



# Evaluation of the Sensitivity of Inventory and Monitoring National Parks to Acidification Effects from Atmospheric Sulfur and Nitrogen Deposition

## *Arctic Network (ARCN)*

Natural Resource Report NPS/NRPC/ARD/NRR—2011/351



**ON THE COVER**

Some ecosystems and vegetation types, such as remote high-elevation lakes, sugar maple trees, headwater streams, and red spruce trees, are sensitive to the effects of acidification from atmospheric nitrogen and sulfur deposition.  
Photograph by: National Park Service

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# **Evaluation of the Sensitivity of Inventory and Monitoring National Parks to Acidification Effects from Atmospheric Sulfur and Nitrogen Deposition**

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April 2011

U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Natural Resource Program Center  
Denver, Colorado

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This report received peer review by subject-matter experts who were not directly involved in the collection, analysis, or reporting of the data. Data in this report were collected and analyzed using methods based on established, peer-reviewed protocols and were analyzed and interpreted within the guidelines of the protocols.

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This report is available from Air Resources Division of the NPS (<http://www.nature.nps.gov/air/Permits/ARIS/networks/acidification-eval.cfm>) and the Natural Resource Publications Management website (<http://www.nature.nps.gov/publications/nrpm/>).

Please cite this publication as:

Sullivan, T. J., G. T. McPherson, T. C. McDonnell, S. D. Mackey, and D. Moore. 2011. Evaluation of the sensitivity of inventory and monitoring national parks to acidification effects from atmospheric sulfur and nitrogen deposition: Arctic Network (ARCN). Natural Resource Report NPS/NRPC/ARD/NRR—2011/351. National Park Service, Denver, Colorado.

## Arctic Network (ARCN)

National maps of atmospheric S and N emissions and deposition are provided in Maps A through D as context for subsequent network data presentations. Maps A and B show county level emissions of total S and total N, respectively, for the year 2002. Maps C and D show total S and N deposition, again for the year 2002. Regional atmospheric deposition data are not available for Alaska.

There are five parks in the Arctic Network: Bering Land Bridge (BELA), Cape Krusenstern (CAKR), Gates of the Arctic (GAAR), Kabuk Valley (KOVA), and Noatak (NOAT). All are larger than 100 square miles.

Total annual S and N emissions, by county, are shown in Maps E and F, respectively, for lands in and surrounding the Arctic Network. County-level S and N emissions within the network were less than 1 ton per square mile per year throughout the entire network. Point source S emissions within the network are shown in Map G. There were few S point sources in or around the network and none of any magnitude. Most S point sources in the network emitted less than 5,000 tons of S per year (Map G). Point source emissions of oxidized (nitrogen oxides, NO<sub>x</sub>) and reduced (ammonia, NH<sub>3</sub>) N were shown in Map H. There were few NO<sub>x</sub> point sources of any magnitude, and many of those were on the coast of the Beaufort Sea, in the easternmost portion of the network (Map H). There were no substantial point sources of reduced N (Map H).

There are no human population centers of any magnitude within the network. There are two to the south, within a 300-mile radius of the network boundary (Map I).

Maps J and K are not shown for this network because regional total S and N deposition data are not available for Alaska. However, the S and N deposition in this network is expected to be very low, each below 1 kg/ha/yr in most locations, and this network is assumed to be in the lowest quintile for S and N Pollutant Exposure. There are five active NADP/NTN wet deposition monitoring sites in Alaska: Poker Creek, Juneau, Denali National Park, GAAR, and Katmai National Park, with data collected since 1980 at Denali and since 1993 at Poker Creek. The other three monitoring sites have been added within the last decade. There are also Clean Air Status and Trends Network (CASTNET) dry deposition measurements at Denali and Poker Flats. At all monitored sites in Alaska, wet N deposition has consistently been less than 1 kg N/ha/yr, and it has been less than 0.5 kg N/ha/yr at all monitored sites except Juneau. Wet S deposition has been slightly higher than 1 kg S/ha/yr at Juneau, but less than that at the other monitoring sites. The dry deposition measurements by CASTNET have also been low. Thus, the sparse available atmospheric deposition data for Alaska are consistent with the general understanding that atmospheric deposition of both N and S tends to be very low at national park lands within Alaska. It can be assumed that N and S deposition in each of the Alaskan networks would be lower than 1 to 2 kg/ha/yr, on average.

Land cover in and around the network is shown in Map L. The predominant cover types within this network are generally arctic shrubland, grassland and arctic herbaceous vegetation, and wetland, with some forest in the southern portions of the network.

Land slope across all parks within the network is variable, but most park lands have relatively low relief (Map M). All of BELA has less than 10° slope. Slope is less than 20° across all park lands within the network except a few HUC watersheds in GAAR that have a slope between 20° and 30°.

Park lands requiring special protection against potential adverse impacts associated with acidic deposition are shown on Map N. Also shown on Map N are all federal lands designated as wilderness, both lands managed by NPS and lands managed by other federal agencies. The land designations used to identify this heightened protection included Class I designation under the Clean Air Act Amendments and wilderness designation. There are expansive areas of designated wilderness in this network, both within and outside the I&M parks.

Network rankings are given in Figures A through C as the average ranking of the Pollutant Exposure, Ecosystem Sensitivity, and Park Protection metrics, respectively. Figure D shows the overall network Summary Risk ranking. In each figure, the rank for this particular network is highlighted to show its relative position compared with the ranks of the other 31 networks.

The Arctic Network ranked the lowest of all networks in Pollutant Exposure (Figure A). Sulfur and N emissions and expected deposition within the network are both low. The network Ecosystem Sensitivity ranking is Moderate, at the bottom of the third quintile among networks (Figure B). The presumed sensitivity is mainly because there are many high-elevation streams within the parks in the network. GAAR has more high-elevation stream length than any other I&M park. There are no data available at this time for designating stream order in Alaska, so this variable was not included in the Ecosystem Sensitivity ranking. This network does not contain red spruce or sugar maple, the primary tree species known to be sensitive to acidification effects. The network ranked at the bottom of the highest quintile in Park Protection (Figure C), having substantial amounts of protected lands.

**Table A.** Relative rankings of individual I&M parks within the network for Pollutant Exposure, Ecosystem Sensitivity, Park Protection, and overall Summary Risk from acidic deposition.

I&M Parks <sup>2</sup> in Network	Relative Ranking of Individual Parks <sup>1</sup>			
	Pollutant Exposure	Ecosystem Sensitivity	Park Protection	Summary Risk
<b><i>Bering Land Bridge</i></b>	Very Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low
<b><i>Cape Krusenstern</i></b>	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Low
<b><i>Gates of the Arctic</i></b>	Very Low	Very High	Very High	High
<b><i>Kobuk Valley</i></b>	Very Low	High	Very High	Moderate
<b><i>Noatak</i></b>	Very Low	High	Very High	Moderate

<sup>1</sup> Relative park rankings are designated according to quintile ranking, among all I&M Parks, from the lowest quintile (very low risk) to the highest quintile (very high risk).

<sup>2</sup> Park name is printed in bold italic for parks larger than 100 square miles.



In combination, the network rankings for Pollutant Exposure, Ecosystem Sensitivity, and Park Protection yield an overall network Summary Risk ranking that was above the middle of the distribution among all networks (Figure D). The overall level of concern for S and N acidification effects on I&M parks within this network is considered Moderate.

Similarly, park rankings are given in Figures E through H for the same metrics. In the case of the park rankings, we only show in the figures the parks that are larger than 100 square miles. Relative ranks for all parks, including the smaller parks, are given in Table A and Appendix A. As for the network rankings, the park rankings highlight those parks that occur in this network to show their relative position compared with parks in the other 31 networks. Note that the rankings shown in Figures E through H reflect the rank of a given park compared with all other parks, irrespective of size.

The five parks in this network all ranked in the lowest quintile in S and N Pollutant Exposure (Figure E), Sulfur and N emissions within the parks in this network and expected deposition were very low. The parks in this network varied with respect to Ecosystem Sensitivity, from Very High (GAAR) to Low (CAKR; Figure F). Three of the parks (GAAR, KOVA, and NOAT) ranked Very High in Park Protection; the other two ranked Moderate for this theme (Figure G). Parks in the Arctic Network were variable in their rankings for park Summary Risk; of the five parks, GAAR showed the highest risk (High; Figure H). KOVA and NOAT were ranked Moderate, and BELA and CAKR were ranked Low. The overall level of concern for acidification effects for most parks in this network is considered Low to Moderate, although it is higher for GAAR (Table A).

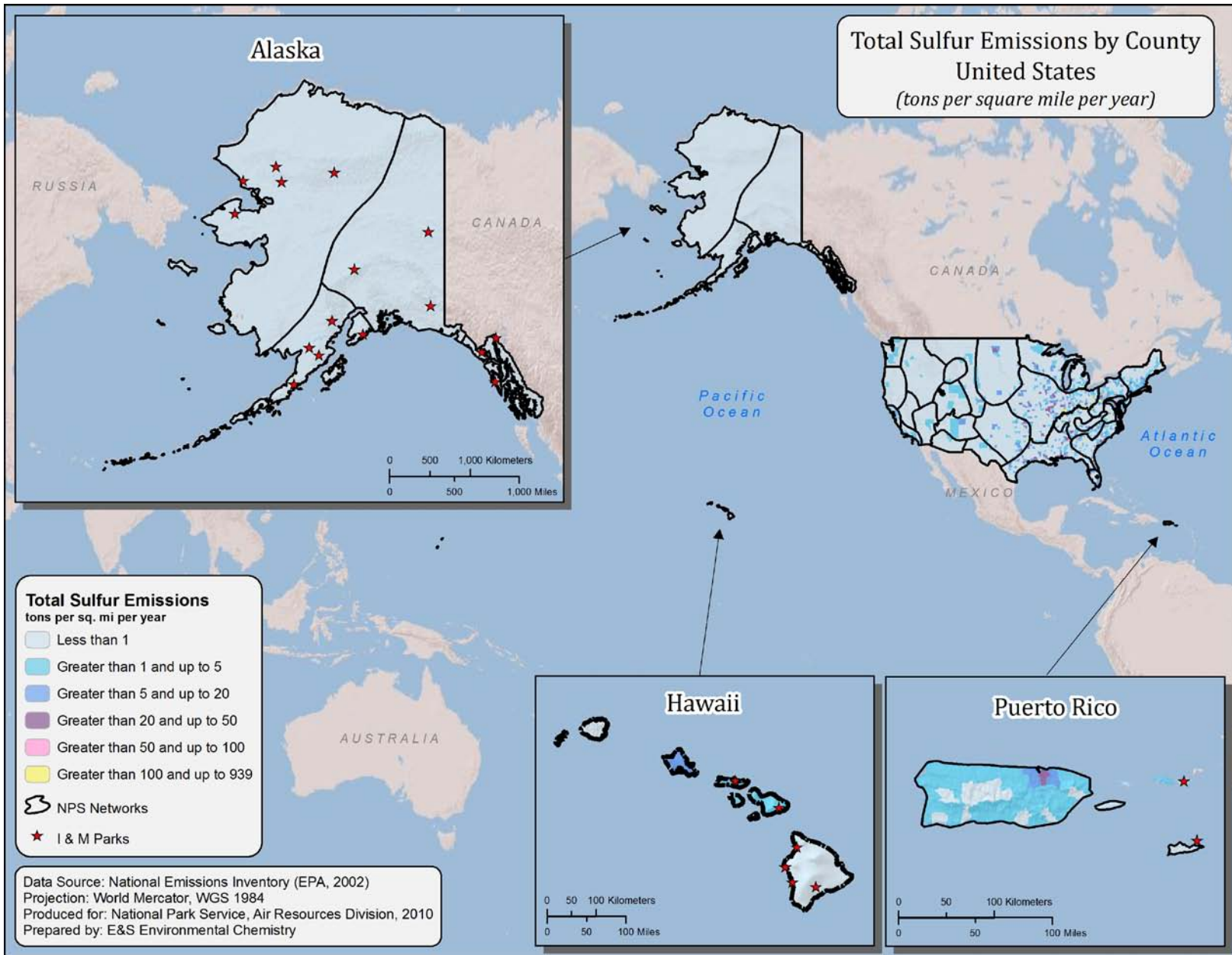
- Map A. National map of total N emissions by county for the year 2002. Both oxidized (nitrogen oxides, NO<sub>x</sub>) and reduced (ammonia, NH<sub>3</sub>) forms of N are included. The total is expressed in tons per square mile per year. (Source of data: EPA National Emissions Inventory, <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/chief/net/2002inventory.html>)
- Map B. Total N deposition for the conterminous United States for the year 2002, expressed in units of kilograms of N deposited from the atmosphere to the earth surface per hectare per year. Wet and dry forms of both oxidized (nitrogen oxides, NO<sub>x</sub>) and reduced (ammonia, NH<sub>3</sub>) N are included. For the eastern half of the country, wet deposition values were derived from interpolated measured values from NADP (three-year average centered on 2002) and dry deposition values were derived from 12-km CMAQ model projections for 2002. For the western half of the country, both wet and dry deposition values were derived from 36-km CMAQ model projections for 2002. NADP interpolations were performed using the approach of Grimm and Lynch (1997). CMAQ model projections were provided by Robin Dennis, U.S. EPA.
- Map C. Total N emissions by county for lands surrounding the network, expressed as tons of N emitted into the atmosphere per square mile per year. The total includes both oxidized (nitrogen oxides, NO<sub>x</sub>) and reduced (ammonia, NH<sub>3</sub>) N. (Source of data: EPA National Emissions Inventory, <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/chief/net/2002inventory.html>)

