Assessment of Scenarios for the Boone River Watershed in North Central Iowa

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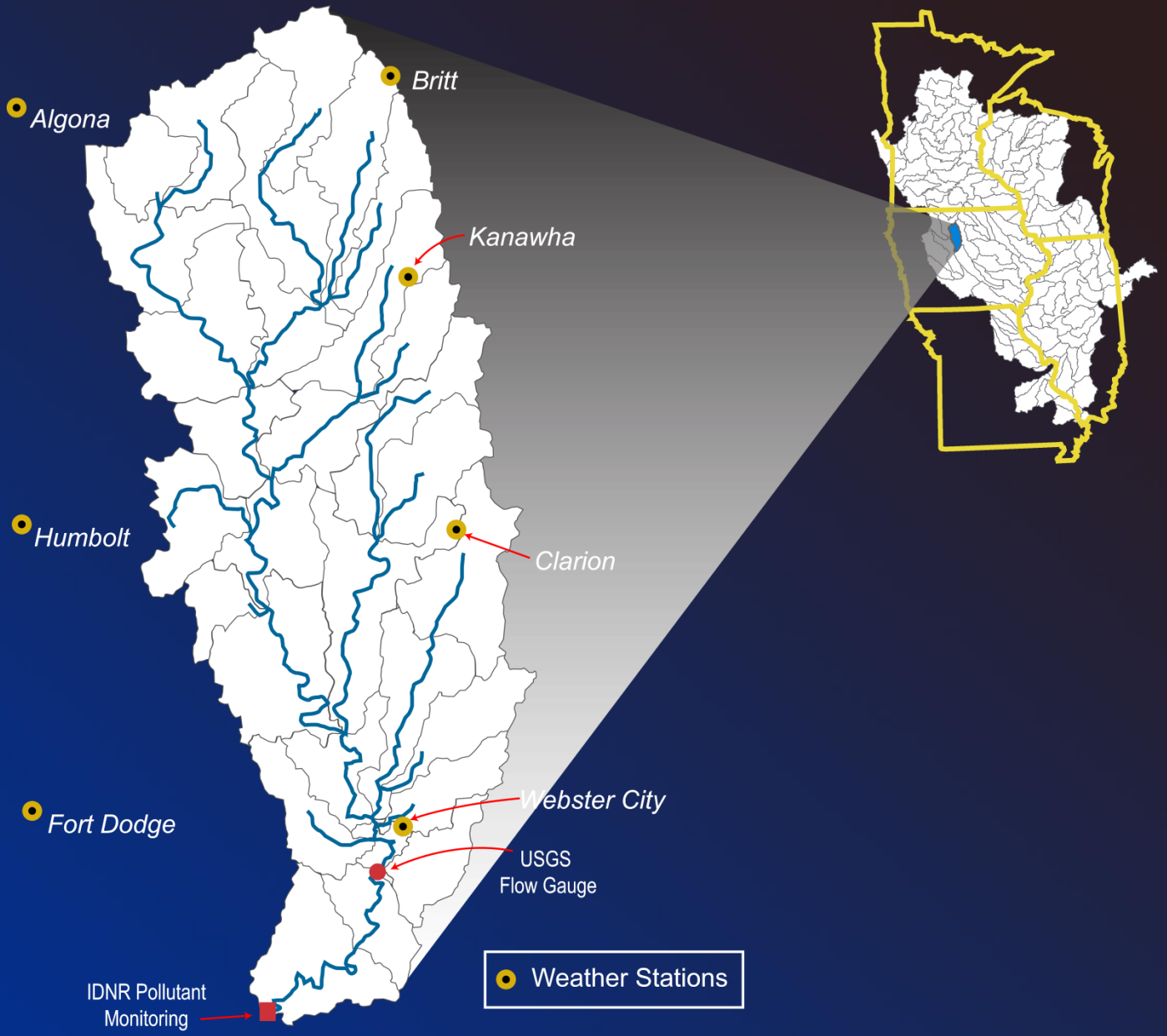
Overview of Presentation

- Background on Boone River Watershed and SWAT modeling structure
- Issues regarding nutrient load estimation
- Model testing results
- Results of some bioenergy scenarios
  - switchgrass, miscanthus, removal of corn stover (biomass)
- Conclusions/Next steps

Boone River Watershed

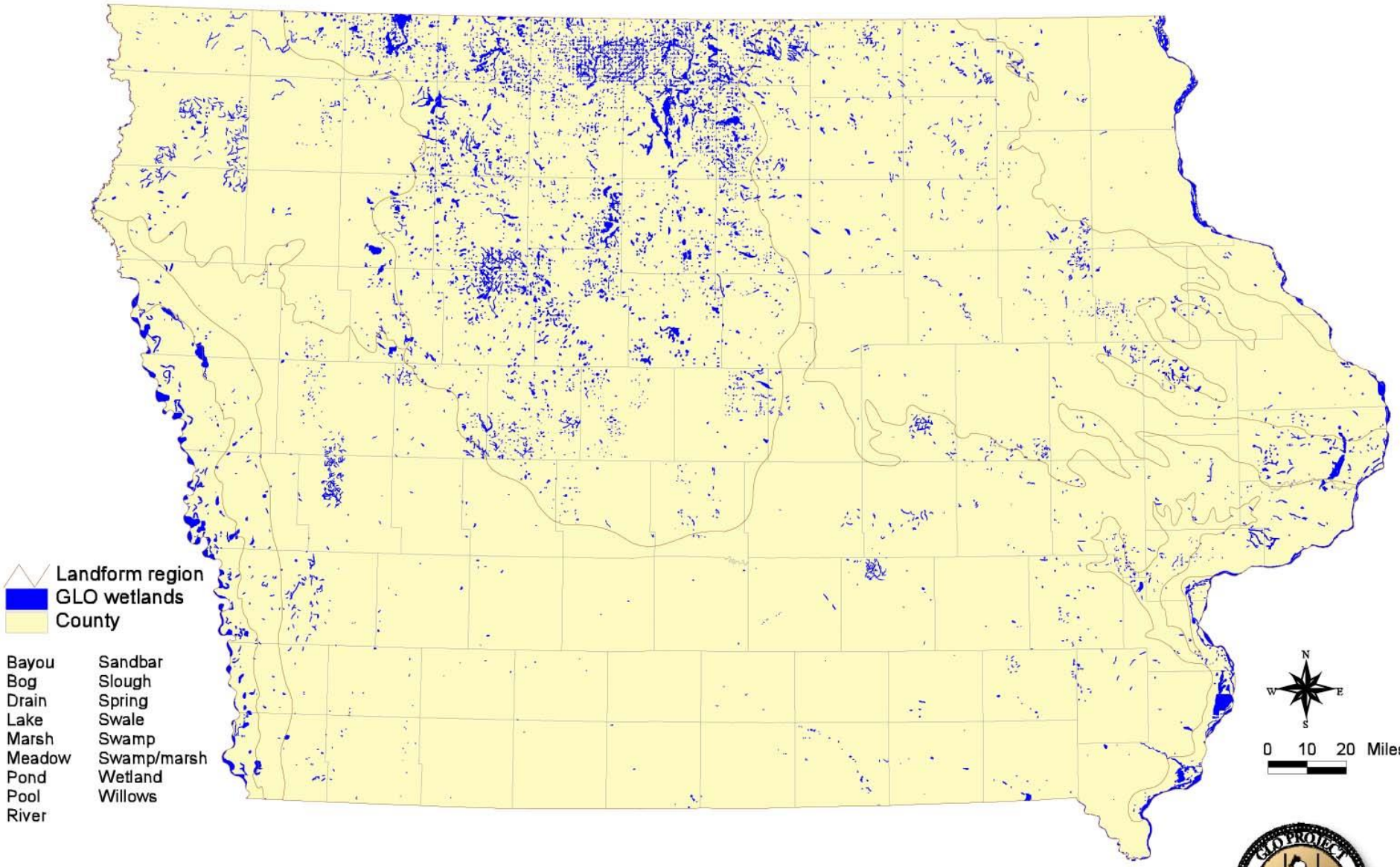
- ~237,000 ha in parts of six counties
- Des Moines Lobe; southern portion of North American Prairie Pothole region
- Generally level topography; heavily tile drained
  - tile drains typically installed at depth of 1200 mm
- Dominated by crop production

