Appendix C
IBIS Habitat Types

Westside Lowlands Conifer-Hardwood Forest
Christopher B. Chappell and Jimmy Kagan

Geographic Distribution. This forest habitat occurs throughout low-elevation western Washington, except on extremely dry or wet sites. In Oregon it occurs on the western slopes of the Cascades, around the margins of the Willamette Valley, in the Coast Range, and along the outer coast. The global distribution extends from southeastern Alaska south to southwestern Oregon.

Physical Setting. Climate is relatively mild and moist to wet. Mean annual precipitation is mostly 35-100 inches (90-254 cm), but can vary locally. Snowfall ranges from rare to regular, but is transitory. Summers are relatively dry. Summer fog is a major factor on the outer coast in the Sitka spruce zone. Elevation ranges from sea level to a maximum of about 2,000 ft (610 m) in much of northern Washington and 3,500 ft (1,067 m) in central Oregon. Soils and geology are very diverse. Topography ranges from relatively flat glacial till plains to steep mountainous terrain.

Landscape Setting. This is the most extensive habitat in the lowlands on the west side of the Cascades, except in southwestern Oregon, and forms the matrix within which other habitats occur as patches, especially Westside Riparian-Wetlands and less commonly Herbaceous Wetlands or Open Water. It also occurs adjacent to or in a mosaic with Urban and Mixed Environs (hereafter Urban) or Agriculture, Pasture and Mixed Environs (hereafter Agriculture) habitats. In the driest areas, it occurs adjacent to or in a mosaic with Westside Oak and Dry Douglas-fir Forest and Woodlands. Bordering this habitat at upper elevations is Montane Mixed Conifer Forest. Along the coastline, it often occurs adjacent to Coastal Dunes and Beaches. In southwestern Oregon, it may border Southwest Oregon Mixed Conifer-Hardwood Forest. The primary land use for this habitat is forestry.

Structure. This habitat is forest, or rarely woodland, dominated by evergreen conifers, deciduous broadleaf trees, or both. Late seral stands typically have an abundance of large (>164 ft [50 m] tall) coniferous trees, a multi-layered canopy structure, large snags, and many large logs on the ground. Early seral stands typically have smaller trees, single-storied canopies, and may be dominated by conifers, broadleaf trees, or both. Coarse woody debris is abundant in early seral stands after natural disturbances but much less so after clearcutting. Forest understories are structurally diverse: evergreen shrubs tend to dominate on nutrient-poor or drier sites; deciduous shrubs, ferns, and/or forbs tend to dominate on relatively nutrient-rich or moist sites. Shrubs may be low (1.6 ft [0.5 m] tall), medium-tall (3.3-6.6 ft [1-2 m]), or tall (6.6-13.1 ft [2-4 m]). Almost all structural stages are represented in the successional sequence within this habitat. Mosses are often a major ground cover. Lichens are abundant in the canopy of old stands.

Composition. Western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) and Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) are the most characteristic species and 1 or both are typically present. Most stands are dominated by 1 or more of the following: Douglas-fir, western hemlock, western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*), Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), red alder (*Alnus rubra*), or bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*). Trees of local importance that may be dominant include Port-Orford cedar (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) in the south, shore pine (*Pinus contorta* var. *contorta*) on stabilized dunes, and grand fir (*Abies grandis*) in drier climates. Western white pine (*Pinus monticola*) is frequent but subordinate in importance through much of this habitat. Pacific silver fir (*Abies amabilis*) is largely absent except on the wettest low-elevation portion of the western Olympic Peninsula, where it is common and sometimes co-dominant. Common small subcanopy trees are cascara buckthorn (*Rhamnus purshiana*) in more moist climates and Pacific yew (*Taxus brevifolia*) in somewhat drier climates or sites.

Sitka spruce is found as a major species only in the outer coastal area at low elevations where summer fog is a significant factor. Bigleaf maple is most abundant in the Puget Lowland, around the Willamette Valley, and in the central Oregon Cascades, but occurs elsewhere also. Douglas-fir is absent to uncommon as a native species in the very wet maritime outer coastal area of Washington, including the coastal plain on the west side of the Olympic Peninsula. However, it has been extensively planted in that area. Port-Orford cedar occurs only in southern Oregon. Paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*) occurs as a co-dominant only in Whatcom County, Washington. Grand fir occurs as an occasional co-dominant only in the Puget Lowland and Willamette Valley.

Dominant or co-dominant understory shrub species of more than local importance include salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), dwarf Oregongrape (*Mahonia nervosa*), vine maple (*Acer circinatum*), Pacific rhododendron (*Rhododendron macrophyllum*), salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*), trailing blackberry (*R. ursinus*), red elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*), fools huckleberry (*Menziesia ferruginea*), beargrass (*Xerophyllum tenax*), oval-leaf huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovalifolium*), evergreen huckleberry (*V. ovatum*), and red huckleberry (*V. parvifolium*). Salal and rhododendron are particularly associated with low nutrient or relatively dry sites.

Swordfern (*Polystichum munitum*) is the most common herbaceous species and is often dominant on nitrogen-rich or moist sites. Other forbs and ferns that frequently dominate the understory are Oregon oxalis (*Oxalis oregana*), deerfern (*Blechnum spicant*), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum*), vanillaleaf (*Achlys triphylla*), twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*), false lily-of-the-valley (*Maianthemum dilatatum*), western springbeauty (*Claytonia siberica*), foamflower (*Tiarella trifoliata*), inside-out flower (*Vancouveria hexandra*), and common whipplea (*Whipplea modesta*).

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat includes most of the forests and their successional seres within the Tsuga heterophylla and Picea sitchensis zones [88]. This habitat is also referred to as Douglas-fir-western hemlock and Sitka spruce-western hemlock forests [87], spruce-cedar-hemlock forest (Picea-Thuja-Tsuga, No. 1) and cedar-hemlock-Douglas-fir forest (Thuja-Tsuga-Pseudotsuga, No. 2) [136]. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] would crosswalk with Sitka spruce-western hemlock maritime forest, Douglas-fir-western hemlock-red cedar forest, red alder forest, red alder-bigleaf maple forest, mixed conifer/mixed deciduous forest, south coast mixed-deciduous forest, and coastal lodgepole forest. The Washington Gap Vegetation map includes this vegetation as conifer forest, mixed hardwood/conifer forest, and hardwood forest in the Sitka spruce, western hemlock, Olympic Douglas-fir, Puget Sound Douglas-fir, Cowlitz River and Willamette Valley zones [37]. A number of other references describe elements of this habitat [13, 25, 26, 40, 42, 66, 90, 104, 110, 111, 114, 115, 210].