- Map D. Major point source emissions of oxidized (nitrogen oxides, NO<sub>x</sub>) and reduced (ammonia, NH<sub>3</sub>) N in and around the network. The base of each vertical bar is positioned in the map at the approximate location of the source. The height of the bar is proportional to the magnitude of the source. (Source of data: EPA National Emissions Inventory, <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/chief/net/2002inventory.html>)
- Map E. Urban centers having more than 10,000 people within the network and within a 300-mile buffer around the perimeter of the network. (Source of data: U.S. Census 2000)
- Map F. Total N deposition in and around the network. Included in the total are wet plus dry forms of both oxidized (nitrogen oxides, NO<sub>x</sub>) and reduced (ammonia, NH<sub>3</sub>) N. Values are expressed as kilograms of N deposited per hectare per year. (Source of data: CMAQ Model wet and dry deposition data for 2002; see information for Map B above for details)
- Map G. Land cover types in and around the network, based on the National Land Cover dataset. (Source of data: National Land Cover Dataset, [http://www.mrlc.gov/nlcd\\_multizone\\_map.php](http://www.mrlc.gov/nlcd_multizone_map.php))
- Map H. Distribution within the larger parks that occur in this network of the five terrestrial vegetation types thought to be most sensitive to N-nutrient enrichment effects: arctic, alpine, meadow, wetland, and arid and semi-arid. (Source of data: See Appendix A)
- Map I. Lands within the network that are classified as Class I or wilderness area. (Source of data: USGS 2005 [National Atlas; <http://nationalatlas.gov>] and NPS)
- Figure A. Network rankings for Pollutant Exposure, calculated as the average of scores for all Pollutant Exposure variables.
- Figure B. Network rankings for Ecosystem Sensitivity, calculated as the average of scores for all Ecosystem Sensitivity variables.
- Figure C. Network rankings for Park Protection, calculated as the average of scores for all Park Protection variables.
- Figure D. Network Summary Risk ranking, calculated as the sum of the averages of the scores for Pollutant Exposure, Ecosystem Sensitivity, and Park Protection.
- Figure E. Park rankings for Pollutant Exposure for all parks larger than 100 square miles. Ranks for each park were calculated relative to all parks, regardless of size, as the average of scores for all Pollutant Exposure variables.
- Figure F. Park rankings for Ecosystem Sensitivity for all parks larger than 100 square miles. Ranks for each park were calculated relative to all parks, regardless of size, as the average of scores for all Ecosystem Sensitivity variables.

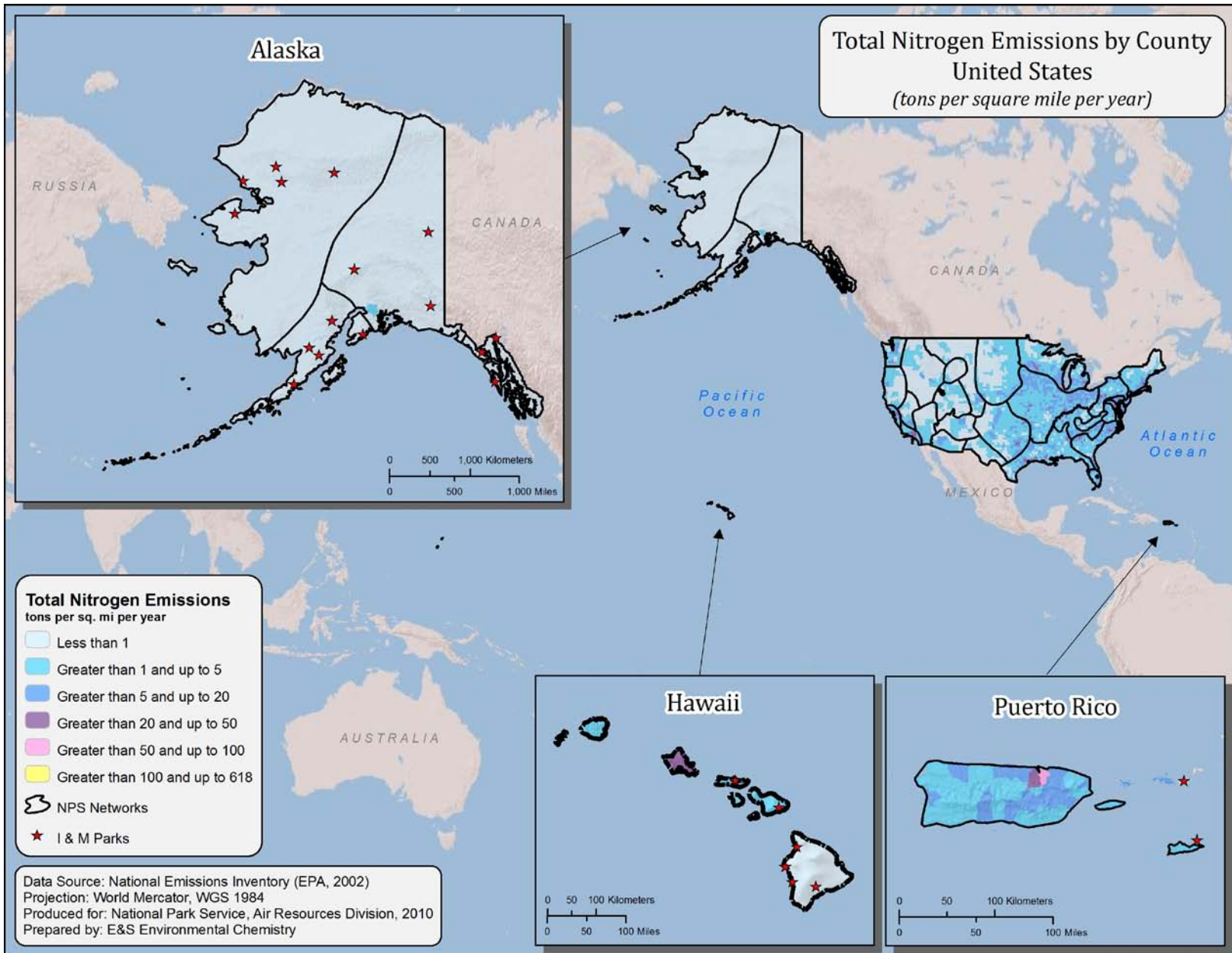


Figure G. Park rankings for Park Protection for all parks larger than 100 square miles. Ranks for each park were calculated relative to all parks, regardless of size, as the average of scores for all Park Protection variables.

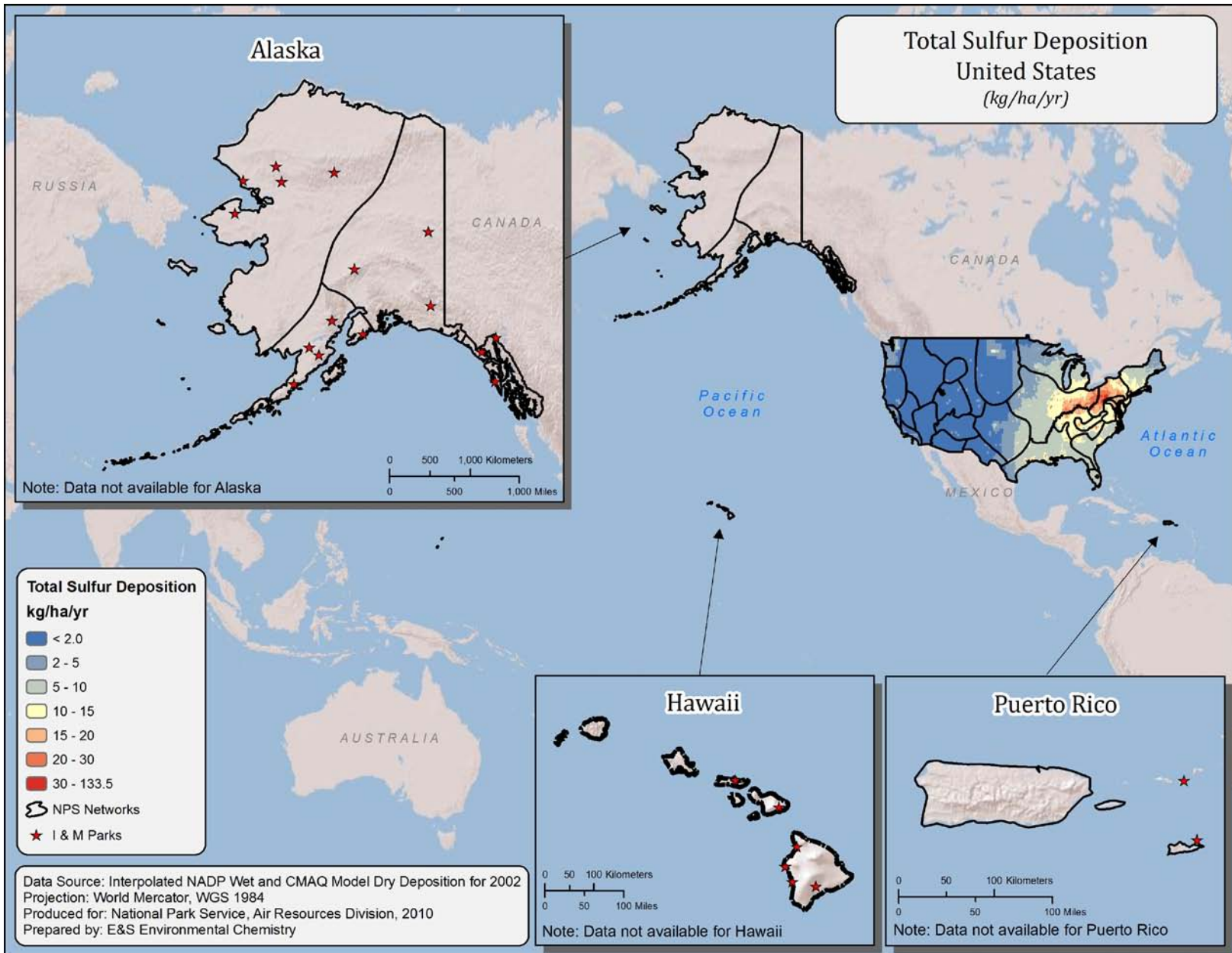
Figure H. Park rankings for Summary Risk for all parks larger than 100 square miles. Ranks for each park were calculated relative to all parks, regardless of size, as the average of scores for all Summary Risk variables.