Boone River Watershed



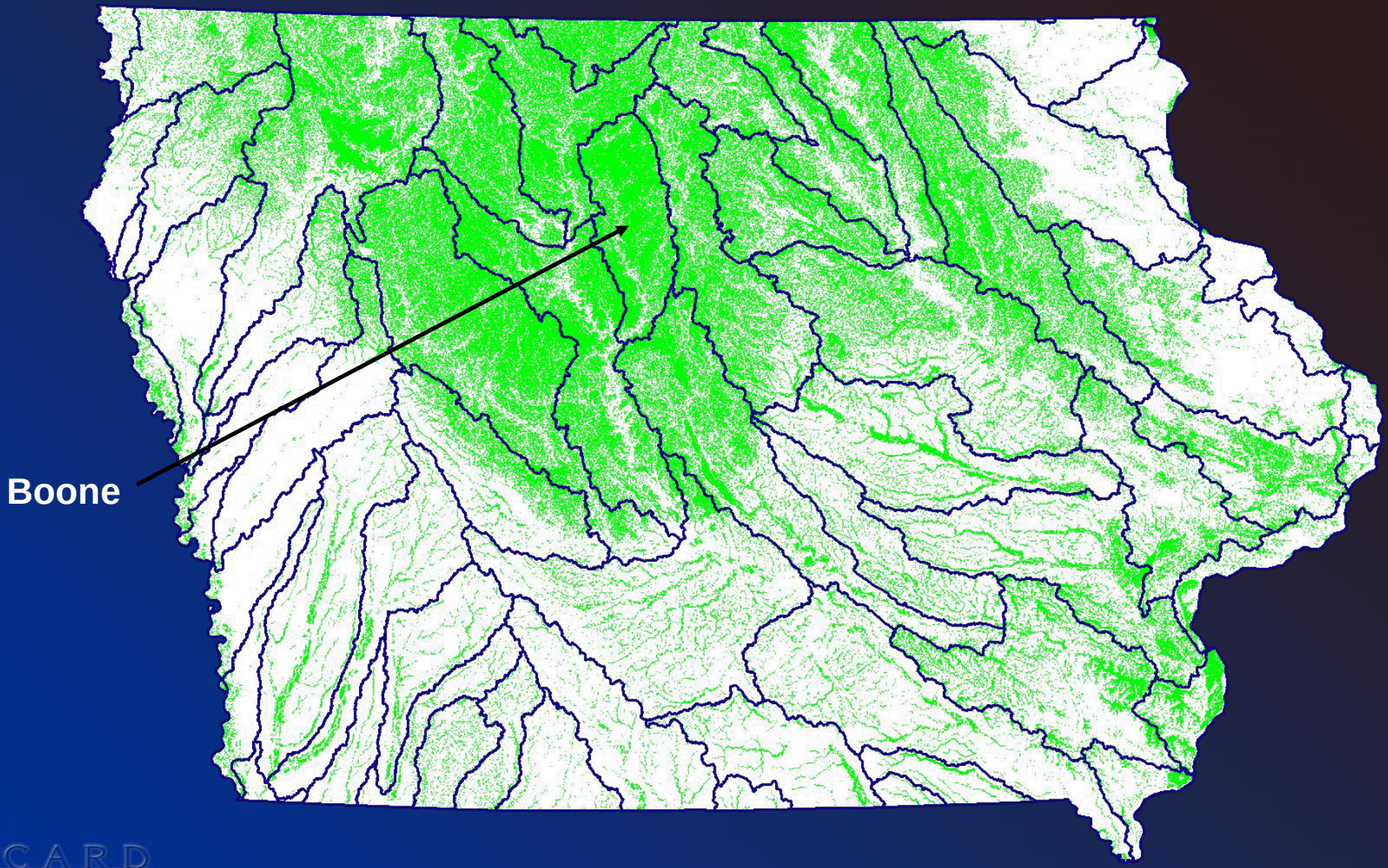
GLO Wetland Vegetation Types

General Land Office Survey of Iowa (1832 - 1859)



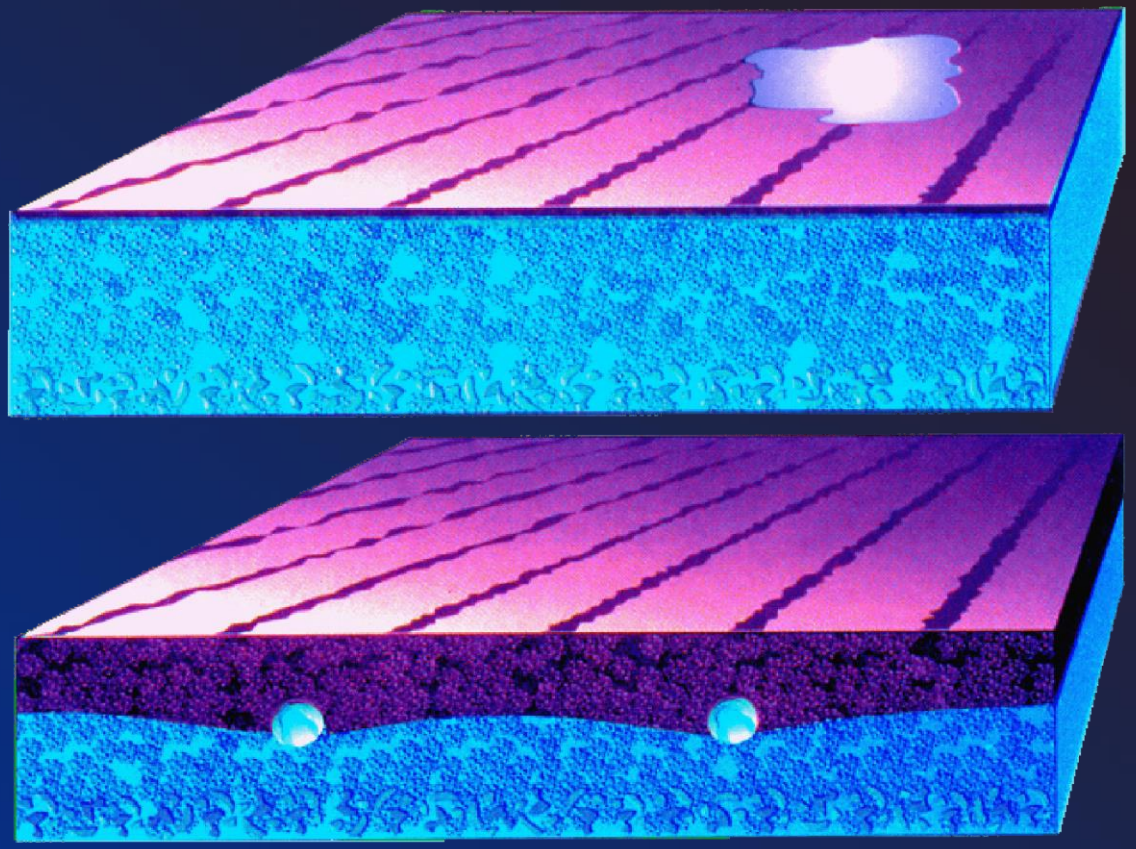
Anderson, P.F. 1996. GIS Research to Digitize Maps of Iowa 1832-1859 Vegetation from General Land Office Township Plat Maps. Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa.

Locations of Hydric (Wet) Soils in Iowa



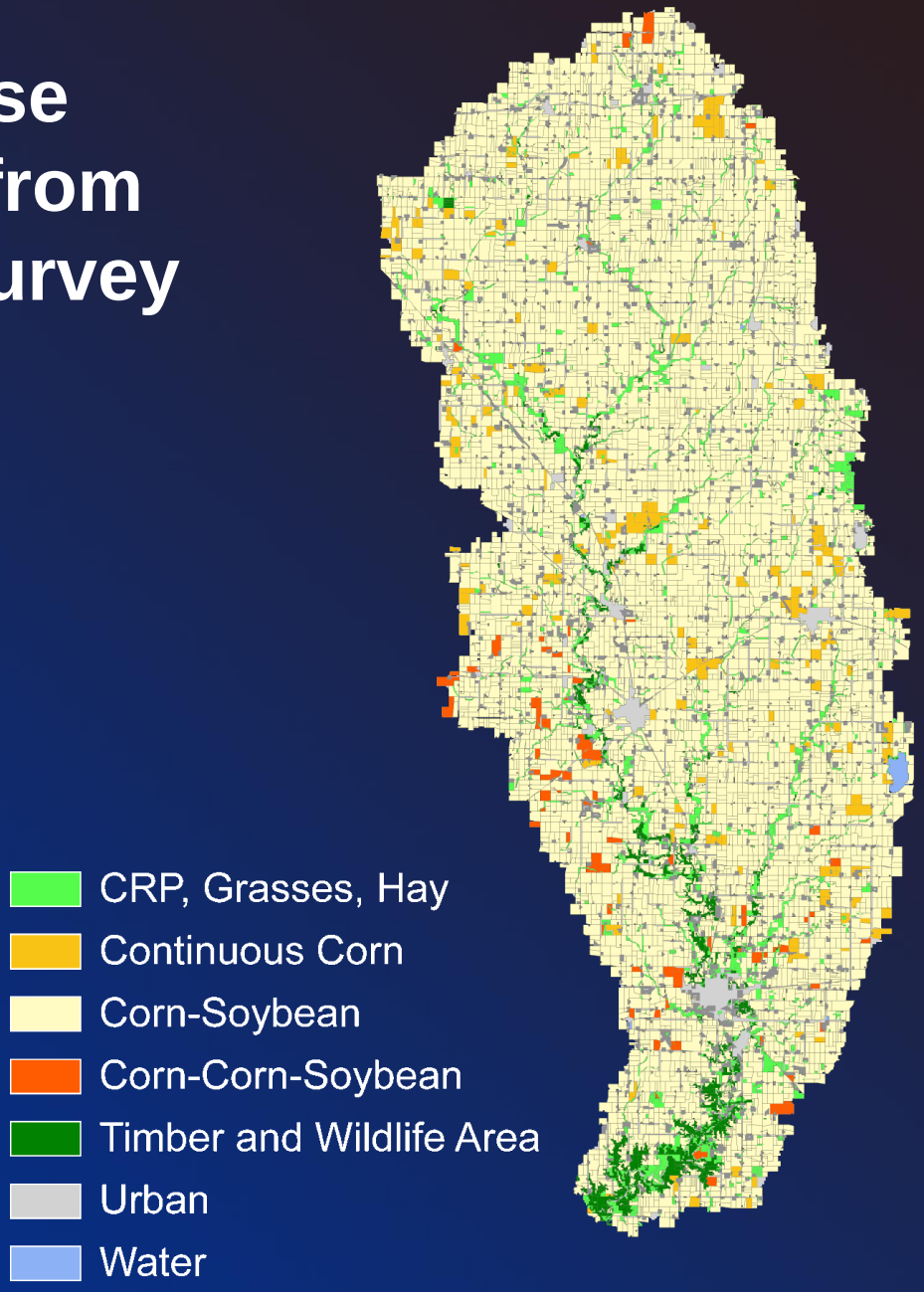
Data generated by C. Wolter, Iowa Deptartment of Natural Resources, Des Moines, IA

