

Biodiversity and Dam Removal

Dam Removal Funds Symposium April 30, 2024

Erin Singer McCombs, Southeast Conservation Director



**AMERICAN
RIVERS**



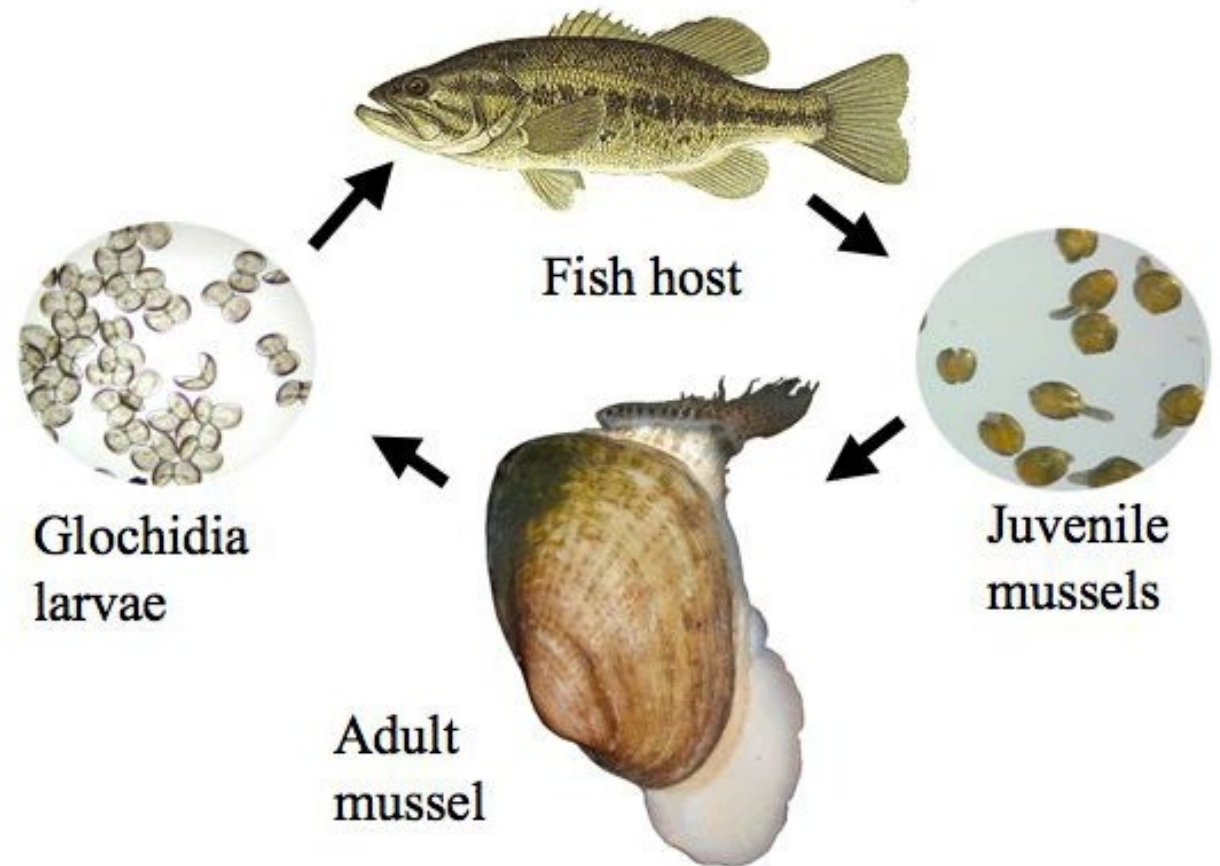
ERIN AND ANDREA IN THE OCONALUFTEE, GARY PEEPLES



