

International Alvar Conservation Initiative

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Objectives of Presentation

- What are alvars?
- What are the conservation challenges?
- How did the *International Alvar Conservation Initiative* address these challenges?
- What have we learned?

Alvar

The Swedish word "alvar" means...

The layer of soil just beneath the top layer

A photograph showing a wide, flat expanse of dark, cracked bedrock. The surface is covered with numerous small, irregular cracks and some sparse, dry, brownish vegetation. In the background, there is a dense forest of tall, thin trees under a clear sky. The overall scene is a natural landscape with a prominent bedrock outcrop.

**Flat bedrock, thin or absent
soils**

Harold Malde

A photograph of an open landscape. The foreground is dominated by a field of tall, green grasses interspersed with numerous bright orange and yellow flowers. The middle ground shows a dense line of evergreen trees, likely spruce or fir, stretching across the horizon. The sky is a pale, overcast white. The overall scene depicts a natural, open environment with minimal tree cover.

**Open landscapes, minimal or
no tree cover**

David Klein



**Subject to seasonal drought,
flooding and extreme
temperatures**

Harold Malde

Distinctive plant species, characteristic vegetation associations



Carol Reschke

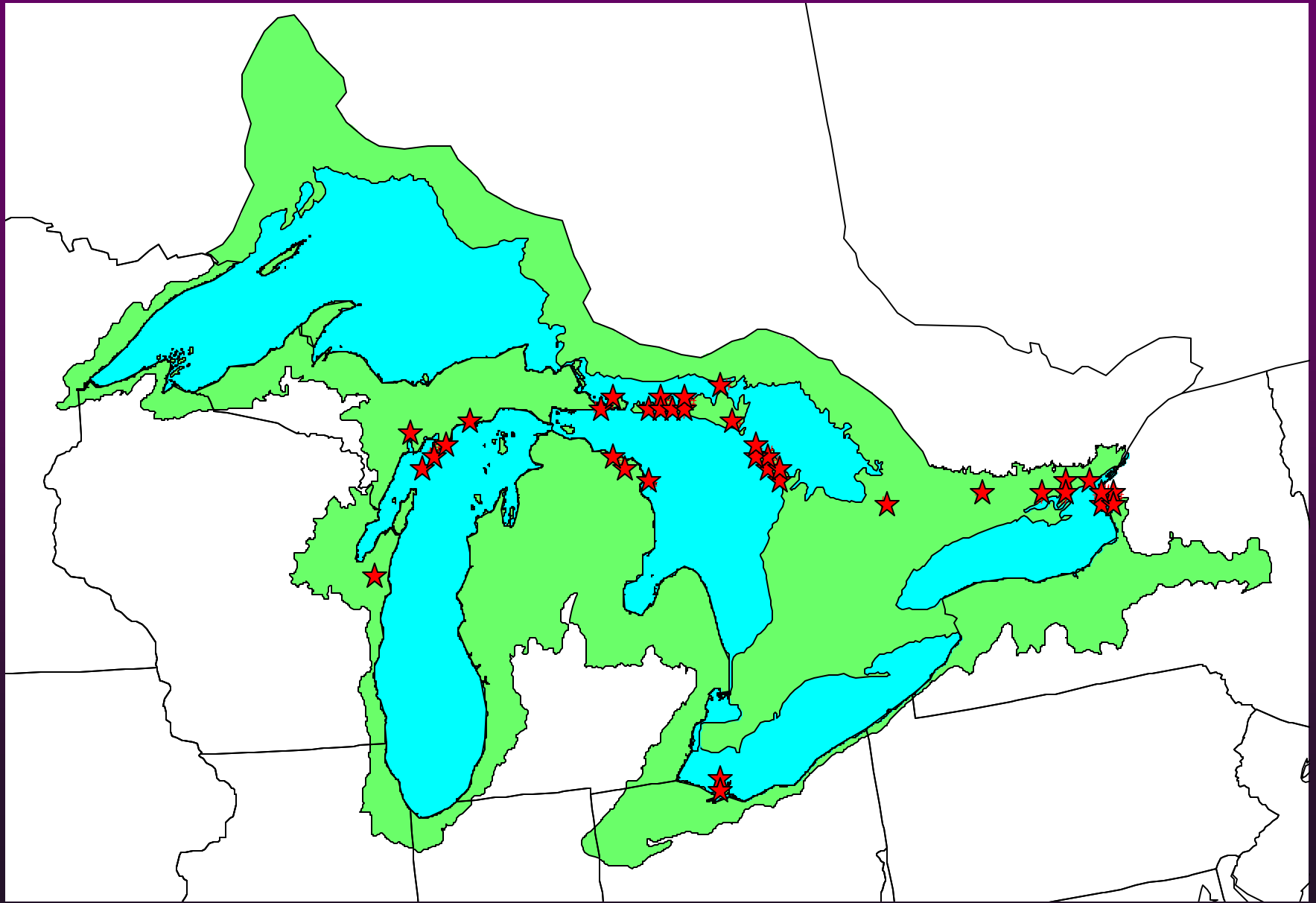


Sue Crispin

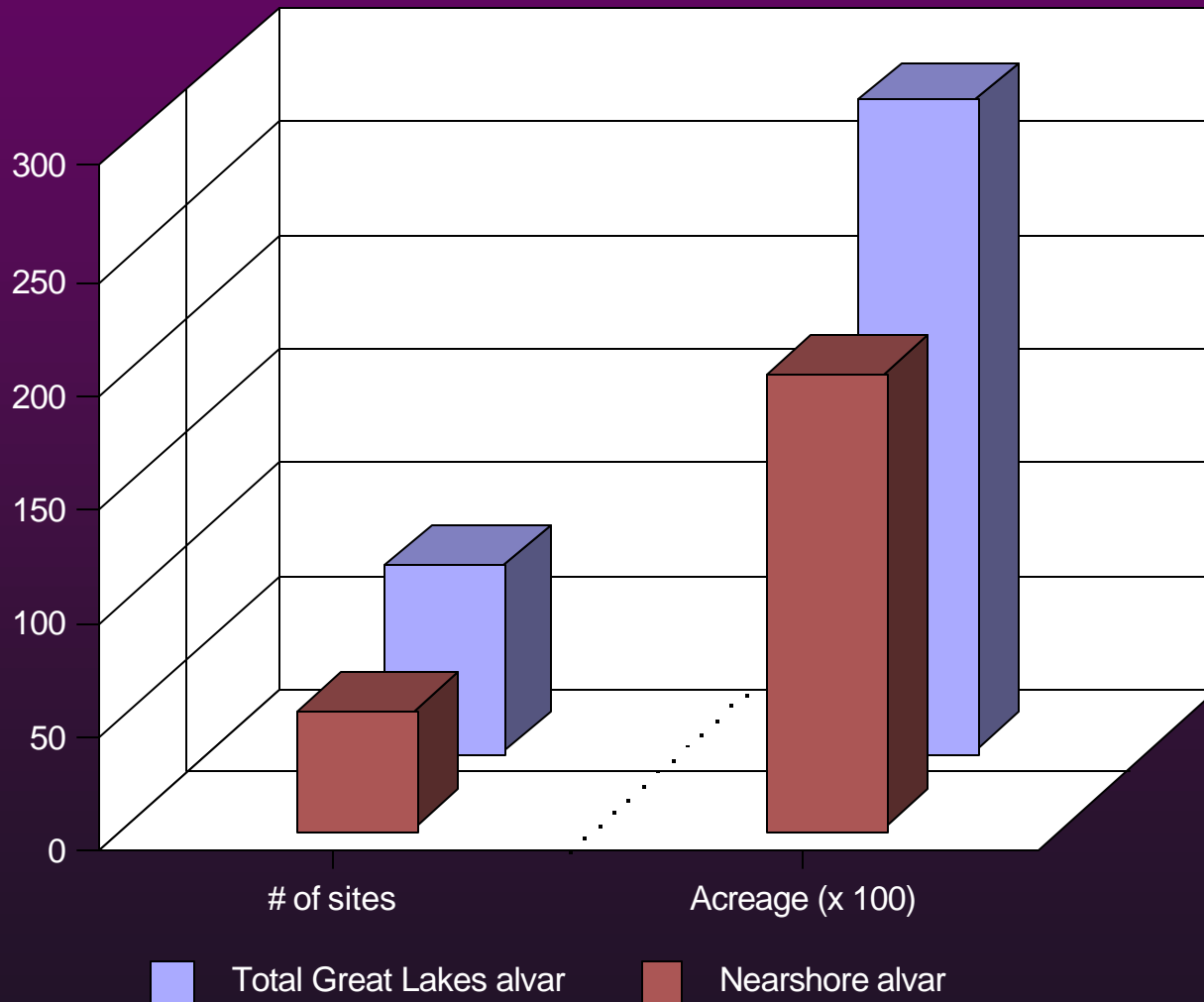
Contain rare and/or endemic species



Great Lakes Alvars



Nearshore and Total Alvars



The Conservation Challenge

- Alvars are unique to the Great Lakes and globally rare



Heather Potter

The Conservation Challenge

- Alvars are unique to the Great Lakes and globally rare
- Threatened by incompatible land uses



