

## **An Eco-Logical Approach to Transportation Planning in the Kansas City Region**

**Mid-America Regional Council, Missouri**, Total Cost: \$180,000, FHWA Share: \$90,000

Period of Performance: 24 months, Dates: March 18, 2008 – March 18, 2010

AOTR: Mary Gray, Grant Project Website: <http://www.marc.org/transportation/conservation.htm>

### **Project Goals**

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) grant project will develop two distinct final products:

- Multi-faceted educational programs to strengthen interagency relationships; and
- A collaborative and integrative environmental-transportation planning and consultation process for the region.

### **Project Activities**

Throughout the past two years, the MARC project team focused on creating products and linkages that will ultimately facilitate good planning and provide easy access to data not previously available to the public. MARC uses an online mapping service to make data more readily available as a means of pursuing its objective to become a regional data clearinghouse. MARC has been successfully facilitating interactions between environmental resource agencies and transportation groups and helping to clarify the potential linkages between ecological and transportation planning process for the environmental agencies located in the Kansas City metro-region.

### **Key Accomplishments**

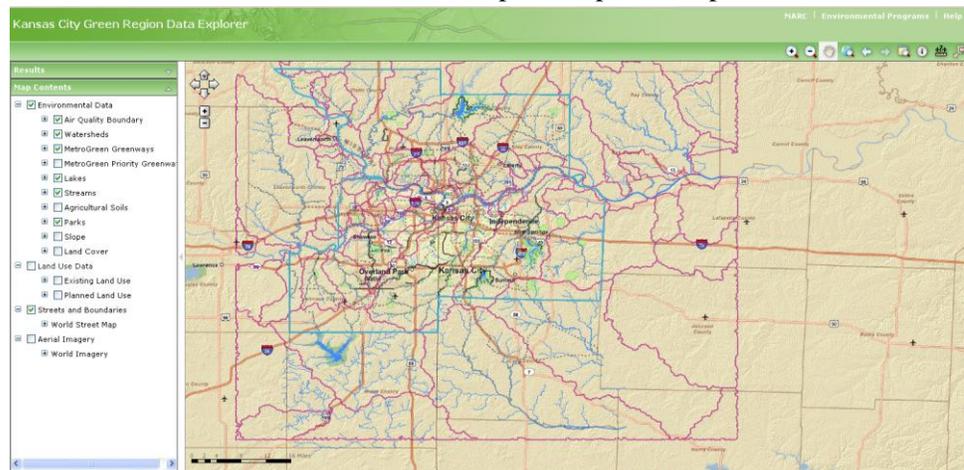
The MARC Board of Directors adopted the document “Linking Environmental & Transportation Planning: An Action Plan” (Action Plan) in May 2009, which includes recommendations and best practices that will guide MARC’s development of a sustainable transportation framework for the region. MARC conducted four public planning workshops at which the project team presented and solicited input on the Action Plan.

### **Challenges**

The project team is proud to announce that it assisted in overcoming an initial communication challenge by helping to build consensus among local officials, transportation planners, and environmental agency representatives in order to develop a proactive, ecosystem-based mitigation framework to incorporate into the region’s LRTP.

### **Future Steps**

MARC plans to complete a framework to guide the creation of an ecosystem-based green infrastructure plan (MARC does not anticipate that the green infrastructure plan will be completed within the scope of the *Eco-Logical* grant project). MARC will likely build such a framework around watersheds, but development and implementation of the framework will continue past the period of performance, into 2010.



**Figure: An image from the “Green Region Data Map” tool.**