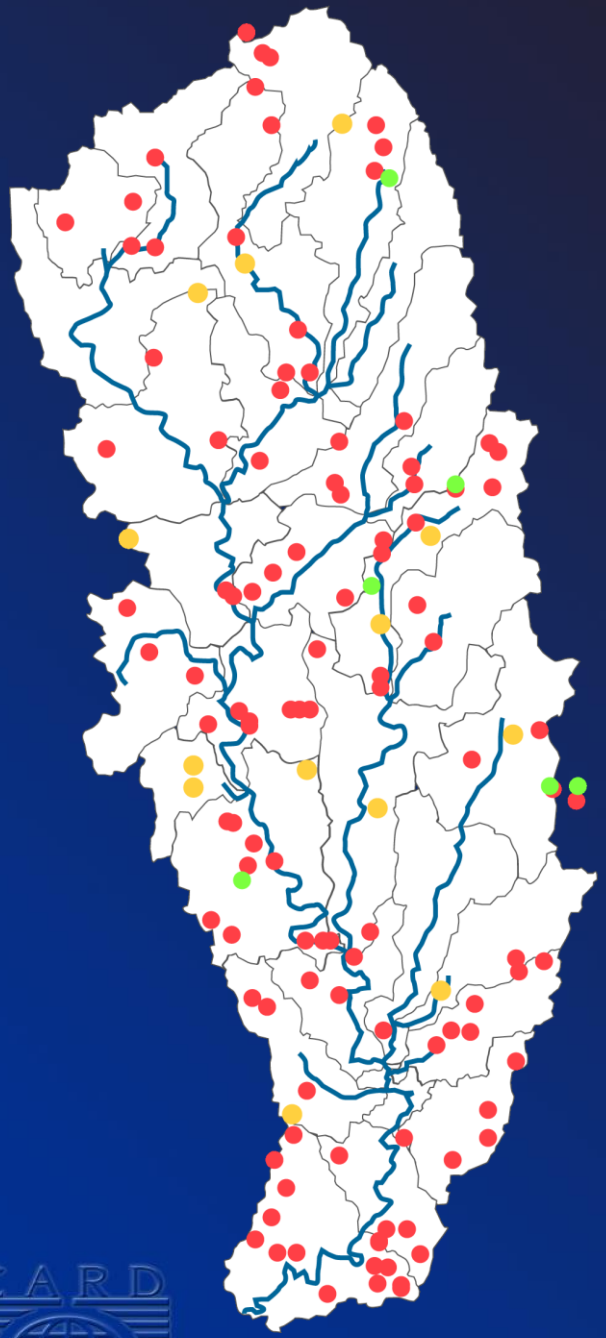
Effects of Tile Drainage on Soil Water



Adapted from: Zucker, L.A. and L.C. Brown (eds.). 1998. Agricultural Drainage: Water Quality Impacts and Subsurface Drainage Studies in the Midwest. Ohio State University Extension Bulletin 871. The Ohio State University.

2005 Land Use Determined from Field-level Survey





CAFOs

Type	Total operations	Total head
Swine	109	481,448
Cattle	13	4,265
Layers	6	6,962,112

Source: 2005 IDNR CAFO data

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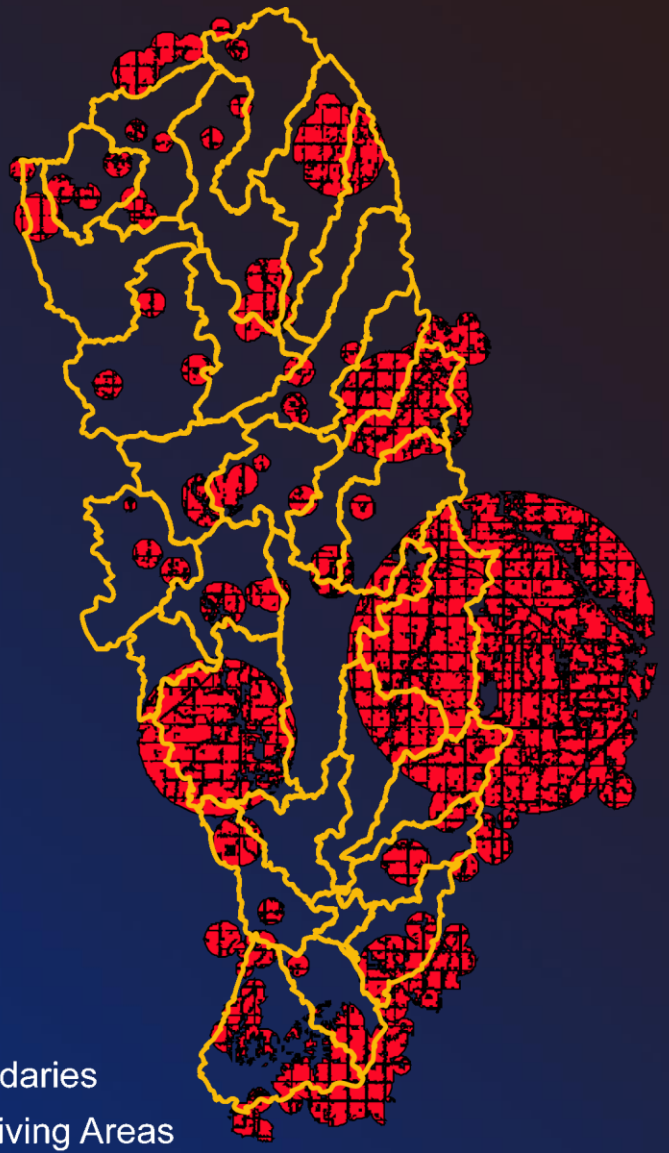
Estimated Manure Application Zones (112 kg/ha N rate)



Data generated by C. Wolter, Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources, Des Moines, IA; Software developed by D. James, USDA -ARS, Ames, IA

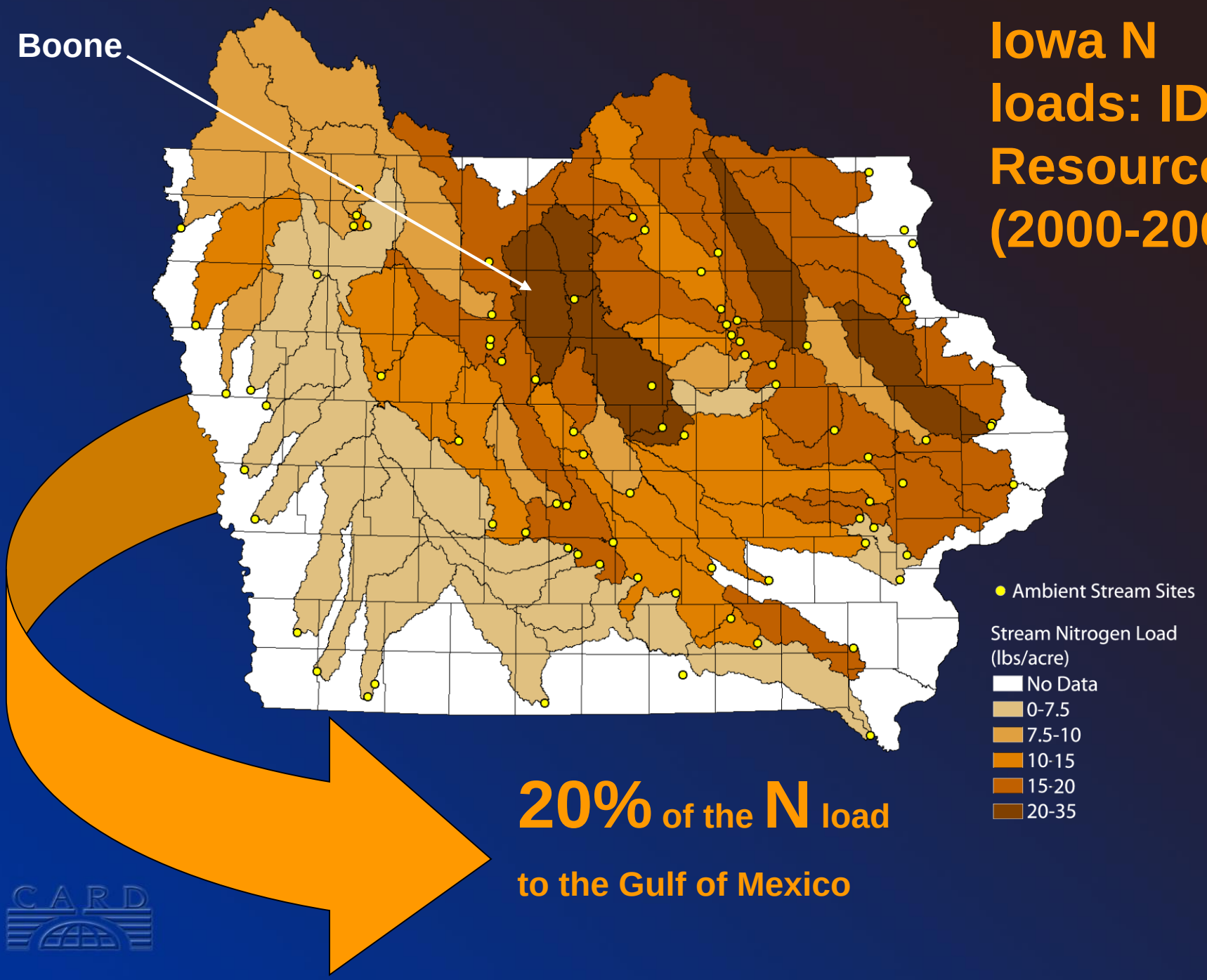
Nutrient Applications

- N fertilizer rates on corn not receiving livestock manure
  - corn after soybean:
    - spring: 172 kg/ha
    - fall: 183 kg/ha
  - corn after corn: 196 kg/ha

