

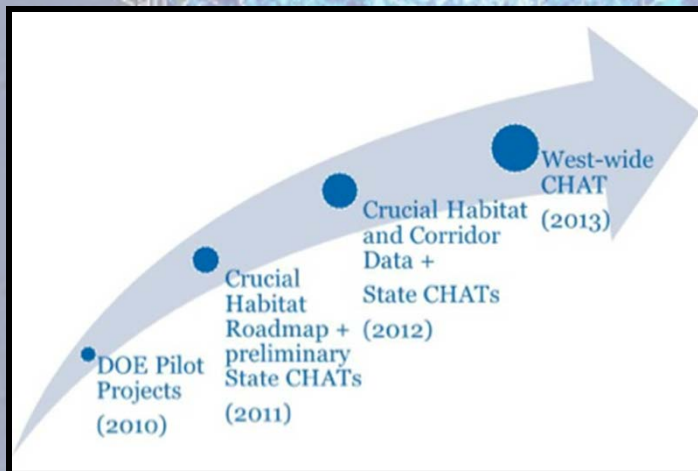
Western Governor's Association Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool (CHAT)

A collaboration between the
New Mexico Department of Game & Fish
and Natural Heritage New Mexico



History

- WGA *“Wildlife Corridors Initiative Report”* and formation of the Wildlife Council
- Phase I: Decision Support System pilot projects
- Phase II: Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool





Wildlife Council

- WGA needed group to examine wildlife issues and guide west wide policy development
- WGA's *"Wildlife Corridors Initiative Report"* recommended creating state Decision Support Systems (DSS)
- Western governors created the Wildlife Council from state wildlife agency representatives

A map of the United States with a semi-transparent blue overlay covering the western and central regions. The overlay is darker in some areas, possibly indicating specific project locations or corridors. Major cities and state names are visible on the map.

Decision Support Systems

- 2009 WGA - Department of Energy MOU
- 2010 WGA White Paper to guide pilot projects and DSS planning
- 2010 NM - CO MOU to establish corridor project (one of 8 state pilot projects)
- NM receives \$32,000 from WGA
- 2011 pilot projects completed and WGA starts the Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool (CHAT) initiative



Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool

- 2011 Start Phase II CHAT development
- 2011 SRLCC grant for \$95,000 to support state and regional CHAT development
- 2012 additional \$20,000 grant from SRLCC
- 2012 Natural Heritage New Mexico contracted to provide GIS analysis and data management
- 2013 State and Regional CHATs completed and available to the public

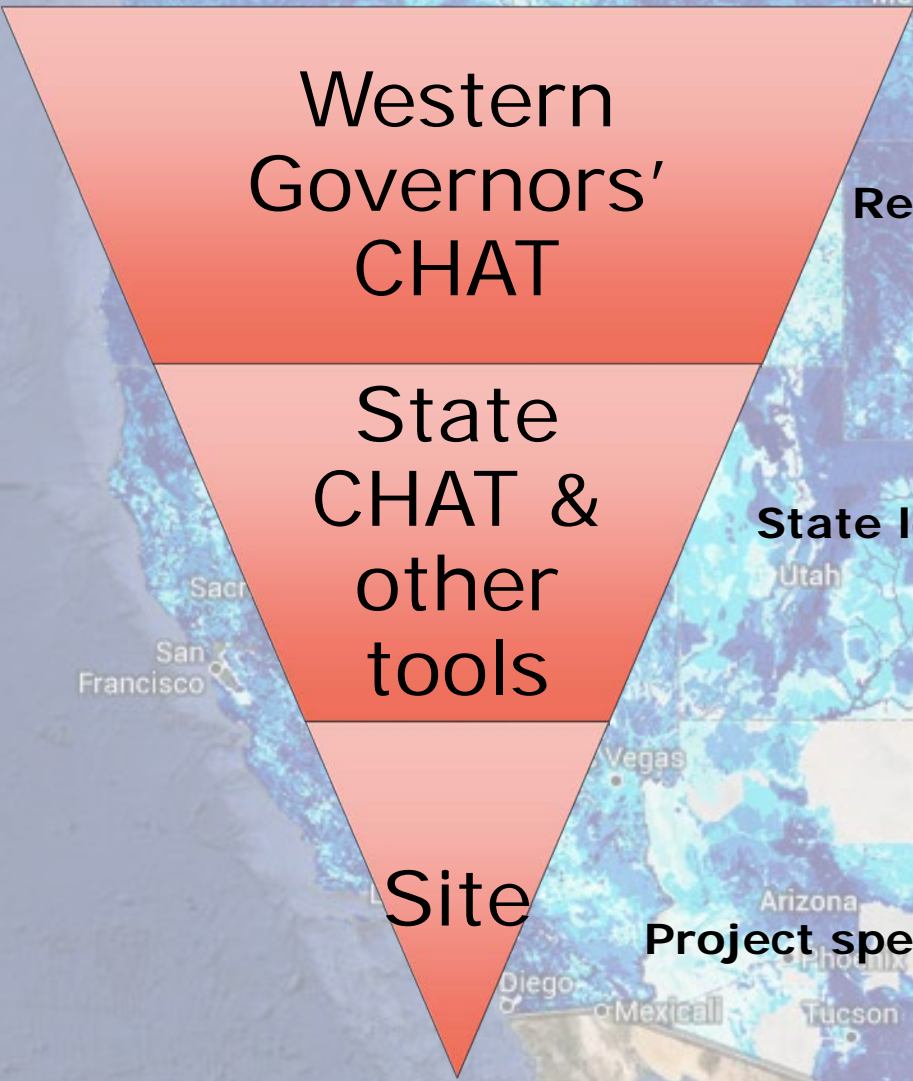
A map of the Western United States, including parts of Canada and Mexico. The map is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue and cyan color scheme, representing wildlife habitat and corridors. Major cities and states are labeled. The text 'WGA CHAT Purpose' is centered over the map.

