



Southern Instream Flow Network  
Updates, Research Agenda,  
and Data Sprint  
WebEx – March 25, 2010

# SIFN WebEx

## Agenda

- Introductions and state updates
- Communications update (Marilyn O'Leary)
- Southern Instream Flow Research Agenda  
(Mary Davis and Scott Robinson)
- Data Sprint (Robert Burgholzer)

# SIFN Purpose



- To implement and improve protective instream flow policies in 15 southern states by providing science-based resources and opening lines of communication.

# SIFN Communications Update



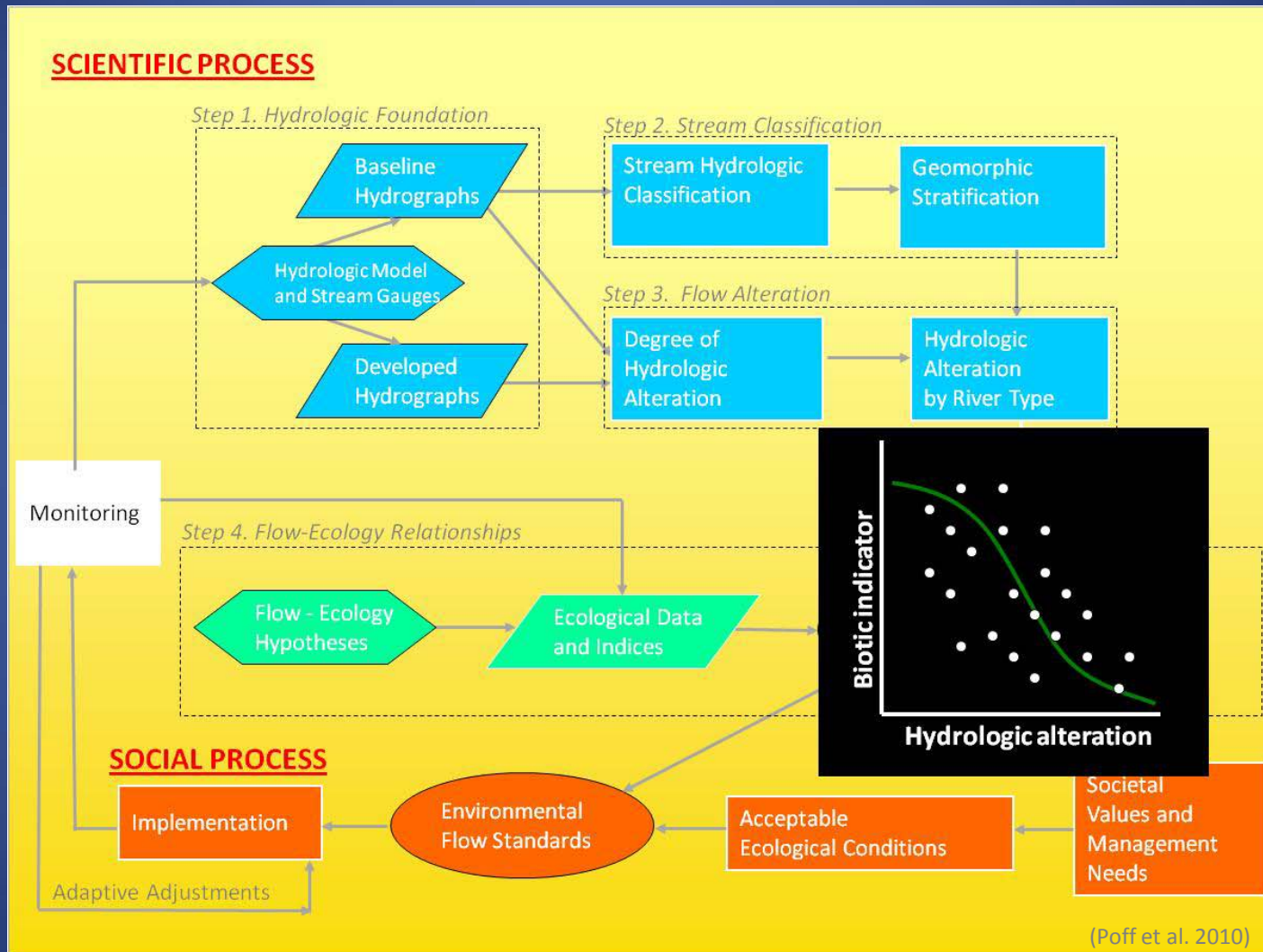
- Communication Committee
- Website Materials
- Additional support

# Southern Instream Flow Research Agenda

[www.southeastaquatics.net/programs/sifn](http://www.southeastaquatics.net/programs/sifn)

- **Problem:** The limited focus on research and funding for instream flows has resulted in a lack of science to support protective instream flow standards.
- **Objective:** to highlight research needs and coordinate sources of funding and research to address these needs.
- **Goal:** to ensure that instream flow research is focused on the needs of water resource managers for scientifically credible and protective state instream flow standards and practices.