Natural Disturbance Regime. Fire is the major natural disturbance in all but the wettest climatic area (Sitka spruce zone), where wind becomes the major source of natural disturbance. Natural fire-return intervals generally range from about 100 years or less in the driest areas to several hundred years [1, 115, 160]. Mean fire-return interval for the western hemlock zone as a whole is 250 years, but may vary greatly. Major natural fires are associated with occasional extreme weather conditions [1]. Fires are typically high-severity, with few trees surviving. However, low- and moderate-severity fires that leave partial to complete live canopies are not uncommon, especially in drier climatic areas. Occasional major windstorms hit outer coastal forests most intensely, where fires are rare. Severity of wind disturbance varies greatly, with minor events being extremely frequent and major events occurring once every few decades. Bark beetles and fungi are significant causes of mortality that typically operate on a small scale. Landslides are another natural disturbance that occur in some areas.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. After a severe fire or blowdown, a typical stand will be briefly occupied by annual and perennial ruderal forbs and grasses as well as predisturbance understory shrubs and herbs that resprout [102]. Herbaceous species generally give way to dominance by shrubs or a mixture of shrubs and young trees within a few years. If shrubs are dense and trees did not establish early, the site may remain as a shrubland for an indeterminate period. Early seral tree species can be any of the potential dominants for the habitat, depending on environment, type of disturbance, and seed source. All of these species except the short-lived red alder are capable of persisting for at least a few hundred years. Douglas-fir is the most common dominant after fire, but is uncommon in the wettest zones. It is also the most fire resistant of the trees in this habitat and survives moderate-severity fires well. After the tree canopy closes, the understory may become sparse, corresponding with the stem-exclusion stage [168]. Eventually tree density will decrease and the understory will begin to flourish again, typically at stand age 60-100 years. As trees grow larger and a new generation of shade-tolerant understory trees (usually western hemlock, less commonly western redcedar) grows up, a multi-layered canopy will gradually develop and be well expressed by stand age 200-400 years [89]. Another fire is likely to return before the loss of shade-intolerant Douglas-fir from the canopy at stand age 800-1,000 years, unless the stand is located in the wet maritime zone. Throughout this habitat, western hemlock tends to increase in importance as stand development proceeds. Coarse woody debris peaks in abundance in the first 50 years after a fire and is least abundant at about stand age 100-200 years [193].

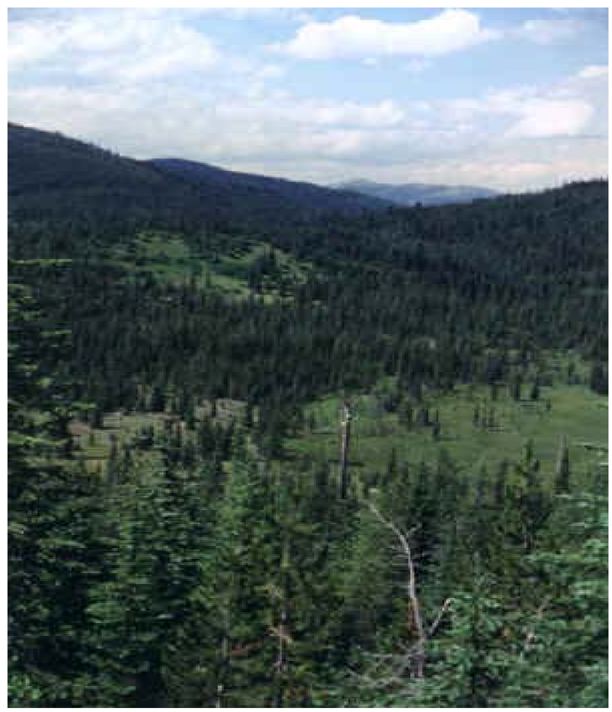
Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Red alder is more successful after typical logging disturbance than after fire alone on moist, nutrient-rich sites, perhaps because of the species' ability to establish abundantly on scarified soils [100]. Alder is much more common now because of large-scale logging activities [87]. Alder grows more quickly in height early in succession than the conifers, thereby prompting many forest managers to apply herbicides for alder control. If alder is allowed to grow and dominate early successional stands, it will decline in importance after about 70 years and die out completely by age 100. Often there are suppressed conifers in the subcanopy that potentially can respond to the death of the alder canopy. However, salmonberry sometimes forms a dense shrub layer under the alder, which can exclude conifer regeneration [88]. Salmonberry responds positively to soil disturbance, such as that associated with logging [19]. Bigleaf maple sprouts readily after logging and is therefore well adapted to increase after disturbance as well. Clearcut logging and plantation forestry have resulted in less diverse tree canopies, and have focused mainly on Douglas-fir, with reductions in coarse woody debris over natural levels, a shortened stand initiation phase, and succession truncated well before late-seral characteristics are expressed. Douglas-fir has been almost universally planted, even in wet coastal areas of Washington, where it is rare in natural stands.

Status and Trends. Extremely large areas of this habitat remain. Some loss has occurred, primarily to development in the Puget Lowland. Condition of what remains has been degraded by industrial forest practices at both the stand and landscape scale. Most of the habitat is probably now in Douglas-fir plantations. Only a fraction of the original old-growth forest remains, mostly in national forests in the Cascade and Olympic mountains. Areal extent continues to be reduced gradually, especially in the Puget Lowland. An increase in alternative silviculture practices may be improving structural and species diversity in some areas. However, intensive logging of natural-origin mature and young stands and even small areas of old growth continues. Of the 62 plant associations representing this habitat listed in the National Vegetation Classification, 27 percent are globally imperiled or critically imperiled [10].

Montane Mixed Conifer Forest
Christopher B. Chappell

Geographic Distribution. These forests occur in mountains throughout Washington and Oregon, excepting the Basin and Range of southeastern Oregon. These include the Cascade Range, Olympic Mountains, Okanogan Highlands, Coast Range (rarely), Blue and Wallowa Mountains, and Siskiyou Mountains.

Physical Setting. This habitat is typified by a moderate to deep winter snow pack that persists for 3 to 9 months. The climate is moderately cool and wet to moderately dry and very cold. Mean annual precipitation ranges from about 40 inches (102 cm) to >200 inches (508 cm). Elevation is mid to upper montane, as low as 2,000 ft (610 m) in northern Washington, to as high as 7,500 ft (2,287 m) in southern Oregon. On the west side, it occupies an elevational zone of about 2,500 to 3,000 vertical feet (762 to 914 m), and on the eastside it occupies a narrower zone of about 1,500 vertical feet (457 m). Topography is generally mountainous. Soils are typically not well developed, but varied in their parent material: glacial till, volcanic ash, residuum, or colluvium. Spodosols are common.



Landscape Setting. This habitat is found adjacent to Westside Lowlands Conifer-Hardwood Forest, Eastside Mixed Conifer Forests, or Southwest Oregon Mixed Conifer-Hardwood Forest at its lower elevation limits and to Subalpine Parkland at its upper elevation limits. Inclusions of Montane Forested Wetlands, Westside Riparian Wetlands, and less commonly Open Water or Herbaceous Wetlands occur within the matrix of montane forest habitat. The typical land use is forestry or recreation. Most of this type is found on public lands managed for timber values and much of it has been harvested in a dispersed-patch pattern.