Map A

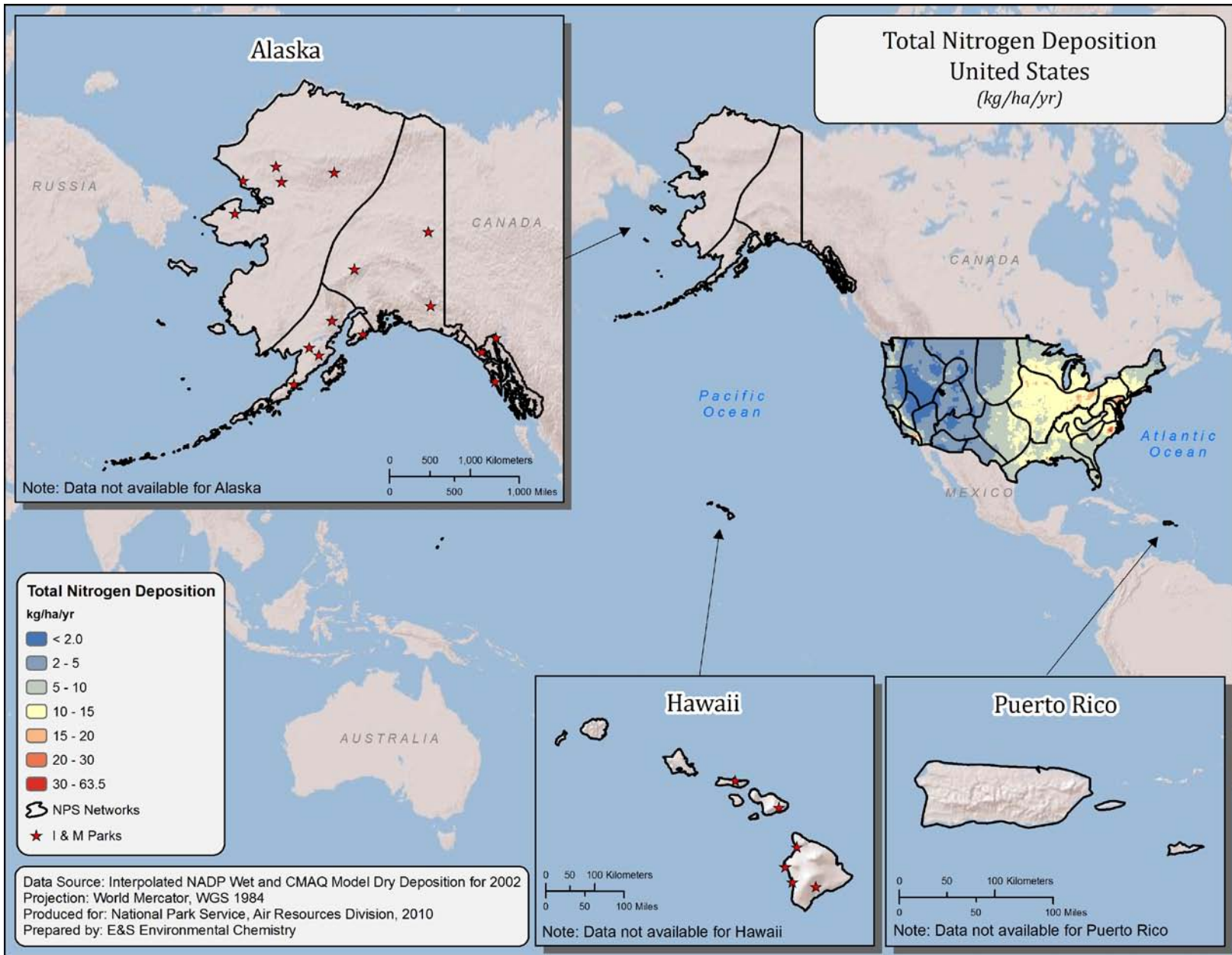


Map B

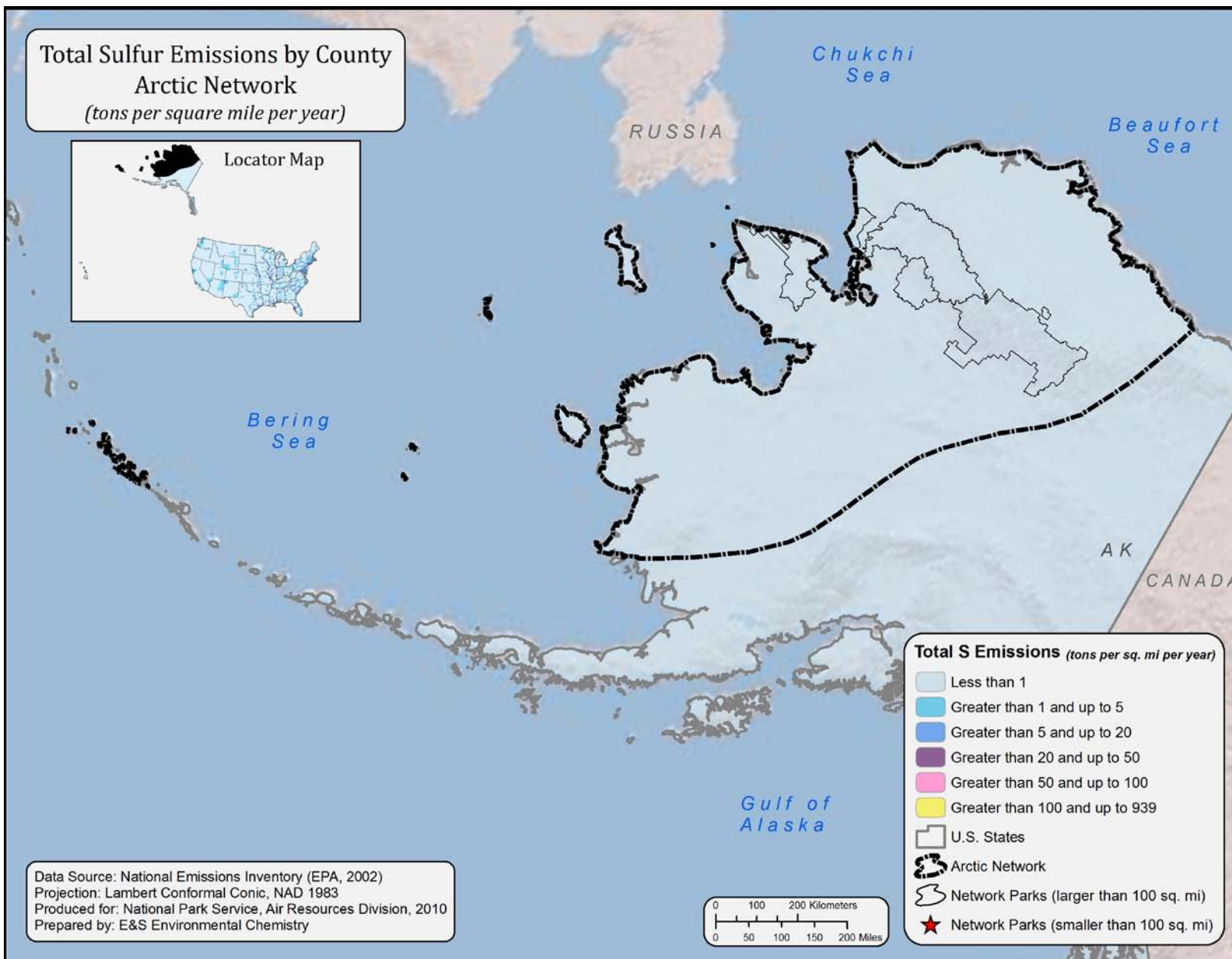


Map C



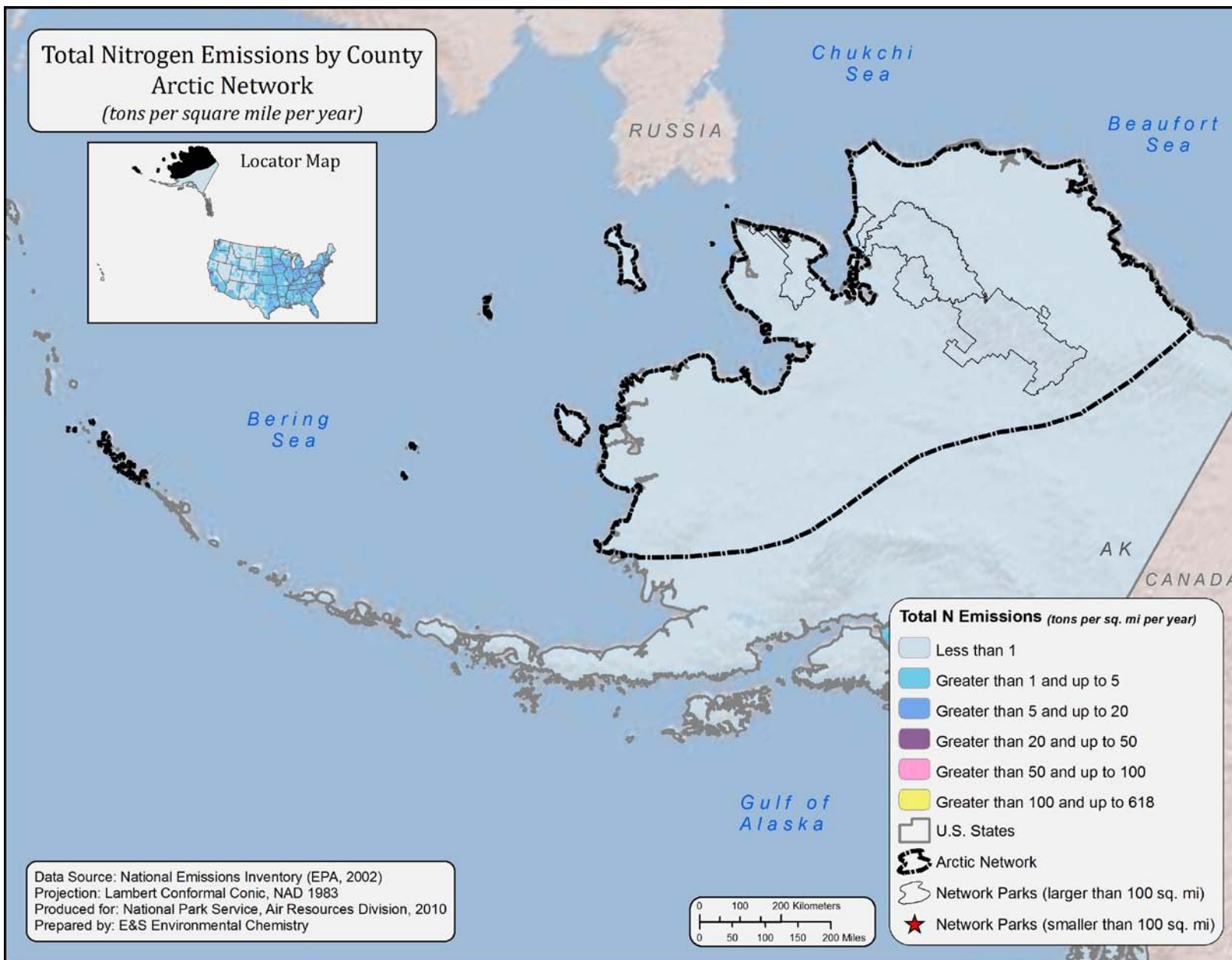


Map D

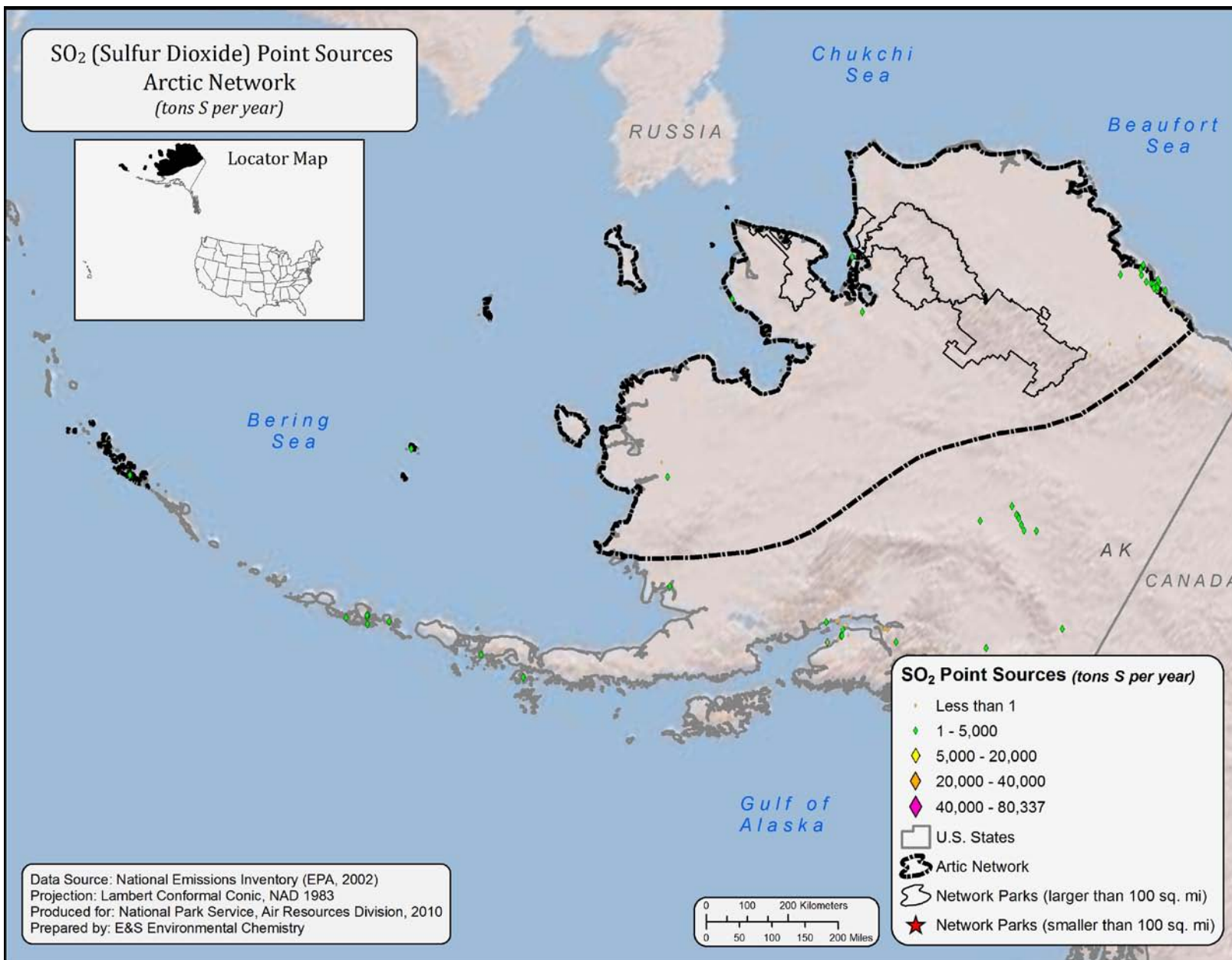


Map E

