



Climate Resilient Reforestation at Scale
Austin Rempel, Forest Restoration Manager



1. Thornforest in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Texas



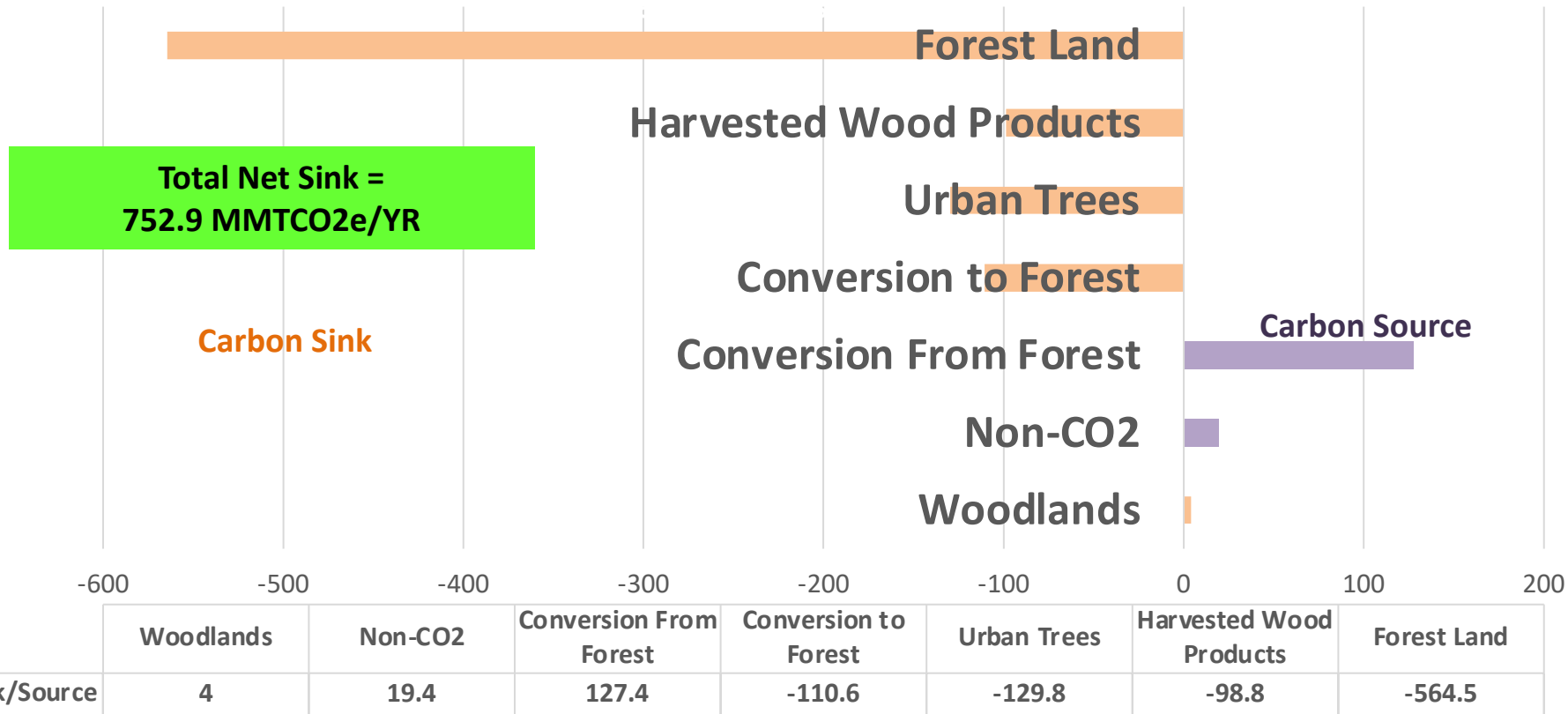
2. The 2018 Camp Fire scar - Paradise, California

Examples of large-scale, climate-informed reforestation

Components of the Nation's Forest Sink

EPA 2020 GHG Inventory

<https://doi.org/10.2737/FS-RU-227>



Our Forests Are Delivering for Climate



1. Tree Species
2. Tree Genetics
3. Planting Techniques
4. Adaptive Management

+ Partnerships and
information-sharing

Climate Resilient Reforestation



Thornforest in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Texas

- **~55 unique thornforest species (e.g. Texas ebony)**
- **4,000 acres of marginal ag lands converted to wildlife refuge**