Structure. This is a forest, or rarely woodland, dominated by evergreen conifers. Canopy structure varies from single- to multi-storied. Tree size also varies from small to very large. Large snags and logs vary from abundant to uncommon. Understories vary in structure: shrubs, forbs, ferns, graminoids or some combination of these usually dominate, but they can be depauperate as well. Deciduous broadleaf shrubs are most typical as understory dominants. Early successional structure after logging or fire varies depending on understory species present. Mosses are a major ground cover and epiphytie lichens are typically abundant in the canopy.

Composition. This forest habitat is recognized by the dominance or prominence of 1 of the following species: Pacific silver fir (*Abies amabilis*), mountain hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*), subalpine fir (*A. lasiocarpa*), Shasta red fir (*A. magnific* var. *shastensi*), Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), noble fir (*A. procera*), or Alaska yellow-cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*). Several other trees may co-dominate: Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*), or white fir (*A. concolor*). Tree regeneration is typically dominated by Pacific silver fir in moist westside middle-elevation zones; by mountain hemlock, sometimes with silver fir, in cool, very snowy zones on the west side and along the Cascade Crest; by subalpine fir in cold, drier eastside zones; and by Shasta red fir in the snowy mid- to upper-elevation zone of southwestern and south-central Oregon.

Subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce are major species only east of the Cascade Crest in Washington, in the Blue Mountains ecoregion, and in the northeastern Olympic Mountains (spruce is largely absent in the Olympic Mountains). Lodgepole pine is important east of the Cascade Crest throughout and in central and southern Oregon. Douglas-fir is important east of the Cascade Crest and at lower elevations on the west side. Pacific silver fir is a major species on the west side as far south as central Oregon. Noble fir, as a native species, is found primarily in the western Cascades from central Washington to central Oregon. Mountain hemlock is a common dominant at higher elevations along the Cascade Crest and to the west. Western hemlock, and to a lesser degree western redcedar, occur as dominants primarily with silver fir at lower elevations on the west side. Alaska yellow-cedar occurs as a co-dominant west of the Cascade Crest in Washington, rarely in northern Oregon. Shasta red fir and white fir occur only from central Oregon south, the latter mainly at lower elevations.

Deciduous shrubs that commonly dominate or co-dominate the understory are oval-leaf huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovalifolium*), big huckleberry (*V. membranaceum*), grouseberry (*V. scoparium*), dwarf huckleberry (*V. cespitosum*), fools huckleberry (*Menziesia ferruginea*), Cascade azalea (*Rhododendron albiflorum*), copperbush (*Elliottia pyroliflorus*), devil's-club (*Oplopanax horridus*), and, in the far south only, baldhip rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*), currants (*Ribes spp*.), and creeping snowberry (*Symphoricarpos mollis*). Important evergreen shrubs include salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), dwarf Oregongrape (*Mahonia nervosa*), Pacific rhododendron (*Rhododendron macrophyllum*), deer oak (*Quercus sadleriana*), pinemat manzanita (*Arctostaphylos nevadensis*), beargrass (*Xerophyllum tenax*), and Oregon boxwood (*Paxistima myrsinites*).

Graminoid dominants are found primarily just along the Cascade Crest and to the east and include pinegrass (*Calamagrostis rubescens*), Geyer's sedge (*Carex geyeri*), smooth woodrush (*Luzula glabrata* var. *hitchcockii*), and long-stolon sedge (*Carex inops*). Deerfern (*Blechnum spicant*) and western oakfern (*Gymnocarpium dryopteris*) are commonly co-dominant. The most abundant forbs include Oregon oxalis (*Oxalis oregana*), single-leaf foamflower (*Tiarella trifoliata* var. *unifoliata*), rosy twisted-stalk (*Streptopus roseus*), queen's cup (*Clintonia uniflora*), western bunchberry (*Cornus unalaschkensis*), twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*), prince's pine (*Chimaphila umbellata*), five-leaved bramble (*Rubus pedatus*), and dwarf bramble (*R. lasiococcus*), sidebells (*Orthilia secu*nda), avalanche lily (*Erythronium montanum*), Sitka valerian (*Valeriana sitchensis*), false lily-of-the-valley (*Maianthemum dilatatum*), and Idaho goldthread (*Coptis occidentalis*).

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat includes most of the upland forests and their successional stages, except lodgepole pine dominated forests, in the *Tsuga mertensiana, Abies amabilis, A. magnifica* var. *shastensis, A. lasiocarpa* zones of Franklin and Dyrness [88]. Portions of this habitat have also been referred to as *A. amabilis-Tsuga heterophylla* forests, *A. magnifica* var. *shastensis* forests, and *Tsuga mertensiana* forests [87]. It is equivalent to Silver fir-Douglas-fir forest No. 3, closed portion of Fir-hemlock forest No. 4, Red fir forest No. 7, and closed portion of Western spruce-fir forest No. 15 [136]; The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation

Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] that would represent this type are mountain hemlock montane forest, true fir-hemlock montane forest, montane mixed conifer forest, Shasta red fir-mountain hemlock forest, and subalpine fir-lodgepole pine montane conifer; also most of the conifer forest in the Silver Fir, Mountain Hemlock, and Subalpine Fir Zones of Washington Gap [37]. A number of other references describe this habitat [13, 15, 17, 25, 26, 36, 38, 90, 108, 111, 114, 115, 118, 144, 148, 158, 212, 221].

Natural Disturbance Regime. Fire is the major natural disturbance in this habitat. Fire regimes are primarily of the high-severity type [1], but also include the moderate-severity regime (moderately frequent and highly variable) for Shasta red fir forests [39]. Mean fire-return intervals vary greatly, from ³800 years for some mountain hemlock-silver fir forests to about 40 years for red fir forests. Windstorms are a common small-scale disturbance and occasionally result in stand replacement. Insects and fungi are often important small-scale disturbances. However, they may affect larger areas also, for example, laminated root rot (*Phellinus weirii*) is a major natural disturbance, affecting large areas of mountain hemlock forests in the Oregon Cascades [72].

Succession and Stand Dynamics. After fire, a typical stand will briefly be occupied by annual and perennial ruderal forbs and grasses, as well as predisturbance understory shrubs and herbs that resprout. Stand initiation can take a long time, especially at higher elevations, resulting in shrub/herb dominance (with or without a scattered tree layer) for extended periods [3, 109]. Early seral tree species can be any of the potential dominants for the habitat, or lodgepole pine, depending on the environment, type of disturbance, and seed source. Fires tend to favor early seral dominance of lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, noble fir, or Shasta red fir, if their seeds are present [1]. In some areas, large stand-replacement fires will result in conversion of this habitat to the Lodgepole Pine Forest and Woodland habitat, distinguished by dominance of lodgepole. After the tree canopy closes, the understory typically becomes sparse for a time. Eventually tree density will decrease and the understory will begin to flourish again, but this process takes longer than in lower elevation forests, generally at least 100 years after the disturbance, sometimes much longer [1]. As stand development proceeds, relatively shade-intolerant trees (lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, western hemlock, noble fir, Engelmann spruce) typically decrease in importance and more shade-tolerant species (Pacific silver fir, subalpine fir, Shasta red fir, mountain hemlock) increase. Complex multi-layered canopies with large trees will typically take at least 300 years to develop, often much longer, and on some sites may never develop. Tree growth rates, and therefore the potential to develop these structural features, tend to decrease with increasing elevation.

