



Valuing Nature in the Mat-Su

Corinne Smith, The Nature Conservancy
Mat-Su Salmon Symposium 2012



The Nature Conservancy

*Our mission is to conserve
the lands and waters
on which all life depends.*

[Nature.org/alaska](https://www.nature.org/alaska)



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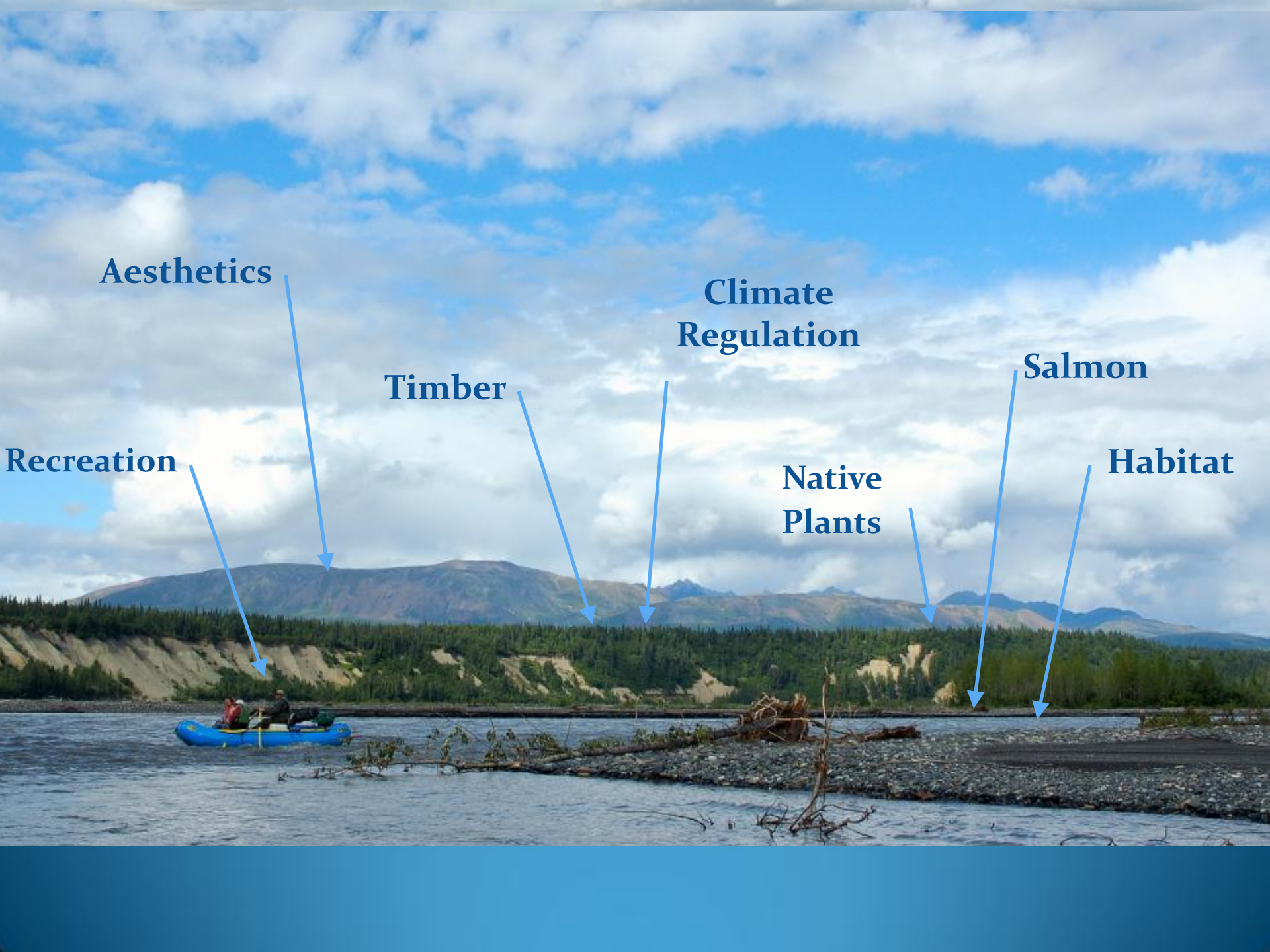
1. Ecosystem Services Valuation
2. Fiscal Impacts of Land Use Patterns

What are ecosystem services?

- The natural environment provides many of the things humans need for survival, including breathable air, drinkable water, food for nourishment, and stable atmospheric conditions, to name a few.
- Ecosystems perform many functions, but only functions that provide human benefits are considered ecosystem goods or services.
- Every ecosystem produces a suite of ecosystem services.