  - P_2O_5 fertilizer rate for corn: 49 kg/ha

- Manure assumptions less straightforward
  - 80% applied on corn & 20% on soybean
    - N rate: 190 kg/ha
    - P rate: 70 kg/ha
  - 50% of manured corn also fertilized

Iowa N loads: IDNR Resources (2000-2002)



20% of the N load

to the Gulf of Mexico

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SWAT Version & RCN Approach

- SWAT version 2012, Release 615

- Contains modifications introduced by Cibin Raj for:
  - switchgrass & miscanthus growth/yields
  - removal of corn stover

- Used ET-based Runoff Curve Number Approach
  - ICN = 1; CNCOEFF = 0.75

ET-based Runoff Curve Number Retention Parameter (S) Calculations

Standard

$$S = S_{\max} \cdot \left(1 - \frac{SW}{\left[SW + \exp\left(w_1 - w_2 \cdot SW \right) \right]} \right)$$

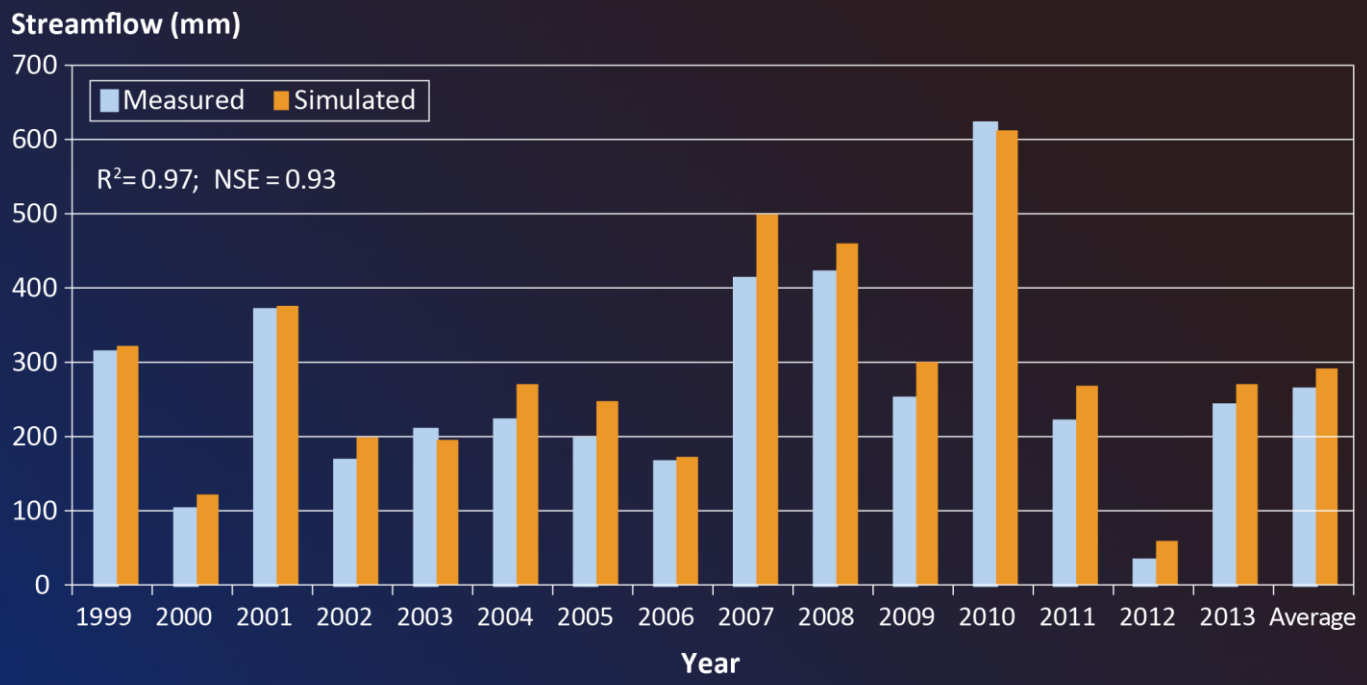
Alternative

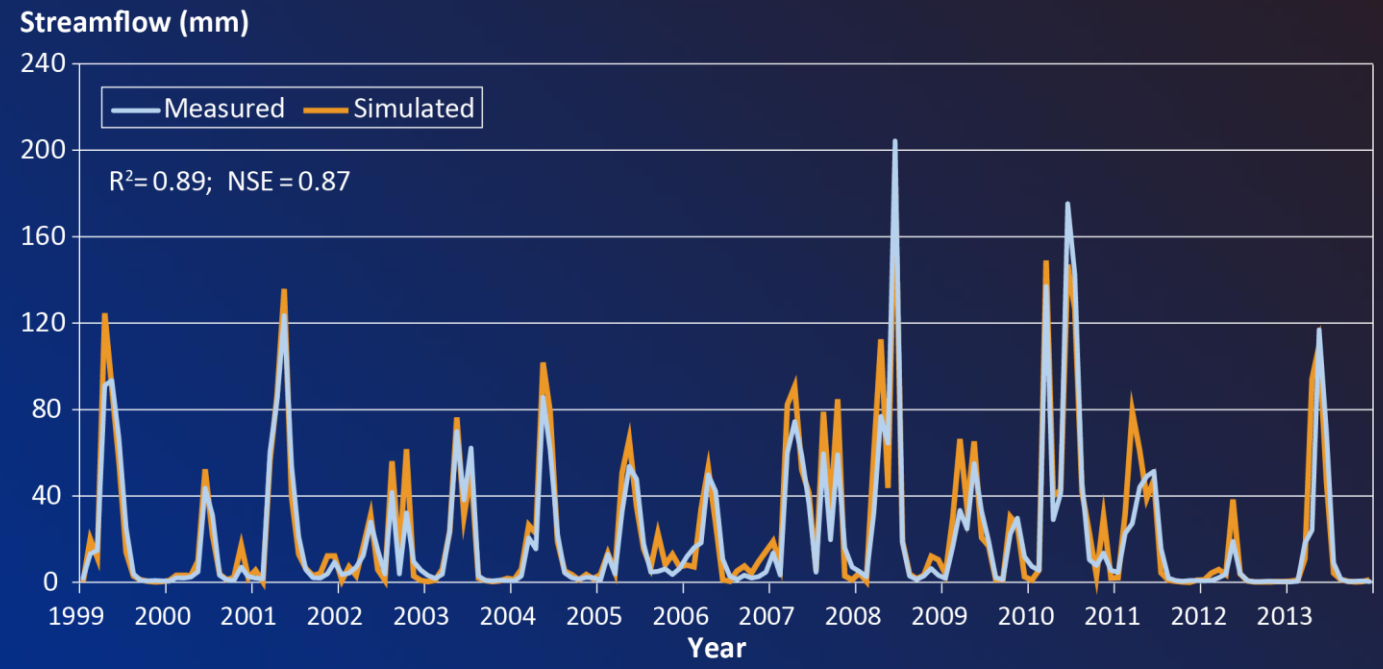
$$S = S_{prev} + E_o * \exp\left(\frac{-CNCOEF - S_{prev}}{S_{\max}} \right) - R_{day} - Q_{surf}$$