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Forest management practices, such as clearcutting and plantations, have in many cases resulted in less diverse tree canopies with an emphasis on Douglas-fir. They also reduce coarse woody debris compared to natural levels, and truncate succession well before late-seral characteristics are expressed. Post-harvest regeneration of trees has been a perpetual problem for forest managers in much of this habitat [16, 97]. Planting of Douglas-fir has often failed at higher elevations, even where old Douglas-fir were present in the unmanaged stand [115]. Slash burning often has negative impacts on productivity and regeneration [186]. Management has since shifted away from burning and toward planting noble fir or native species, natural regeneration, and advance regeneration [16, 103]. Noble fir plantations are now fairly common in managed landscapes, even outside the natural range of the species. Advance regeneration management tends to simulate wind disturbance but without the abundant downed wood component. Shelterwood cuts are a common management strategy in Engelmann spruce or subalpine fir stands [221].

Status and Trends. This habitat occupies large areas of the region. There has probably been little or no decline in the extent of this type over time. Large areas of this habitat are relatively undisturbed by human impacts and include significant old-growth stands. Other areas have been extensively affected by logging, especially dispersed patch clearcuts. The habitat is stable in area, but is probably still declining in condition because of continued logging. This habitat is one of the best protected, with large areas represented in national parks and wilderness areas. The only threat is continued road building and clearcutting in unprotected areas. None of the 81 plant associations representing this habitat listed in the National Vegetation Classification is considered imperiled [10].

Eastside (Interior) Mixed Conifer Forest
Rex C. Crawford

Geographic Distribution. The Eastside Mixed Conifer Forest habitat appears primarily the Blue Mountains, East Cascades, and Okanogan Highland Ecoregions of Oregon, Washington, adjacent Idaho, and western Montana. It also extends north into British Columbia.

Douglas-fir-ponderosa pine forests occur along the eastern slope of the Oregon and Washington Cascades, the Blue Mountains, and the Okanogan Highlands of Washington. Grand fir-Douglas-fir forests and western larch forests are widely distributed throughout the Blue Mountains and, lesser so, along the east slope of the Cascades south of Lake Chelan and in the eastern Okanogan Highlands. Western hemlock-western red cedar-Douglas-fir forests are found in the Selkirk Mountains of eastern Washington, and on the east slope of the Cascades south of Lake Chelan to the Columbia River Gorge.

Physical Setting. The Eastside Mixed Conifer Forest habitat is primarily mid-montane with an elevation range of between 1,000 and 7,000 ft (305-2,137 m), mostly between 3,000 and 5,500 ft (914-1,676 m). Parent materials for soil development vary. This habitat receives some of the greatest amounts of precipitation in the inland northwest, 30-80 inches (76-203 cm)/year. Elevation of this habitat varies geographically, with generally higher elevations to the east.

Landscape Setting. This habitat makes up most of the continuous montane forests of the inland Pacific Northwest. It is located between the subalpine portions of the Montane Mixed Conifer Forest habitat in eastern Oregon and Washington and lower tree line Ponderosa Pine and Forest and Woodlands.

Structure. Eastside Mixed Conifer habitats are montane forests and woodlands. Stand canopy structure is generally diverse, although single-layer forest canopies are currently more common than multi-layered forests with snags and large woody debris. The tree layer varies from closed forests to more open-canopy forests or woodlands. This habitat may include very open stands. The undergrowth is complex and diverse. Tall shrubs, low shrubs, forbs or any combination may dominate stands. Deciduous shrubs typify shrub layers. Prolonged canopy closure may lead to development of a sparsely vegetated undergrowth.

Composition. This habitat contains a wide array of tree species (9) and stand dominance patterns. Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) is the most common tree species in this habitat. It is almost always present and dominates or co-dominates most overstories. Lower elevations or drier sites may have ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) as a co-dominant with Douglas-fir in the overstory and often have other shade-tolerant tree species growing in the undergrowth. On moist sites, grand fir (*Abies grandis*), western redcedar (*Thuja plicata*) and/or western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*) are dominant or co-dominant with Douglas-fir. Other conifers include western larch (*Larix occidentalis*) and western white pine (*Pinus monticola*) on mesic sites, Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), and subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*) on colder sites. Rarely, Pacific yew (*Taxus brevifolia*) may be an abundant undergrowth tree or tall shrub.

Undergrowth vegetation varies from open to nearly closed shrub thickets with 1 to many layers. Throughout the eastside conifer habitat, tall deciduous shrubs include vine maple (*Acer circinatum*) in the Cascades, Rocky Mountain maple (*A. glabrum*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*), mallowleaf ninebark (*Physocarpus malvaceus*), and Scouler's willow (*Salix scouleriana*) at mid- to lower elevations. Medium-tall deciduous shrubs at higher elevations include fools huckleberry (*Menziesia ferruginea*), Cascade azalea (*Rhododendron albiflorum*), and big huckleberry (*Vaccinium membranaceum*). Widely distributed, generally drier site mid-height to short deciduous shrubs include baldhip rose (*Rosa gymnocarpa*), shiny-leaf spirea (*Spiraea betulifolia*), and snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*, *S. mollis*, and *S. oreophilus*). Low shrubs of higher elevations include low huckleberries (*Vaccinium cespitosum*, and *V. scoparium*) and five-leaved bramble (*Rubus pedatus*). Evergreen shrubs represented in this habitat are chinquapin (*Castanopsis chrysophylla*), a tall shrub in southeastern Cascades, low to mid-height dwarf Oregongrape (*Mahonia nervosa* in the east Cascades and *M. repens* elsewhere), tobacco brush (*Ceanothus velutinus*), an increaser with fire, Oregon boxwood (*Paxistima myrsinites*) generally at mid- to lower elevations, beargrass (*Xerophyllum tenax*), pinemat manzanita (*Arctostaphylos nevadensis*) and kinnikinnick (*A. uva-ursi*).Herbaceous broadleaf plants are important indicators of site productivity and disturbance. Species generally indicating productive sites include western oakfern (*Gymnocarpium dryopteris*), vanillaleaf (*Achlys triphylla*), wild sarsparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), wild ginger (*Asarum caudatum*), queen's cup (*Clintonia uniflora*), goldthread (*Coptis occidentalis*), false bugbane (*Trautvetteria caroliniensis*), windflower (*Anemone oregana*, *A. piperi*, *A. lyallii*), fairybells (*Disporum hookeri*), Sitka valerian (*Valeriana sitchensis*), and pioneer violet (*Viola glabella*). Other indicator forbs are dogbane (*Apocynum androsaemifolium*), false solomonseal (*Maianthemum stellata*), heartleaf arnica (*Arnica cordifolia*), several lupines (*Lupinus caudatus*, *L. latifolius*, *L. argenteus ssp. argenteus* var *laxiflorus*), western meadowrue (*Thalictrum occidentale*), rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera oblongifolia*), skunkleaf polemonium (*Polemonium pulcherrimum*), trailplant (*Adenocaulon bicolor*), twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*), western starflower (*Trientalis latifolia*), and several wintergreens (*Pyrola asarifolia*, *P. picta*, *Orthilia secunda*).

