

February 23, 2022

Douglas County Presentation

Environmental Impacts

San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council

Public Lands Advocacy

Millions of visitors every year

Come to the San Luis Valley from all parts of Colorado, and the USA to enjoy world class landscapes

Through thoughtful policy, more than 30 years of Agriculture and conservation partnerships



The RWR proposal isn't offering anything new

- In the late 80's AWDI "we will make so much money that people like you will be able to sit on a Board to help us decide how to spend it"
- It's important to learn from history
 - The SLV has been mobilized for over 30 years
 - We understand what happened in Owens Valley, CA and Crowley County, CO
- **We engaged in two ballot initiatives, 1991 and 1998**
 - First, 1991-local, 5 counties 98.7 % of voters said YES to fund court case
 - Second, 1998- 2 statewide. 70% of Colorado voted against the crippling water management schemes proposed by Stockman's. 2 to 1 in Douglas County

UNITY: State of Colorado voters continue to stand behind the San Luis Valley and rural communities, deep roots.



Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve Act of 2000

Expanding the Great Sand Dunes monument into a National Park. Also created the Forest Service Baca mountain tract and US Fish and Wildlife Service Baca National Wildlife refuge.

- **Through bi-partisan effort, the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve Act was passed, converting the 97,000 acre Baca Ranch into public lands.**
- \$33 million was allocated for this purpose. Designation was signed by Interior Secretary Gail Norton in 2004.