Kannan et al. 2008. Hydrol. Processes

15 Year Calibration (1999-2013)

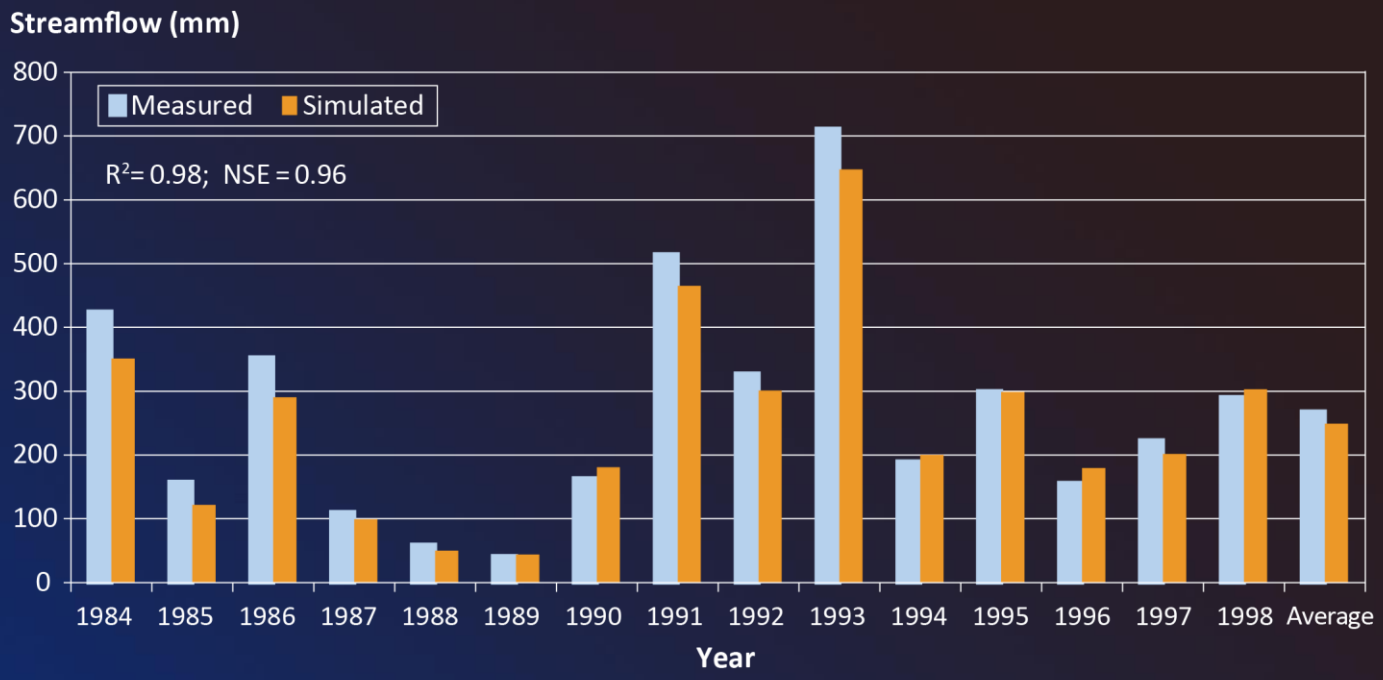
Warm-up years: 1997 & 1998

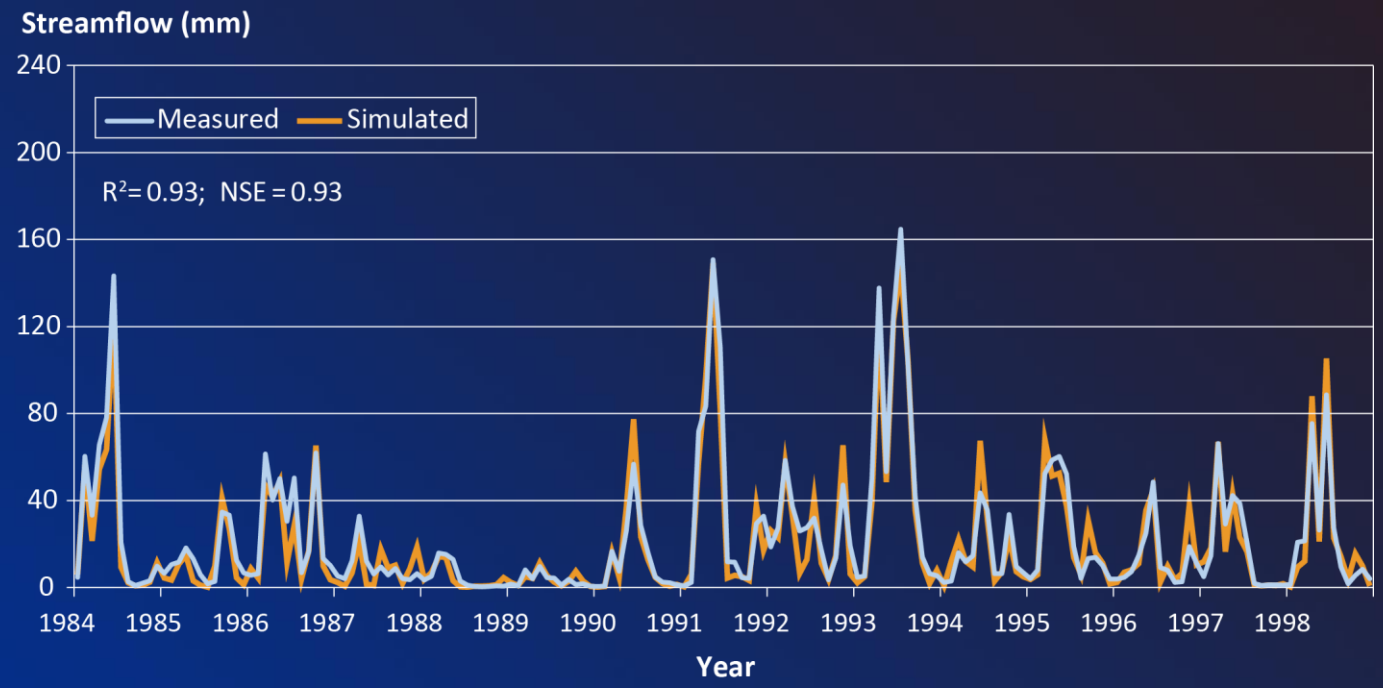




15 Year Validation (1984-1998)

Warm-up years: 1982 & 1983



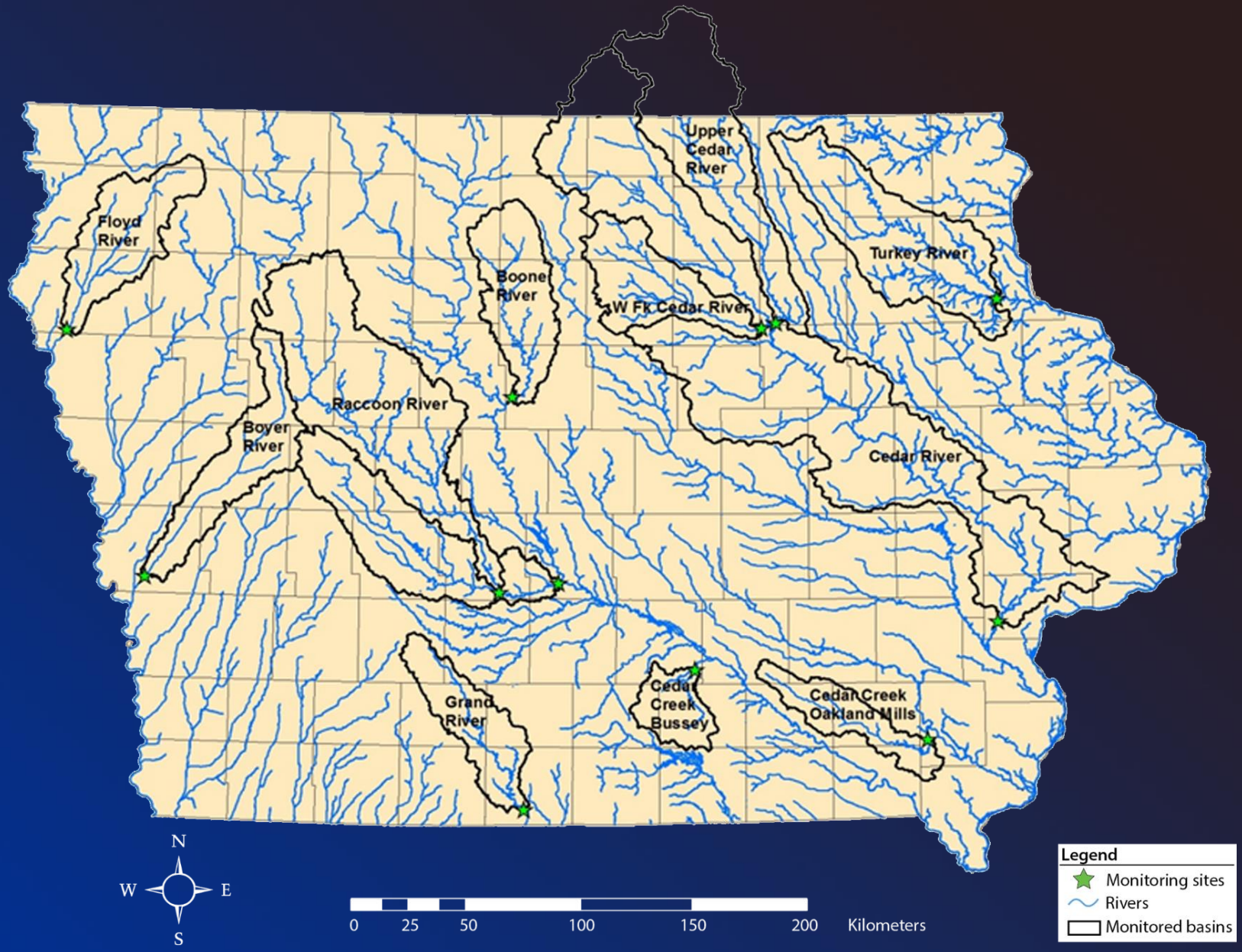


USGS LOADEST Problems

- **Stenback et al. 2011. Rating curve estimation of nutrient loads in Iowa rivers. Journal of Hydrology 396: 158- 169. DOI: 10.1016/j.jhydrol.2010.11.006.**

- http://water.usgs.gov/software/loadest/

IMPORTANT NOTE: LOADEST can produce biased load estimates when the selected model is a poor representation of the relationship between load and the explanatory variables. Problems with load bias may be identified through careful analyses of model residuals. LOADEST has therefore been modified since its initial release to include several features that facilitate residual analysis and bias identification. This updated version of the software was placed on the web site on March 27, 2013 …..



