

# INTRODUCTION TO CONNECTIVITY #3

## Connectivity Terms

The language of connectivity includes many common terms that have specific meanings when used in this context. To illustrate some of these terms, below is an aerial view of a long-term corridor experiment at the Savannah River Site in the southeastern U.S. This experiment, which has been running for over 20 years in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, includes plots of land that have been clear cut to make way for native savannas. Studies from these plots reveal how biodiversity is affected by whether or not the plots are connected by corridors.



**CONNECTIVITY:** a measure of how easy it is for individuals to move between patches of suitable habitat.

**RESISTANCE:** the probability that an individual will move through a landscape.

**EDGE EFFECTS:** the tendency for species to behave differently at habitat edges, such as at the edge of a patch or corridor.

**MATRIX:** the surrounding environment in which a patch or corridor is embedded.

**GENE FLOW:** the transfer of genetic material through a population, which can be used as a measure of how connected populations are.

**DISPERSAL:** the movement of individuals from the area where they were born to a new area where they settle.

**PATCH:** a central area of habitat that is separate from the surrounding matrix.

**CORRIDOR:** a habitat whose main function is to connect isolated patches of habitat that would otherwise be inaccessible.

PHOTO CREDITS: Aerial view (Ellen Damschen) | Forest landscape (Nick Haddad) | Spider (Lindsey Kemmerling)