WGA CHAT Purpose

"In its simplest form, CHAT will be an easily accessible online system of maps displaying crucial wildlife habitat and corridors across the West.

While not intended for project-level approval, CHAT is designed to reduce conflicts and surprises while ensuring wildlife values are better incorporated into land use decision-making, as well as large-scale conservation projects."

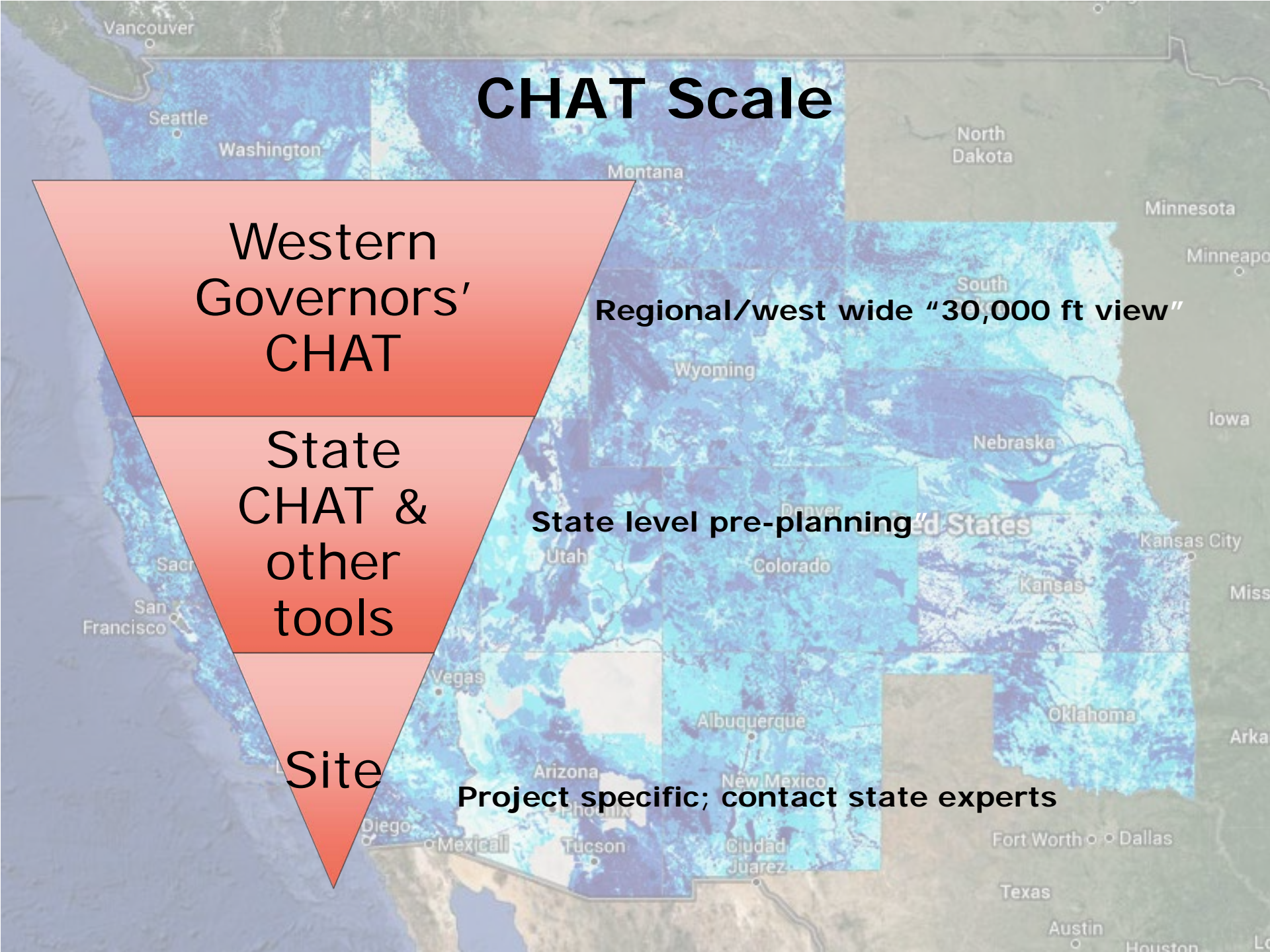
CHAT Scale



Regional/west wide "30,000 ft view"

State level pre-planning "United States"

Project specific; contact state experts



A map of the United States with a color-coded overlay representing habitat significance. The colors range from light blue (low significance) to dark blue (high significance). Major cities and state names are labeled on the map. The text 'Crucial Habitat Definition' is overlaid on the map in a large, bold, black font.