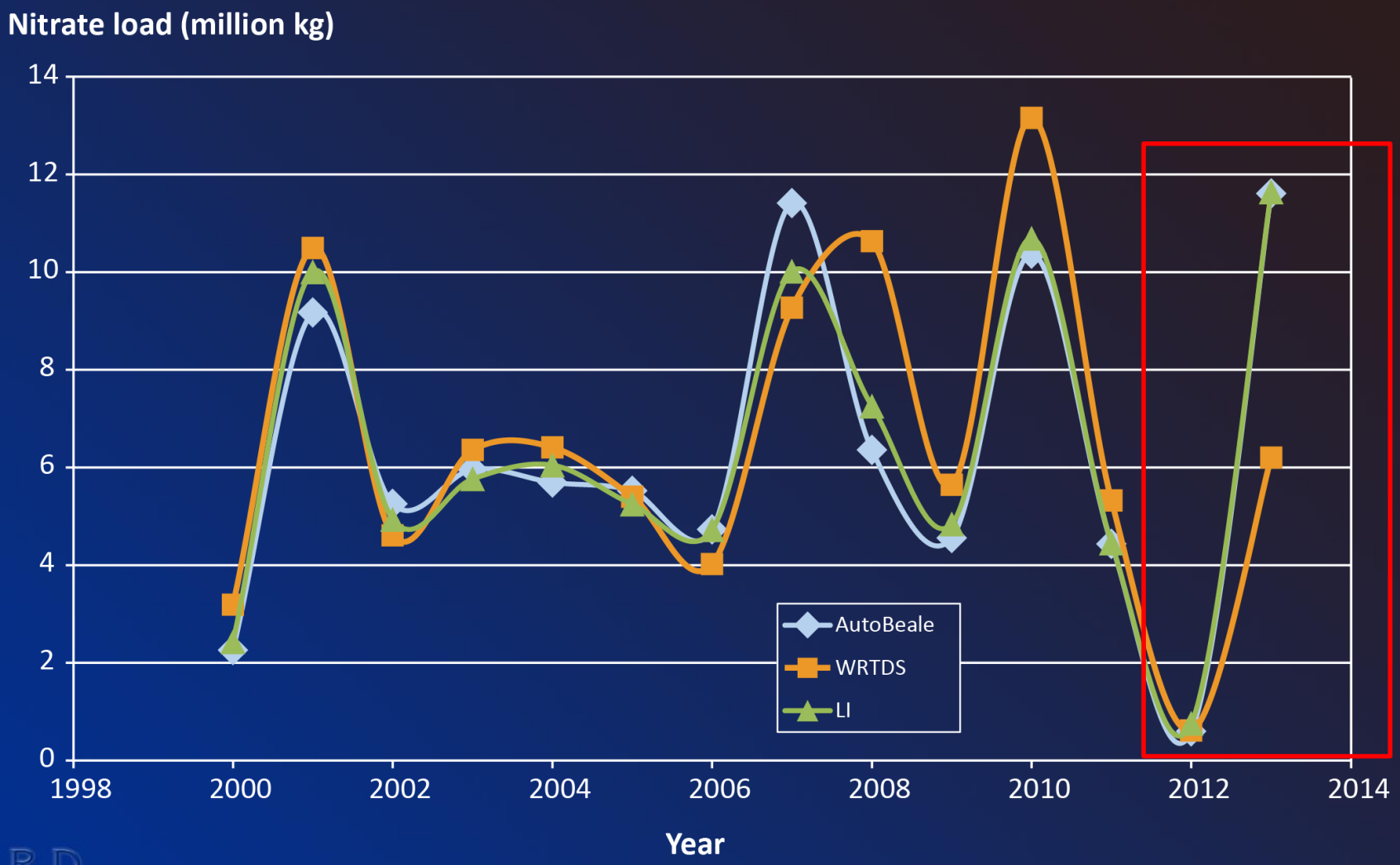
Source: Schilling et al. 2015. Assessment of Nitrate-N Load Estimation Methods to Quantify Load Reduction strategies. JAWRA (submitted).

Estimated Nitrate Loads at Boone Outlet

Load Estimation Method	Estimated Daily Average Nitrate Load (kg)
Linear interpolation	17,848
Average monthly values	13,626
AutoBeale method	16,517
Cokriging	24,652
LOADEST	40,009
WRTDS	17,376

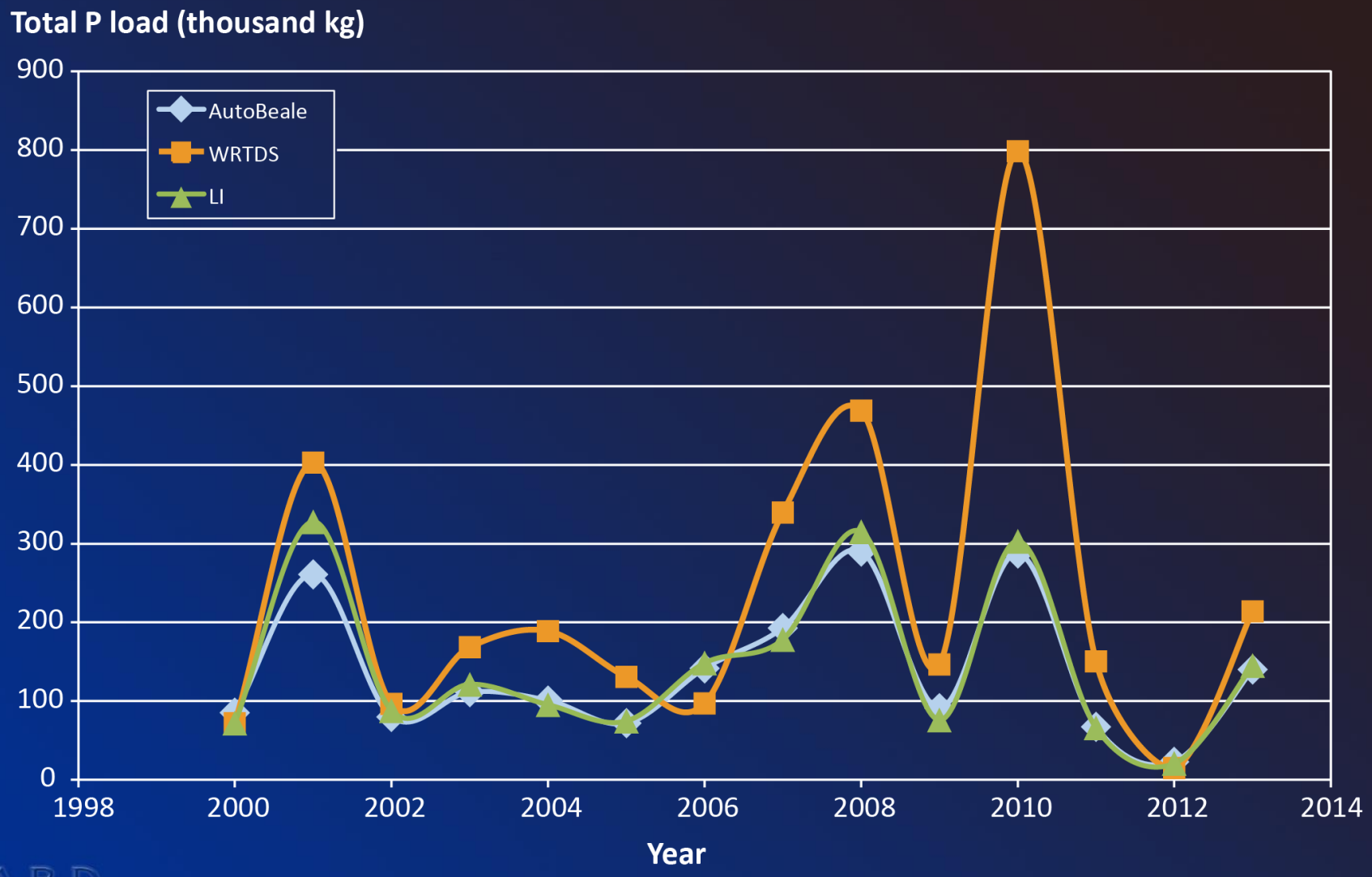
Source: Schilling et al. 2015. Assessment of Nitrate-N Load Estimation Methods to Quantify Load Reduction strategies. JAWRA (submitted).