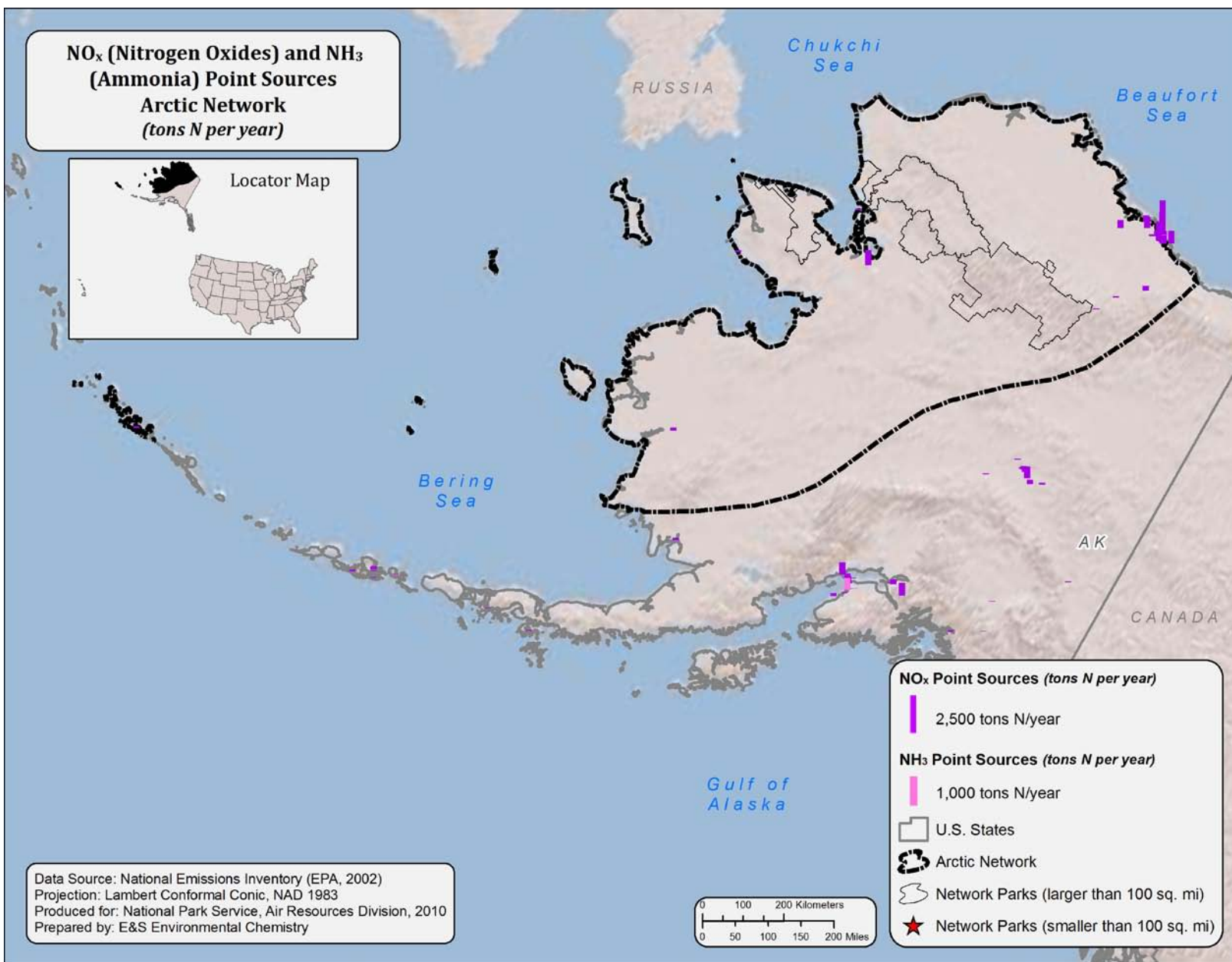




Map F

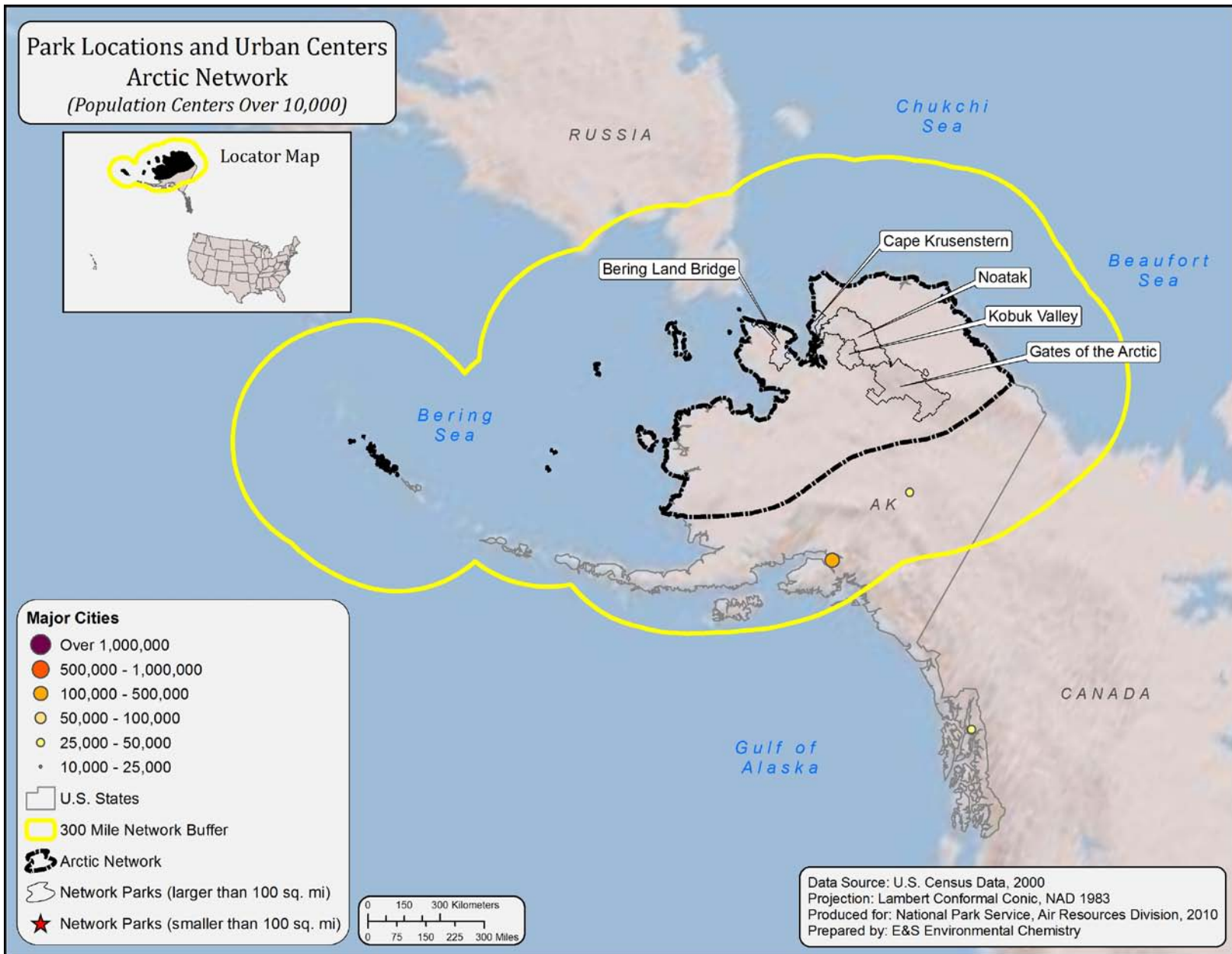


Map G

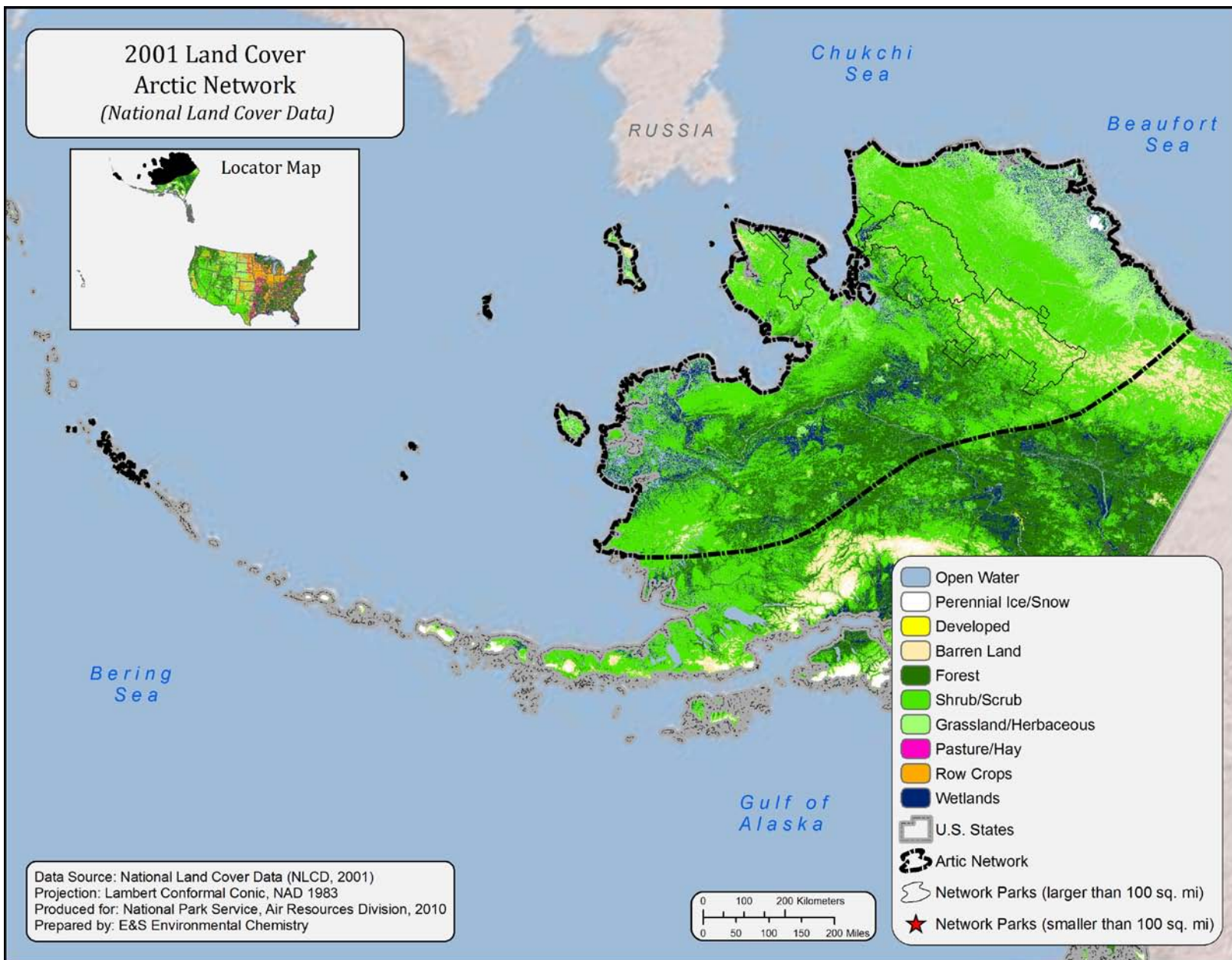


Map H

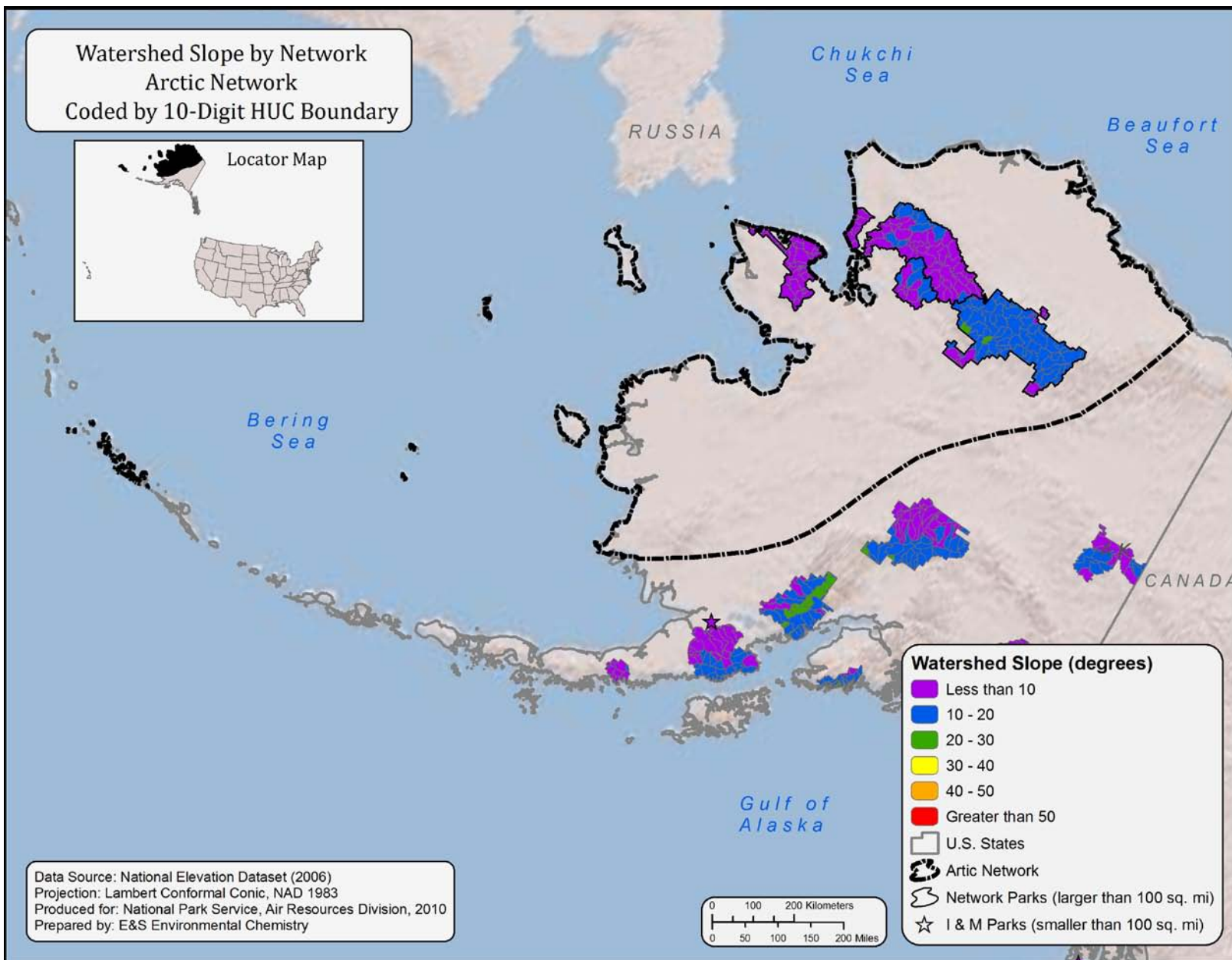




Map I

