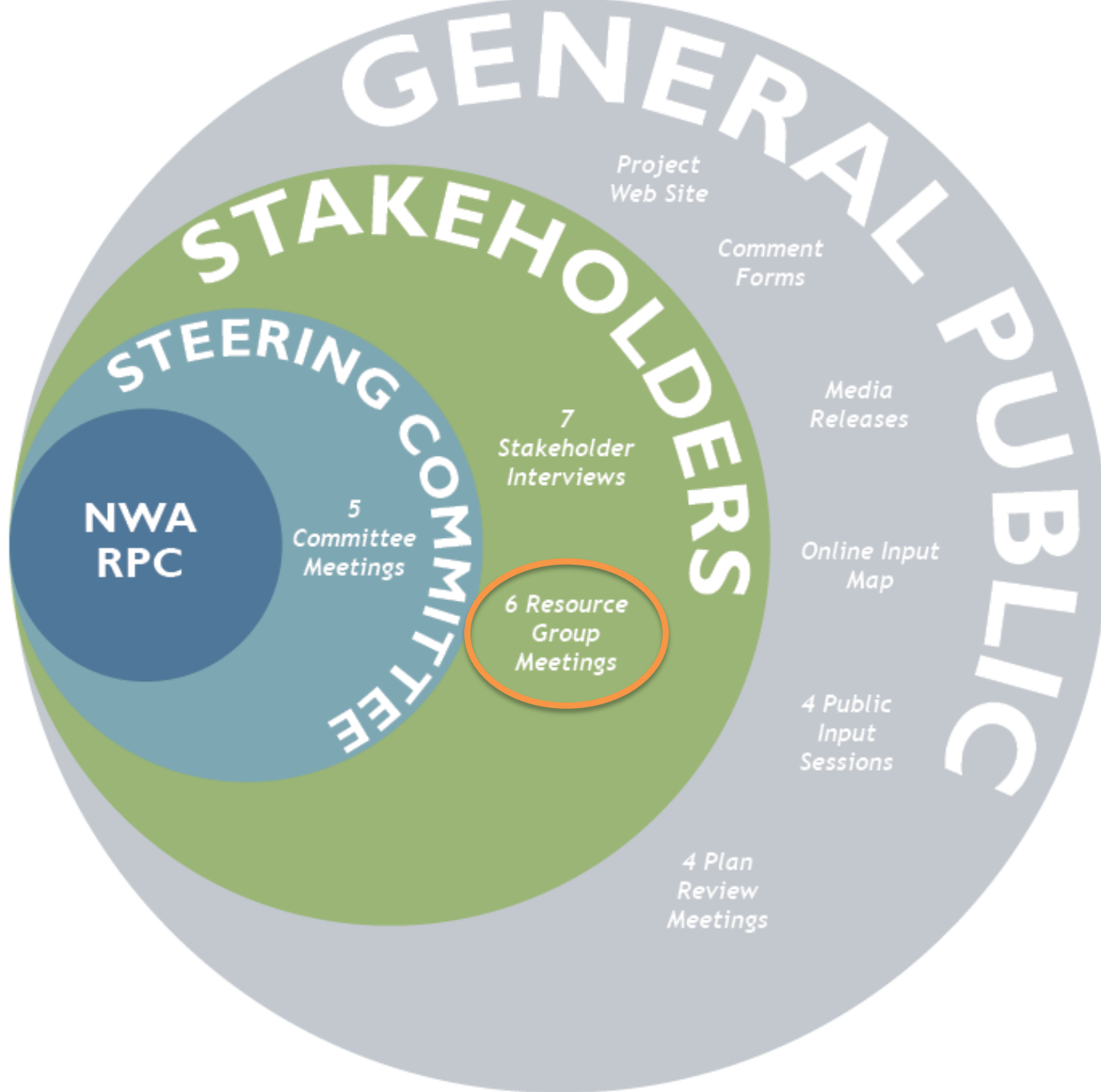
[LEARN MORE](#)

- Should be brief, legible, and useful
- Will be made available online
- Hardcopies will include a return address & contact info



Northwest Arkansas
OPEN SPACE PLAN





Potential Resource Groups

Example Groups from FNHA's 2010 Plan:

- Heritage Working Landscapes
- Environmental Working Group
- Awareness Working Group
- Parks & Trails Working Group
- Land Use Working Group