Heather Potter



Heather Potter





Harold Malde



Sandy Bonnano



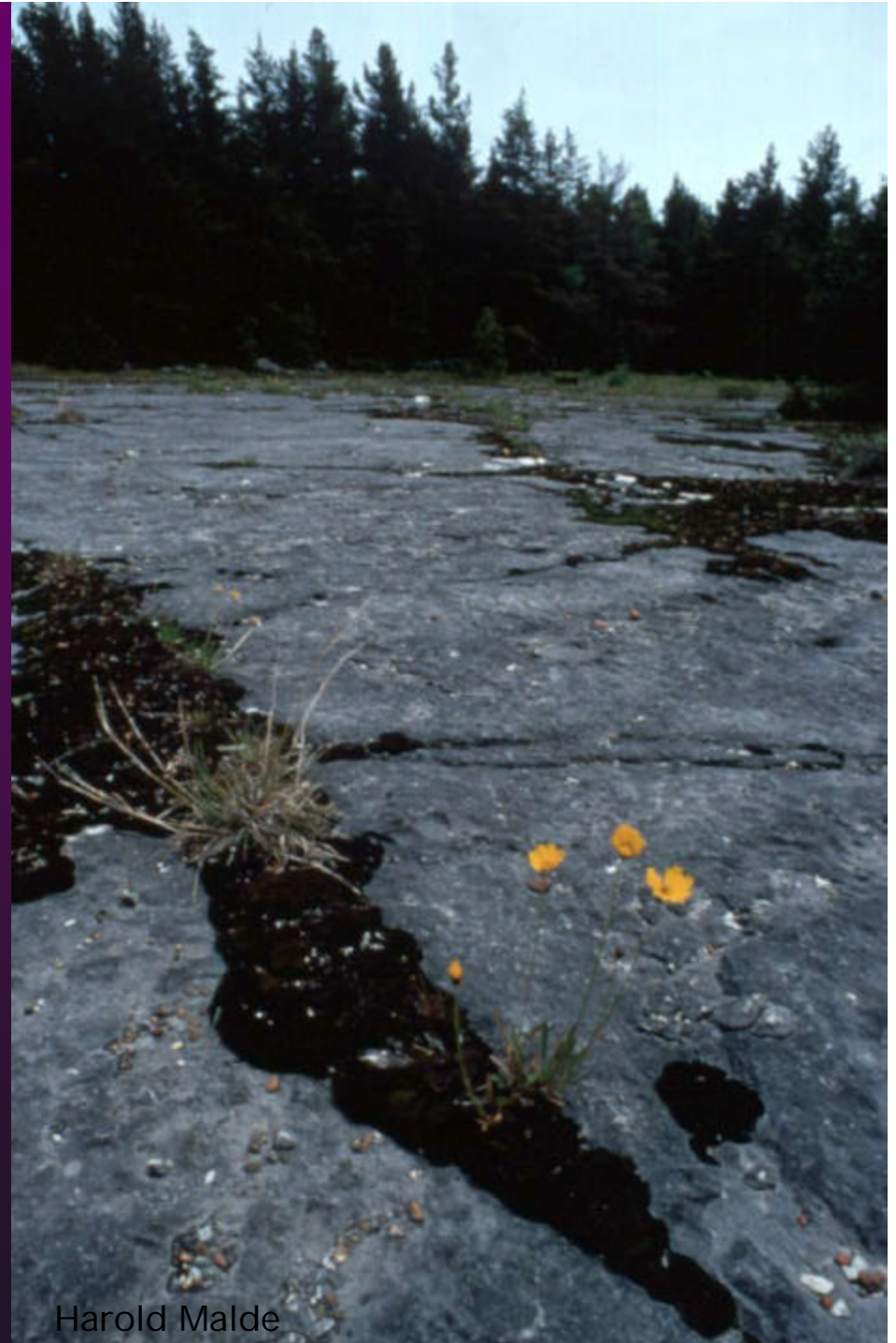
Elinor Osborne



Harold Malde

The Conservation Challenge