What are ecosystem services?

1. **Goods:** food, water, fiber, fuel, carbon
2. **Services:** disturbance regulation, water quality
3. **Support Functions:** pollination, habitat
4. **Cultural:** recreation, spiritual, aesthetic



Aesthetics

**Climate
Regulation**

Salmon

Timber

Recreation

**Native
Plants**

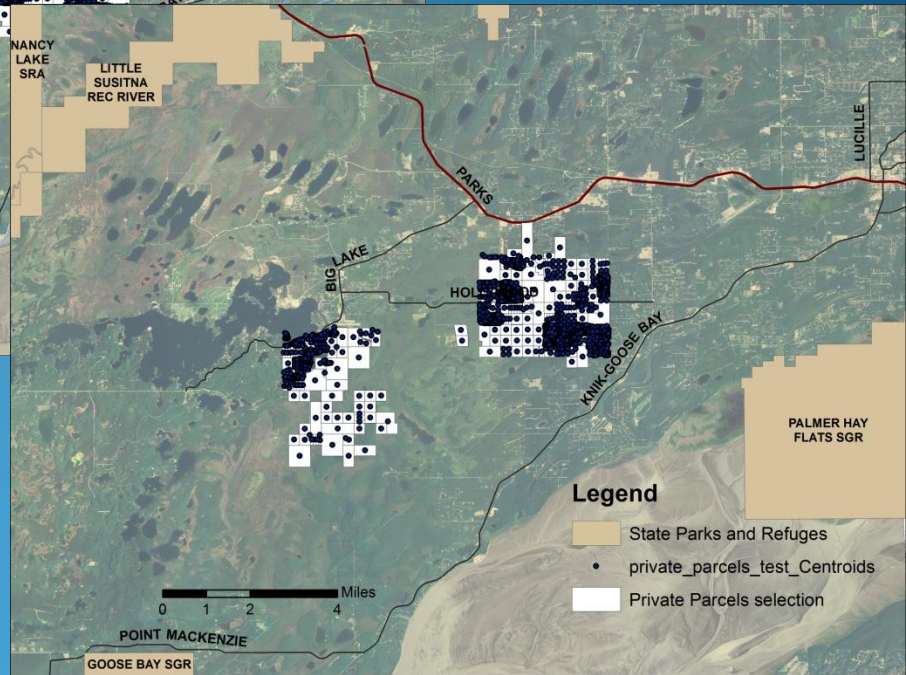
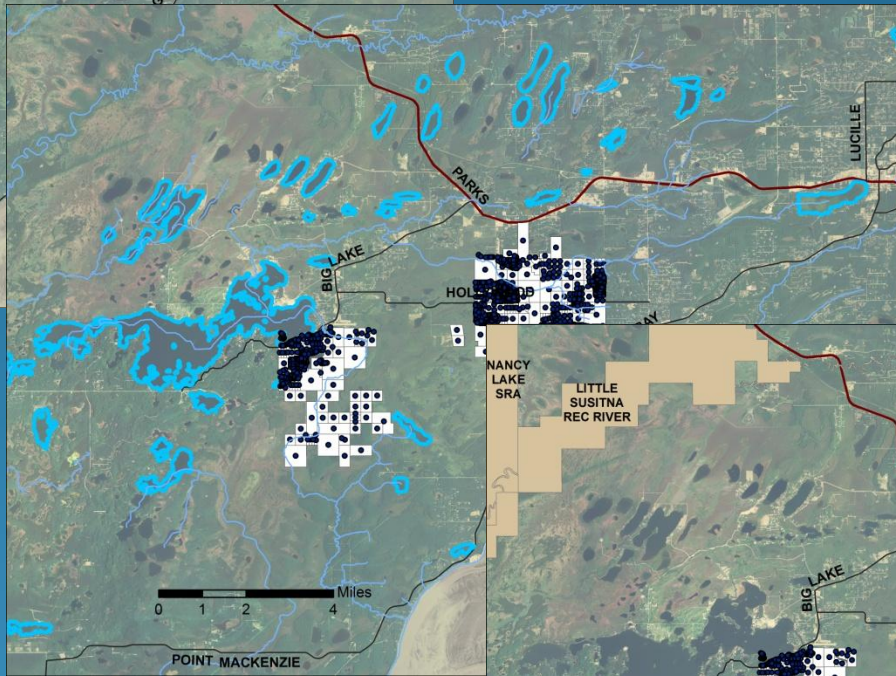
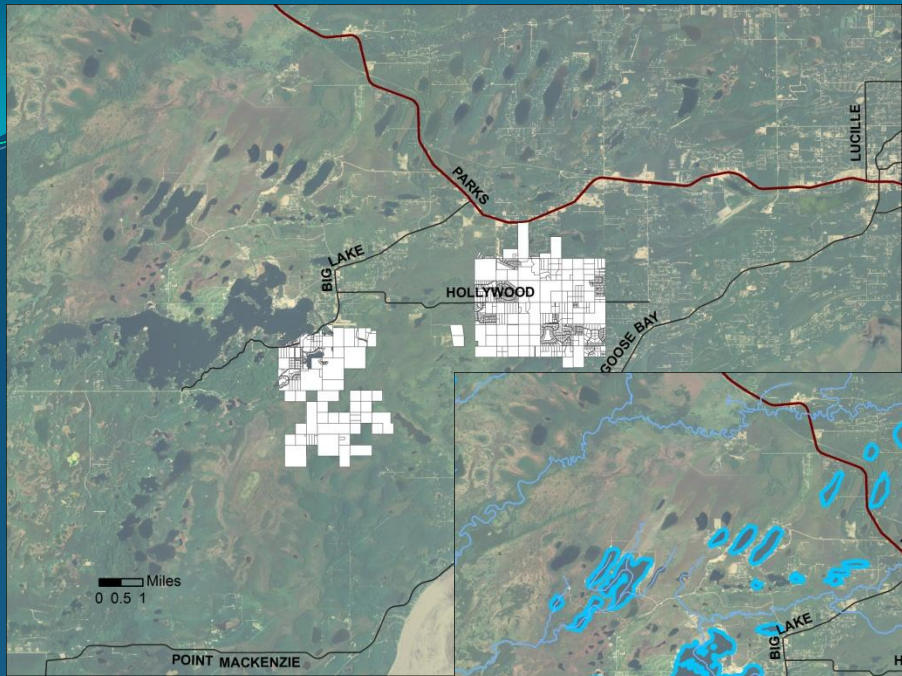
Habitat