Crucial Habitat Definition

- Category 1: Rare or fragile wildlife habitats and corridors **irreplaceable**.
- Category 2: Habitats and corridors which limit a fish or wildlife community or population and are **essential**.
- Category 3: Habitats and corridors that help **maintain** fish and/or wildlife communities or populations loss may cause local or population-level declines.
- Common Habitat: Relatively common habitat that **does not limit** fish and/or wildlife communities or populations, and more suited for land use conversion.
- Habitat Significance Unknown: Lands likely to have significant wildlife values, but **not enough information** to know how important.

What is the CHAT Tool?

- Three main layers combined into one Crucial Habitat layer
- Categorized 1 mile hexagons
- Web mapping tool
- For landscape scale planning



**Species and
Habitat of
Concern (SOC)**

**Landscape
Integrity (LI)**

**Species of
Economic and
Recreational
Importance
(SERI)**

Crucial Habitat

WGA CHAT Process

Species of Economic and Recreational Importance (SERI)

Species/Habitats of Concern

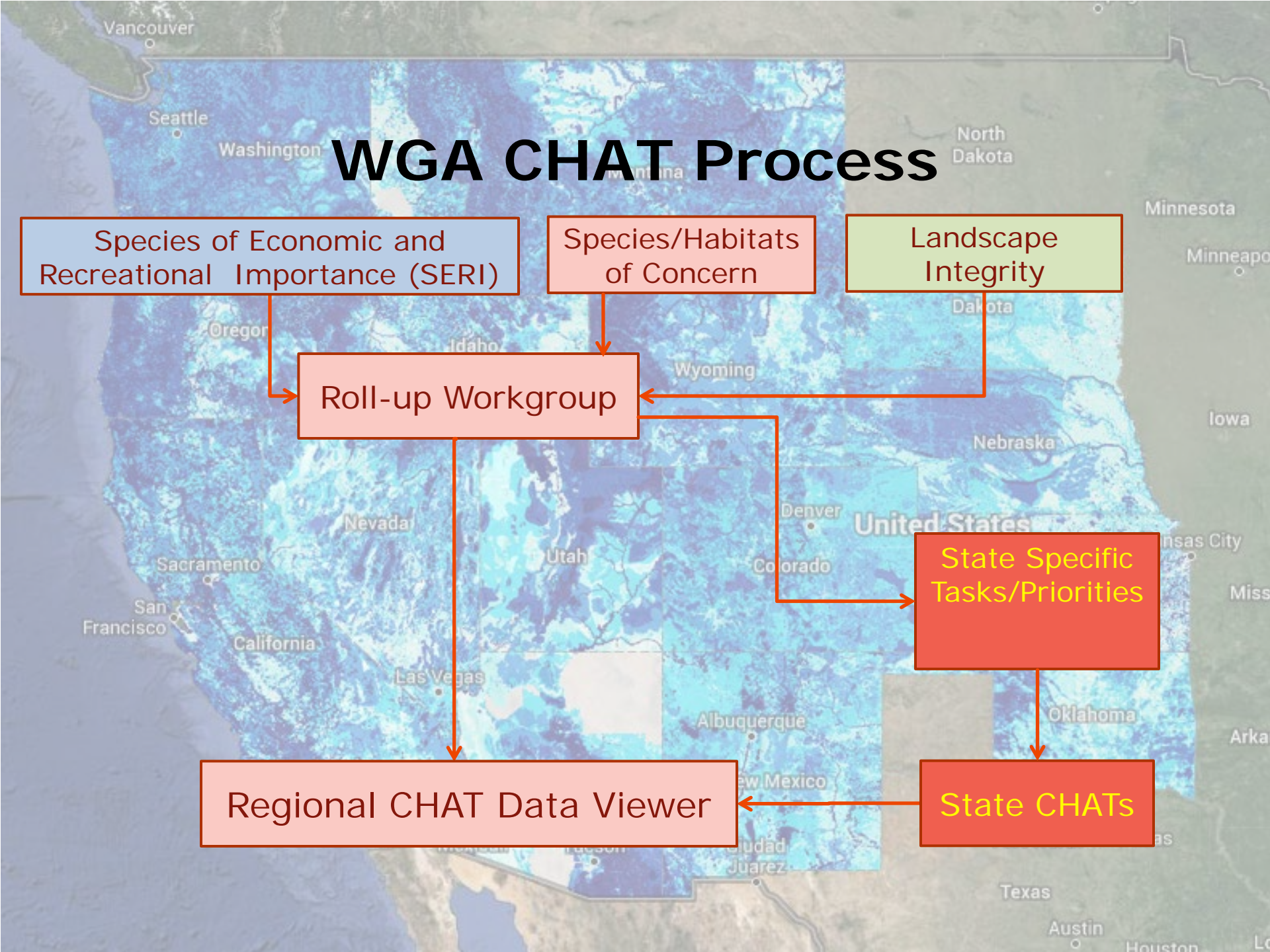
Landscape Integrity

Roll-up Workgroup

State Specific Tasks/Priorities

Regional CHAT Data Viewer

State CHATs



Western Governors' CHAT webpage

Western Governors' CHAT - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

Crucial Habitat Assessment Tools Western Governors' CHAT

westgovchat.org

MAP DATA STATES RESOURCES ABOUT FEEDBACK

WESTERN GOVERNORS'
Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool
Mapping Fish and Wildlife Across the West

CHAT

CHAT is designed to reduce conflicts and surprises during the planning process.