Thornforest Restoration



530 species of birds, 300 species of butterfly and 11 threatened and endangered species including Texas tortoises, jaguarundis and ocelots

Biodiversity



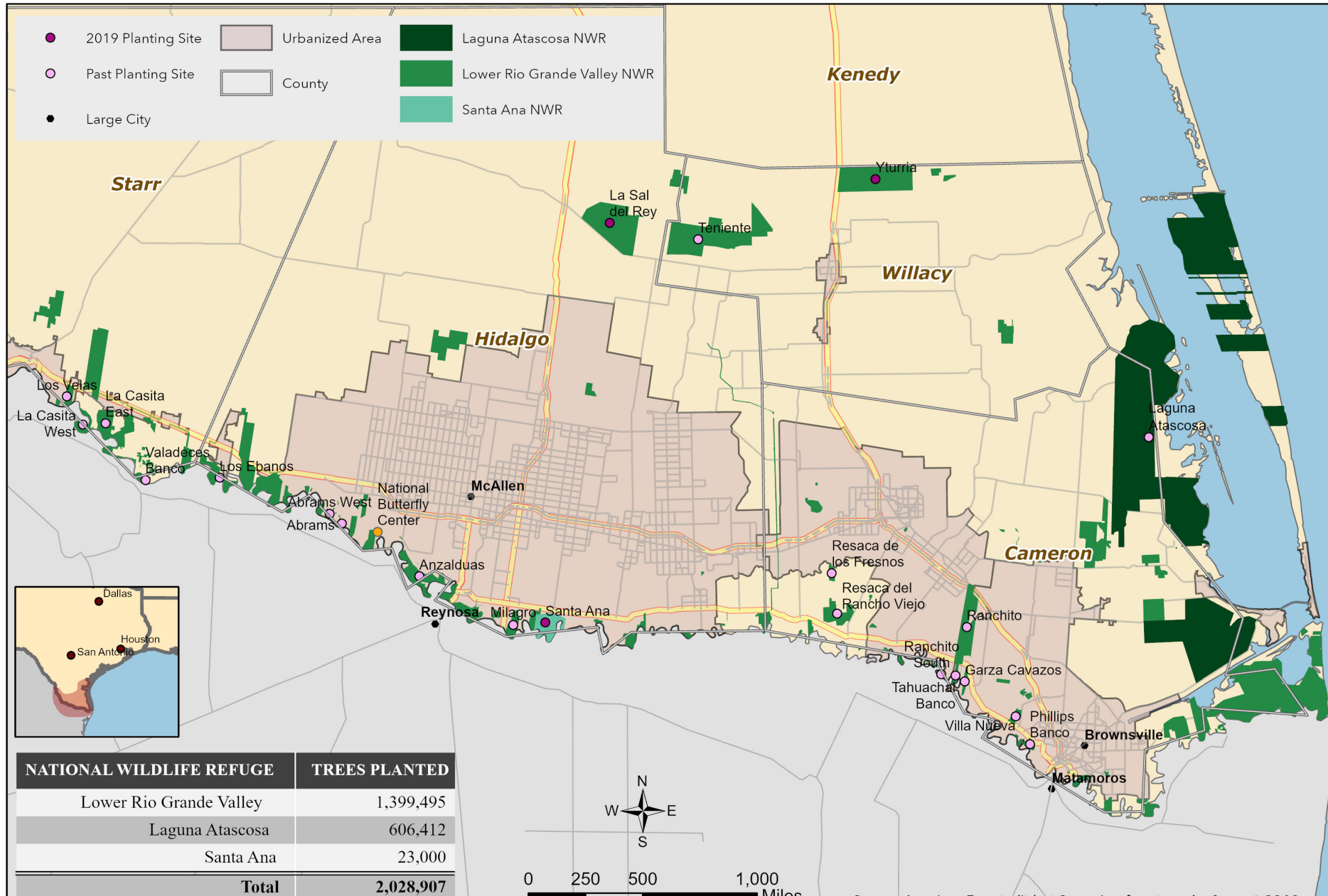
