

REGIONAL CONSERVATION INVESTMENT STRATEGIES PROGRAM (AB 2087)

California's New Conservation & Advance
Mitigation Program

California Department of Fish & Wildlife
RCA and RCIS Guidelines Public Workshop
June 21, 2017

Ron Unger, Program Manager
Landscape Conservation Planning Program
Habitat Conservation Planning Branch



WORKSHOP AGENDA

- RCIS Program Overview
- RCA Overview & Guidelines
- RCIS Overview & Guidelines
- MCA Overview
- Examples of Uses
- Fees, Next Steps, & Contacts
- Questions and Answers

RCIS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

RCIS
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RCIS PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- Regional Conservation Assessments (RCA)
- Regional Conservation Investment Strategies (RCIS)
- Mitigation Credit Agreements (MCA)

RCIS PROGRAM PURPOSE

RCA - **ASSESS** conservation opportunities

RCIS - Develop a conservation **STRATEGY**

MCA - Provide an **ADVANCE MITIGATION** tool

RCIS PROGRAM IS TO:

- Achieve more strategic, effective conservation
- Promote resiliency to climate change & other pressures
- Support infrastructure & other projects with efficient mitigation delivery

THE ASSESSMENT HIERARCHY

Local Planning

Ecological

RCAs

Regional

Ecoregion Section

RCISs

Multi-county
to sub-county

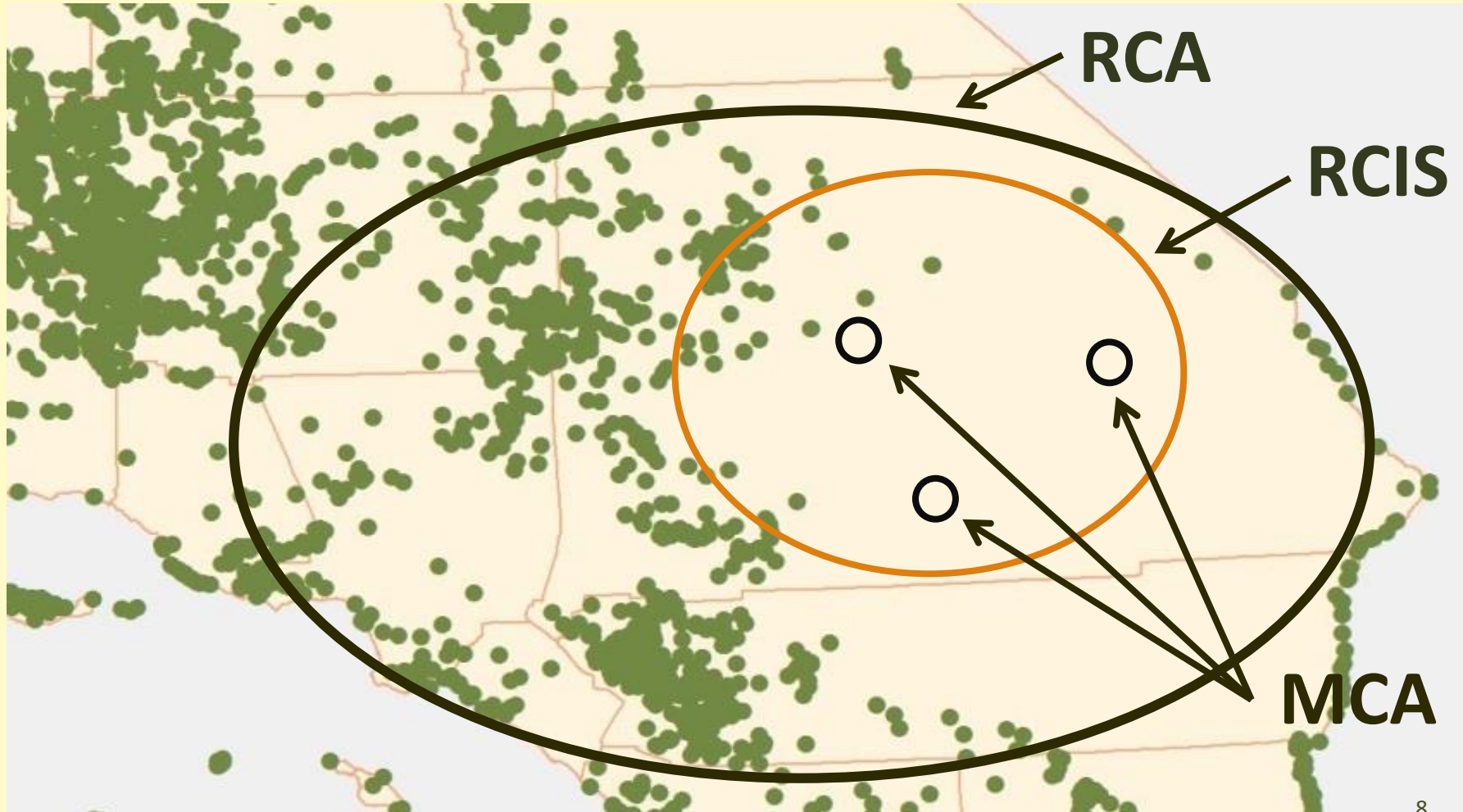
Sub-Ecoregion

MCAs

Land base

Vegetation
Community/
Habitat

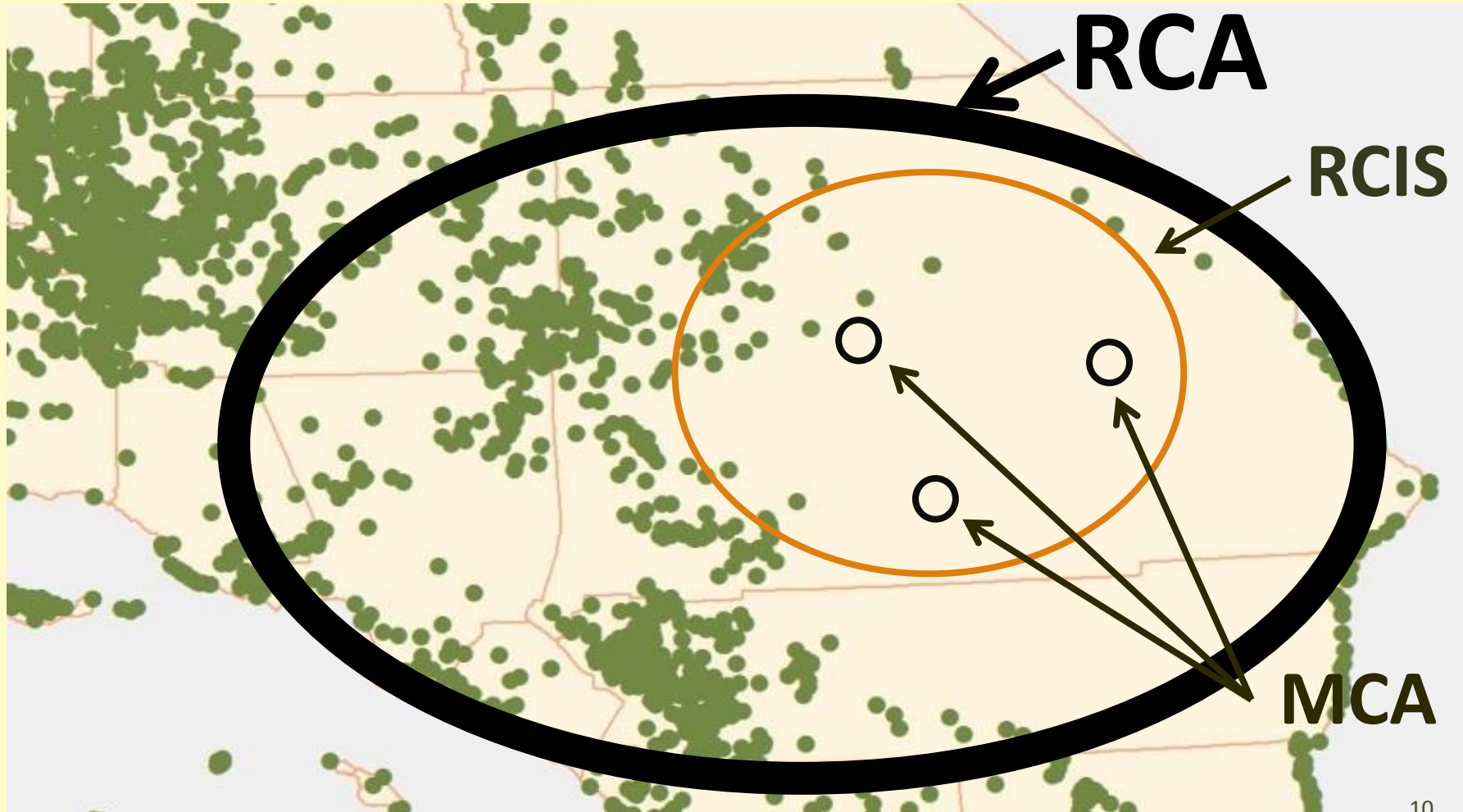
REGIONAL CONSERVATION SCALES



REGIONAL
CONSERVATION
ASSESSMENT (RCA)
OVERVIEW & GUIDELINES

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RCA OVERVIEW



RCIS PROGRAM KEY POINT

RCA is an ***assessment*** to identify areas for long-term ecosystem conservation success

RCA OVERVIEW

- RCA is voluntary, non-regulatory
- Non-binding on land use authorities
- Proposed by any public agency
- Public review not required, but recommended
- ***RCA not required to do an RCIS***

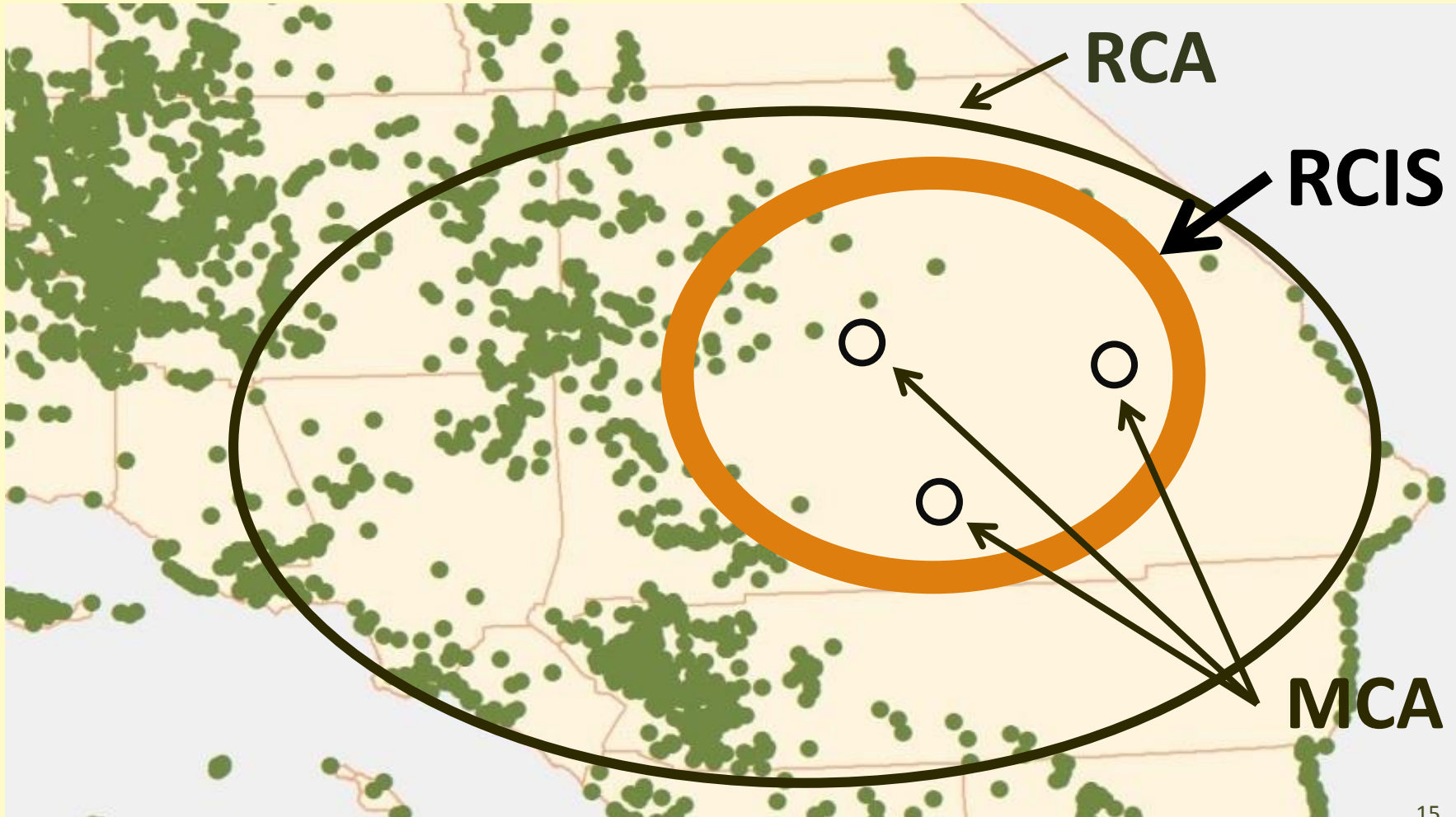
RCA COMPONENTS

- Required Components:
 - Description of RCA Area
 - Natural Communities Information
 - Biodiversity & Species Information
 - Habitat Connectivity Values
 - Existing Conservation Areas
 - Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments
 - Other Pressures and Stressors
 - Major Infrastructure & Development
- Consistent with Regional Conservation Plans
- Data Sharing and Access

