

A collaboration among conservation partners = acceleration of ecological site descriptions

- Natureserve: Interpretation of existing data, assembly of technical team and peer review.
- Heritage Program: Natural community descriptions and botanical expertise.
- Academia: existing data points of reference communities, refinement of STMs.
- NRCS: soil site key and technologies (plant/SSURGO representation).

Who benefits and how?

- Natureserve: refinement of the NVC; expansion of regional conservation goals (Initiative Planning Areas Overlap)
- Heritage Programs and Academia: expansion of inventory of natural communities; spatial representation of plant/soil correlations and increased knowledge of soil-plant relationships
- NRCS: accelerated efforts to promote ESD development, especially in areas where little existing vegetation data is known; alignment of the NVC and expansion of client base

The Future

- Current NRCS-Natureserve projects and proposals: CIG grant for the upper MS river; assisting USFWS inventory in New England; lower MS alluvium, desired (MRBI, MBHI).
- NRCS/UNC, NC State and Duke: expansion of ESD development in the Piedmont using existing data; funding for continued inventories of reference communities.