Quickly view the best available maps of crucial wildlife habitat in 16 Western states and connect to more detailed state habitat maps.
[Learn More >>](#)

[Learn About CHAT >>](#)
[Go to the Map >>](#)
[Get the Data >>](#)

WESTERN GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

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Version 11.5093.17802, Last Updated December 11, 2013

WGA CHAT link to NM CHAT

New Mexico - Western Governors' CHAT - Mozilla Firefox

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Map - Western Governors' CHAT New Mexico - Western Governors' C...

westgovchat.org/states/newmexico

WESTERN GOVERNORS' CHAT
Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool
Mapping Fish and Wildlife Across the West

MAP DATA STATES RESOURCES ABOUT FEEDBACK

STATES

- Alaska
- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- Idaho
- Kansas
- Montana
- Nebraska
- Nevada
- NEW MEXICO**
- Oklahoma
- Oregon
- South Dakota
- Utah
- Washington
- Wyoming
- Southern Great Plains

New Mexico

NEW MEXICO CRUCIAL HABITAT ASSESSMENT TOOL (NM CHAT)

Managed by the New Mexico Department of Game & Fish in collaboration with Natural Heritage New Mexico at the University of New Mexico.

Summary

The New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool is a web-based map tool with spatial information on sensitive species and habitats across New Mexico. It is designed to aid early landscape-level planning and is intended for conservation managers, industry, and the public to identify priority habitat. This website is a collaboration between New Mexico Dept. of Game & Fish and Natural Heritage New Mexico and will be available the end of 2013.

For more information on wildlife habitat go to the state's [Department of Game and Fish website](#)

Details

Accessible data includes:

- Species of Concern (SOC) crucial habitat
- Species of Economic and Recreational Importance (SERI)
- Ecological Systems of Concern (ESOC)
- Wetland, riparian, and playa areas
- Large Intact Blocks (LIBs) - large natural areas of undisturbed land
- Wildlife corridors
- Watershed disturbance (NFHAP)

Data Availability

Data will be available for download from the New Mexico CHAT website.

Contacts

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New Mexico Department of Game & Fish
Kenneth.Cunningham@state.nm.us, (505) 476-8114

Go New Mexico CHAT site >>

New Mexico CHAT site

UNITED STATES

Legend

- Crucial Habitat
- Watershed Disturbance

NM CHAT webpage

NM Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool - Mozilla Firefox



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NM Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool

nmchat.org

New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool
NM CHAT


Home Map Data Resources About Contact

 **Visualizing sensitive species and habitats across New Mexico** 

NM CHAT is:

- a conservation information system for energy development planners, natural resources managers, and conservation practitioners.
- a tool to better incorporate wildlife values, sensitive animals and plants, and important ecosystem features into land use decision-making to reduce conflicts and surprises.
- a collaborative project between the New Mexico Department of Game & Fish, Natural Heritage New Mexico at the University of New Mexico, and the Western Governors' Association's Wildlife Council.


Use NM CHAT to quickly identify the location of New Mexico's crucial wildlife habitat

[Go to Map](#) 

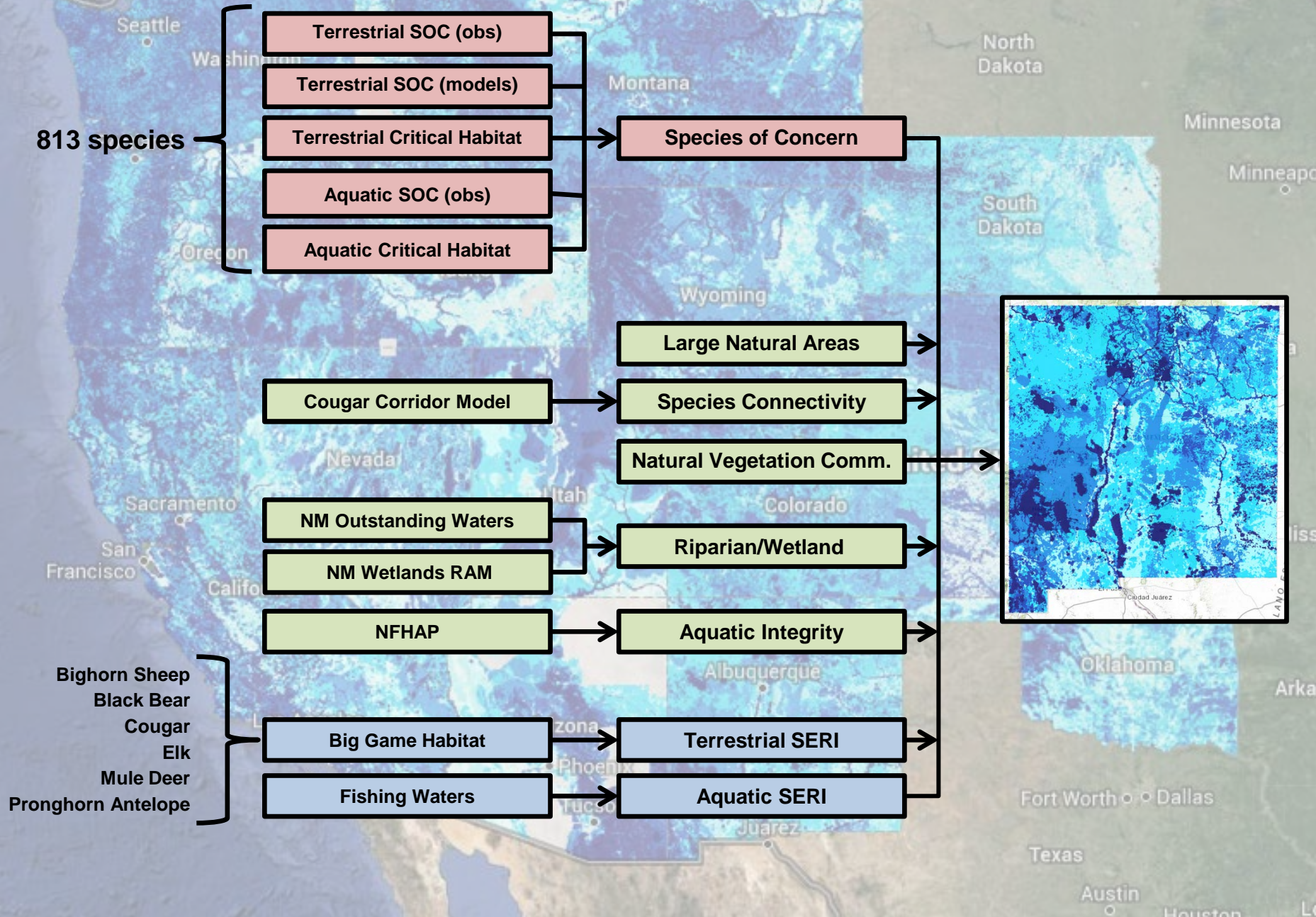
NM CHAT provides:

