



HABITAT:

CONSERVATION SUMMARIES FOR STRATEGY HABITATS

Photo © (left) Edward J. O'Neill; (right) Martin Nugent

Strategy Habitats were determined in a two-step process. First, maps of current vegetation were compared to those of the year 1850 to determine vegetation types that had high degrees of loss since European settlement. Vegetation types with a high degree of historic loss were evaluated for historic importance at the ecoregional scale, ecological similarity, amount of remaining habitat managed for conservation values, known limiting factors, ecological similarity and importance to Strategy Species. For more information on the methods used to develop the vegetation maps and determine Strategy Habitats, see Appendix IV.

Using 1850 provides a reference point to determine changes in vegetation since European settlement. It is a single point in time, so it does not

Key to ecoregion abbreviations:

- BM = Blue Mountains
- CP = Columbia Plateau
- CR = Coast Range
- EC = East Cascades
- KM = Klamath Mountains
- NBR = Northern Basin and Range
- WC = West Cascades
- WV = Willamette Valley

STRATEGY HABITATS	ECOREGIONS								COMMENTS
	BM	CP	CR	EC	KM	NBR	WC	WV	
Aspen Woodlands	X					X			
Coastal Dunes			X						
Estuaries			X						
Freshwater Aquatic Habitats	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Grasslands (includes grass-dominated habitats such as upland prairie, Coastal bluffs, and montane grasslands)		X	X		X		X	X	
Late Successional Mixed Conifer Forests			X		X		X		WC specifies Late Successional Douglas-fir Forests
Oak Woodlands			X	X	C ¹		X	X	Pine, Pine-Oak and Oak Woodlands are combined in KM
Ponderosa Pine Woodlands	X			X	C ¹				Pine, Pine-Oak and Oak Woodlands are combined in KM
Riparian Habitats	X	C ¹	X	X	X	X	X	X	Riparian and Wetlands are combined in CP
Sagebrush Habitats (includes steppe and/or shrublands)	X	X				X			
Wetlands (includes all freshwater wetland types: ponds, marshes, wet prairies, vernal pools, bogs, lakes, swamps, etc.)	X	C ¹	X	X	X	X	X	X	Riparian and Wetlands are combined in CP

C¹ = Combined

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show how vegetation varied in the past due to fire, climate change or other factors. The 1850 maps represent a baseline for analysis and not a target to re-create. Returning to pre-settlement conditions is neither possible nor desirable. Instead, the baseline vegetation maps can provide insight into why certain species may be declining and can help determine priorities for restoration projects.

The number of Strategy Habitats per ecoregion range from four in the Columbia Plateau to seven in the Coast Range. Aquatic, riparian and wetlands were identified as Strategy Habitats for all eight ecoregions. Other common Strategy Habitats occurring in more than one ecoregion include grasslands, oak, ponderosa pine and sagebrush habitats. Strategy Habitats that occur in more than one ecoregion are usually affected by similar limiting factors, such as invasive species, conversion to other land uses, or altered disturbance regimes, particularly vegetation changes due to fire suppression

In this document, the term “fragmentation” is used to describe certain habitat characteristics at the landscape scale. Fragmentation can be thought of in two ways. First, habitat conversion results a matrix of unsuitable areas. For example, most of the grassland and oak woodland habitat in the Willamette Valley has been converted to agricultural, urban, and rural residential uses. The remnant grassland and oak woodland patches are small, isolated, and surrounded by unsuitable habitat

for many species. Second, forest fragmentation has been defined as “the process of reducing size and connectivity of stands composing a forest.” It may occur naturally through disturbance regimes or through human-caused activities. It may or may not be accompanied by habitat loss, depending on the specific forest habitat elements required by the species. It also may or may not serve as a barrier to movement, again depending on the requirements and mobility of individual species.

This section provides general descriptions, conservation overviews, issues and recommended approaches for Strategy Habitats. These are intended to be broad views of Strategy Habitats from a statewide perspective. Conditions will vary on the site, watershed, and ecoregional level based on differences in soil, climate, and management history. Local conditions will need to be considered when determining site-appropriate conservation actions.

Although this section presents a statewide perspective, Strategy Habitats were designated by ecoregion, based on historic habitat loss and other factors.

In addition, this section describes habitat data gaps and “Local and Specialized Habitats” that support particular species or represent important landscape features not adequately addressed through Strategy Habitats.

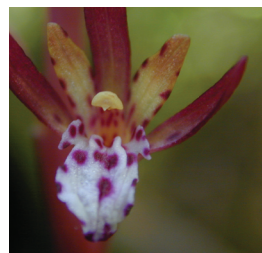


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