Graminoids are common in this forest habitat. Columbia brome (*Bromus vulgaris*), oniongrass (*Melica bulbosa*), northwestern sedge (*Carex concinnoides*) and western fescue (*Festuca occidentalis*) are found mostly in mesic forests with shrubs or mixed with forb species. Bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*), Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*), and junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*) are found in drier more open forests or woodlands. Pinegrass (*Calamagrostis rubescens*) and Geyer's sedge (*C. geyeri*) can form a dense layer under Douglas-fir or grand fir trees.

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat includes the moist portions of the Pseudotsuga menziesii, the Abies grandis, and the Tsuga heterophylla zones of eastern Oregon and Washington [88]. This habitat is called Douglas-fir (No. 12), Cedar-Hemlock-Pine (No. 13), and Grand fir-Douglas-fir (No. 14) forests in Kuchler [136]. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] that would represent this type are the eastside Douglas-fir dominant-mixed conifer forest, ponderosa pine dominant mixed conifer forest, and the northeast Oregon mixed conifer forest. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] referred to this habitat as Grand fir/White fir, the Interior Douglas-fir, Western larch, Western redcedar/Western hemlock, and Western white pine cover types and the Moist Forest potential vegetation group. Other references detail forest associations for this habitat [45, 59, 117, 118, 123, 122, 144, 148, 208, 209, 212, 221, 228].

Natural Disturbance Regime. Fires were probably of moderate frequency (30-100 years) in presettlement times. Inland Pacific Northwest Douglas-fir and western larch forests have a mean fire interval of 52 years [22]. Typically, stand-replacement fire-return intervals are 150-500 years with moderate severity-fire intervals of 50-100 years. Specific fire influences vary with site characteristics. Generally, wetter sites burn less frequently and stands are older with more western hemlock and western redcedar than drier sites. Many sites dominated by Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine, which were formerly maintained by wildfire, may now be dominated by grand fir (a fire sensitive, shade-tolerant species).

Succession and Stand Dynamics. Successional relationships of this type reflect complex interrelationships between site potential, plant species characteristics, and disturbance regime [228]. Generally, early seral forests of shade-intolerant trees (western larch, western white pine, ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir) or tolerant trees (grand fir, western redcedar, western hemlock) develop some 50 years following disturbance. This stage is preceded by forb- or shrub- dominated communities. These early stage mosaics are maintained on ridges and drier topographic positions by frequent fires. Early seral forest develops into mid-seral habitat of large trees during the next 50-100 years. Stand replacing fires recycle this stage back to early seral stages over most of the landscape. Without high-severity fires, a late-seral condition develops either single-layer or multi-layer structure during the next 100-200 years. These structures are typical of cool bottomlands that usually only experience low-intensity fires.

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. This habitat has been most affected by timber harvesting and fire suppression. Timber harvesting has focused on large shade-intolerant species in mid- and late-seral forests, leaving shade-tolerant species. Fire suppression enforces those logging priorities by promoting less fire-resistant, shade-intolerant trees. The resultant stands at all seral stages tend to lack snags, have high tree density, and are composed of smaller and more shade-tolerant trees. Mid-seral forest structure is currently 70 percent more abundant than in historical, native systems [181]. Late-seral forests of shade-intolerant species are now essentially absent. Early-seral forest abundance is similar to that found historically but lacks snags and other legacy features.

Status and Trends. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] concluded that the Interior Douglas-fir, Grand fir, and Western redcedar/Western hemlock cover types are more abundant now than before 1900, whereas the Western larch and Western white pine types are significantly less abundant. Twenty percent of Pacific Northwest Douglas-fir, grand fir, western redcedar, western hemlock, and western white pine associations listed in the National Vegetation Classification are considered imperiled or critically imperiled [10]. Roads, timber harvest, periodic grazing, and altered fire regimes have compromised these forests. Even though this habitat is more extensive than pre-1900, natural processes and functions have been modified enough to alter its natural status as functional habitat for many species.

Lodgepole Pine Forest and Woodlands
Rex C. Crawford

Geographic Distribution. This habitat is found along the eastside of the Cascade Range, in the Blue Mountains, the Okanogan Highlands and ranges north into British Columbia and south to Colorado and California.

With grassy undergrowth, this habitat appears primarily along the eastern slope of the Cascade Range and occasionally in the Blue Mountains and Okanogan Highlands. Subalpine lodgepole pine habitat occurs on the broad plateau areas along the crest of the Cascade Range and the Blue Mountains, and in the higher elevations in the Okanogan Highlands. On pumice soils this habitat is confined to the eastern slope of the Cascade Range from near Mt. Jefferson south to the vicinity of Crater Lake.

Physical Setting. This habitat is located mostly at mid- to higher elevations (3,000-9,000 ft [914-2,743 m]). These environments can be cold and relatively dry, usually with persistent winter snowpack. A few of these forests occur in low-lying frost pockets, wet areas, or under edaphic control (usually pumice) and are relatively long-lasting features of the landscape. Lodgepole pine is maintained as a dominant by the well-drained, deep Mazama pumice in eastern Oregon.

Landscape Setting. This habitat appears within Montane Mixed Conifer Forest east of the Cascade crest and the cooler Eastside Mixed Conifer Forest habitats. Most pumice soil lodgepole pine habitat is intermixed with Ponderosa Pine Forest and Woodland habitats and is located between Eastside Mixed Conifer Forest habitat and either Western Juniper Woodland or Shrubsteppe habitat.

Structure. The lodgepole pine habitat is composed of open to closed evergreen conifer tree canopies. Vertical structure is typically a single tree layer. Reproduction of other more shade-tolerant conifers can be abundant in the undergrowth. Several distinct undergrowth types develop under the tree layer: evergreen or deciduous medium-tall shrubs, evergreen low shrub, or graminoids with few shrubs. On pumice soils, a sparsely developed shrub and graminoid undergrowth appears with open to closed tree canopies.

Composition. The tree layer of this habitat is dominated by lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta* var. *latifolia* and *P. c.* var. *murrayana*), but it is usually associated with other montane conifers (*Abies concolor*, *A. grandis*, *A. magnifici* var. *shastensi*, *Larix occidentalis*, *Calocedrus decurrens*, *Pinus lambertiana*, *P. monticola*, *P. ponderosa*, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*). Subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*), mountain hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*), Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), and whitebark pine (*Pinus albicaulis*), indicators of subalpine environments, are present in colder or higher sites. Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) sometimes occur in small numbers.