- landscape-level information on species and habitats.
- a Crucial Habitat Rank at a square-mile scale based on:
 - Species of Concern (animals and plants)
 - Wildlife Corridors
 - Terrestrial Species of Economic and Recreational Importance
 - Aquatic Species of Economic and Recreational Importance
 - Freshwater Integrity (watershed status)
 - Wetland and Riparian Areas
 - Large Natural Areas
 - Natural Vegetation Communities of Concern
- supplemental spatial data to aid conservation planning.
- links to other information tools.

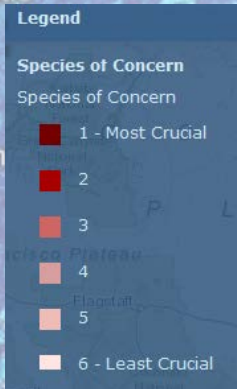
See [Data](#) for details.



New Mexico CHAT Layers (Phase III)



Species of Concern

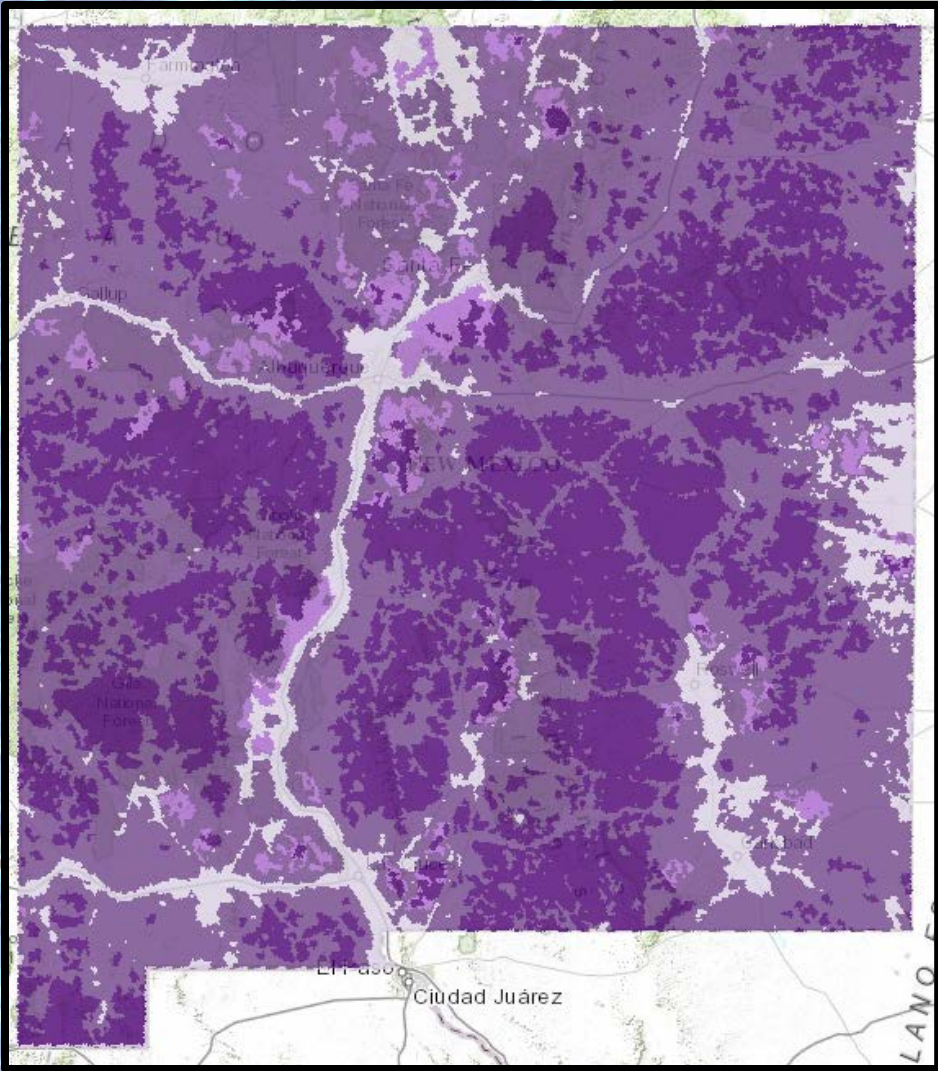


Large Natural Areas

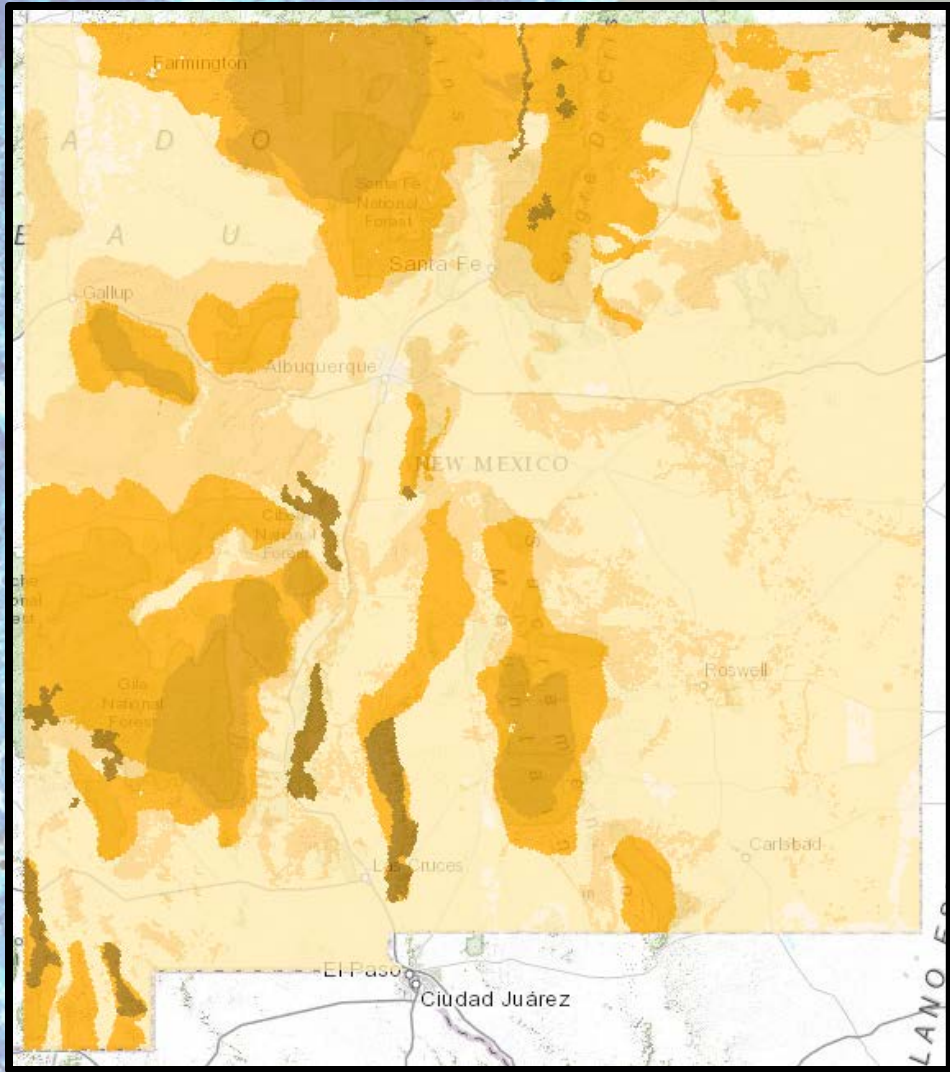
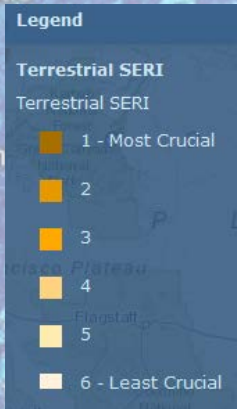
Legend