Estimated Nitrate Loads at Boone Outlet



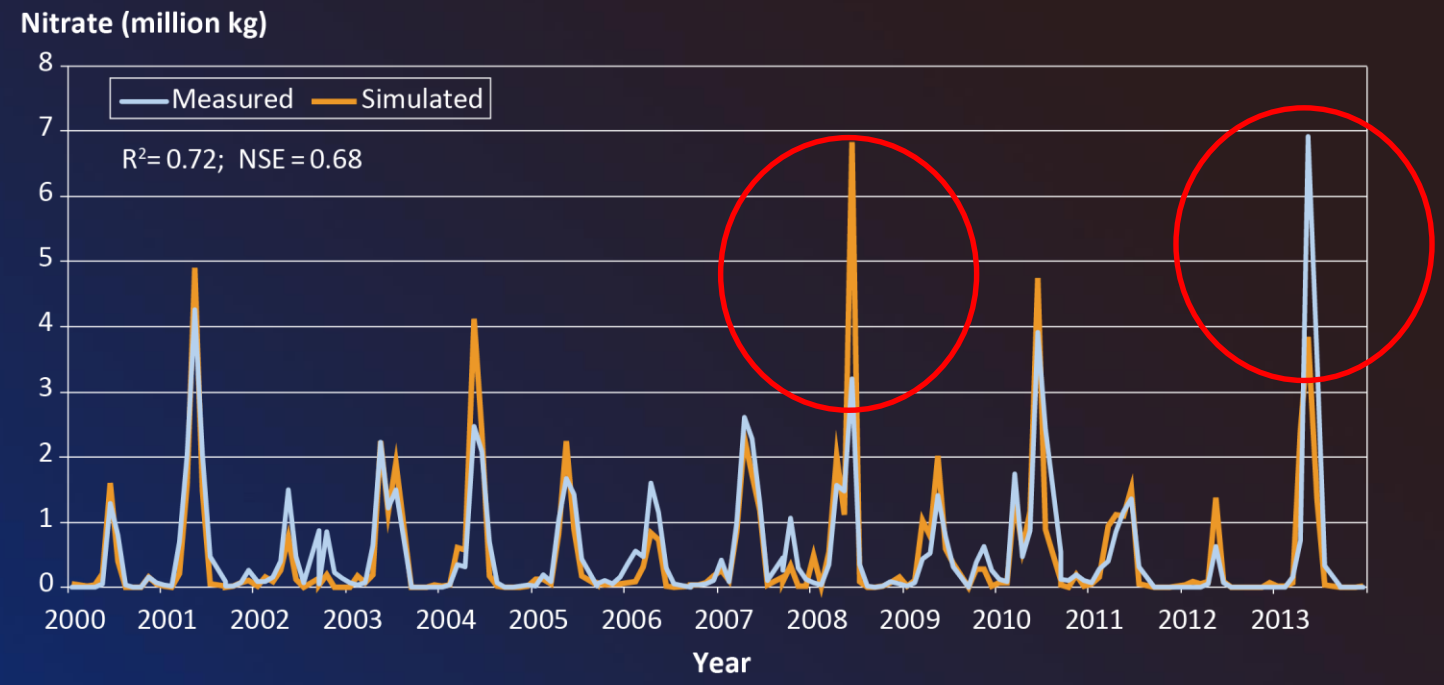
Data generated by C. Wolter, Iowa Deptartment of Natural Resources, Des Moines, IA

Estimated Total P Loads at Boone Outlet

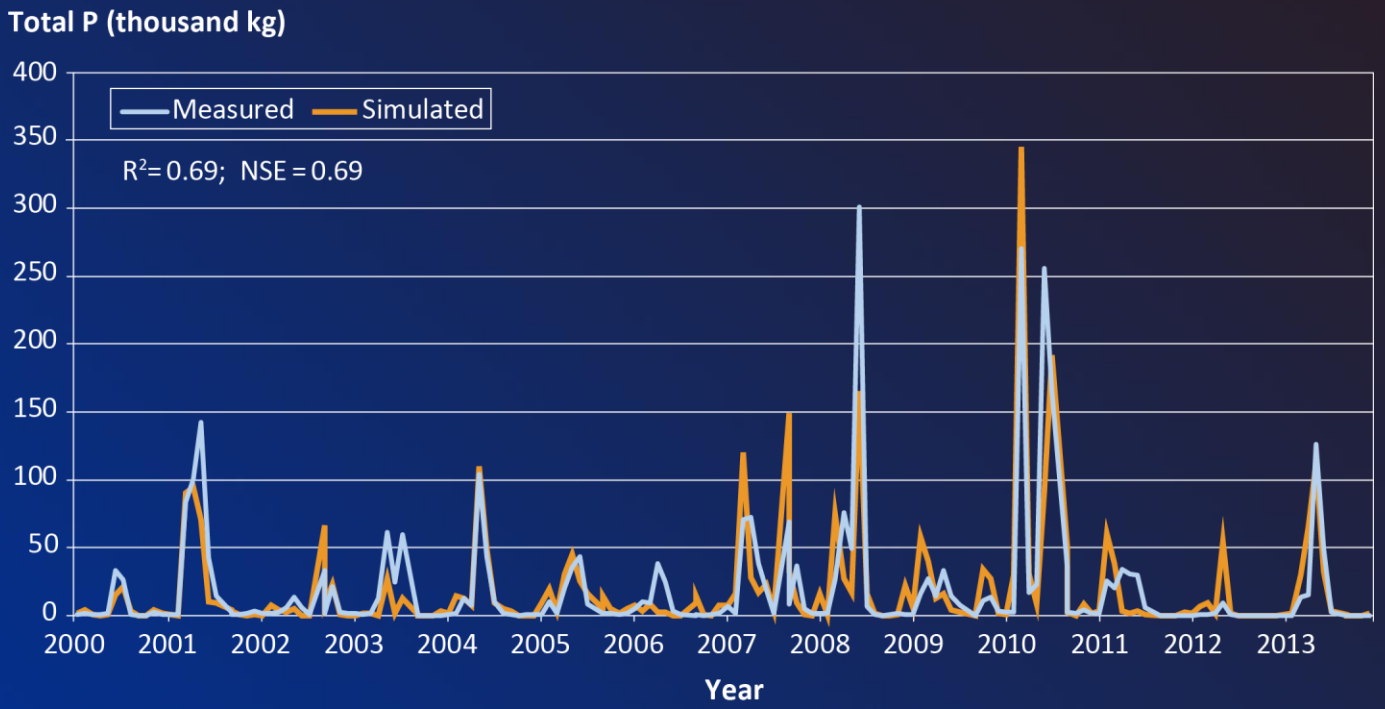


Data generated by C. Wolter, Iowa Deptartment of Natural Resources, Des Moines, IA

Nitrate calibration: observed loads based on LI



Total P calibration: observed loads based on WRTDS



Bioenergy Scenarios

- Total conversion of cropland to either switchgrass or miscanthus
  - N application rate: 122 kg/ha surface applied as urea (46% nitrate)
  - manure nutrients also applied to some fields

- 20% and 50% removal of corn stover

  - supplemental nitrogen and phosphate fertilizer applied to corn to replace nutrients removed in stover

Crop Yield Estimates

- Baseline: corn = 10.5 t/ha & soybean =3.0 t/ha

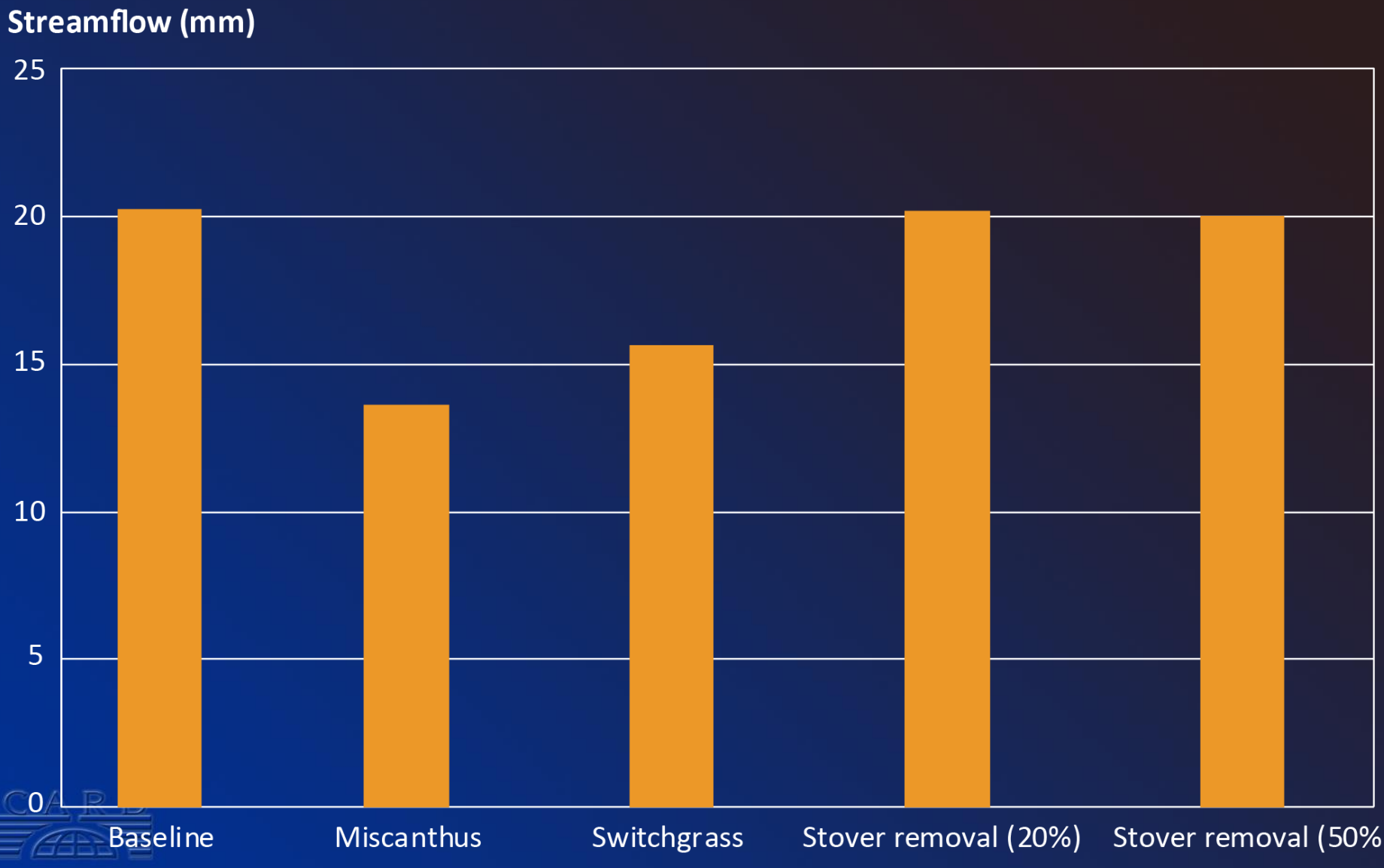
- Switchgrass:
  - with just N fertilizer: 10.3 t/ha
  - with additional manure N: 11.9 t/ha