Shrubs can dominate the undergrowth. Tall deciduous shrubs include Rocky Mountain maple (*Acer glabrum*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*), oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*), or Scouler's willow (*Salix scouleriana*). These tall shrubs often occur over a layer of mid-height deciduous shrubs such as baldhip rose (Rosa gymnocarpa), russet buffaloberry (*Shepherdia canadensis*), shiny-leaf spirea (*Spiraea betulifolia*), and snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus* and/or *S. mollis*). At higher elevations, big huckleberry (*Vaccinium membranaceum*) can be locally important, particularly following fire. Mid-tall evergreen shrubs can be abundant in some stands, for example, creeping Oregon grape (*Mahonia repens*), tobacco brush (*Ceanothus velutinus*), and Oregon boxwood (*Paxistima myrsinites*). Colder and drier sites support low- growing evergreen shrubs, such as kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) or pinemat manzanita (*A. nevadensis*). Grouseberry (*V. scoparium*) and beargrass (*Xerophyllum tenax*) are consistent evergreen low shrub dominants in the subalpine part of this habitat. Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos patula*), kinnikinnick, tobacco brush, antelope bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), and wax current (*Ribes cereum*) are part of this habitat on pumice soil.

Some undergrowth is dominated by graminoids with few shrubs. Pinegrass (*Calamagrostis rubescens*) and/or Geyer's sedge (*Carex geyeri*) can appear with grouseberry in the subalpine zone. Pumice soils support grassy undergrowth of long-stolon sedge (*C. inops*), Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*) or western needlegrass (*Stipa occidentalis*). The latter 2 species may occur with bitterbrush or big sagebrush and other bunchgrass steppe species. Other nondominant indicator graminoids frequently encountered in this habitat are California oatgrass (*Danthonia californica*), blue wildrye (*Elymus glaucus*), Columbia brome (*Bromus vulgaris*) and oniongrass (*Melica bulbosa*). Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), and bottlebrush squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*) can be locally abundant where livestock grazing has persisted.

The forb component of this habitat is diverse and varies with environmental conditions. A partial forb list includes goldthread (*Coptis occidentalis*), false solomonseal (*Maianthemum stellata*), heartleaf arnica (*Arnica cordifolia*), several lupines (*Lupinus caudatus*, *L. latifolius*, *L. argenteus ssp. argenteus* var. *laxiflorus*), meadowrue (Thalictrum occidentale), queen's cup (*Clintonia uniflora*), rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera oblongifolia*), skunkleaf polemonium (*Polemonium pulcherrimum*), trailplant (*Adenocaulon bicolor*), twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*), Sitka valerian (*Valeriana sitchensis*), western starflower (*Trientalis latifolia*), and several wintergreens (*Pyrola asarifolia*, *P. picta*, *Orthilia secunda*).

Other Classifications and Key References. The Lodgepole Pine Forest and Woodland habitat includes the Pinus contorta zone of eastern Oregon and Washington [88]. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Type [127] that would represent this type is lodgepole pine forest and woodlands. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] referred to this habitat as Lodgepole pine cover type and as a part of the Dry Forest potential vegetation group. Other references detail forest associations with this habitat [117, 118, 122, 123, 144, 212, 221].

Natural Disturbance Regime. This habitat typically reflects early successional forest vegetation that originated with fires. Inland Pacific Northwest lodgepole pine has a mean fire interval of 112 years [22]. Summer drought areas generally have low to medium-intensity ground fires occurring at intervals of 25-50 years, whereas areas with more moisture have a sparse undergrowth and slow fuel build-up that results in less frequent, more intense fire. With time, lodgepole pine stands increase in fuel loads. Woody fuels accumulate on the forest floor from insect (mountain pine beetle) and disease outbreaks and residual wood from past fires. Mountain pine beetle outbreaks thin stands that add fuel and create a drier environment for fire or open canopies and create gaps for other conifer regeneration. High-severity crown fires are likely in young stands, when the tree crowns are near deadwood on the ground. After the stand opens up, shade-tolerant trees increase in number.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. Most Lodgepole Pine Forest and Woodlands are early- to mid seral stages initiated by fire. Typically, lodgepole pine establishes within 10-20 years after fire. This can be a gap phase process where seed sources are scarce. Lodgepole stands break up after 100-200 years. Without fires and insects, stands become more closed-canopy forest with sparse undergrowth. Because lodgepole pine cannot reproduce under its own canopy, old unburned stands are replaced by shade-tolerant conifers. Lodgepole pine on pumice soils is not seral to other tree species; these extensive stands, if not burned, thin naturally, with lodgepole pine regenerating in patches. On poorly drained pumice soils, quaking aspen sometimes plays a mid-seral role and is displaced by lodgepole when aspen clones die. Serotinous cones (cones releasing seeds after fire) are uncommon in eastern Oregon lodgepole pine (*P. c*. var. *murrayana*). On the Colville National Forest in Washington, only 10 percent of lodgepole pine (*P. c.* var. *latifolia*) trees in low-elevation Douglas-fir habitats had serotinous cones, whereas 82 percent of cones in high-elevation subalpine fir habitats were serotinous [4].

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Fire suppression has left many single- canopy lodgepole pine habitats unburned to develop into more multilayered stands. Thinning of serotinous lodgepole pine forests with fire intervals <20 years can reduce their importance over time. In pumice-soil lodgepole stands, lack of natural regeneration in harvest units has lead to creation of "pumice deserts" within otherwise forested habitats [47].

Status and Trends. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] concluded that the extent of the lodgepole pine cover type in Oregon and Washington is the same as before 1900 and in regions may exceed its historical extent. Five percent of Pacific Northwest lodgepole pine associations listed in the National Vegetation Classification are considered imperiled [10]. At a finer scale, these forests have been fragmented by roads, timber harvest, and influenced by periodic livestock grazing and altered fire regimes.

Ponderosa Pine Forest and Woodlands (includes Eastside Oak)
Rex C. Crawford and Jimmy Kagan

Geographic Distribution. This habitat occurs in much of eastern Washington and eastern Oregon, including the eastern slopes of the Cascades, the Blue Mountains and foothills, and the Okanogan Highlands. Variants of it also occur in the Rocky Mountains, the eastern Sierra Nevada, and mountains within the Great Basin. It extends into south-central British Columbia as well.

In the Pacific Northwest, ponderosa pine-Douglas-fir woodland habitats occur along the eastern slope of the Cascades, the Okanogan Highlands, and in the Blue Mountains. Ponderosa pine woodland and savanna habitats occur in the foothills of the Blue Mountains, along the eastern base of the Cascade Range, the Okanogan Highlands, and in the Columbia Basin in northeastern Washington. Ponderosa pine is widespread in the pumice zone of south-central Oregon between Bend and Crater Lake east of the Cascade Crest. Ponderosa pine-Oregon white oak habitat appears east of the Cascades in the vicinity of Mt. Hood near the Columbia River Gorge north to the Yakama Nation and south to the Warm Springs Nation. Oak dominated woodlands follow a similar distribution as Ponderosa Pine-White Oak habitat but are more restricted and less common.

