

Southeastern Gap Analysis: Products and Accessibility

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Abstract: The Southeast Gap Analysis Project (SEGAP; <http://www.basic.ncsu.edu/segap/>) is part of the U.S. Geological Survey National Gap Analysis Program. The SEGAP includes nine Southeastern states (Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia). The main focus of this regional GAP is to develop datasets and tools for use in conservation planning efforts such as State Wildlife Action Plans. We present the Gap Analysis process including the use of satellite imagery to map vegetation, developing databases for modeling predicted species distributions, compiling land stewardship data, and identifying conservation “gaps” (areas of conservation interest outside the conservation network). We will highlight the results of the recently completed analyses for over 600 vertebrate species in the Southeast. In addition to standard hard-copy data distribution (CDs and DVDs), the Southeast Gap Analysis Program has developed an online conservation decision support tool (DST) that uses GAP data. Potential users of the tool provided input on functionality and ease of use through workshop participation, written questionnaires, and personal interviews. This DST was designed to allow users to quickly access, quantify, and publish maps using GAP data sets (land cover, vertebrate, and stewardship) without the need for proprietary Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software or an extensive knowledge of GIS. We demonstrate the use of this tool with the Southwest regional dataset and discuss the timeframe for online availability of the Southeast dataset.

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