AMERICAN FORESTS
- SINCE 1875 -

Lower Rio Grande Valley

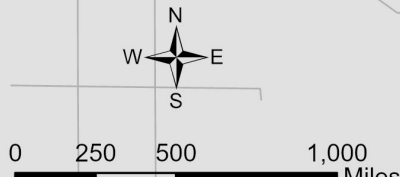


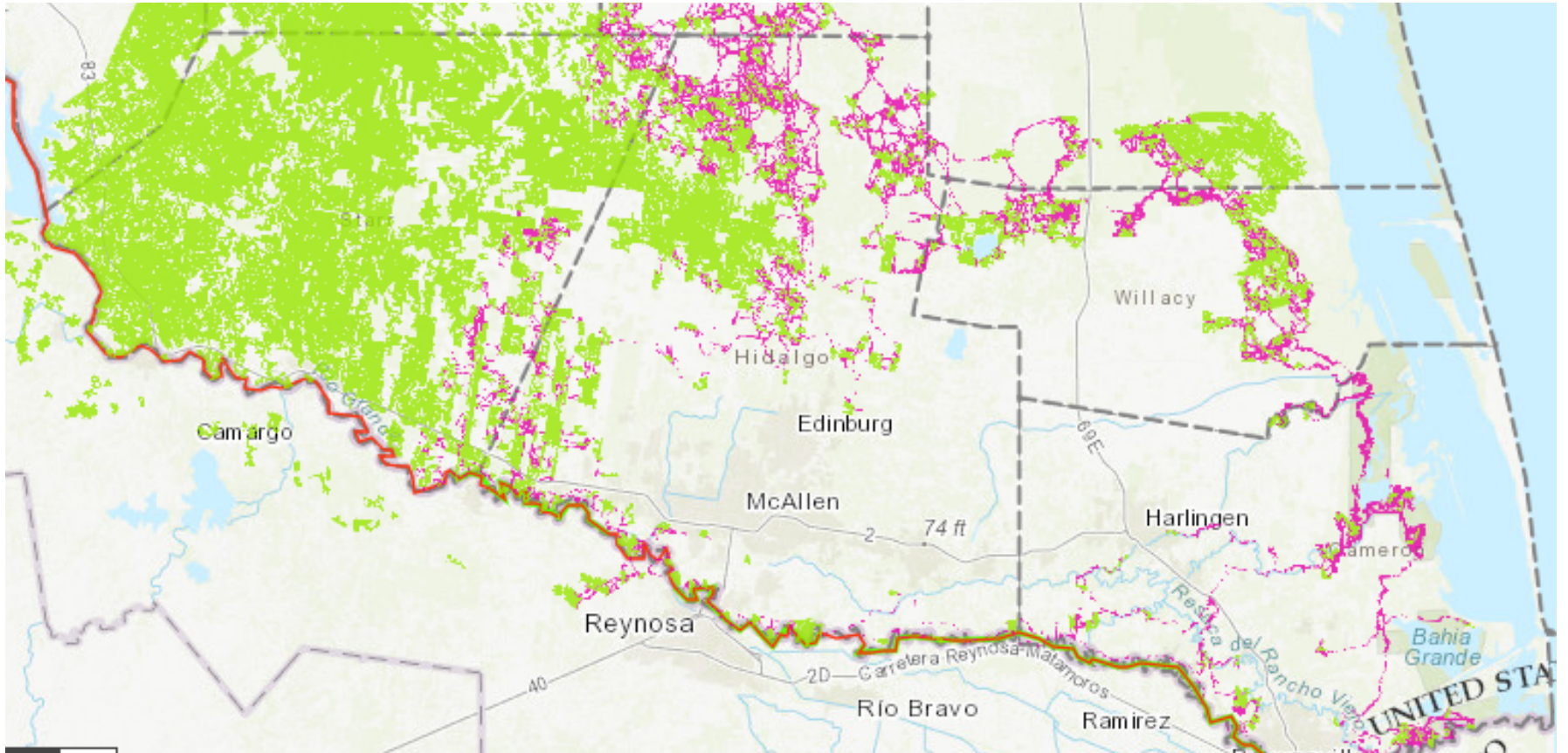
AMERICAN FORESTS

American Forests has planted over 2 million trees in 22 years!



NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE	TREES PLANTED
Lower Rio Grande Valley	1,399,495
Laguna Atascosa	606,412
Santa Ana	23,000
Total	2,028,907





Connectivity and Prioritization



- Planting species that will be able to better withstand **future conditions**
- Selecting and growing genetically **diverse seeds**
- **Site preparation** tactics that help native plants outcompete invasive species
- Seedling **shelter tubes** that dramatically increase plant survival



Adaptation Tactics



Thornforest Conservation Partnership



Climate-informed Reforestation and Regeneration in the Camp Fire



Camp Fire (2018, 153,336 ac)
- ‘pyrosilvicultural’ founder stands, provenance tests, oaks, refugia

Adaptation Trials



RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
OF BUTTE COUNTY



AMERICAN FORESTS
- SINCE 1875 -



Restoration Partners

Species	2030	2060
Black oak	59%	42%
Interior live oak	55%	54%
Blue oak	52%	46%
Canyon live oak	49%	35%
Ponderosa pine	39%	34%
Douglas-fir	31%	25%
Sugar pine	13%	10%

Conifer Transition Zone

About

Tool

Advanced

1 Select Species

Douglas-fir

2 Select Species Distribution Record

1981 - 2010

3 Select Modeling Conditions ⓘ

Select a future time range and a model

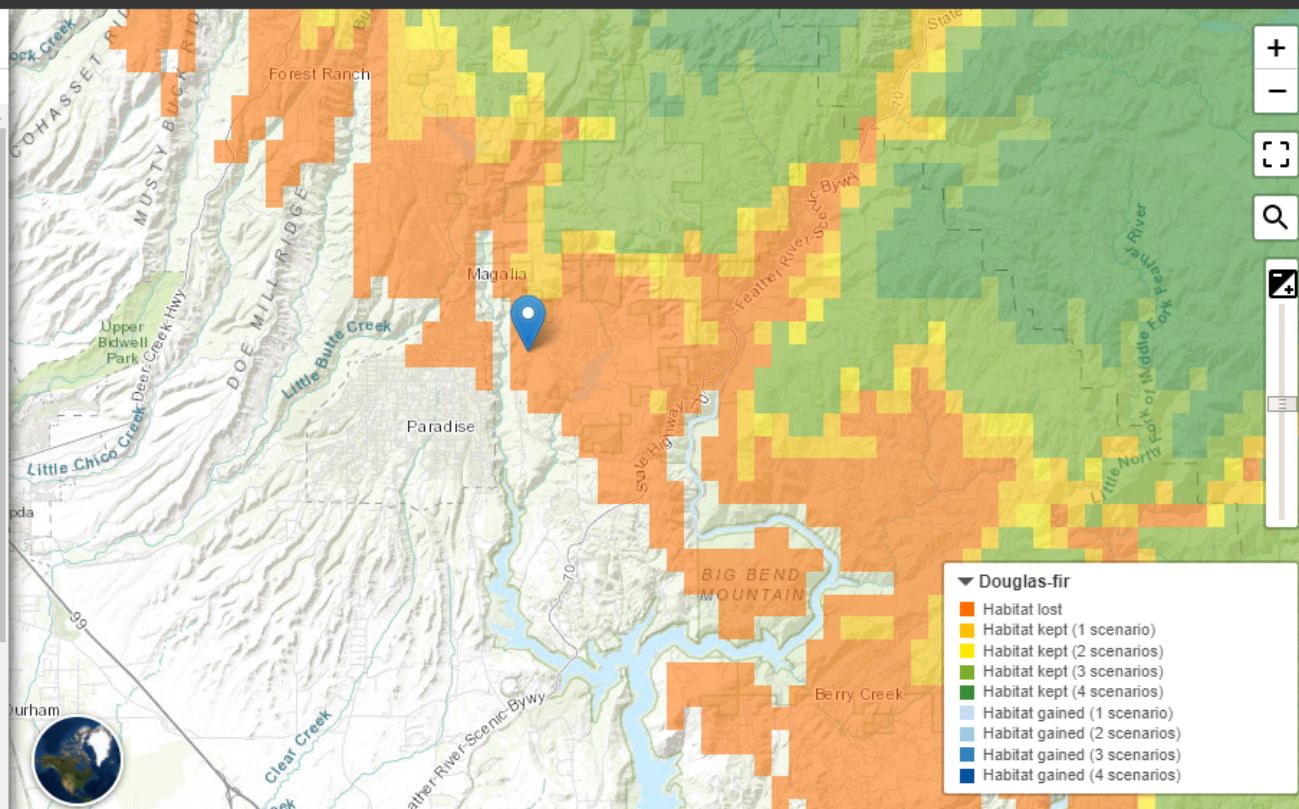