Great Sand Dunes, anchor of conservation



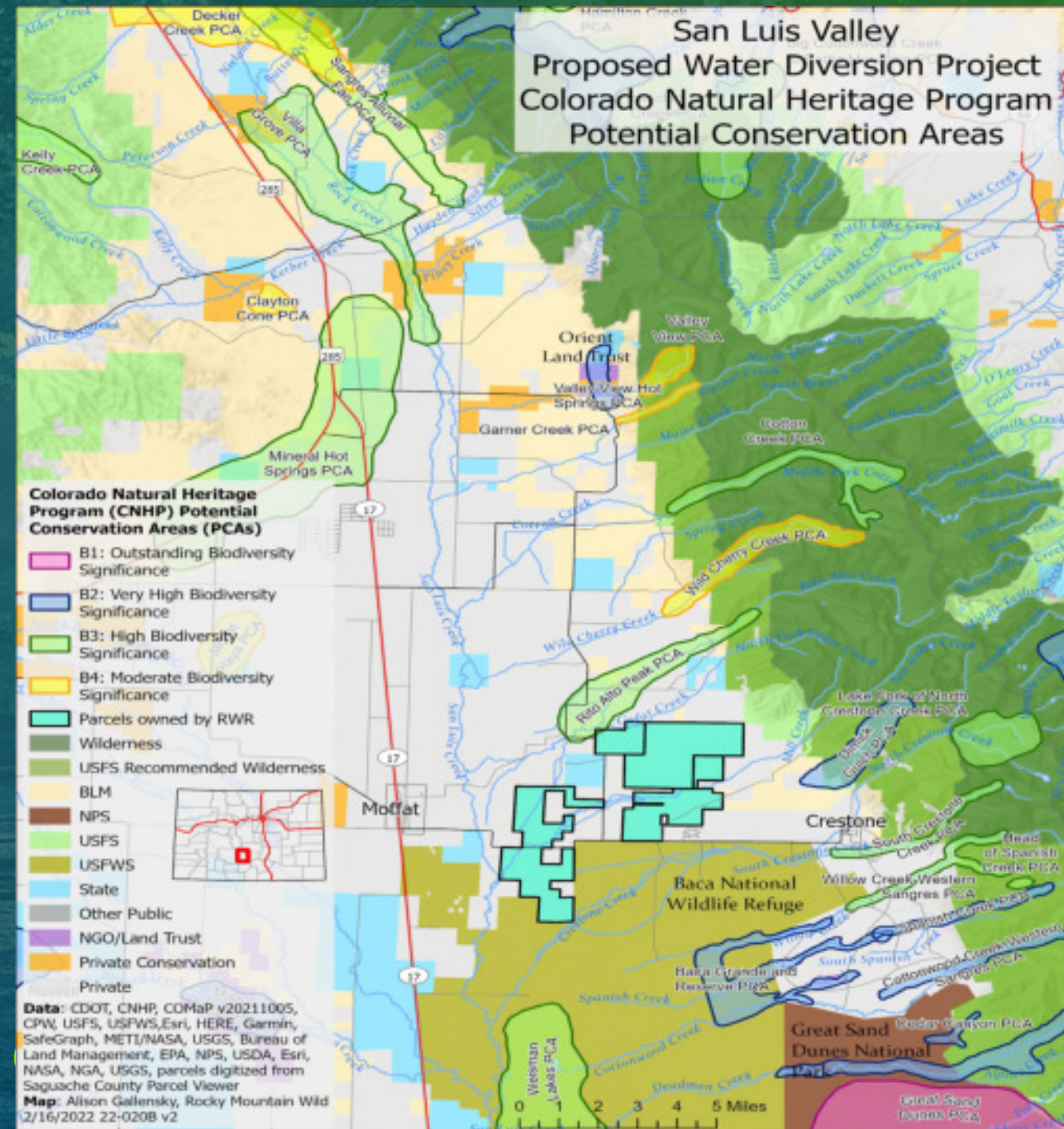
Sangre de Cristo Wilderness 1992

Potential Conservation Areas

½ million acres, were designated Wilderness from Poncha Pass to the Great Sand Dunes.

The water that RWR is proposing to pump flows directly below this designation

Orientation of RWR proposal

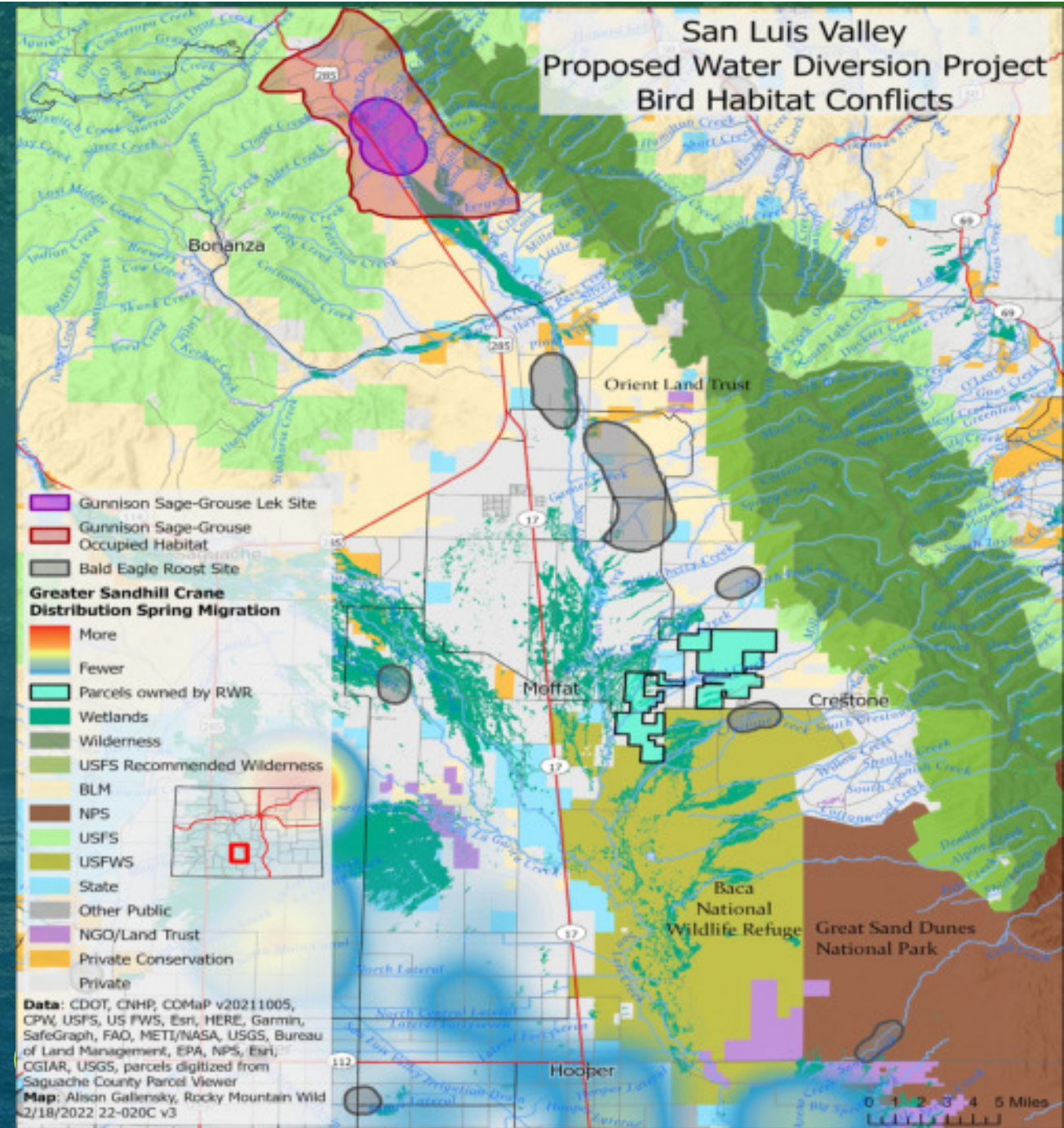


Wetlands and birds

Wetlands are both the Valley's most valuable and vulnerable ecosystems. **While only representing 2% of Colorado's total area, wetland and riparian habitats support over 80% of wildlife species throughout their lives.**

The Valley supports at least

- 13 threatened and endangered species
- 260 species of birds, including the sandhill cranes.
- The Monte Vista Crane Festival has celebrated this 25,000 crane migration for almost 40 years.