REGIONAL
CONSERVATION
INVESTMENT STRATEGY
(RCIS)
OVERVIEW & GUIDELINES

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RCIS OVERVIEW



RCIS PROGRAM KEY POINT

RCIS is a ***strategy*** with ***actions*** to achieve regional conservation

RCIS OVERVIEW

- Voluntary, non-regulatory
- Non-binding on land use authorities
- ***RCIS required for MCAs***
- Proposed by any public agency
- State agency sponsor letter required
- Good for up to ten years
- Can be extended, updated or amended
- CDFW can approve eight (*those with a letter from a state water or transportation infrastructure agency requesting RCIS approval are exempt from this limit*)

RCIS COMPONENTS

- Required Components Include:
 - RCIS Conservation Purpose
 - Description of RCIS Area
 - Focal Species and Other Conservation Elements
 - Conservation and Habitat Enhancement Actions
 - Summary of Banks in RCIS Area
 - Consistency with NCCPs, HCPs, other plans
 - Best Available Scientific Information
 - Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments
 - Major Infrastructure & Development
- Data Sharing and Access
- Public Notice Requirements
- CDFW Review and Approval Process

RCIS CONSERVATION PURPOSE

- Align with State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP)
- Enhance resiliency to climate change, other pressures
- Be consistent with overlapping NCCPs, HCPs
- Consider working lands conservation benefits
- Not allowed for Delta water conveyance facilities
- ***Identify conservation and enhancement actions***

RCIS COMPONENTS

- Focal Species
 - SWAP Species of Greatest Conservation Need
 - Native vulnerable species
 - Indicator species and wide-ranging species
 - Special-status species
- Other Conservation Elements
 - Natural communities
 - Water resources

RCIS PROGRAM KEY POINT

**Species & conservation elements in an MCA
must be covered by the approved RCIS**

RCIS COMPONENTS

- Conservation Goals and Measurable Objectives
 - Address climate change and other pressures
- Conservation and Habitat Enhancement Actions
 - Prioritize by species & conservation elements
 - Amounts and types of habitats that will benefit
 - Evaluate effectiveness of actions

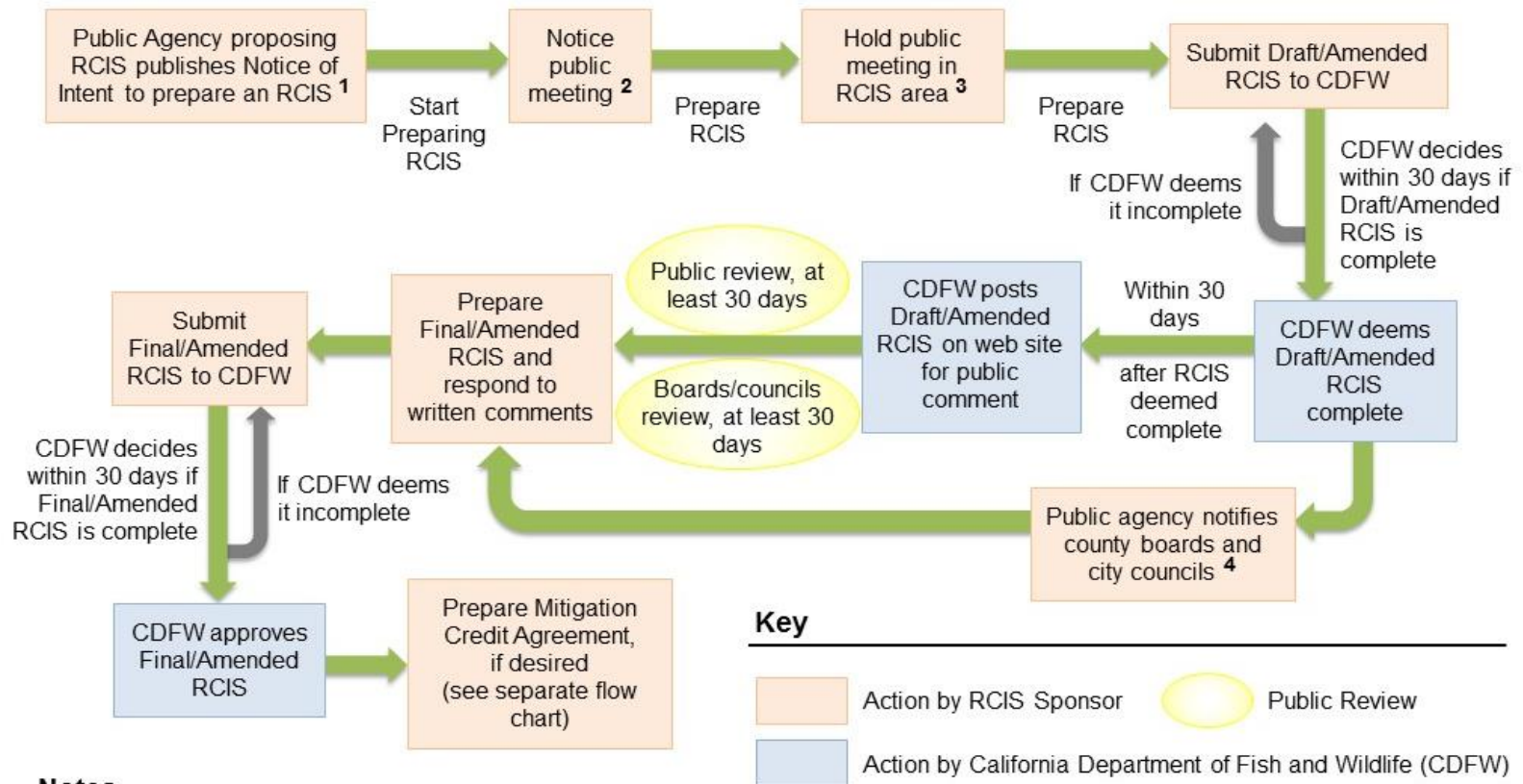
POTENTIAL CONSERVATION & ENHANCEMENT ACTIONS

- Acquire and protect land
- Restore creeks and rivers
- Restore habitat on public land
- Install wildlife crossings
- Remove fish barriers
- Create/restore rearing habitat

RCIS PROGRAM KEY POINT

RCISs provide a basis for conservation investments – philanthropic and mitigation

RCIS APPROVAL PROCESS



Notes

1. File with Governor's Office of Planning and Research and county clerk of all overlapping counties (filing not required if RCIS started before Jan. 1, 2017).
2. Notice public meeting to 1) each city or county within or adjacent to the RCIS, 2) each implementing entity for overlapping HCPs or NCCPs, and 3) each agency, organization, or individual who has filed a request for such notices, including those who have filed a general request with CDFW to receive all RCIS notices.
3. Hold public meeting "early in the process of preparing it" to allow adequate opportunity for the public to provide written and oral comments. If RCIS started before January 1, 2017, the public meeting can occur anytime as long as occurs at least 30 days before submitting draft RCIS to CDFW.
4. Notify county boards of supervisors and city councils in RCIS area at least 60 days prior to submitting final RCIS to CDFW for approval, and allow them at least 30 days to submit written comments.