RCP 4.5

RCP 8.5

2011 - 2040

2041 - 2070

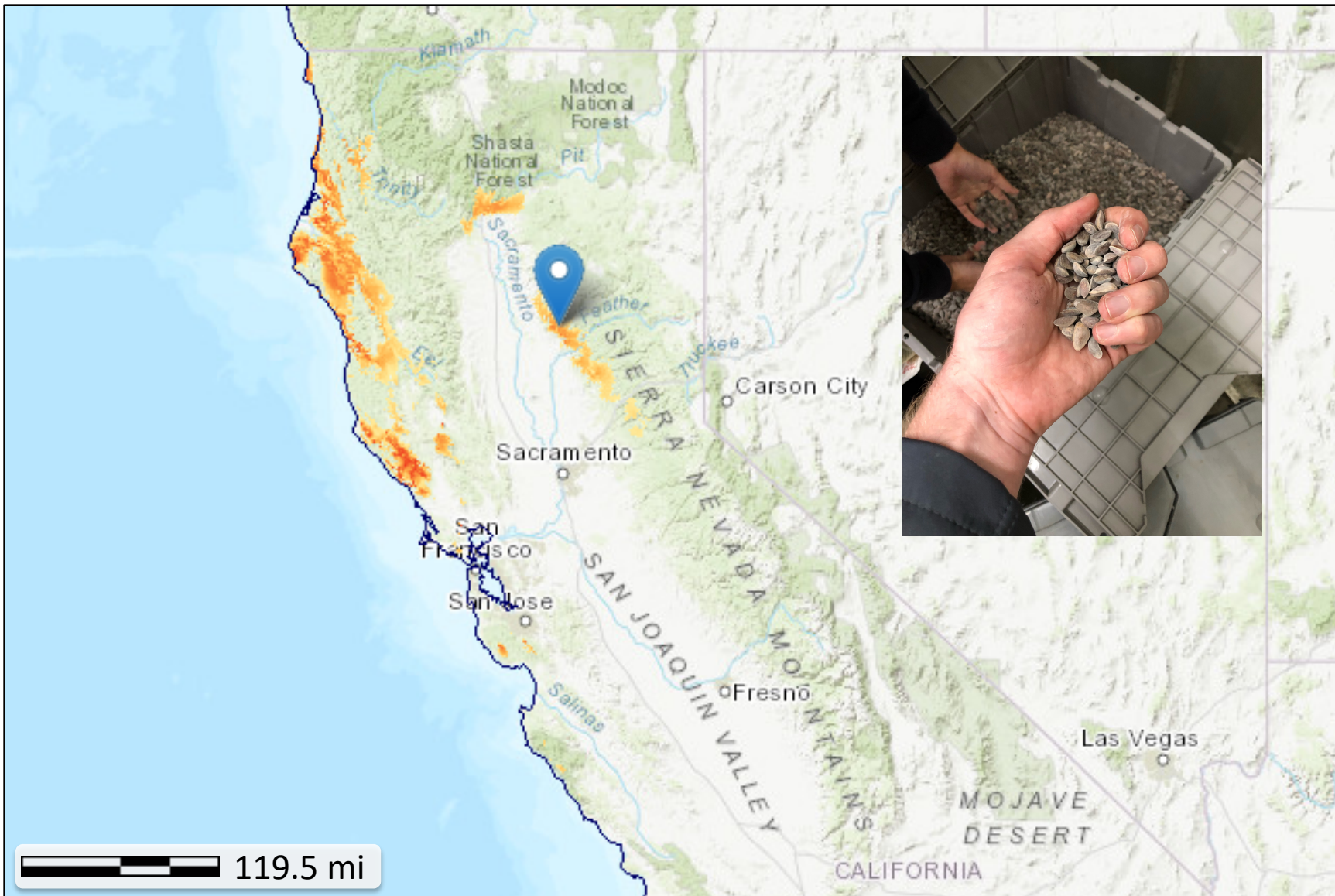
2071 - 2100



Transition Zone - Douglas Fir

42.33° N

127.41° W



119.5 mi

Low High

Match

34.97° N

113.24° W



Post-fire shrub dominance



California mixed conifer



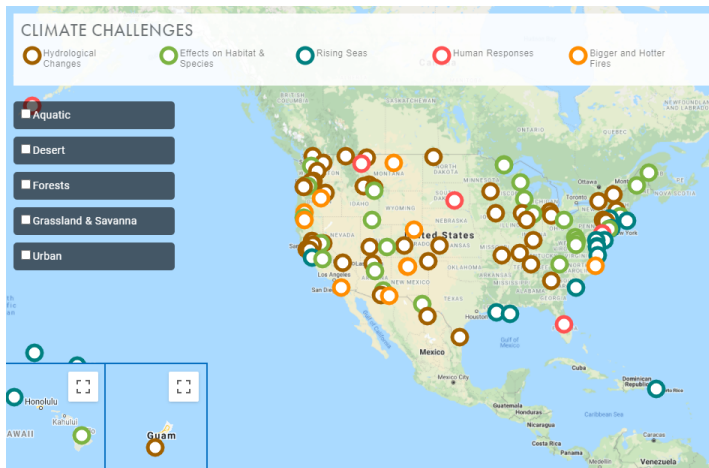
Oak and Gray Pine woodland/savannah



Transition



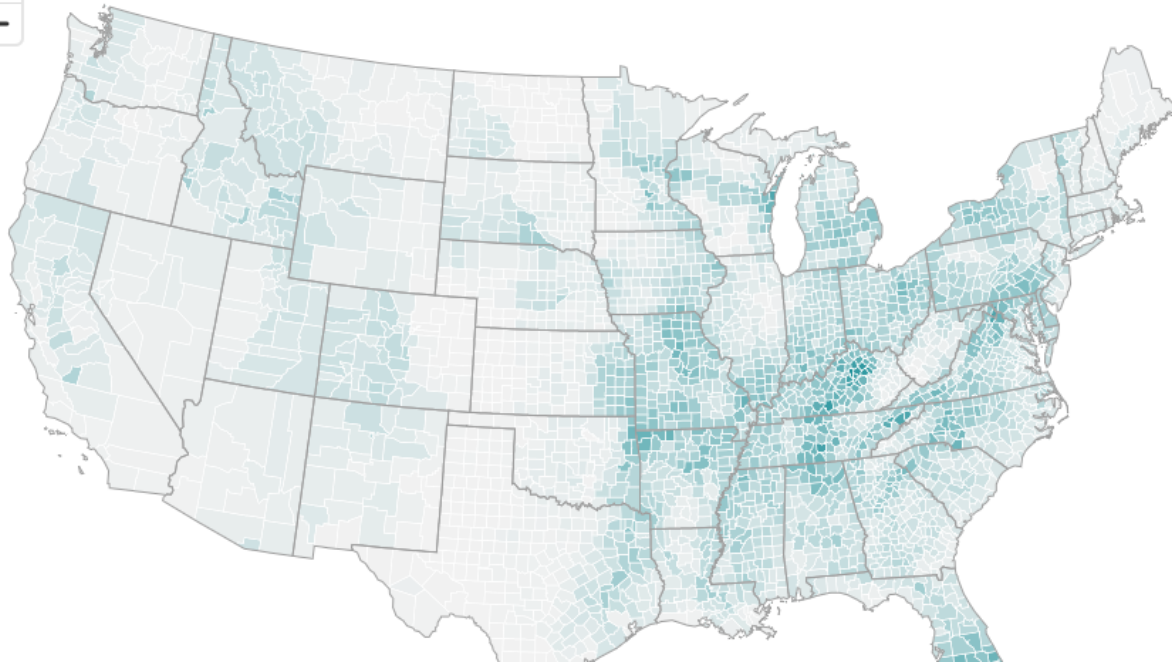
Monitoring and learning



Adaptive Silviculture for Climate Change (ASCC)



This is Happening Everywhere





There are up to 127 million acres* of opportunity in the United States to restore forest cover for climate mitigation.