# Ecological Limits of Hydrologic Alteration (ELOHA)



# Southern Instream Flow Research Agenda

## Priority Research Topics

1. Develop a regional river classification system
2. Identify commonalities in ecosystem responses to flow alterations
3. Compile regional aquatic ecology data sets
4. Develop hypotheses for regional ecological responses to flow alteration
5. Perform field studies to test ecological responses to altered flow regimes

# Southern Instream Flow Research Agenda Implementation

## **Immediate need (by June 2010):**

- Prepare budgets to fund instream flow research in FY 11
- Initiate collaboration with regional researchers to develop flow alteration – ecological response hypothetical relationships and implement field studies to test them
- Obtain initial commitment of resources to initiate development of regional river classification system , identification of common hydrologic threats, and the compilation of the aquatic ecology data base

## **Short-term Tasks and Needs (By December 2010)**

- Expand on efforts to secure funding and research interest in the Southern Instream Flow Research Agenda
- Secure funding to extend funding for the Southern Instream Flow Network for three years (current funding expires in December 2010)

## **Long-term Goal**

- Establish a Southern Instream Flow Research Program that would serve to
  - promote instream flow research in the region,
  - serve as a clearing house for regional instream flow information,
  - facilitate communications among state water resource managers, and
  - help ensure protective instream flow standards are adopted by southern states .

# Southern Instream Flow Research Agenda

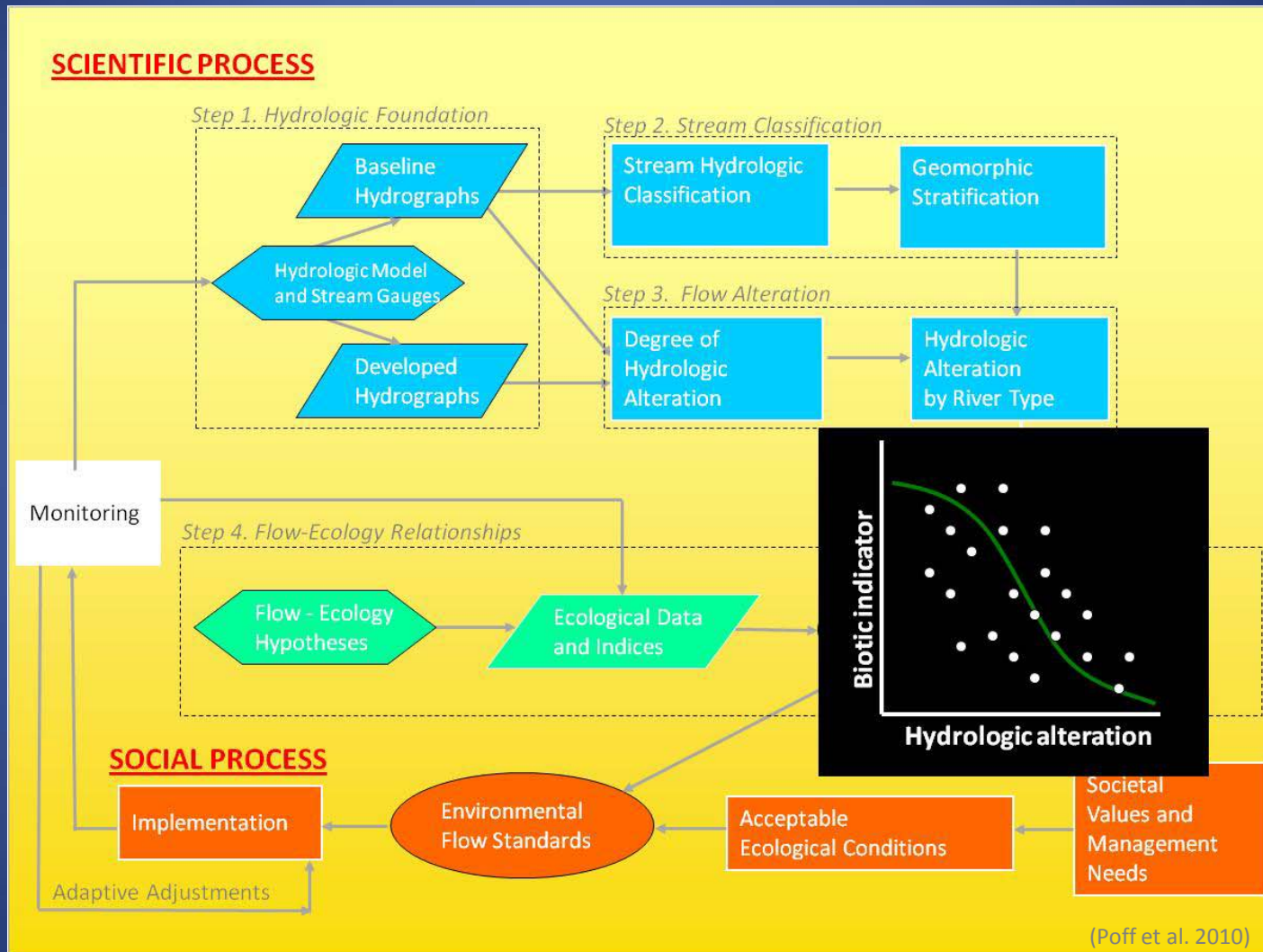
## Call for Endorsements



Photo: TNC/Malcolm Hodges

- Instream Flow Council
- The Nature Conservancy
- American Fisheries Society
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Auburn University
- SARP member organizations
- Other federal and state agencies
- Other research institutions