Large Natural Areas

- 1 - Most Crucial
- 2
- 3
- 6 - Least Crucial



Terrestrial SERI



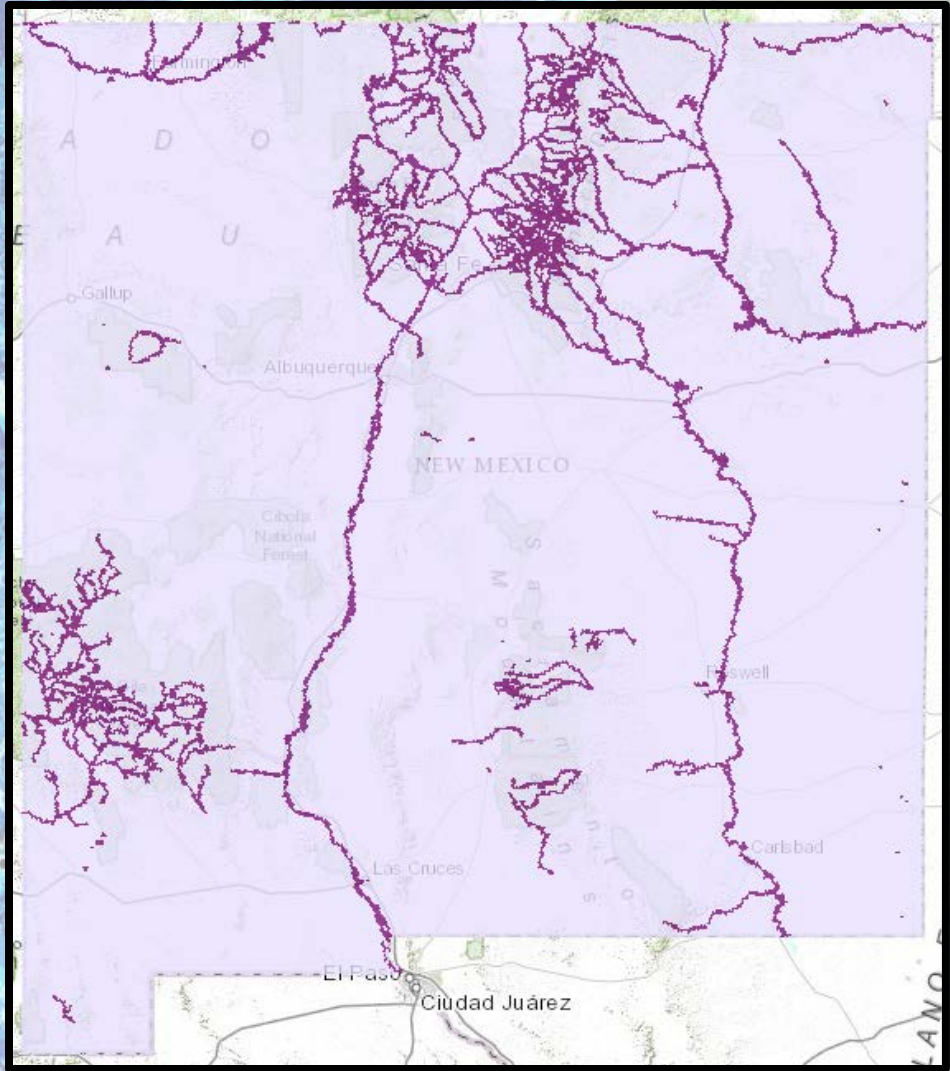
Aquatic SERI

Legend

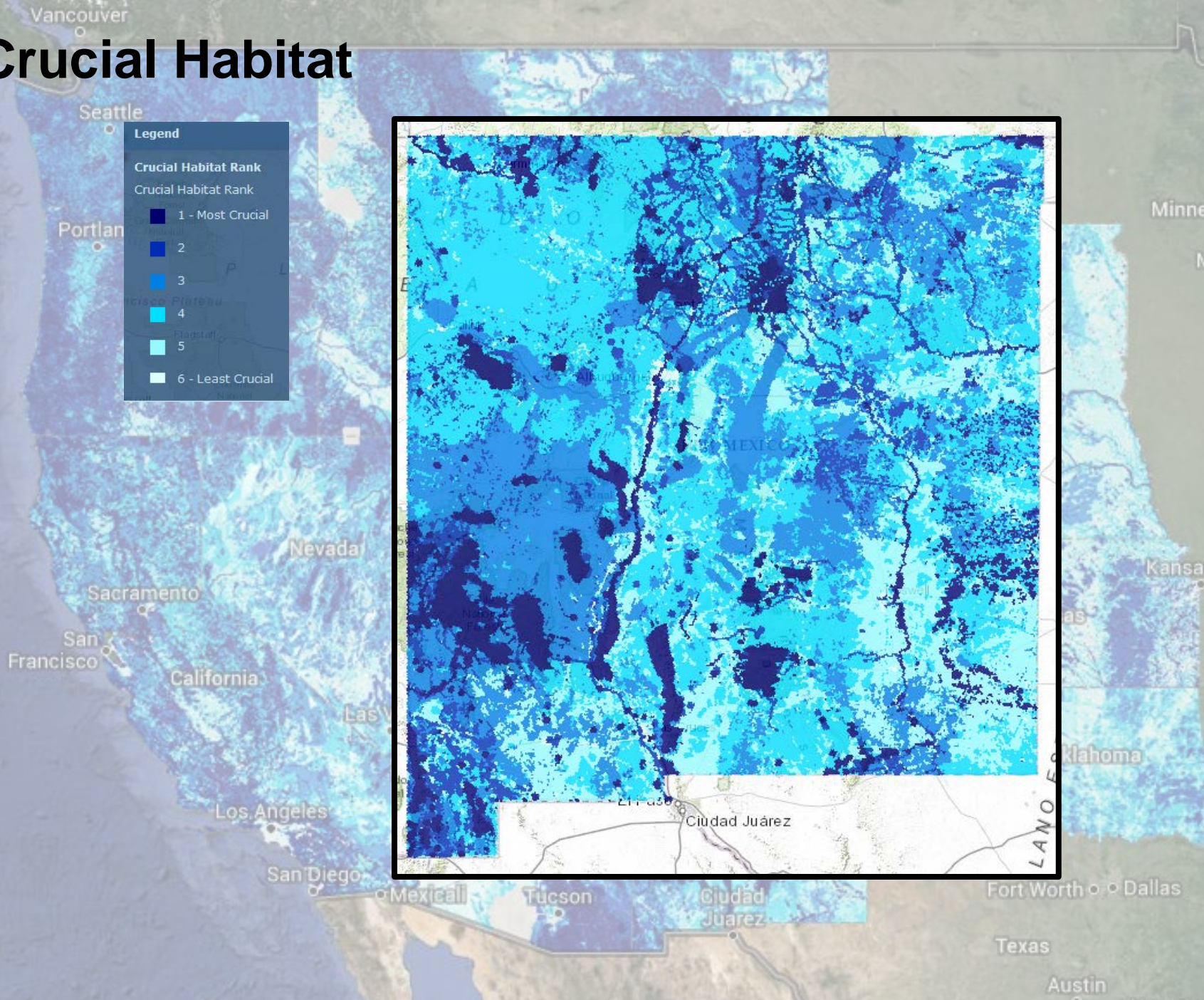
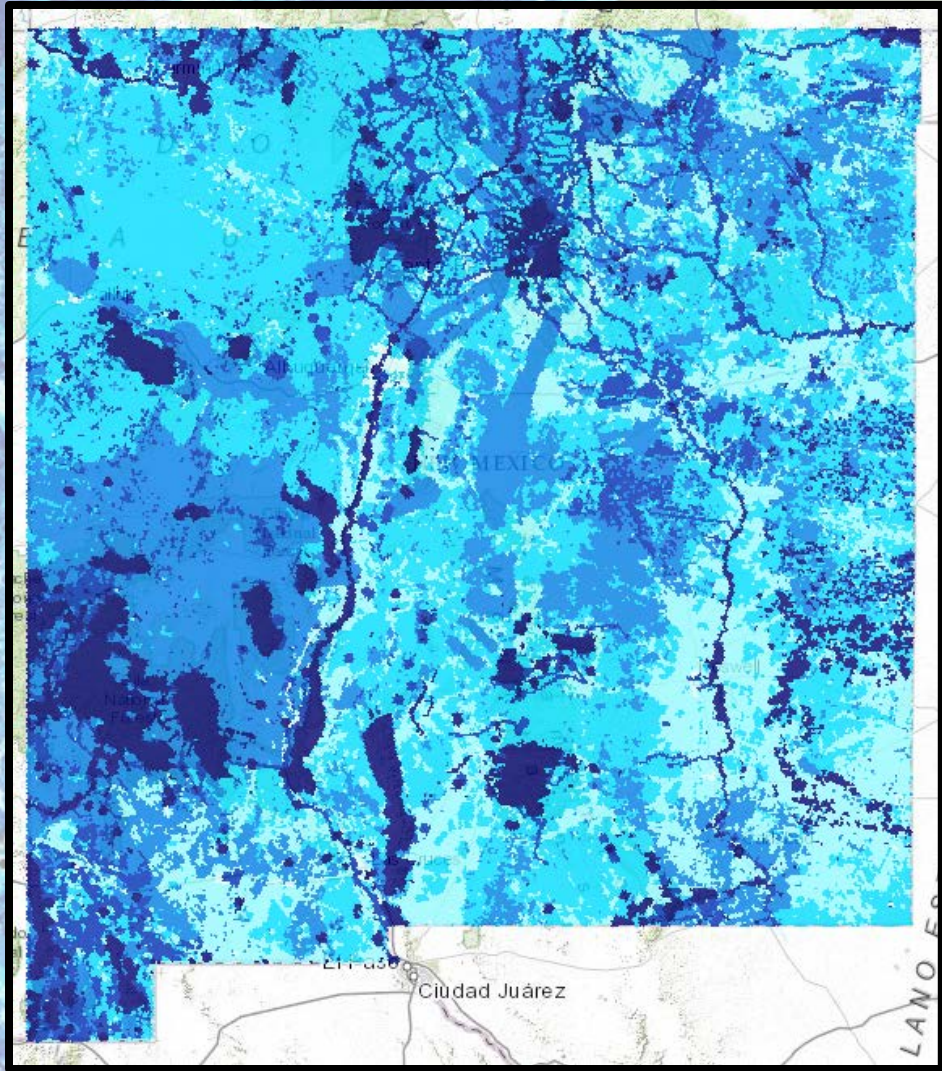
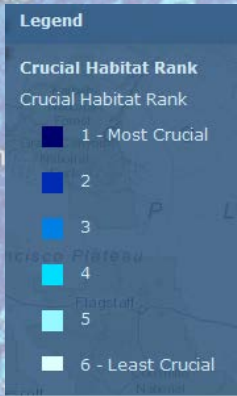
Aquatic SERI

Aquatic SERI

- 1 - Most Crucial
- 6 - Least Crucial



Crucial Habitat





NM CHAT Next Steps

- Refine and update support data
- Create linkages with Wildlife Action Plan
- Upgrade to information management system to include:
 - State Wildlife Action Plan
 - BISON-M
 - Document based DSS



QUESTIONS?

Vancouver
Seattle
Washington
Portland
Oregon
Idaho
Montana
North Dakota
Minnesota
South Dakota
Wyoming
Iowa
Nebraska
United States
Nevada
Utah
Colorado
Kansas
Sacramento
San Francisco
California
Las Vegas
Arizona
New Mexico
Los Angeles
Phoenix
San Diego
Tucson
Albuquerque
Ciudad Juarez
Fort Worth
Dallas
Texas
Austin
Houston