Reforesting these areas with approximately 68 billion trees could capture 314 million tonnes of CO₂ per year, equivalent to removing 74.1 million cars from the road.



Total Opportunity


Acres











 Scale by county area 

Reforestation Hub

Challenges to the reforestation pipeline in the United States

Provisionally accepted The final, formatted version of the article will

be published soon.  [Notify me](#)

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¹The Nature Conservancy (United States), United States

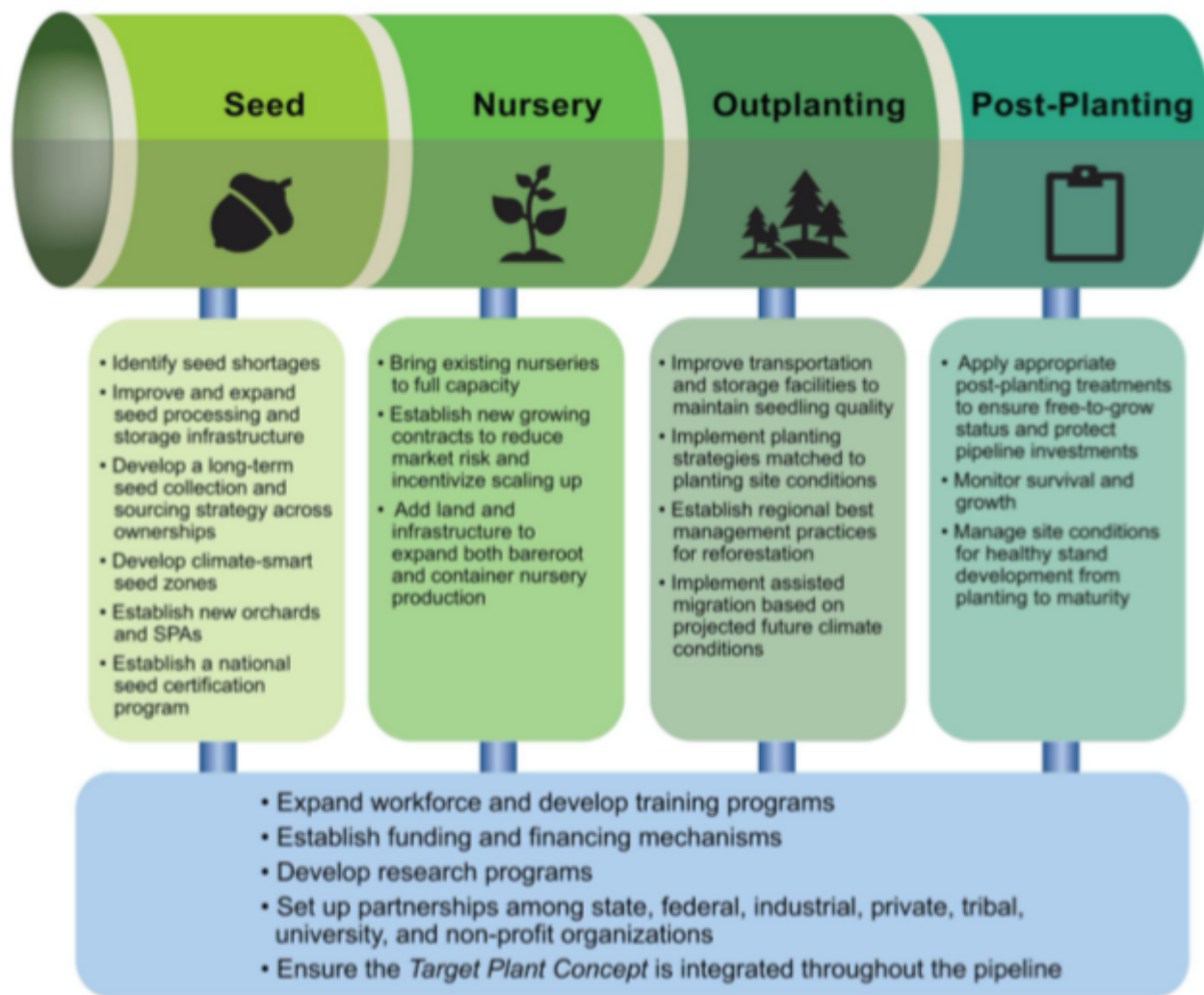
²Other, United States

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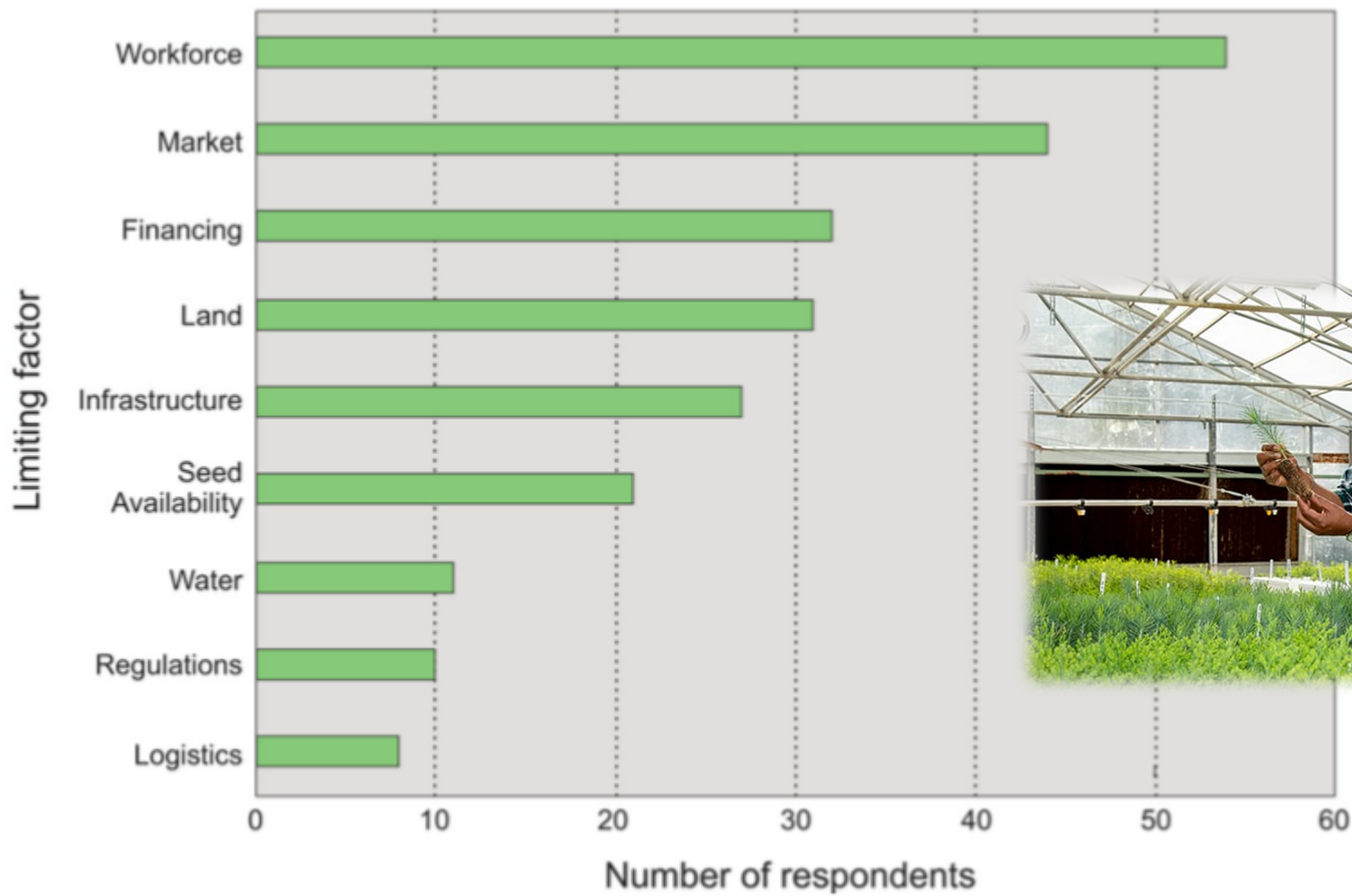
⁵Natural Climate Solutions Science, The Nature Conservancy, United States

Assessing the Reforestation Pipeline



Assessing the Reforestation Pipeline

Seedbanks and nurseries are the engine for landscape-scale reforestation



Challenges to the Nursery Sector



Thank you!

Austin Rempel

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