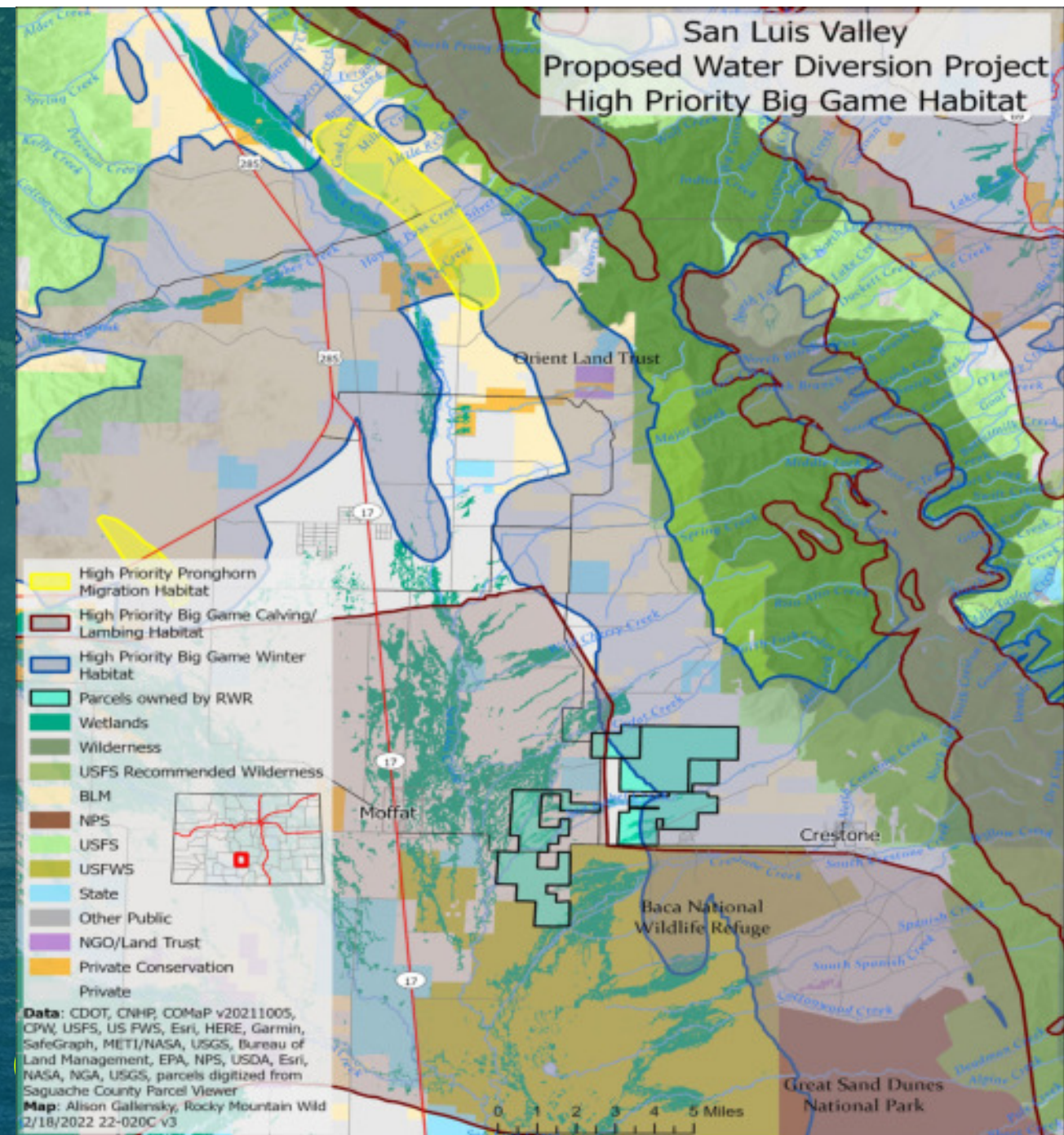
Colorado Parks and Wildlife
2018 Total Economic
Contribution of Outdoor
Recreation in south central
Colorado: \$6,384,000

\$27 million Great Sand Dunes –
600,000 visitors each year

RWR puts all wildlife, including
threatened/endangered species, at
risk.

That's why 25 environmental and
conservation groups have come
out in opposition.