# Ecological Limits of Hydrologic Alteration (ELOHA)



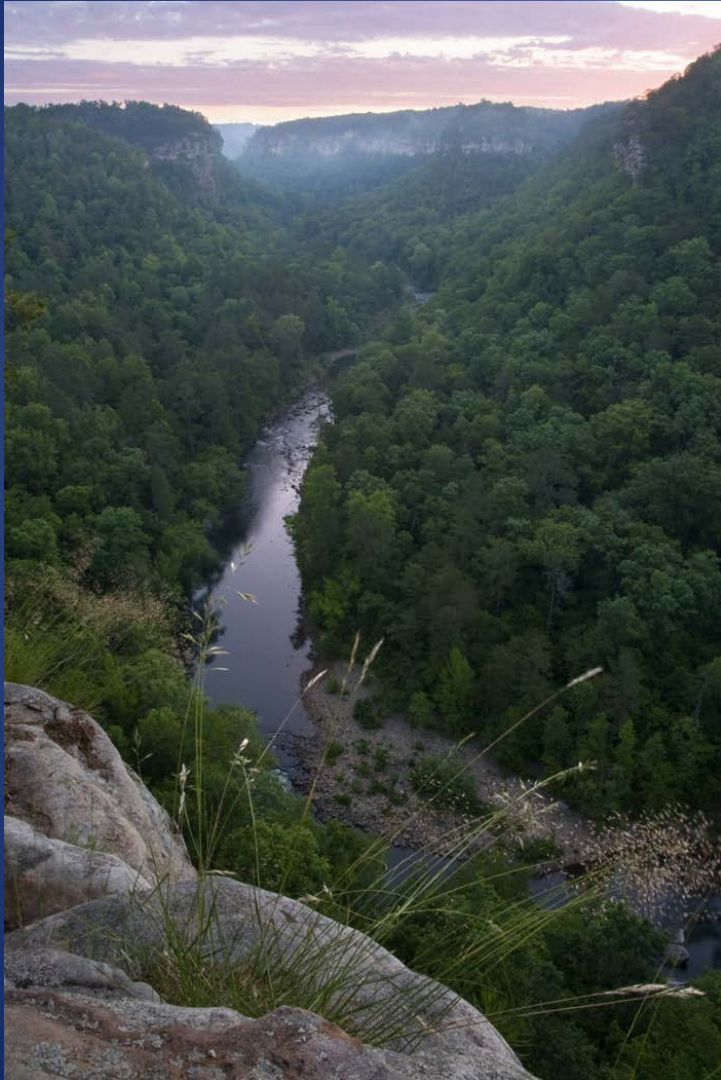


# SIFN Data Sprint

## Introduction

- **Purpose:** Compile regional aquatic ecology data sets to provide information to
  - form and test flow-ecology hypotheses
  - Identify information gaps and research needs
  - develop guidelines to improve the comparability of future study results
- **Objective:** To provide a large, unified, geographically tagged and easy to access database pertaining to the health of individuals and groups of aquatic species under a variety of flow conditions and southeastern stream classes.
- **Approach:** Wiki to Workshop

# Data Sprint



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# SIFN Data Sprint Committees

1. Data Classes (contact: Mary Davis)
  - Attributes – what data was collected?
    - geographic,
    - temporal,
    - Population: occurrence, population count, and/or size/age distribution
2. Data Requirements (contact: Mary Davis)
  - Source – who collected it?
  - Integrity - do we trust methods, how much?
  - How do we assign geography?
3. Data Storage and Retrieval (contact: Robert Burgholzer)
  - Storage Architecture – database type, data table structure
  - How to store it – method of data entry for end users
  - How to obtain it –method of retrieval for end users
4. Data Source (volunteers to coordinate the Wiki?)
  - What data do we know about?

# Southern Instream Flow Network

## Activities and Actions in 2010

- Southern Instream Flow Research Agenda
  - Work on first 4 priority research topics
  - Incorporate into funding programs
  - Involve local research institutions
  - Identify sources of aquatic ecology data
- Instream Flow Communications
  - Identify stories that link flow regime to aquatic biota
  - Contribute and update state information/materials for website
- Support of state teams
  - Increased education/outreach for state regulatory agencies
- Future WebExs
- Data Sprint at 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual SIFN Workshop – early December in Alabama