Physical Setting. This habitat generally occurs on the driest sites supporting conifers in the Pacific Northwest. It is widespread and variable, appearing on moderate to steep slopes in canyons, foothills, and on plateaus or plains near mountains. In Oregon, this habitat can be maintained by the dry pumice soils, and in Washington it can be associated with serpentine soils. Average annual precipitation ranges from about 14 to 30 inches (36 to 76 cm) on ponderosa pine sites in Oregon and Washington and often as snow. This habitat can be found at elevations of 100 ft (30m) in the Columbia River Gorge to dry, warm areas over 6,000 ft (1,829 m). Timber harvest, livestock grazing, and pockets of urban development are major land uses.

Landscape Setting. This woodland habitat typifies the lower treeline zone forming transitions with Eastside Mixed Conifer Forest and Western Juniper and Mountain Mahogany Woodland, Shrubsteppe, Eastside Grassland, or Agriculture habitats. Douglas-fir-ponderosa pine woodlands are found near or within the Eastside Mixed Conifer Forest habitat. Oregon oak woodlands appear in the driest most restricted landscapes in transition to Eastside Grassland or Shrubsteppe.

Structure. This habitat is typically a woodland or savanna with tree canopy coverage of 10- 60 percent, although closed-canopy stands are possible. The tree layer is usually composed of widely spaced large conifer trees. Many stands tend towards a multi-layered condition with encroaching conifer regeneration. Isolated taller conifers above broadleaf deciduous trees characterize part of this habitat. Deciduous woodlands or forests are an important part of the structural variety of this habitat. Clonal deciduous trees can create dense patches across a grassy landscape rather than scattered individual trees. The undergrowth may include dense stands of shrubs or, more often, be dominated by grasses, sedges, or forbs. Shrubsteppe shrubs may be prominent in some stands and create a distinct tree-shrub-sparse-grassland habitat.

Composition. Ponderosa pine (Pinus ponderosa) and Douglas-fir (Pseudotsuga menziesii) are the most common evergreen trees in this habitat. The deciduous conifer, western larch (Larix occidentalis), can be a co-dominant with the evergreen conifers in the Blue Mountains of Oregon, but seldom as a canopy dominant. Grand fir (Abies grandis) may be frequent in the undergrowth on more productive sites giving stands a multi-layer structure. In rare instances, grand fir can be co-dominant in the upper canopy. Tall ponderosa pine over Oregon white oak (Quercus garryana) trees form stands along part of the east Cascades. These stands usually have younger cohorts of pines. Oregon white oak dominates open woodlands or savannas in limited areas.

The undergrowth can include dense stands of shrubs or, more often, be dominated by grasses, sedges, and/or forbs. Some Douglas-fir and ponderosa pine stands have a tall to medium-tall deciduous shrub layer of mallowleaf ninebark (Physocarpus malvaceus) or common snowberry (Symphoricarpos albus). Grand fir seedlings or saplings may be present in the undergrowth. Pumice soils support a shrub layer represented by green-leaf or white-leaf manzanita (Arctostaphylos patula or A. viscida). Short shrubs, pinemat manzanita (Arctostaphylos nevadensis) and kinnikinnick (A. uva-ursi) are found across the range of this habitat. Antelope bitterbrush (Purshia tridentata), big sagebrush (Artemisia tridentata), black sagebrush (A. nova), green rabbitbrush (Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus), and in southern Oregon, curl-leaf mountain mahogany (Cercocarpus ledifolius) often grow with Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine and/or Oregon white oak, which typically have a bunchgrass and shrubsteppe ground cover.

Undergrowth is generally dominated by herbaceous species, especially graminoids. Within a forest matrix, these woodland habitats have an open to closed sodgrass undergrowth dominated by pinegrass (Calamagrostis rubescens), Geyer’s sedge (Carex geyeri), Ross’ sedge (C. rossii), long-stolon sedge (C. inops), or blue wildrye (Elymus glaucus). Drier savanna and woodland undergrowth typically contains bunchgrass steppe species, such as Idaho fescue (Festuca idahoensis), rough fescue (F. campestris), bluebunch wheatgrass (Pseudoroegneria spicata), Indian ricegrass (Oryzopsis hymenoides), or needlegrasses (Stipa comata, S. occidentalis). Common exotic grasses that may appear in abundance are cheatgrass (Bromus tectorum), and bulbous bluegrass (Poa bulbosa). Forbs are common associates in this habitat and are too numerous to be listed.

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat is referred to as Merriam's Arid Transition Zone, Western ponderosa forest (Pinus), and Oregon Oak wood (Quercus) in Kuchler [136], and as Pacific ponderosa pine-Douglas-fir and Pacific ponderosa pine, and Oregon white oak by the Society of American Foresters. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] that would represent this type are ponderosa pine forest and woodland, ponderosa pine-white oak forest and woodland, and ponderosa pine-lodgepole pine on pumice. Other references describe elements of this habitat [45, 62, 88, 117, 118, 121, 122, 123, 144, 148, 209, 212, 221, 222].

Natural Disturbance Regime. Fire plays an important role in creating vegetation structure and composition in this habitat. Most of the habitat has experienced frequent low-severity fires that maintained woodland or savanna conditions. A mean fire interval of 20 years for ponderosa pine is the shortest of the vegetation types listed by Barrett et al.[22]. Soil drought plays a role in maintaining an open tree canopy in part of this dry woodland habitat.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. This habitat is climax on sites near the dry limits of each of the dominant conifer species and is more seral as the environment becomes more favorable for tree growth. Open seral stands are gradually replaced by more closed shade-tolerant climax stands. Oregon white oak can reproduce under its own shade but is intolerant of overtopping by conifers. Oregon white oak woodlands are considered fire climax and are seral to conifers. In drier conditions, unfavorable to conifers, oak is climax. Oregon white oak sprouts from the trunk and root crown following cutting or burning and form clonal patches of trees.

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Pre-1900, this habitat was mostly open and park like with relatively few undergrowth trees. Currently, much of this habitat has a younger tree cohort of more shade-tolerant species that gives the habitat a more closed, multi-layered canopy. For example, this habitat includes previously natural fire-maintained stands in which grand fir can eventually become the canopy dominant. Fire suppression has lead to a buildup of fuels that in turn increase the likelihood of stand-replacing fires. Heavy grazing, in contrast to fire, removes the grass cover and tends to favor shrub and conifer species. Fire suppression combined with grazing creates conditions that support cloning of oak and invasion by conifers. Large late-seral ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, and Oregon white oak are harvested in much of this habitat. Under most management regimes, typical tree size decreases and tree density increases in this habitat. Ponderosa pine-Oregon white oak habitat is now denser than in the past and may contain more shrubs than in pre-settlement habitats. In some areas, new woodlands have been created by patchy tree establishment at the forest-steppe boundary.

Status and Trends. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] concluded that the Interior Ponderosa Pine cover type is significantly less in extent than pre-1900 and that the Oregon White Oak cover type is greater in extent than pre-1900. They included much of this habitat in their Dry Forest potential vegetation group [181], which they concluded has departed from natural succession and disturbance conditions. The greatest structural change in this habitat is the reduced extent of the late-seral, single-layer condition. This habitat is generally degraded because of increased exotic plants and decreased native bunchgrasses. One third of Pacific Northwest Oregon white oak, ponderosa pine, and dry Douglas-fir or grand fir community types listed in the National Vegetation Classification are considered imperiled or critically imperiled [10].