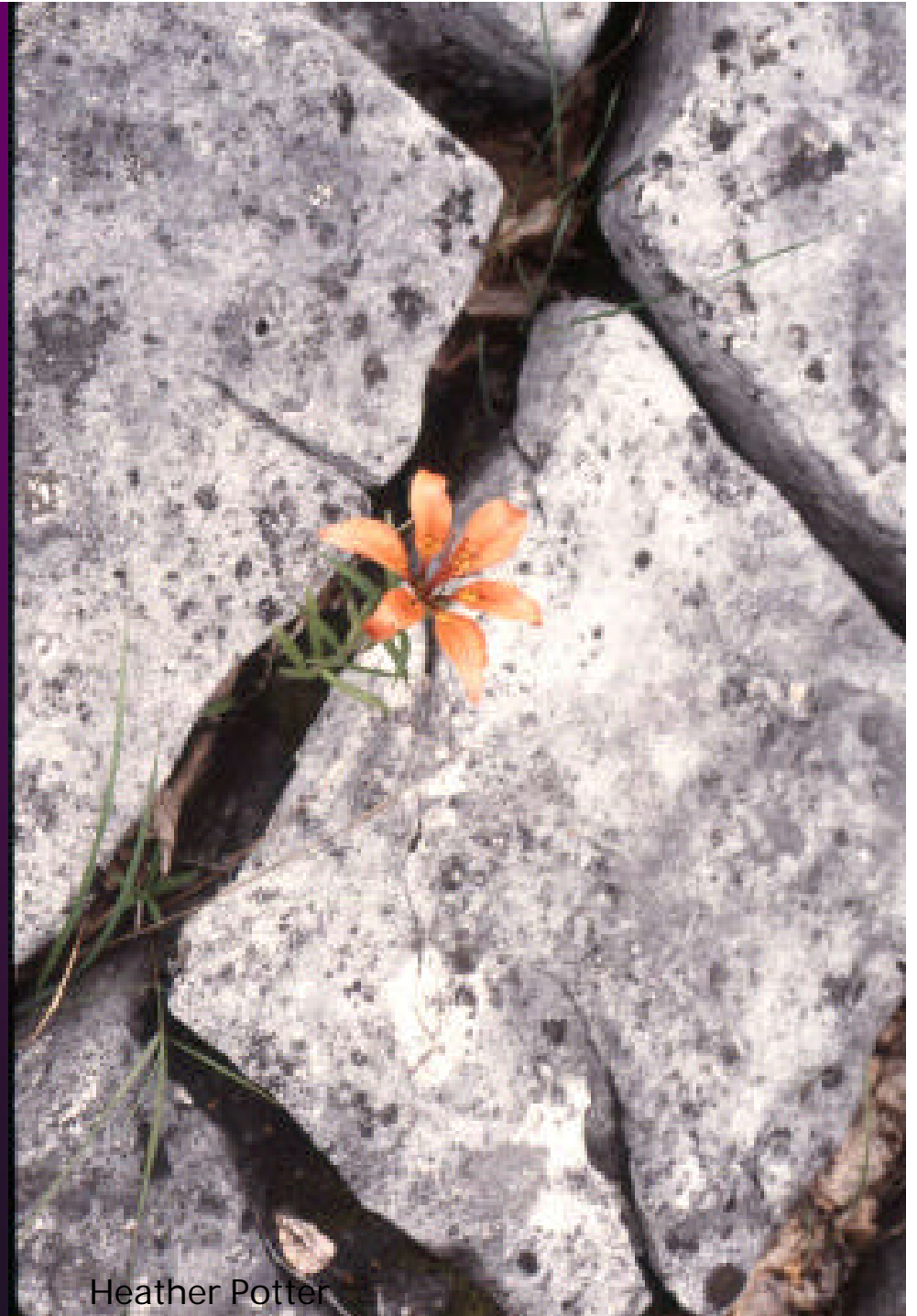
- Alvars are unique to the Great Lakes and globally rare
- Threatened by incompatible land uses
- Conservation efforts have been scattered, isolated and uncoordinated