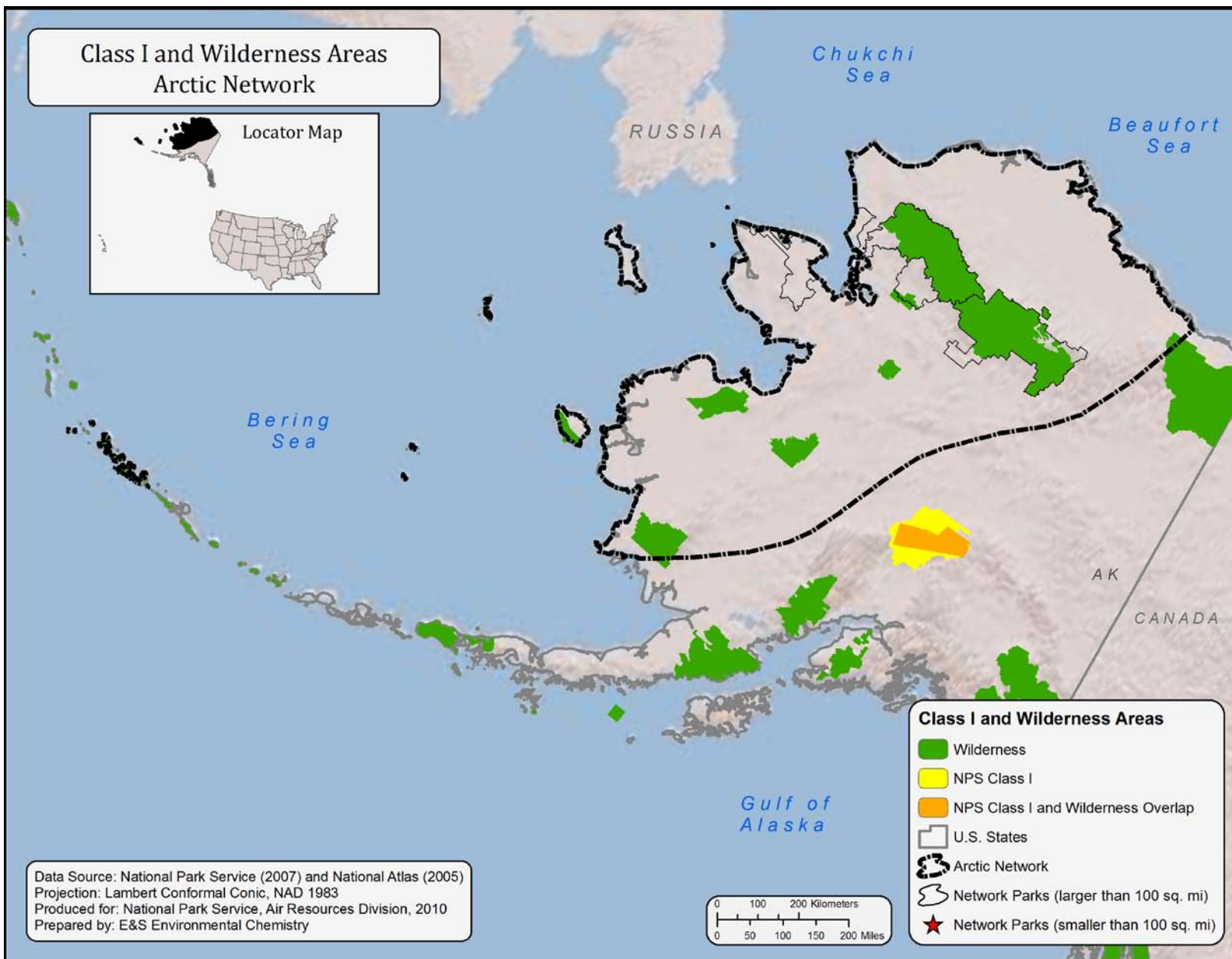


Map L



Map M





Map N

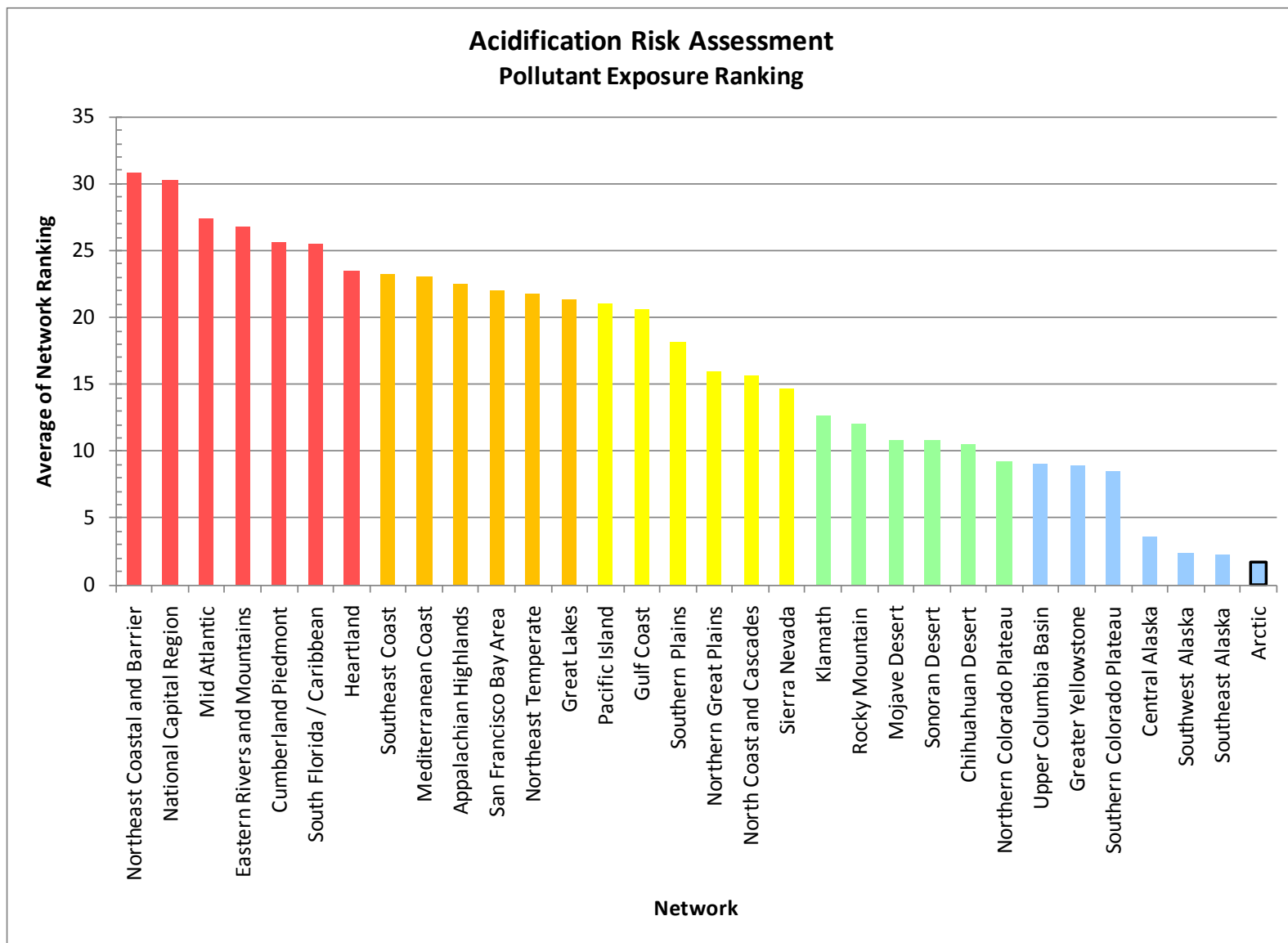


Figure A

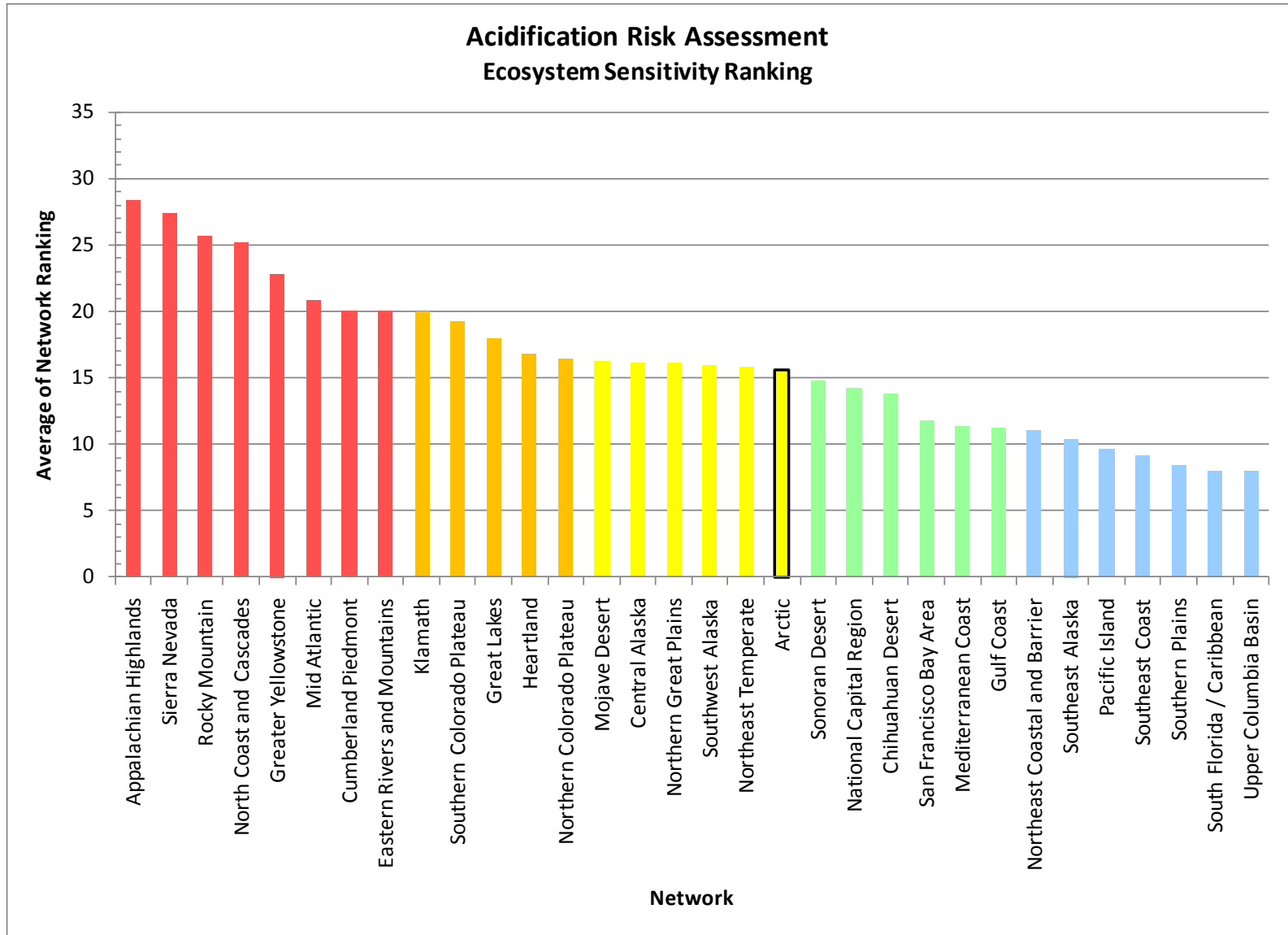


Figure B

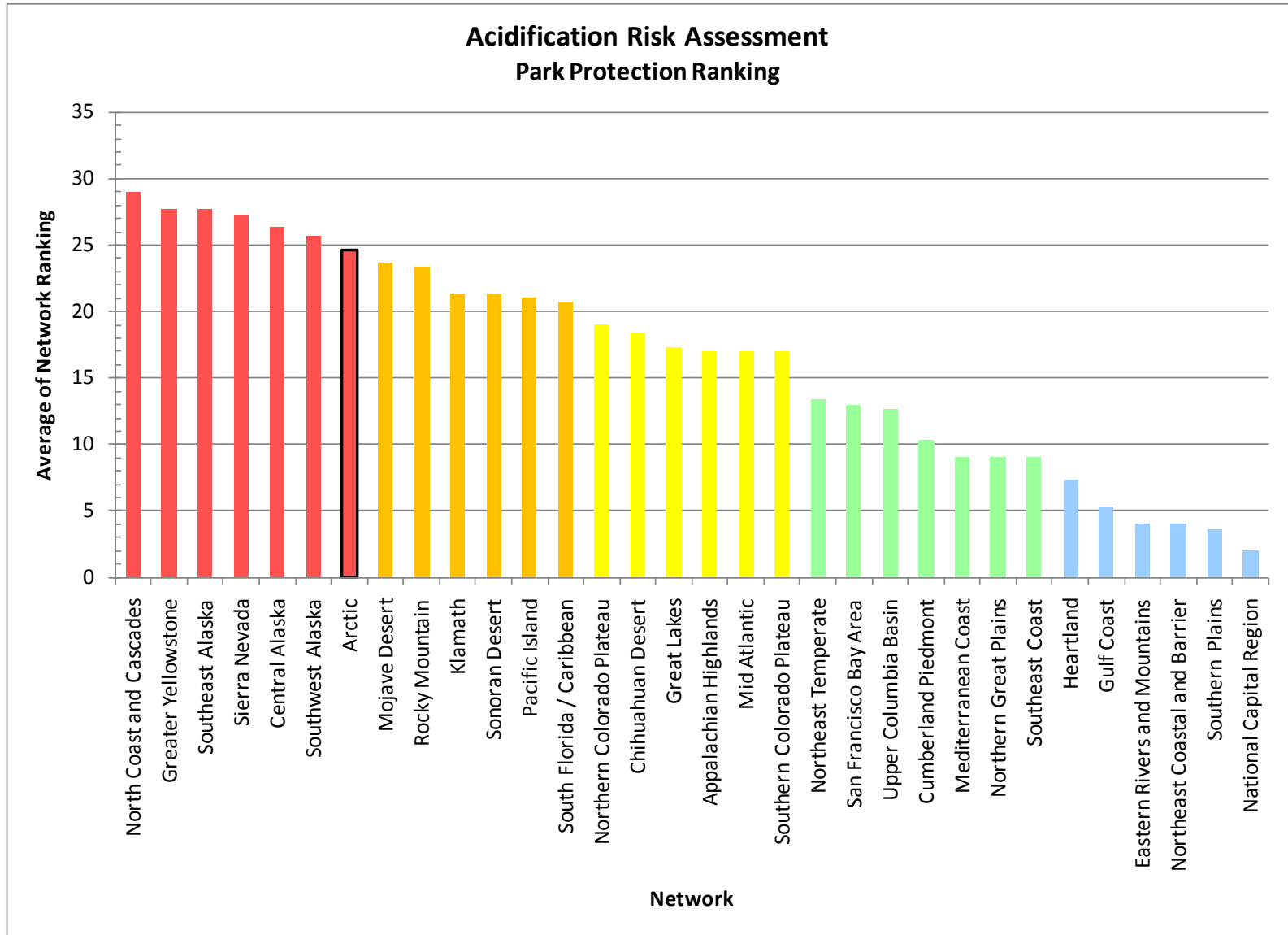