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1. Ecosystem Services Valuation

- I. Private Property Hedonic Pricing
- II. Global ecosystem services
- III. Local ecosystem services





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1. Ecosystem Services Valuation

I. Private Property (hedonic pricing)

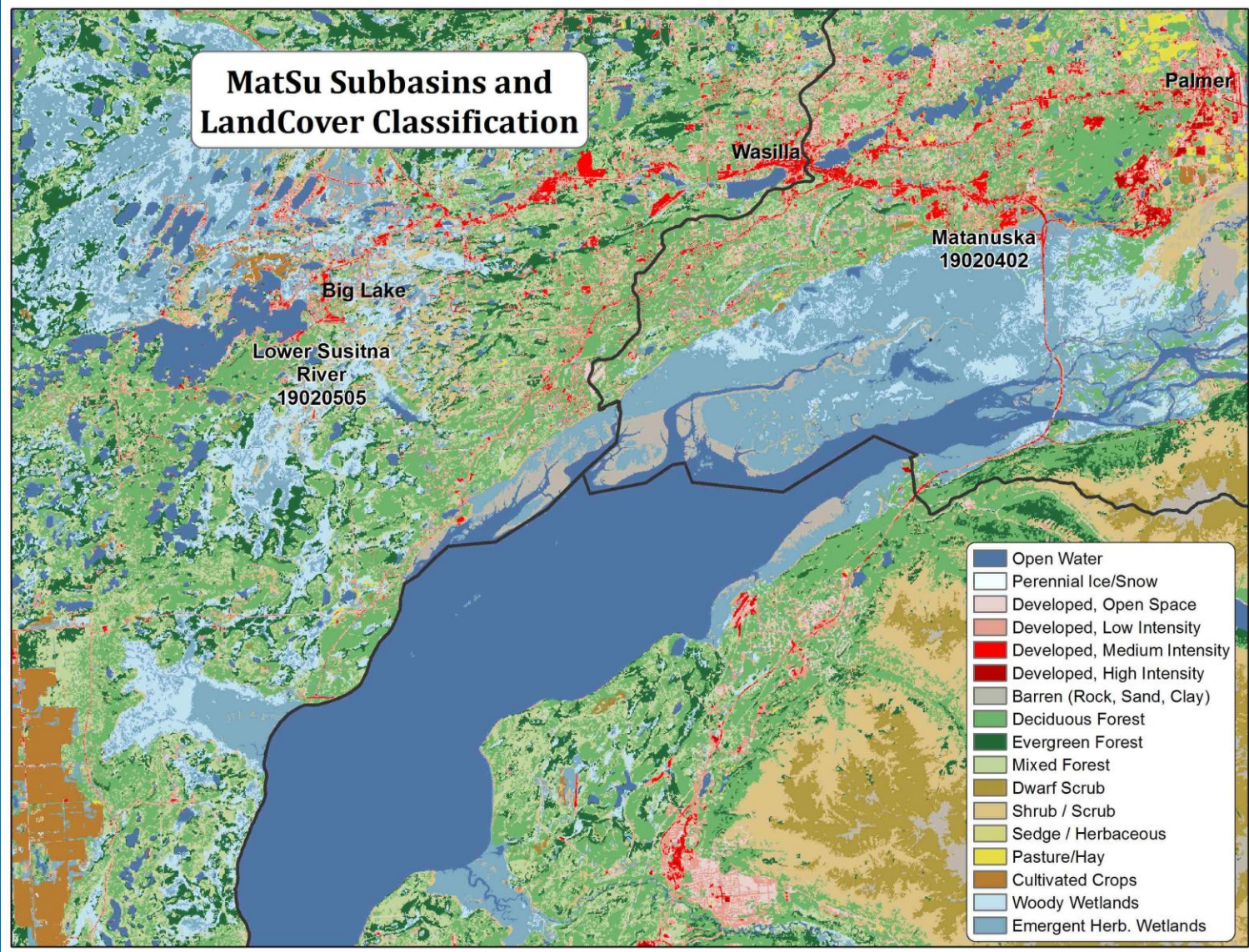
II. Global ecosystem services

III. Local ecosystem services

Global ecosystem services

- gas regulation (e.g., carbon storage)
- climate regulation (e.g., carbon sequestration)
- disturbance regulation (e.g. flood protection)
- soil retention
- waste regulation (e.g., water filtration)

Benefit Transfer methods





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1. Ecosystem Services Valuation

I. Private Property (hedonic pricing)

II. Global ecosystem services

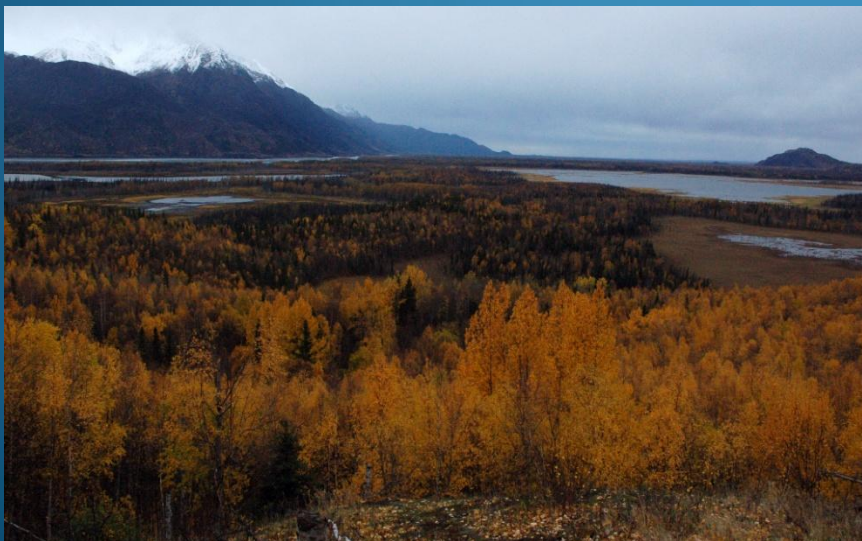
III. Local ecosystem services

Local ecosystem services

- Recreation
- Aesthetics
- Science and education
- Spiritual
- Historic and cultural
- Fish & wildlife habitat and biodiversity

Survey of Mat-Su residents

- Contingent valuation
- Willingness to pay





Project Partners

The Nature Conservancy
Great Land Trust
Alaska Farmland Trust
US Fish and Wildlife Service
The Mat-Su Borough

Consulting Experts

Institute of Social & Economics Research
Earth Economics
Western Demographics, Inc.

Financial Support

US Fish and Wildlife Service
Bullitt Foundation
Moore Foundation



Thank you!

Questions or Comments?



The Nature Conservancy in the Mat-Su

- Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership
- Improved understanding of healthy salmon runs and healthy salmon habitat
- Build the case for salmon conservation



Wasilla
1949

Aero-Metric Inc.

Wasilla
2005

