



<b>Issue :</b>		<b>Development and Conservation</b>	
<b>Action Tool Title:</b>		Regional Ecosystem Framework (REF)	
<b>Description of the tool:</b>		The tool is a common conservation framework intended to collaboratively develop a vision of desired future conditions that integrates ecological, economic and social factors in planning for infrastructure development. At the core of the framework is to take stock of, and thus appreciation of existing aquatic and terrestrial biomes.	
<b>How Well Does It Work?</b>			
<b>How valuable is this tool? How important is its contribution to achieving North Texas' vision for the future?</b>			
This tool facilitates apriori assesment of undeveloped natural lands and therefore appreciation of their value and importance independent of the pressures of project implementation. This implies that when future development(s) are proposed, the opportunity cost is already known.			
<b>How does it actually work?</b>			
The tool will identify and integrate growth management plans, prioritize opportunities and document agreements among agencies in matters pertaining to infrastructure projects.			
<b>What are the costs and who will they affect?</b>		<b>What are the benefits and who will they help?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time for coordination, mapping and taking inventory of target areas for conservation.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The benefit would be a better quality of life for all the residents of the region as a result of carefully planned development that maintains the integrity of natural assets.</li> </ul>	
<b>What are the biggest stumbling blocks?</b>		<b>How can they be addressed?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intergovernmental cooperation in integrating management plans and prioritizing opportunities.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of a consultative and coordination framework for facilitating cooperation and achievement of synergy among multiple agencies and levels of governments in the DFW region.</li> </ul>	
<b>Who Would be Responsible?</b>			
<b>Primary (lead) responsibility</b>		Metropolitan Planning Organization (NCTCOG), local governments.	
<b>Secondary responsibility</b>		Conservation agencies, private sector, non-profits.	
<b>Need for coordination</b>		NCTCOG	
<b>How Should it be Funded?</b>			
<b>Primary (lead) responsibility</b>		N.A	
<b>Secondary responsibility</b>		N.A	
<b>How Does It Connect?</b>			
<b>What other VNT issues are helped by this tool?</b>		The initiative touches literally all aspects of VNT's mission such as land use and conservation issues.	
<b>What other VNT issues could be hurt by this tool?</b>		None foreseeable at the moment	
<b>How Should It Be Implemented?</b>			
<b>What will be done?</b>		<b>When will it happen?</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First step of action will be the formation of a consultative and coordination framework for facilitating cooperation and achievement of synergy among multiple agencies and levels of governments in the DFW region.</li> </ul>			
<b>What Examples Can We Follow?</b>			
North Texas Case Studies		N.A	
Other Texas Case Studies		N.A	
Other U.S. Case Studies		N.A	
Supporting Research		N.A	
Related Information		N.A	
<b>Acknowledgements</b>		Vision North Texas Water/Natural Assets Team	