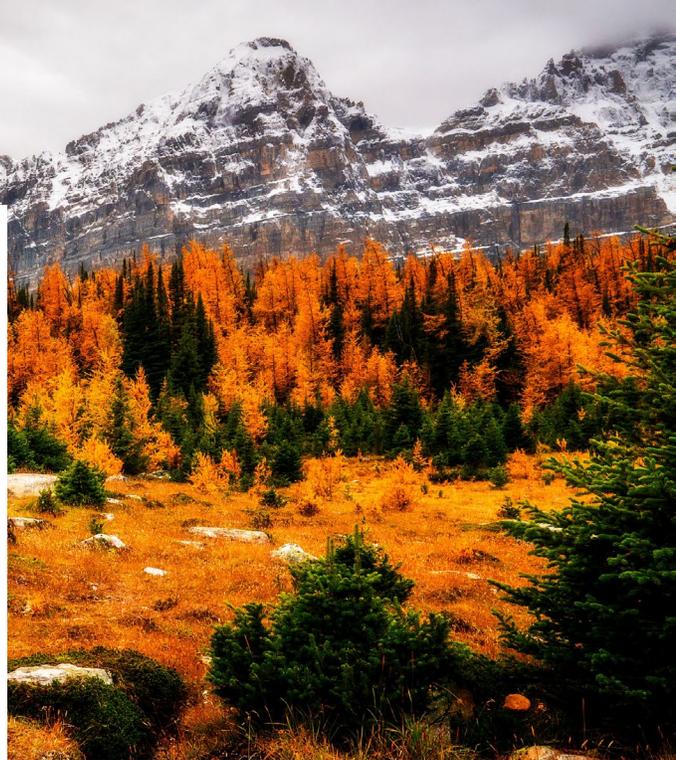


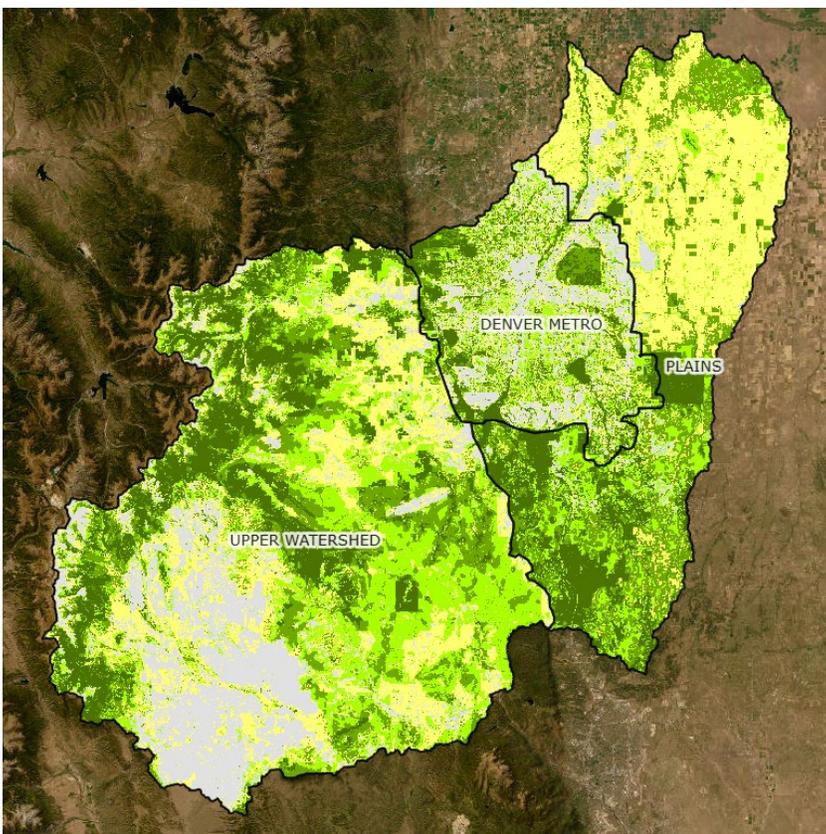


SOUTH PLATTE NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE



INVESTING IN THE WATERSHED

Stakeholders of the South Platte Watershed, including the Colorado State Forest Service, the US Forest Service, and the EPA, needed economic data to know where and how to prioritize future investments – for restoration and for conservation. The Project Team developed a framework that communicated the return on investment from ecological restoration and conservation – informing future grant applications & more.