MITIGATION CREDIT AGREEMENT OVERVIEW

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RCIS PROGRAM KEY POINT

MCA^s* *implement* the conservation strategy!

* MCA guidelines not released yet

MCA ENABLES:

- *Advance* mitigation
- *Transferable* credits
- *Excess* project conservation & enhancements used as credits
- Offset impacts under CESA, CEQA, LSA
- Offset permanent and temporary impacts
- On *public* or private land

MCA OVERVIEW

- Anyone may apply for MCA
- Based on conservation & habitat enhancement actions in approved RCIS
- Consistent with CDFW's Banking Program
- NCCP Implementing Entity approval required

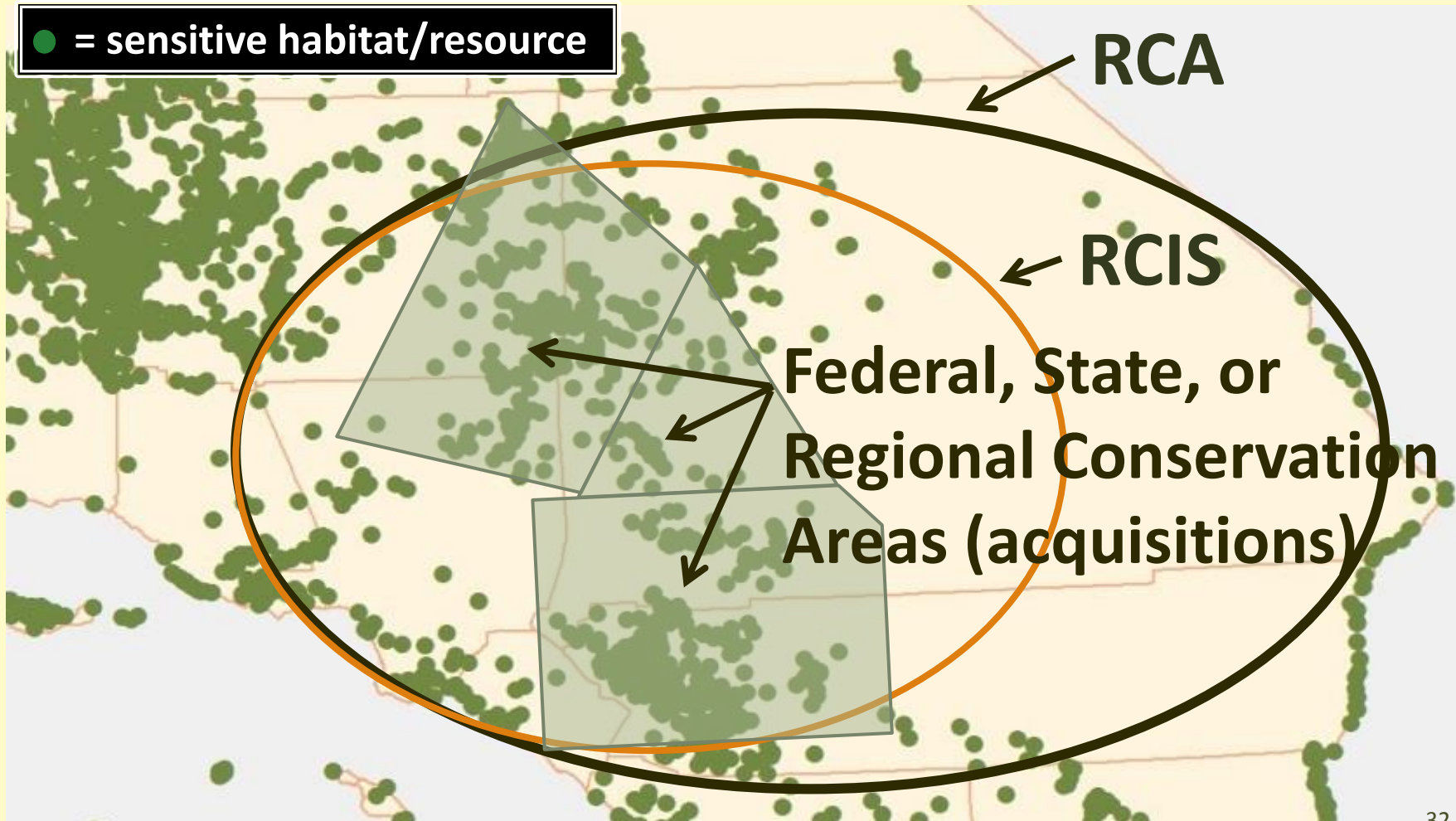
RCIS PROGRAM EXAMPLES OF USES

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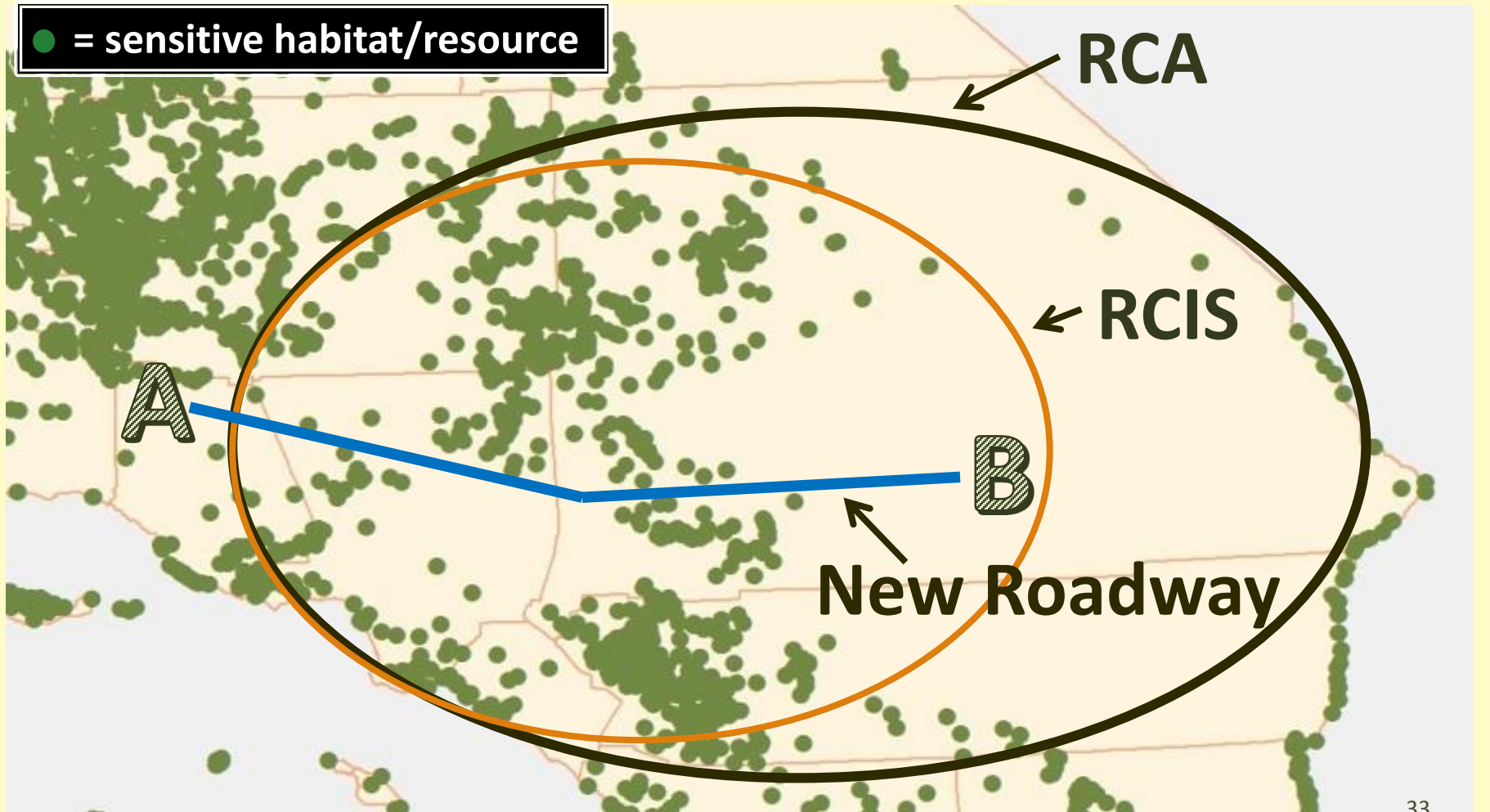
RCIS PROGRAM POTENTIAL USERS

- State agencies
- Infrastructure agencies
- Local governments and public agencies
- Non-governmental organizations
- Mitigation and conservation bankers
- NCCP Implementing Entities
- Other public and private entities