Harold Malde

The Conservation Challenge

- Alvars are unique to the Great Lakes and globally rare
- Threatened by incompatible land uses
- Conservation efforts have been scattered, isolated and uncoordinated
- Lack of awareness about alvar habitats



Heather Potter

International Alvar Conservation Initiative (1994)



Harold Malde

International Alvar Conservation Initiative

A collaborative effort aimed at providing a unified, consistent approach to understanding and conserving the Great Lakes' rare and vulnerable alvar ecosystems





Major Accomplishments

1. Assessment of alvar distribution & conservation status
2. Documentation of priority sites
3. Knowledge of how alvar systems function
4. Strategies for alvar protection/stewardship
5. Awareness of uniqueness & value of alvars





Major Accomplishments

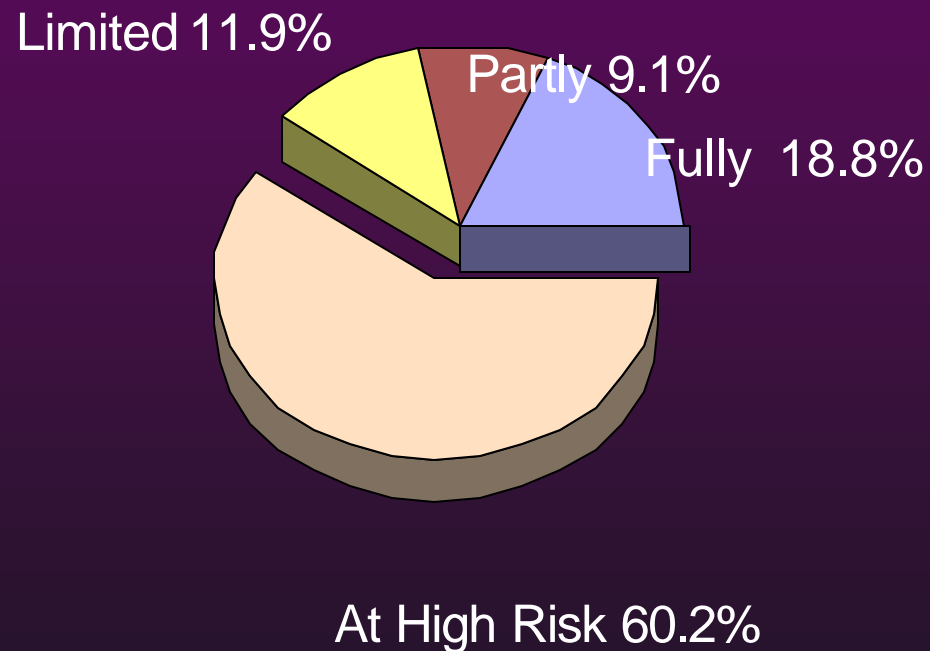
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6. Model for binational collaboration in the conservation of biodiversity

What Have We Learned?