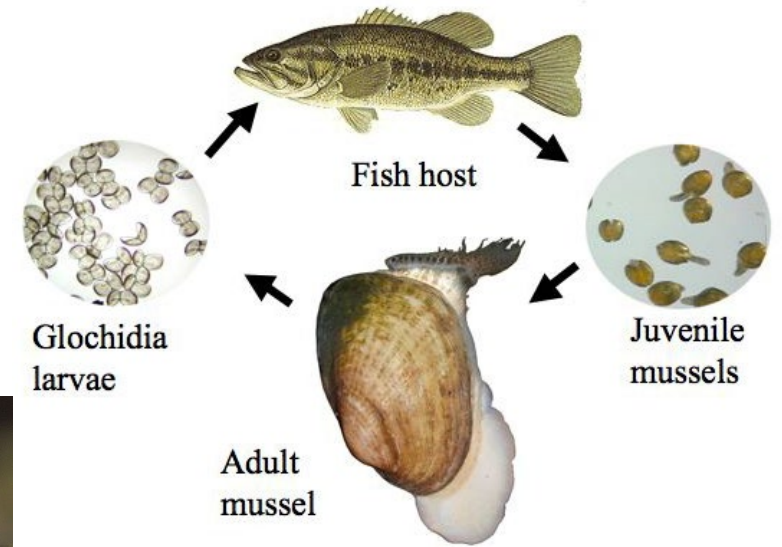


About freshwater mussels

- Diversity and variety of species
- Highly imperiled
- Life history not fully understood
- Ecological role
- Impact of dams