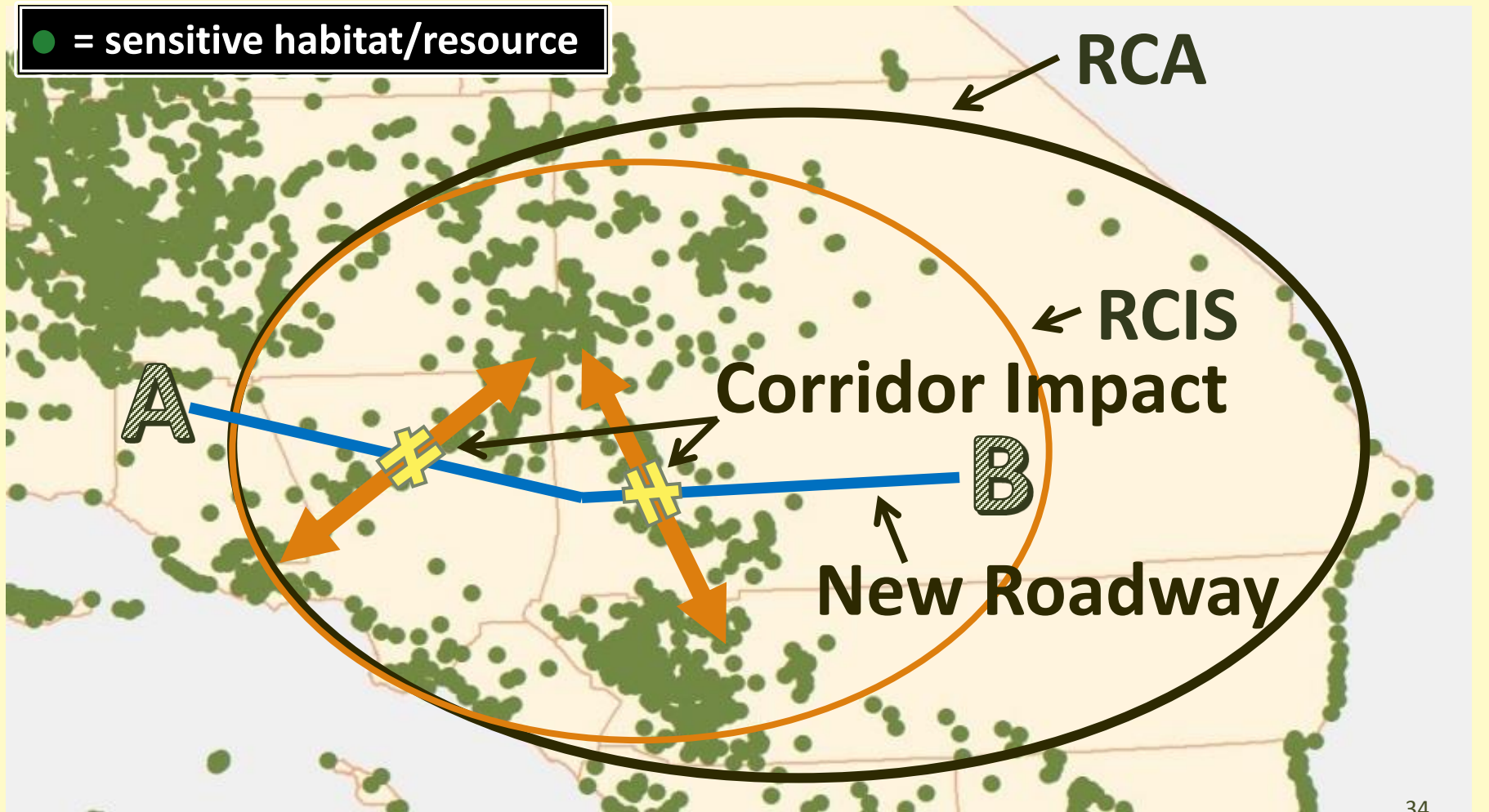
PROGRAM USES – CONSERVATION



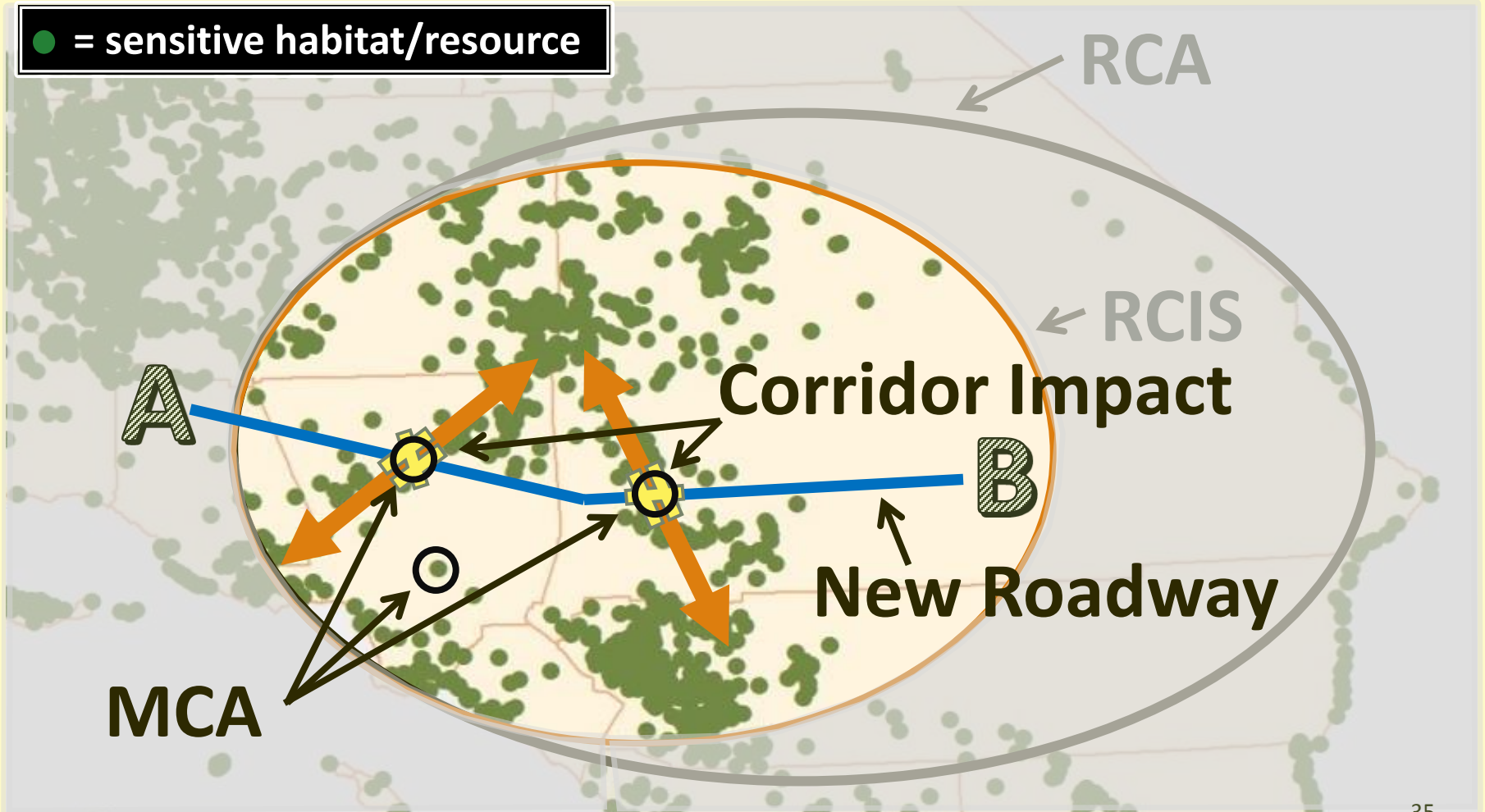
PROGRAM USES – TRANSPORTATION



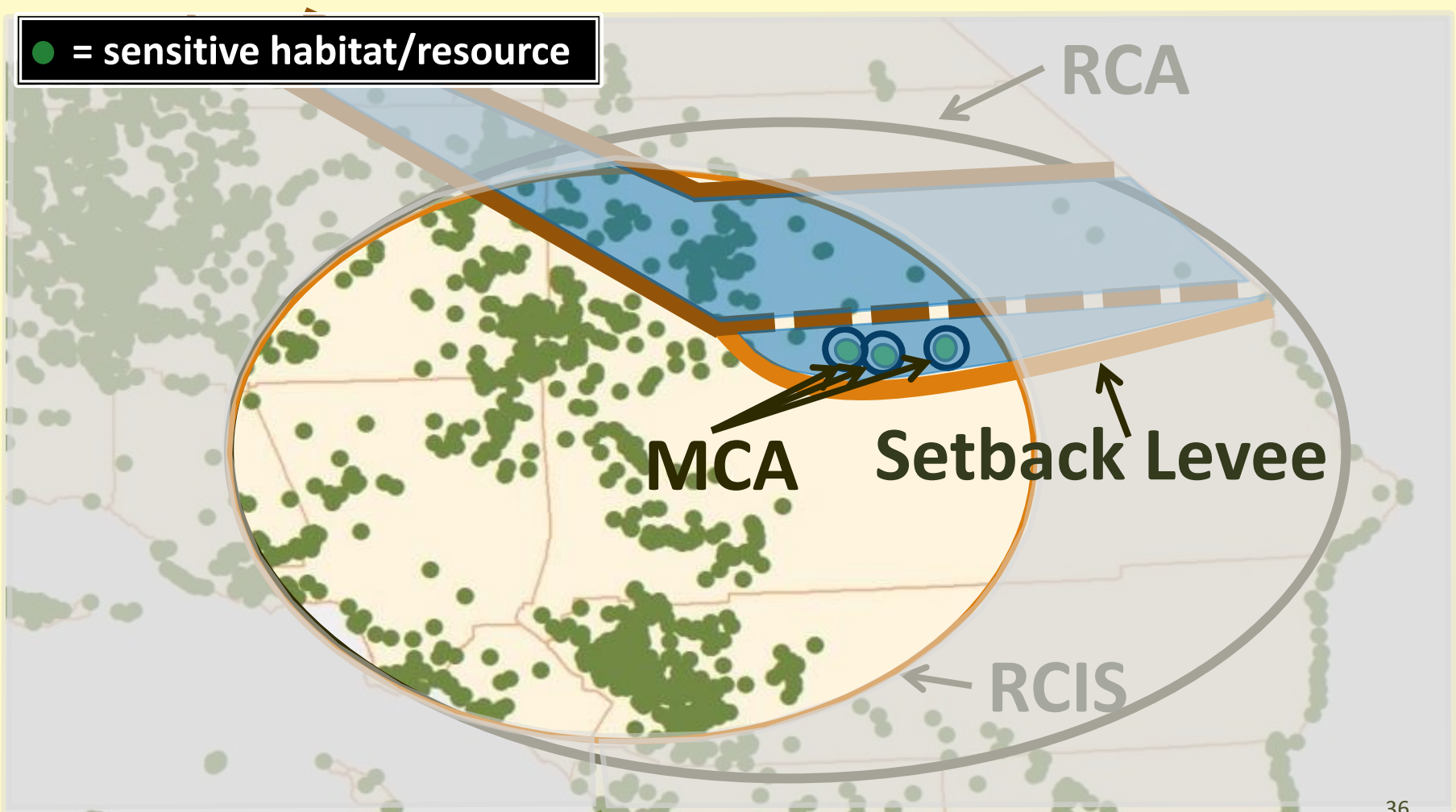
PROGRAM USES – TRANSPORTATION



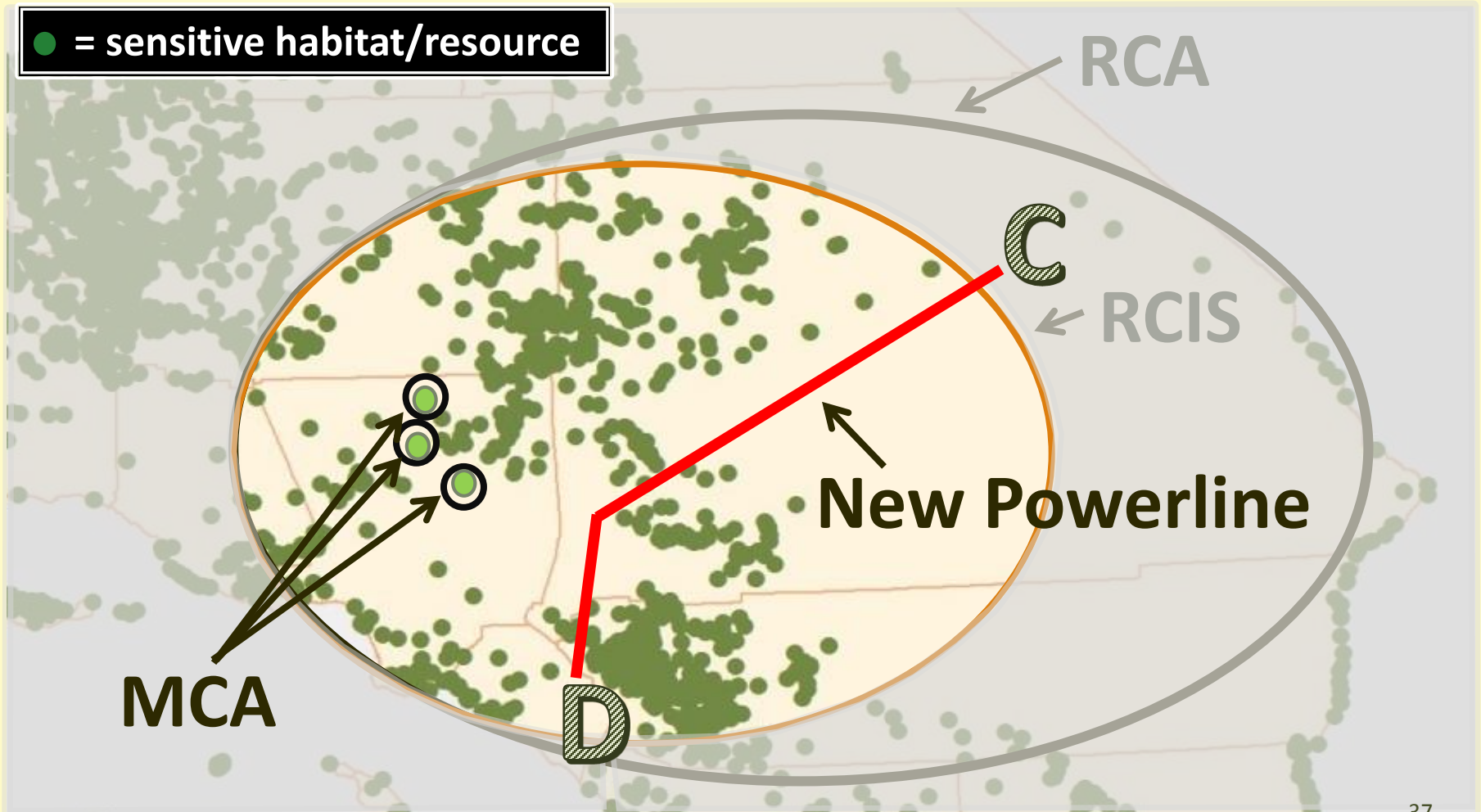
PROGRAM USES – TRANSPORTATION



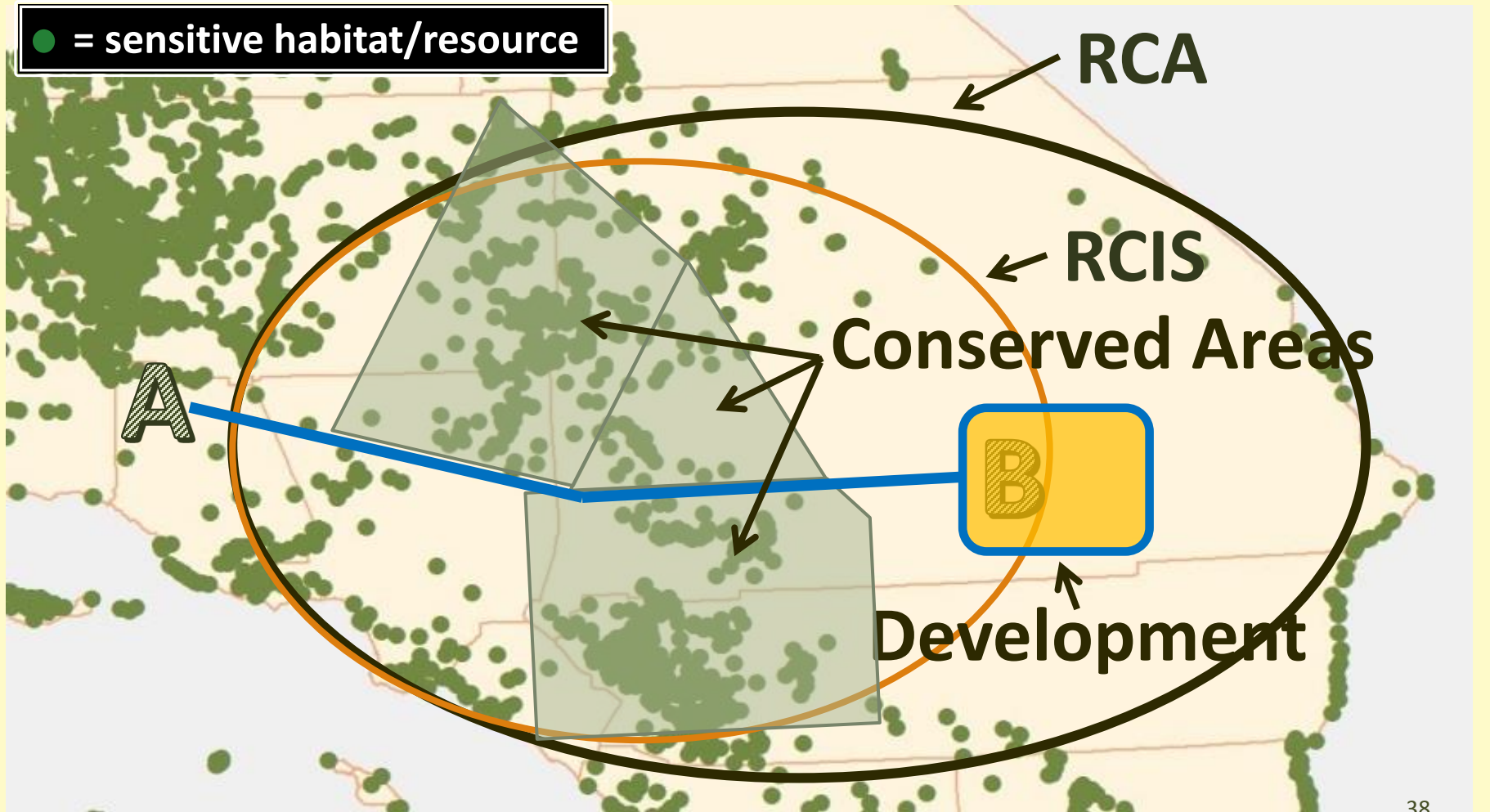
PROGRAM USES – FLOOD CONTROL



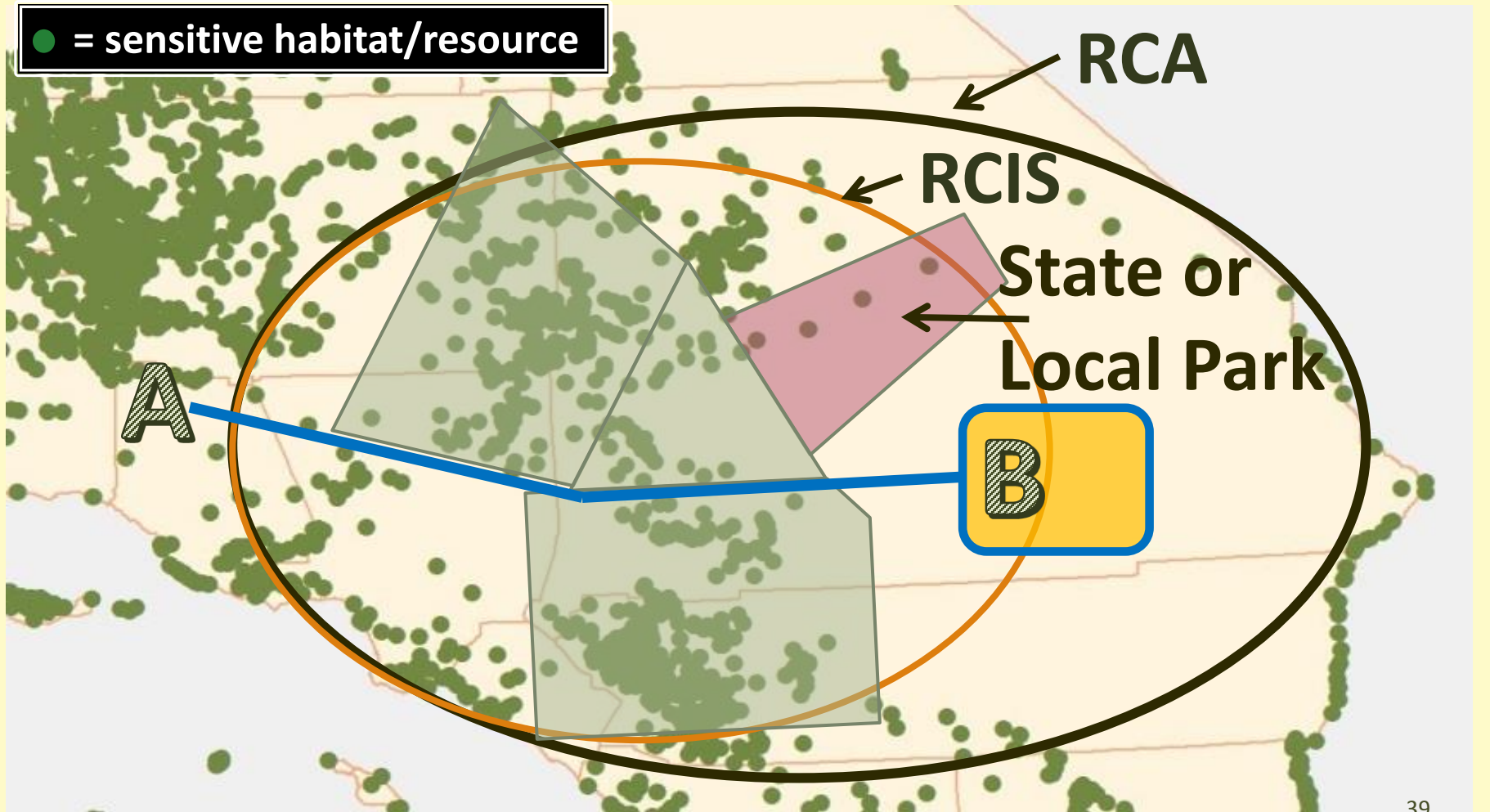
PROGRAM USES – UTILITIES



PROGRAM USES – DEVELOPMENT



PROGRAM USES – PARKS



RCIS PROGRAM FEES, NEXT STEPS & CONTACTS