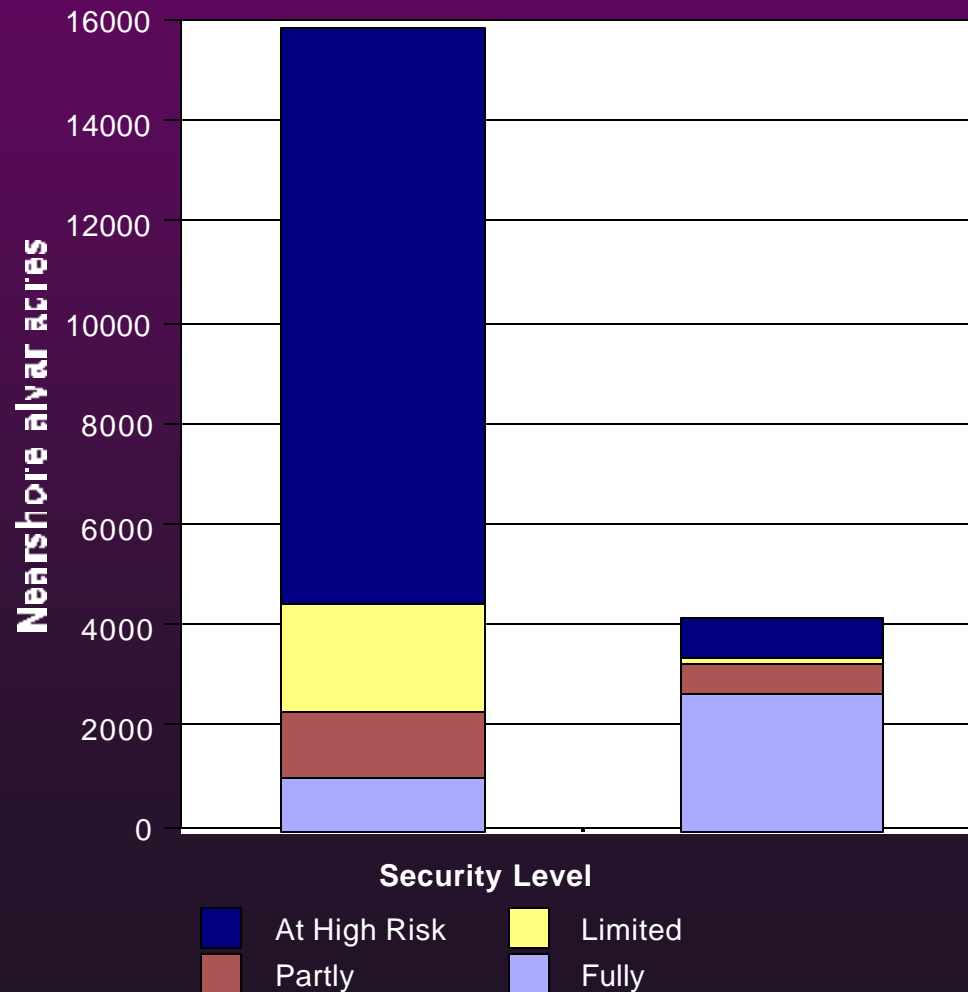


Degree of Protection

Nearshore Alvar Acreage



Level of Protection for Nearshore Alvars



Alvar Protected: 1998-2000

Percentage fully or partly protected



Alvar Protected: 1998-2000





Carol Reschke



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