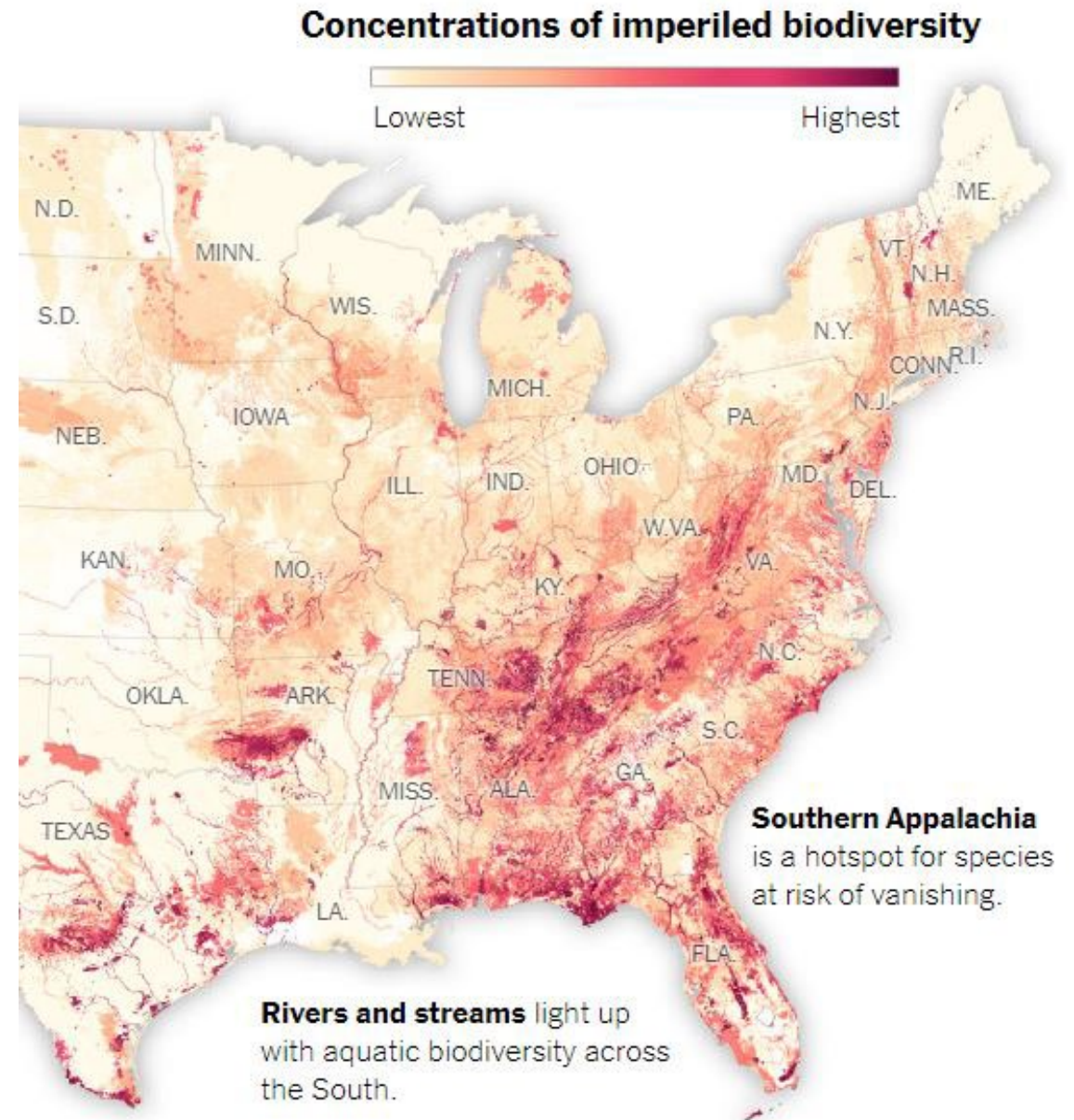


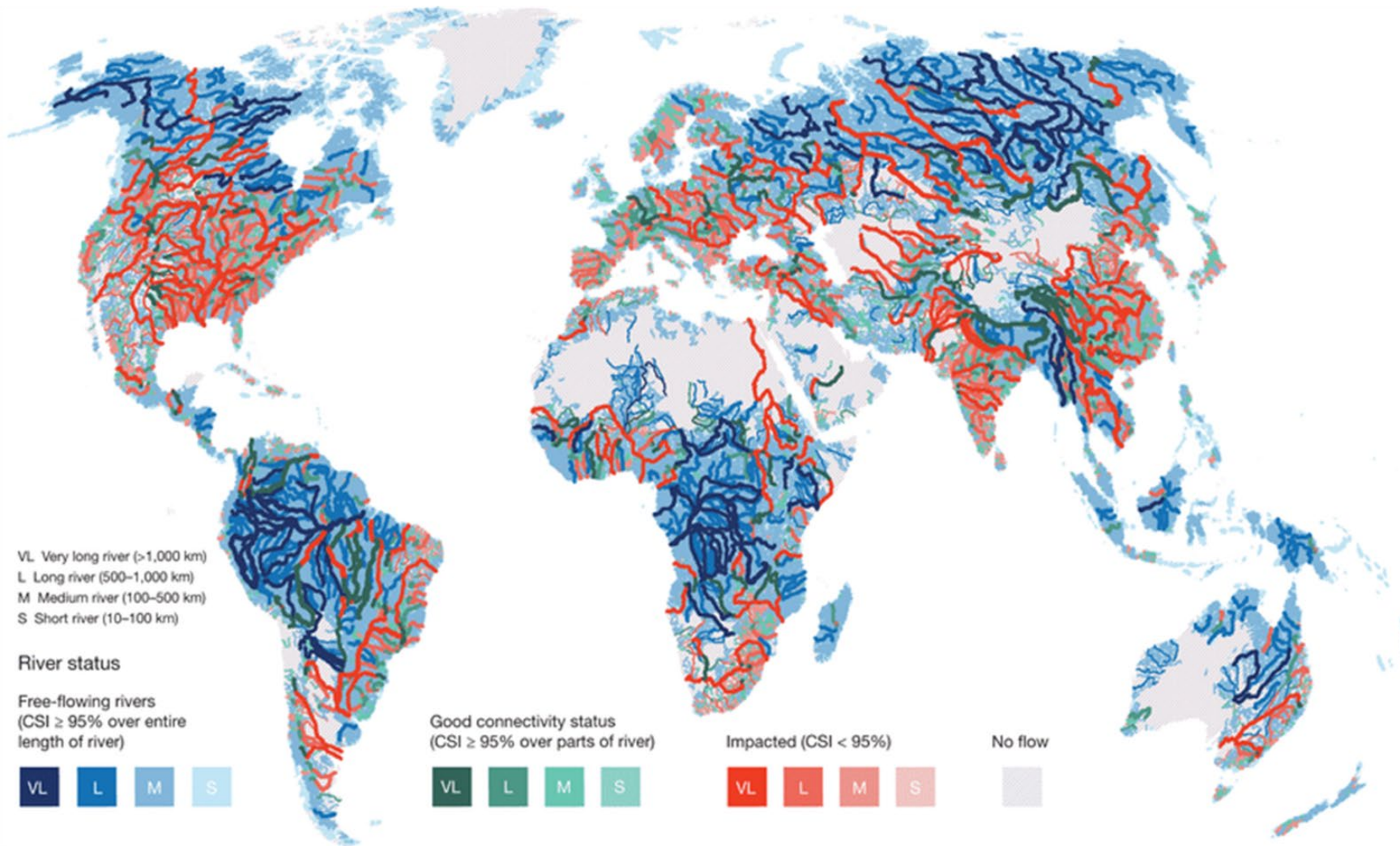
About freshwater mussels



Freshwater Biodiversity in Crisis

- Only 1% of the planet is Freshwater
- Freshwater populations declining faster than terrestrial or marine
- Warming climates increase risk of extinction for freshwater aquatic species more than terrestrial ones





Dams and reservoirs and the up-and downstream fragmentation and flow regulation caused by those dams are the leading contributors to the loss of river connectivity.