- Miscanthus:
  - with just N fertilizer: 17.5 t/ha
  - with additional manure N: 24.1 t/ha

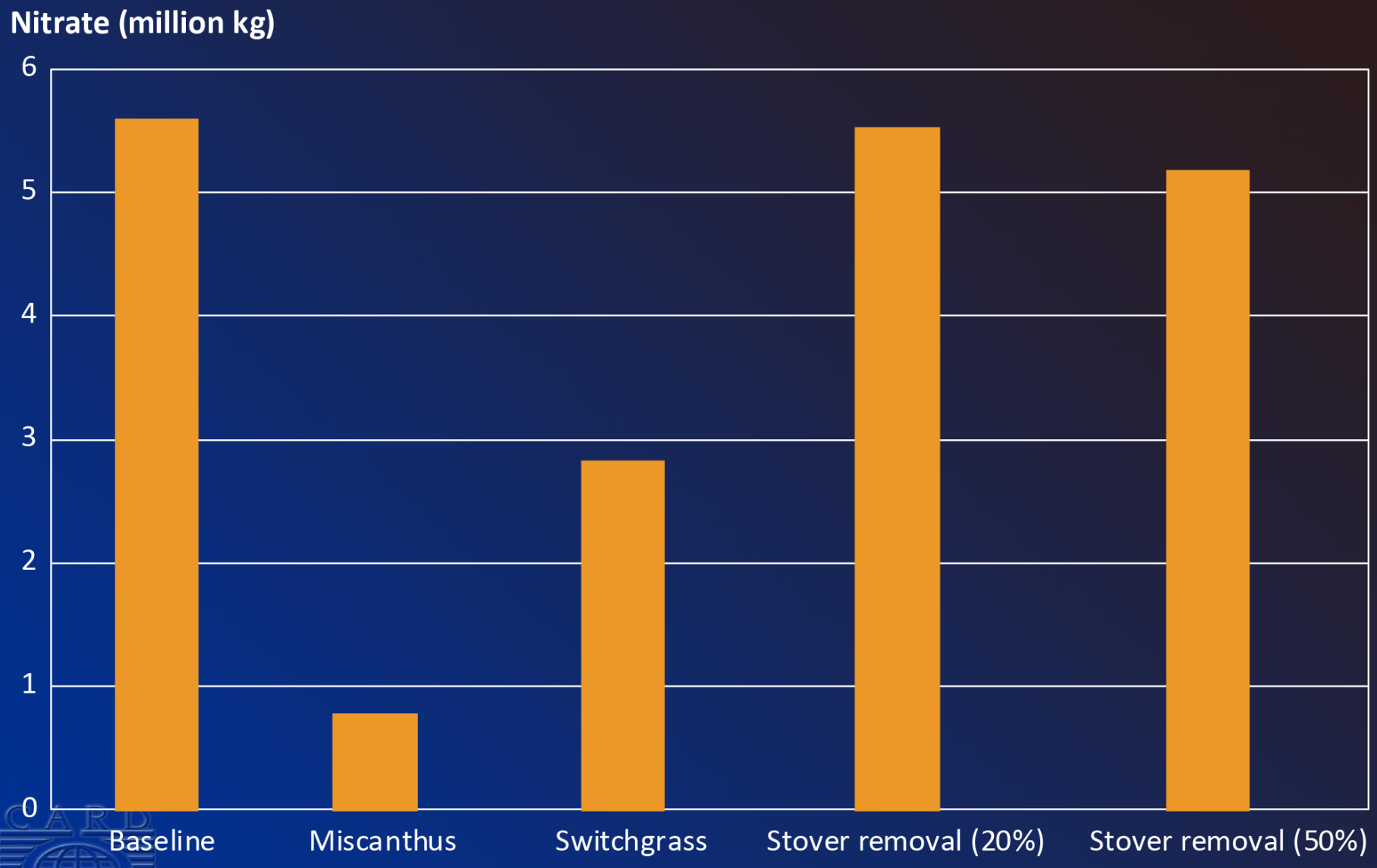
Water Balance (mm)

Water Balance Indicator	Baseline	Switchgrass	Miscanthus	20% Corn Stover removal	50% Corn Stover removal
Precip.	854	854	854	854	854
Surface run.	66	31	44	66	67
Tile flow	184	159	120	183	179
Lateral & ground.	29	26	25	29	29
ET	582	645	673	582	585
Water yield	277	214	186	276	274

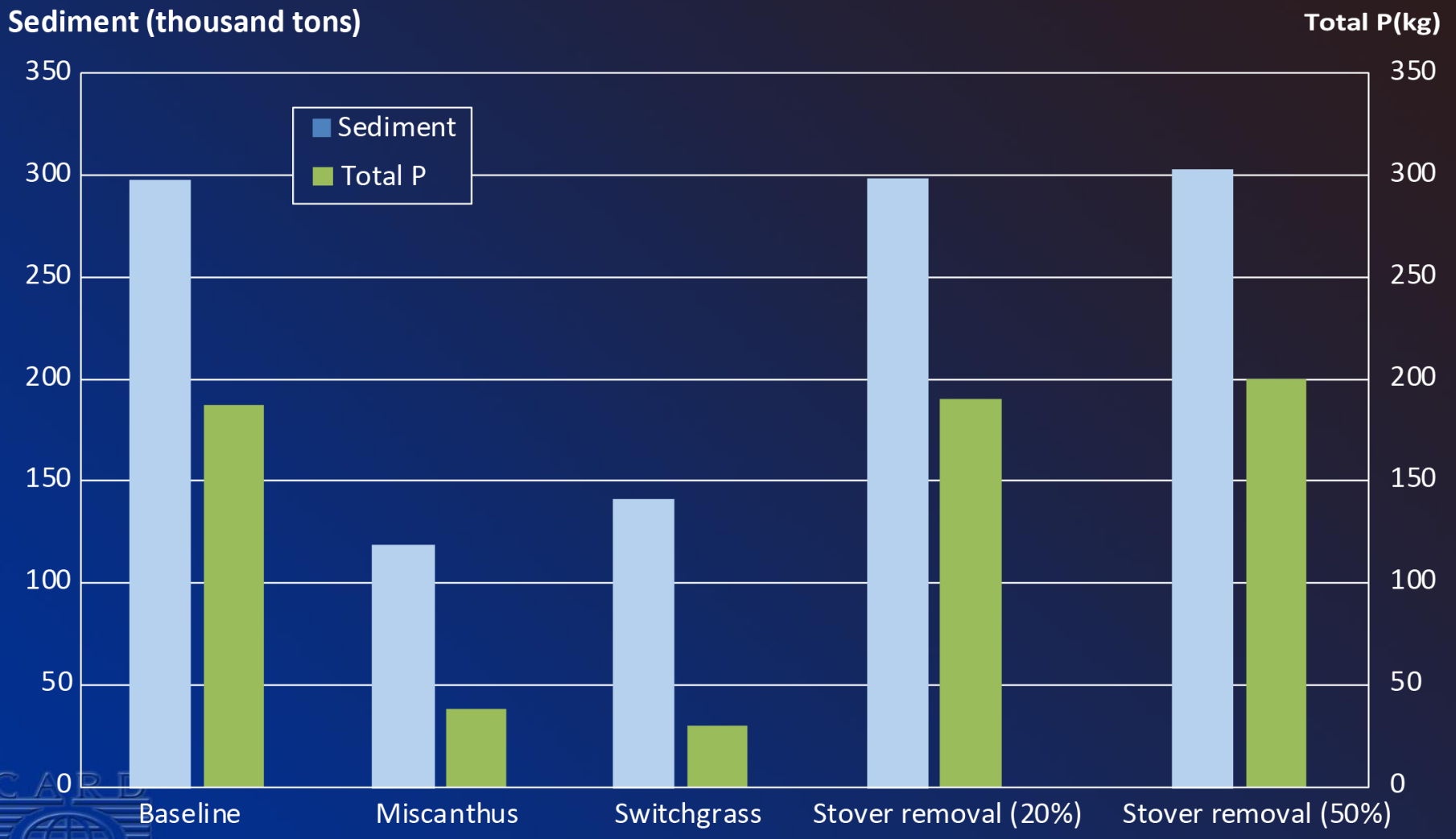
Scenario Impacts: Average Annual Streamflow



Scenario Impacts: Average Annual Nitrate Loss



Scenario Impacts: Average Annual Sediment & Total P Loss



Conclusions / Next Steps

- Load estimation techniques can result in some very biased results
- SWAT baseline testing results were satisfactory
- Large scale adoption of switchgrass and miscanthus resulted in substantial reduction of pollutant loads
- Only minor pollutant impacts resulted for stover removal scenarios

Conclusions / Next Steps

- Further examine current scenario results
- Expand suite of bioenergy scenarios
- Revisit some of the input data?
- Explore use of the pothole routine?