Figure C

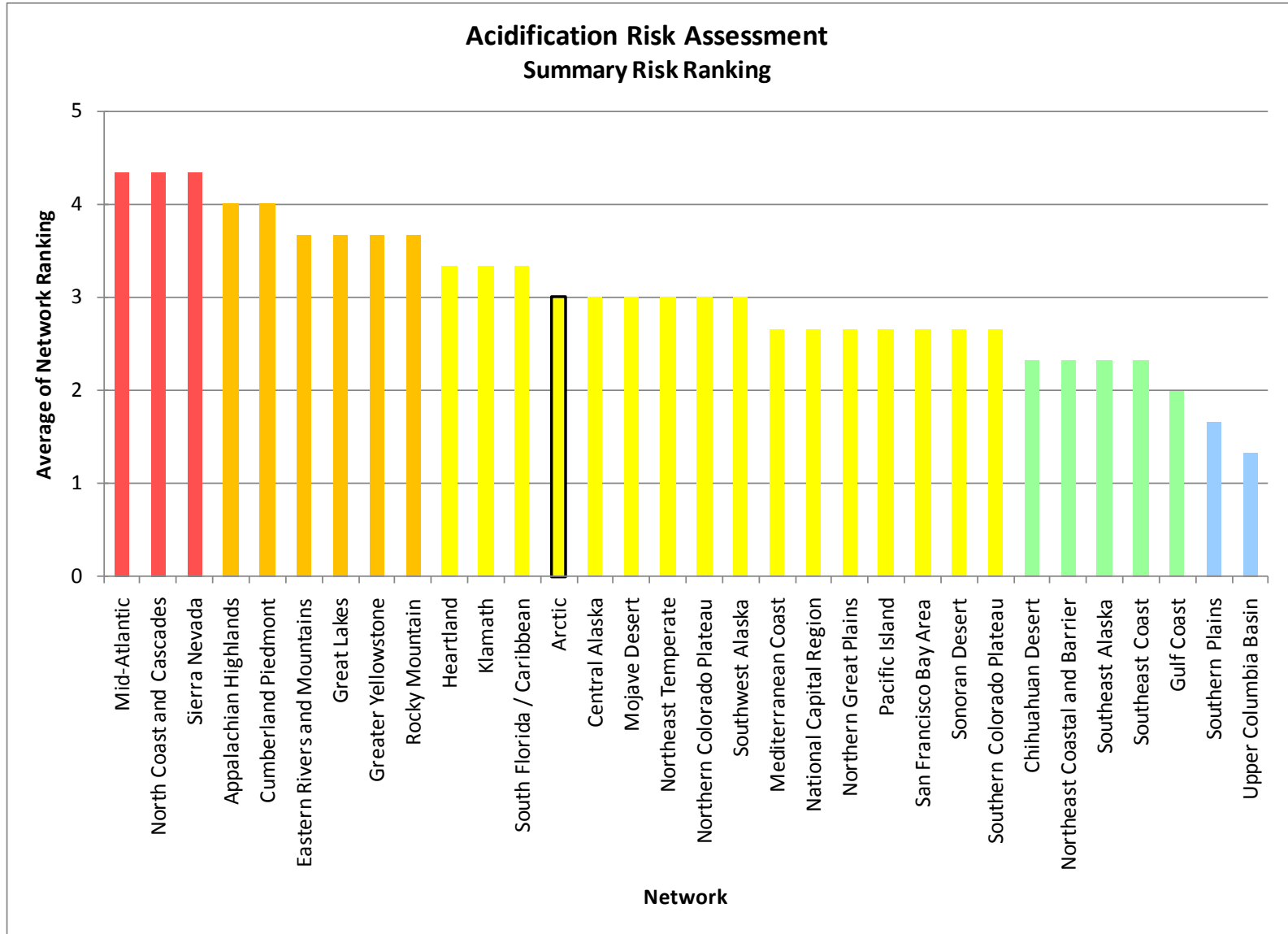


Figure D

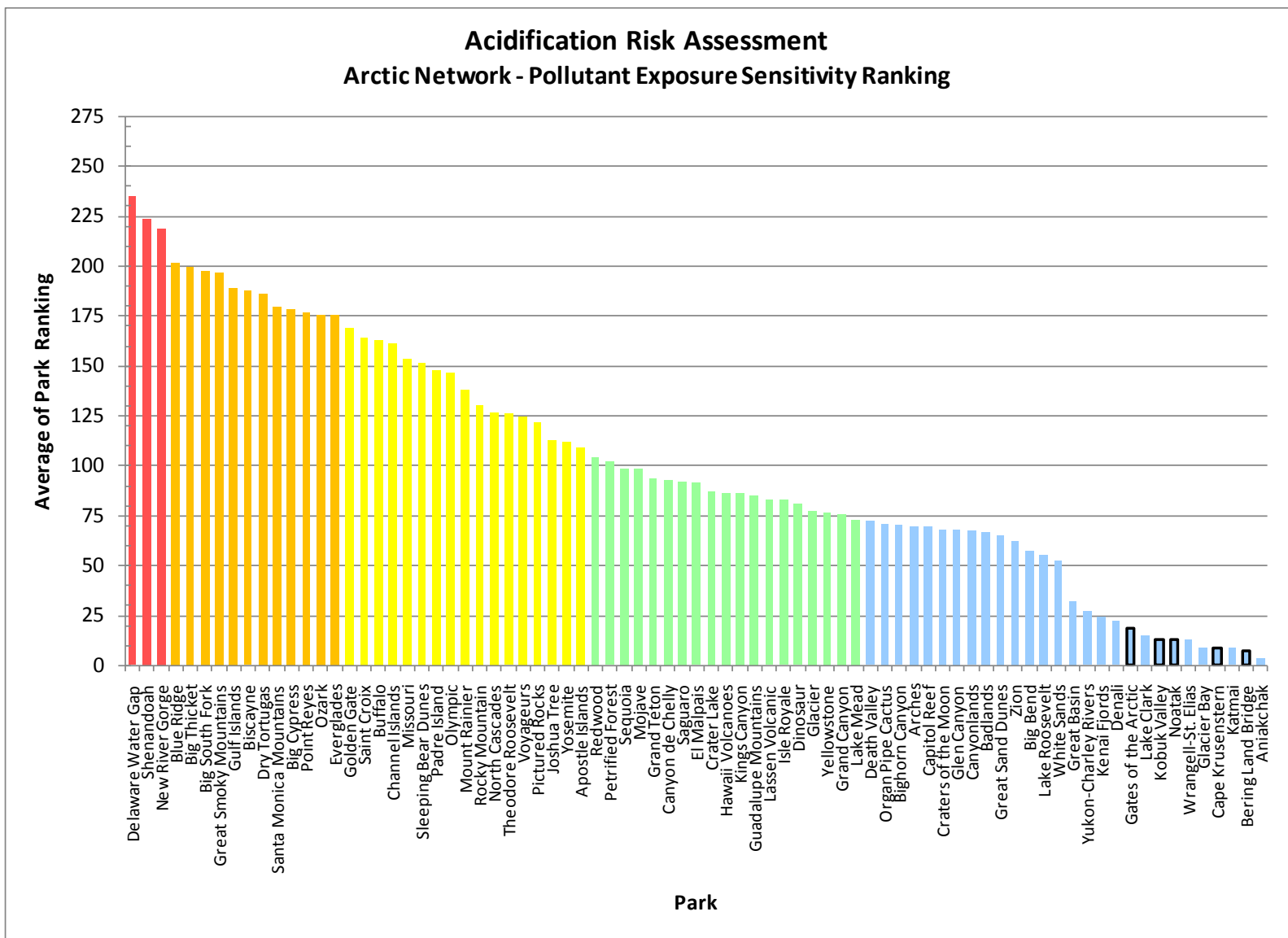


Figure E



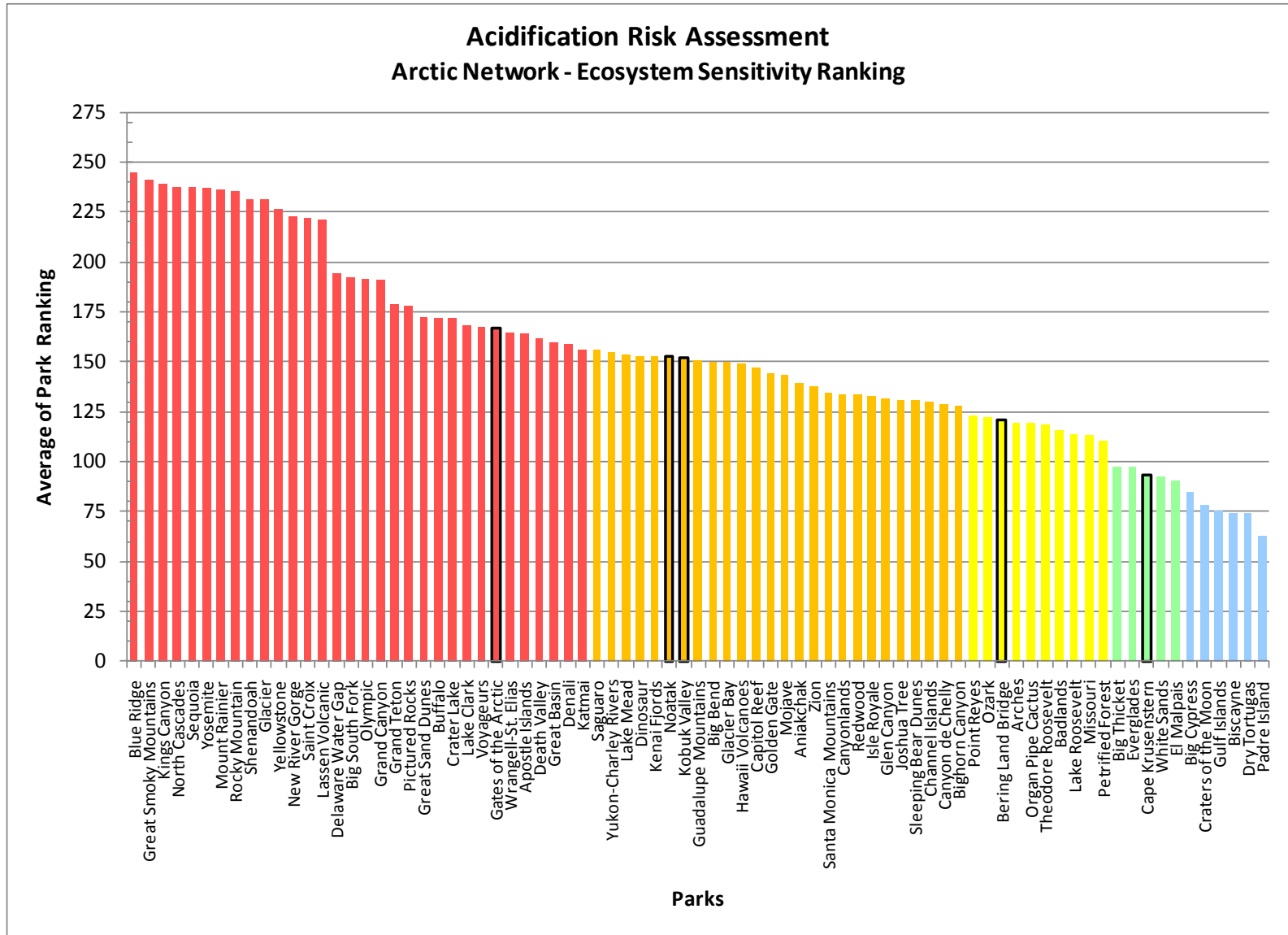


Figure F

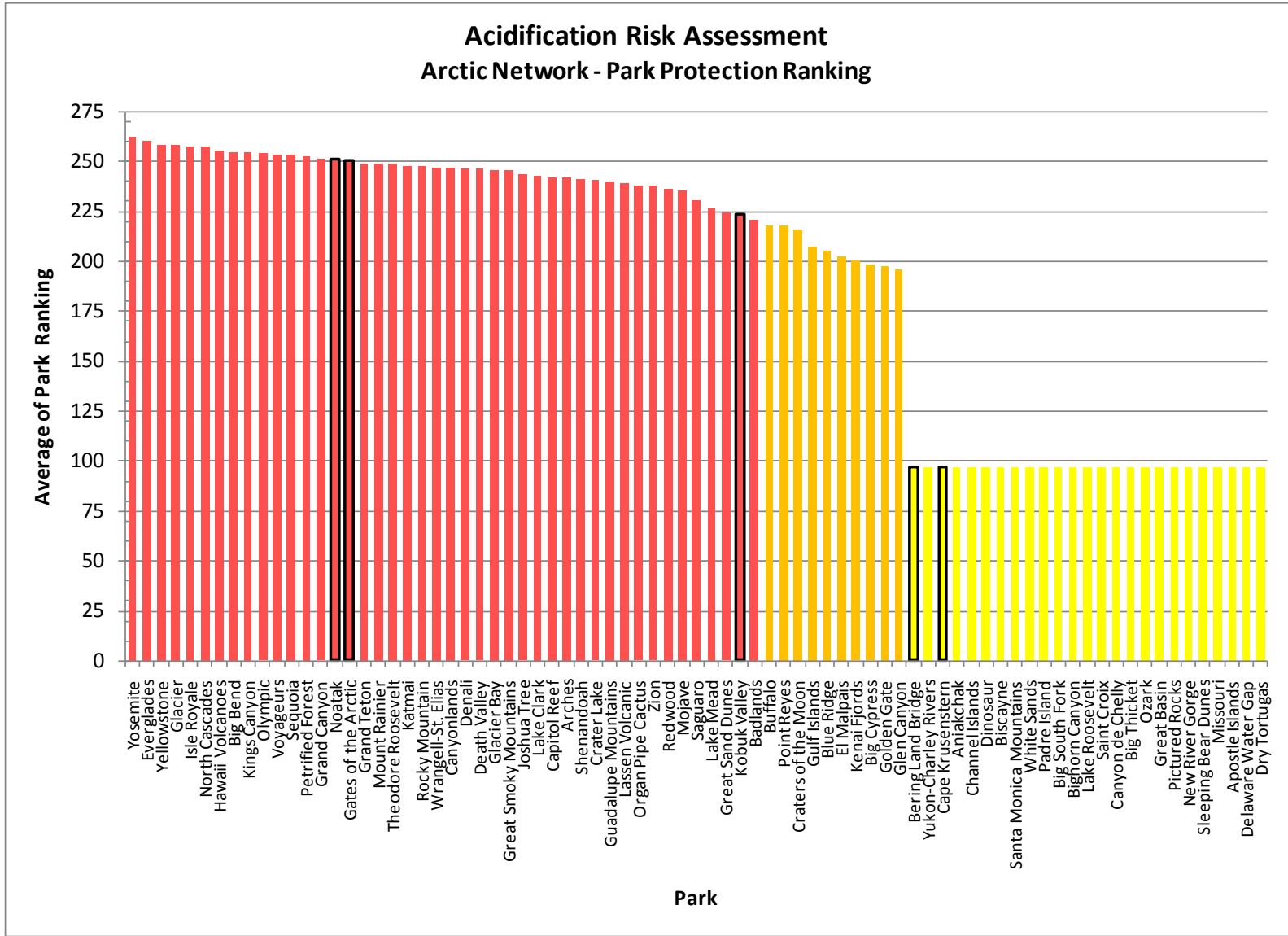