Dams are a leading reason for the loss of freshwater biodiversity

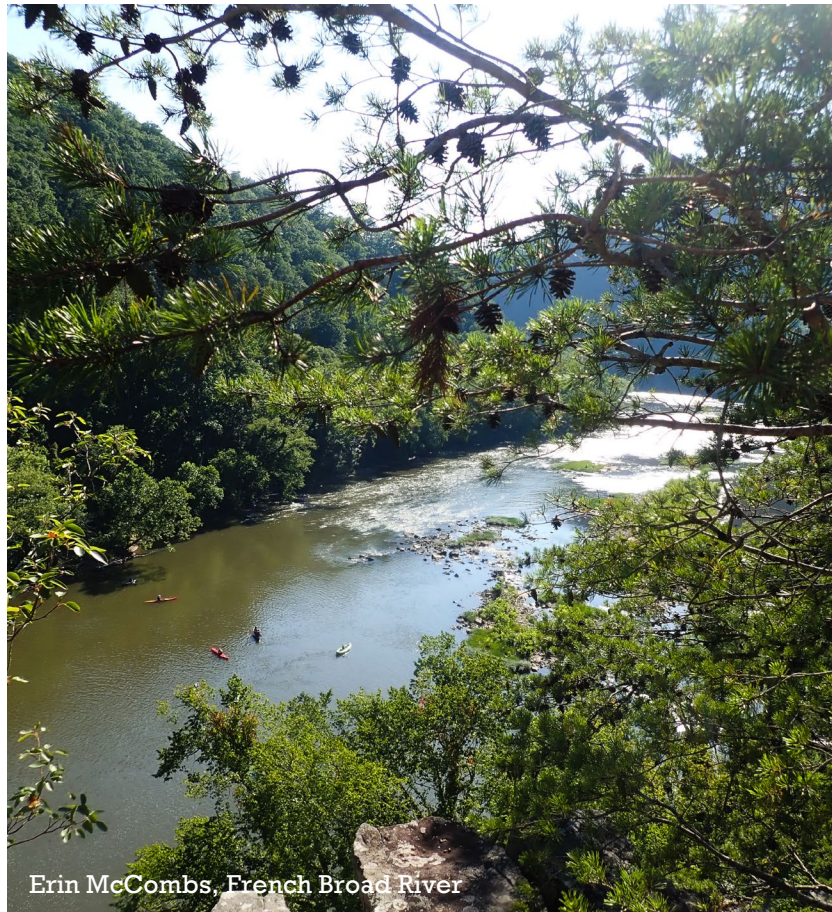


Conservation Goals Achievable through Dam Removal



Lynette Batt, Steels Mill, Post Removal

Quality Habitat



Erin McCombs, French Broad River

Connectivity



Erin McCombs, Tuckasegee River, Sicklefins Redhorse

Target Species



SE Threatened and Endangered Species



USFWS, River Unknown

Brook Trout



USFWS, Cane River

Appalachian Elktoe



USFWS, Upper Rocky River

Cape Fear Shiner





Life Depends on RiversSM