Colorado recreates in the San Luis
Valley



Big Game Winter Range



Public Policy and the law

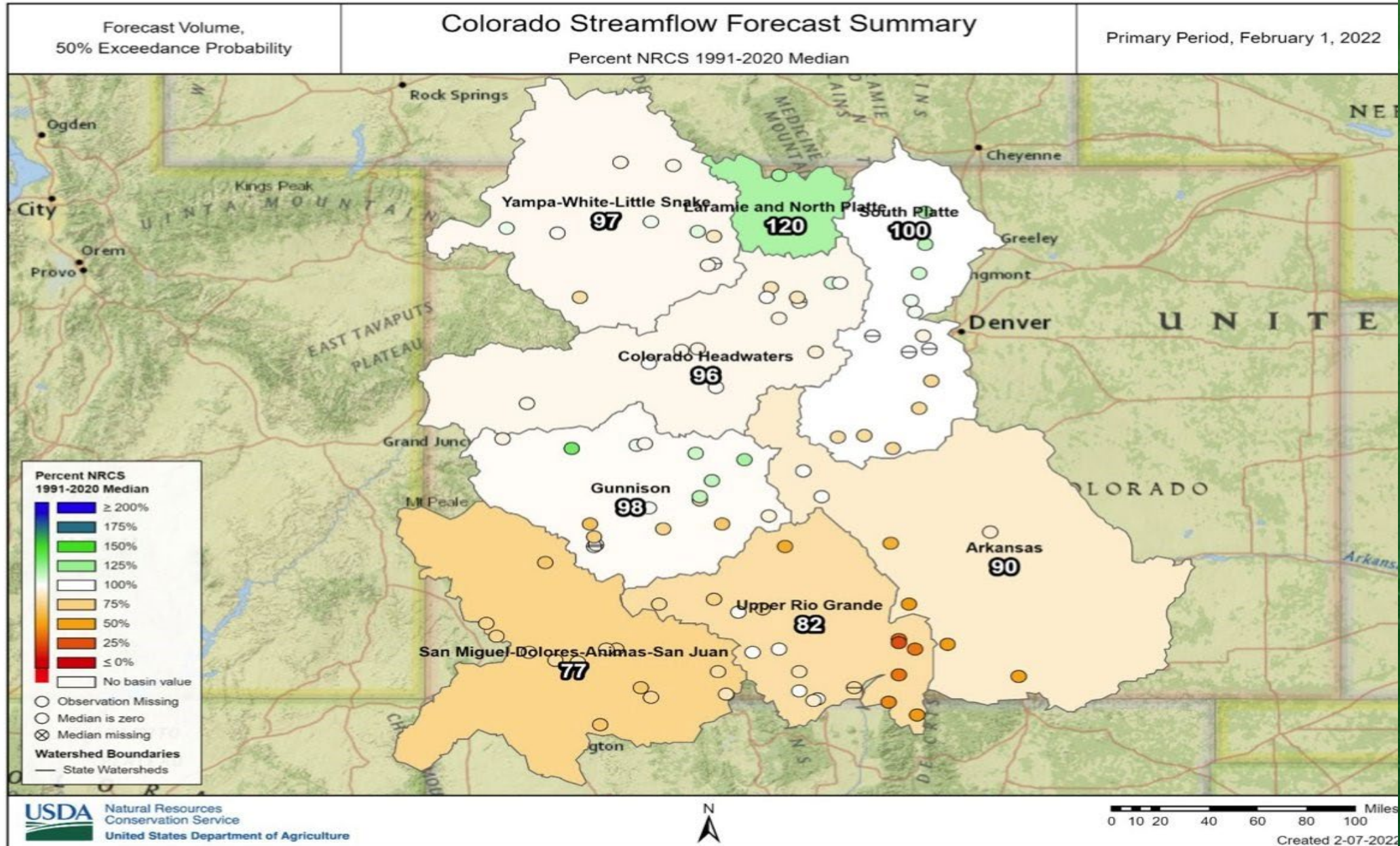
- 1991- Division 3 Water Court Judge Ogburn decision-water is tributary
- 1992- San Luis Valley Water Resources Protection Act-federal nexus
- 1992 - Sangre de Cristo Wilderness –federal nexus
- 2000- Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve Act-federal nexus
- 2004- SB 04-222 State Water and Irrigation Act
- 2009 - Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area
(generated 99.4 million in local economy in 2021)

Ongoing- local County 1041 Regulations

Saguache County-significant recharge area, Chaffee County, Park County

The San Luis Valley is a gem for all of
Colorado to enjoy and cherish

Streamflow



Thank you

Christine Canaly, Director
San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council
P.O. Box 223, Alamosa, CO 81101
(719) 589-1518
www.slvec.org
info@slvec.org

American Avocet,
Sand Dunes