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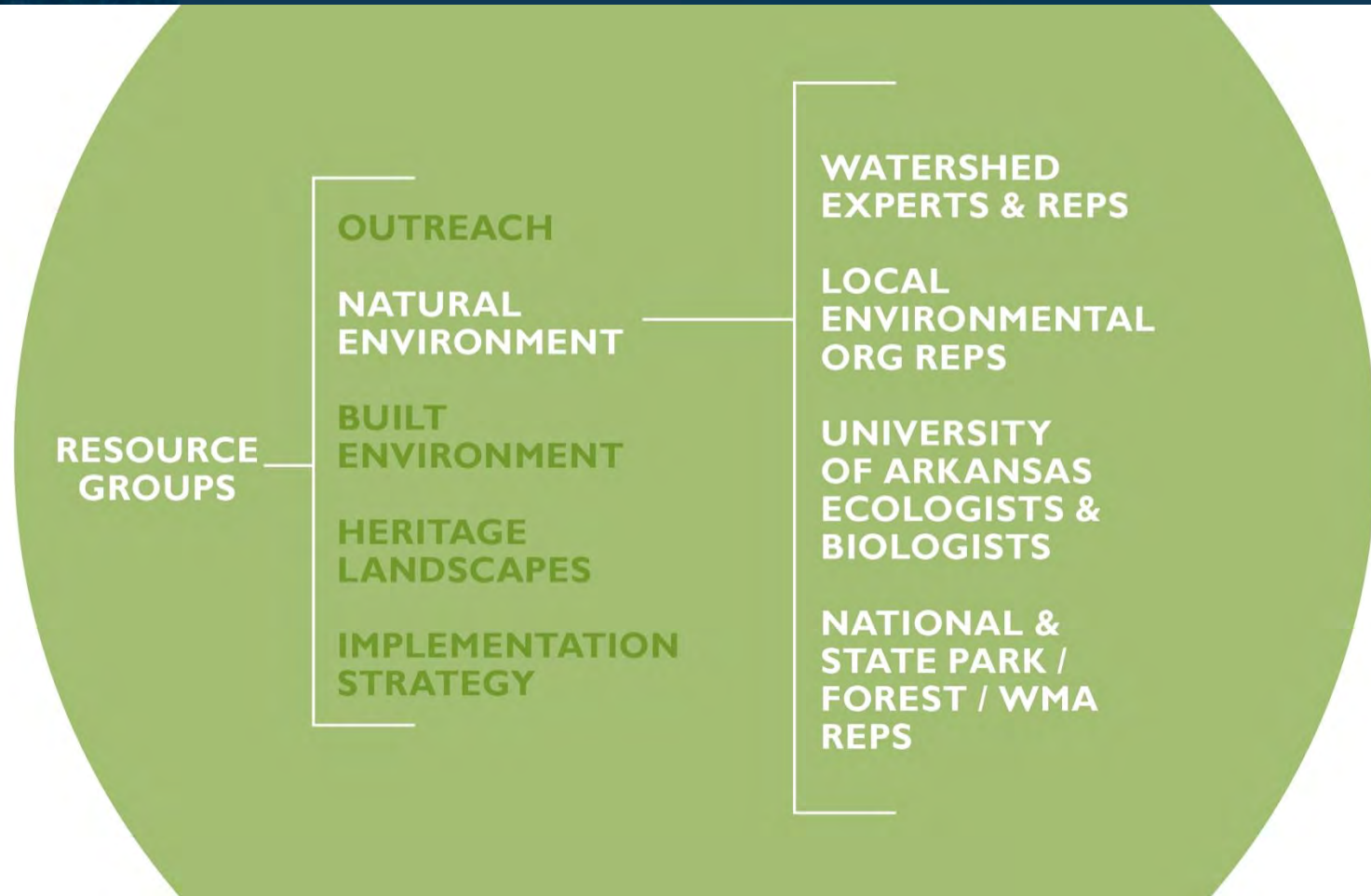
Possible Groups for the NWA Open Space Plan:

- Outreach Group
- Natural Environment
- Built Environment
- Heritage Landscapes
- Implementation Group

Potential Resource Group Participants



Potential Resource Group Participants



Potential Resource Group Participants



Potential Resource Group Participants



Potential Resource Group Participants





Next Steps



Next Steps in the Short-Term

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Identify Stakeholders | Underway |
| 2. Collect & Review Existing Plans | Underway |
| 3. Develop Existing Conditions Base Maps | Underway |
| 4. Set Up Website & Comment Form | By mid-Dec |
| 5. Begin outreach for 1 st Public Meetings | By mid-Dec |

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ENTRANCE/
EXIT

SIGN-IN

- 1 Tables with 2 chairs
- 2 Clipboards
- 2-3 Pens
- 1 Easel
- 1 24x36 Foam Core Board (or similar)
- Welcome poster
- Sign-in sheets
- Exterior and interior building door signs, if needed*

PUBLIC COMMENT FORMS

- Tables with chairs to sit 12-16 people
- 12-16 Pens
- 1 folder, box or basket for completed forms
- 100 hardcopy comment forms

Open House Public Meetings: January 20th & 21th, 4:00pm- 7:00pm At Fayetteville & Bentonville Public Libraries

PROJECT INTRO/PLANNING PROCESS BOARDS

- 3 Easels
- 3 24x36 Foam Core Board (or similar)
- 3 Project Posters



SELF-RUN PRESENTATION

- 1 screen or blank wall area
- 20-30 chairs arranged for viewing
- 1 projector and cords
- 1 laptop
- 1 PPT presentation

CURRENT CONDITIONS MAPS

- 5 Easels
- 5 24x36 Foam Core Board (or similar)
- 5 Current Conditions Posters/Maps

BASE MAP INPUT TABLE

(to provide comments, corrections, and additions to the existing open spaces map)

- 1 Table
- 1 Set of markers
- 1 Base Map