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RCIS PROGRAM FEES

- RCIS Program is entirely fee-based:
 - RCA Review/Approval - \$22,000*
 - RCIS Review/Approval - \$28,500*
 - MCA Review/Approval – to be determined

* Notes:

- Additional fees apply for revisions and amendments
- CDFW may adjust fees after June 30, 2018

CDFW'S NEXT STEPS INCLUDE:

- CDFW is currently developing the fee structure and schedule for MCAs
- Revise program guidelines as needed
- Approve RCAs, RCISs, and MCAs

RCA, RCIS, MCA SUBMITTALS

Submit to:

Richard Macedo, Branch Chief
RCIS Program
Habitat Conservation Planning Branch
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
1416 Ninth Street, 12th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

To receive RCIS and MCA notifications:

rcis@wildlife.ca.gov or address above

RCIS PROGRAM RESOURCE LINKS

- RCIS Program Website:
 - <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning/Regional-Conservation>
- CDFW Conservation Resources (BIOS, etc.):
 - <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation>
- Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments:
 - <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Climate-Science/Resources/Vulnerability>
- Landscape Conservation Planning Program (NCCP, Conservation Banks, etc.)
 - <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Planning>

WHERE TO SUBMIT RCIS PROGRAM QUESTIONS

Submit to:

Ron Unger, Program Manager

RCIS Program

Landscape Conservation Planning

Habitat Conservation Planning Branch

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

RCIS@wildlife.ca.gov

(916) 653-3779

QUESTIONS?

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