ECOSYSTEM SERVICE VALUE

Each region of the South Platte is its own economic engine, providing immense ecosystem service value, amounting to the following:

UPPER WATERSHED

\$6.0B PER YEAR

DENVER METRO

\$795M PER YEAR

PLAINS

\$7.4B PER YEAR



PRIORITIZING INVESTMENT

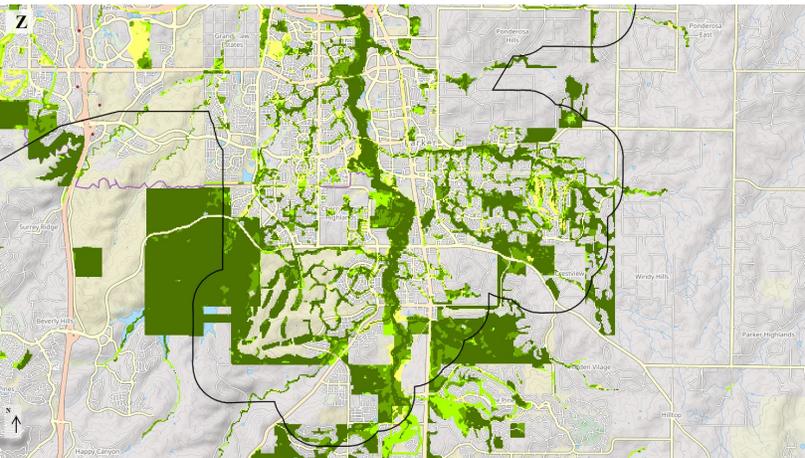
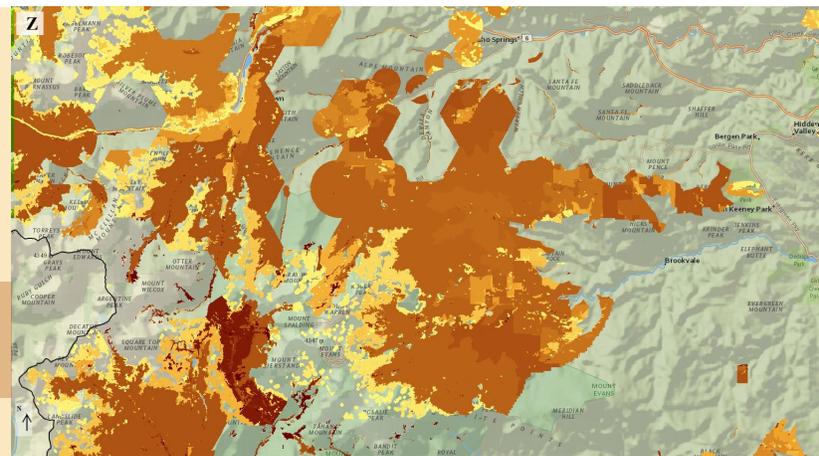
Prioritizing investments in ecosystem services enhances their capacity to sustain biodiversity, improve human well-being, and build resilience against environmental challenges.

Our research team used spatial data to highlight the most valuable habitat and the most threatened ecosystems. The examples below show how investments can focus on projects with the highest return.

Threats to Wildlife Habitat

Wildlife habitat evaluation identified critical landscapes at risk within the watershed. The highest category wildlife habitats represent an ecosystem service value of \$1.2B each year.

\$1.2 billion wildlife habitat hotspots under threat each year



Natural Infrastructure Connectivity

Connecting natural infrastructure throughout urban and rural areas can improve ecosystem function and habitat mobility. High-connectivity zones contribute ecosystem service values exceeding \$18M annually.

\$18 million in high connectivity zones

Losses Due to Urban Sprawl

Analysis of future development in the South Platte Watershed shows encroachment onto sensitive and valuable habitat. Nearly 24,000 acres of highly valuable habitat were estimated to be impacted by future development, a cost of \$61M each year.

\$61 million habitat loss each year