Figure G

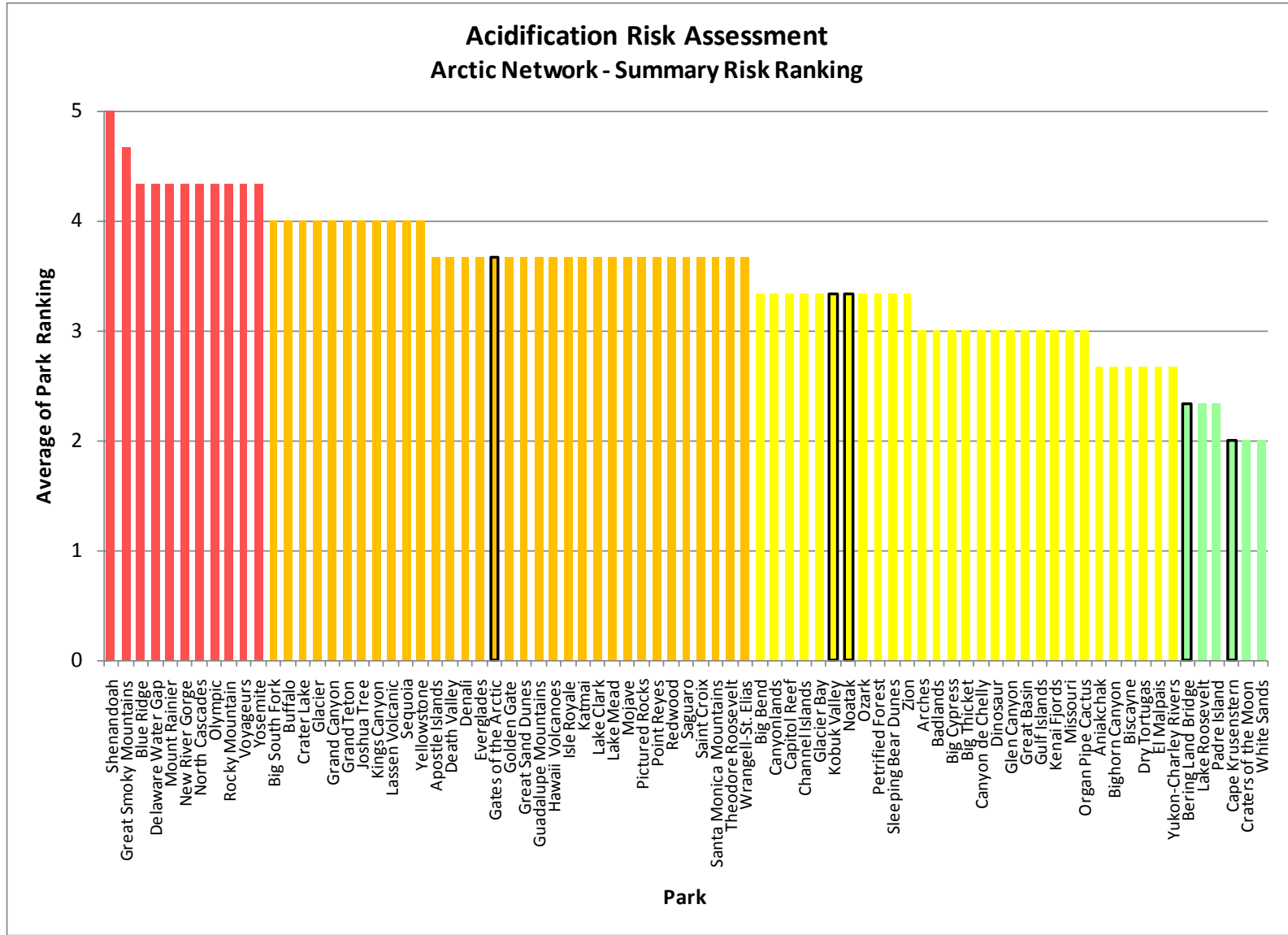


Figure H



The Department of the Interior protects and manages the nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its special responsibilities to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated Island Communities.

NPS 953/107385, April 2011

**National Park Service**  
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