Subalpine Parkland
Rex C. Crawford and Christopher B. Chappell

Geographic Distribution. The Subalpine Parkland habitat occurs throughout the high mountain ranges of Washington and Oregon (e.g., Cascade crest, Olympic Mountains, Wallowa and Owyhee Mountains, and Okanogan Highlands), extends into mountains of Canada and Alaska, and to the Sierra Nevada and Rocky Mountains.

Physical Setting. Climate is characterized by cool summers and cold winters with deep snowpack, although much variation exists among specific vegetation types. Mountain hemlock sites receive an average precipitation of >50 inches (127 cm) in 6 months and several feet of snow typically accumulate. Whitebark pine sites receive 24-70 inches (61-178 cm) per year and some sites only rarely accumulate a significant snowpack. Summer soil drought is possible in eastside parklands but rare in west side areas. Elevation varies from 4,500 to 6,000 ft (1,371 to 1,829 m) in the western Cascades and Olympic Mountains and from 5,000 to 8,000 ft (1,524 to 2,438 m) in the eastern Cascades and Wallowa Mountains.

Landscape Setting. The Subalpine Parkland habitat lies above the Mixed Montane Conifer Forest or Lodgepole Pine Forest habitat and below the Alpine Grassland and Shrubland habitat. Associated wetlands in subalpine parklands extend up a short distance into the alpine zone. Primary land use is recreation, watershed protection, and grazing.

Structure. Subalpine Parkland habitat has a tree layer typically between 10 and 30 percent canopy cover. Openings among trees are highly variable. The habitat appears either as parkland, that is, a mosaic of treeless openings and small patches of trees often with closed canopies, or as woodlands or savanna-like stands of scattered trees. The ground layer can be composed of (1) low to matted dwarf-shrubs (<1 ft [0.3 m] tall) that are evergreen or deciduous and often small-leaved; (2) sod grasses, bunchgrasses, or sedges; (3) forbs; or (4) moss- or lichen-covered soils. Herb or shrub-dominated wetlands appear within the parkland areas and are considered part of this habitat; wetlands can occur as deciduous shrub thickets up to 6.6 ft (2 m) tall, as scattered tall shrubs, as dwarf shrub thickets, or as short herbaceous plants <1.6 ft (0.5 m) tall. In general, western Cascades and Olympic areas are mostly parklands composed of a mosaic of patches of trees interspersed with heather shrublands or wetlands, whereas, eastern Cascades and Rocky mountain areas are parklands and woodlands typically dominated by grasses or sedges, with fewer heathers.

Composition. Species composition in this habitat varies with geography or local site conditions. The tree layer can be composed of 1 or several tree species. Subalpine fir (Abies lasiocarpa), Engelmann spruce (Picea engelmannii) and lodgepole pine (Pinus contorta) are found throughout the Pacific Northwest, whereas limber pine (P. flexilis) is restricted to southeastern Oregon. Alaska yellowcedar (Chamaecyparis nootkatensis), Pacific silver fir (A. amabilis), and mountain hemlock (Tsuga mertensiana) are most common in the Olympics and Cascades. Whitebark pine (P. albicaulis) is found primarily in the eastern Cascade Mountains Okanogan Highlands, and Blue Mountains. Subalpine larch (Larix lyallii) occurs only in the northern Cascade Mountains, primarily east of the crest.

West Cascades and Olympic areas generally are parklands. Tree islands often have big huckleberry

(Vaccinium membranaceum) in the undergrowth interspersed with heather shrublands between. Openings are composed of pink mountain-heather (Phyllodoce empetriformis), and white mountain-heather (Cassiope mertensiana) and Cascade blueberry (Vaccinium deliciosum). Drier areas are more woodland or savanna like, often with low shrubs, such as common juniper (Juniperus communis), kinnikinnick (Arctostaphylos uva-ursi), low whortleberries or grouseberries (Vaccinium myrtillus or V. scoparium) or beargrass (Xerophyllum tenax) dominating the undergrowth. Wetland shrubs in the Subalpine Parkland habitat include bog-laurel (Kalmia microphylla), Booth's willow (Salix boothii), undergreen willow (S. commutata), Sierran willow (S. eastwoodiae), and blueberries (Vaccinium uliginosum or V. deliciosum)

Undergrowth in drier areas may be dominated by pinegrass (Calamagrostis rubescens), Geyer's sedge (Carex geyeri), Ross' sedge (C. rossii), smooth woodrush (Luzula glabrata var. hitchcockii), Drummond's rush (Juncus drummondii), or short fescues (Festuca viridula, F. brachyphylla, F. saximontana). Various sedges are characteristic of wetland graminoid-dominated habitats: black (Carex nigricans), Holm's Rocky Mountain (C. scopulorum), Sitka (C. aquatilis var. dives) and Northwest Territory (C. utriculatia) sedges. Tufted hairgrass (Deschampsia caespitosa) is characteristic of subalpine wetlands.

The remaining flora of this habitat is diverse and complex. The following herbaceous broadleaf plants are important indicators of differences in the habitat: American bistort (Polygonum bistortoides), American false hellebore (Veratrum viride), fringe leaf cinquefoil (Potentilla flabellifolia), marsh marigolds (Caltha leptosepala), avalanche lily (Erythronium montanum), partridgefoot (Luetkea pectinata), Sitka valerian (Valeriana sitchensis), subalpine lupine (Lupinus arcticus ssp. subalpinus), and alpine aster (Aster alpigenus). Showy sedge (Carex spectabilis) is also locally abundant.

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat is called the Hudsonian Zone [155], Parkland subzone [134], meadow-forest mosaic [74], upper subalpine zone [88], Meadows and Park, and Subalpine Parkland [20]. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] called this habitat Whitebark pine and Whitebark pine-Subalpine larch cover types. Kuchler [136] included this within the subalpine fir-mountain hemlock forest. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] that would represent this type are whitebark-lodgepole pine montane forest and subalpine parkland. Additional references describe this habitat [11, 49, 75, 105, 112, 114, 115, 139, 144, 221].

Natural Disturbance Regime. Although fire is rare to infrequent in this habitat, it plays an important role, particularly in drier environments. Whitebark pine woodland fire intervals varied from 50 to 300 years before 1900. Mountain hemlock parkland fire reoccurrence is 400-800 years. Wind blasting by ice and snow crystals is a critical factor in these woodlands and establishes the higher limits of the habitat. Periodic shifts in climatic factors, such as drought, snowpack depth, or snow duration either allow tree invasions into meadows and shrublands or eliminate or retard tree growth. Volcanic activity plays a long-term role in establishing this habitat. Wetlands are usually seasonally or perennially flooded by snowmelt and springs, or by subirrigation.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. Succession in this habitat occurs through a complex set of relationships between vegetation response to climatic shifts and catastrophic disturbance, and plant species interactions and site modification that create microsites. A typical succession of subalpine trees into meadows or shrublands begins with the invasion of a single tree, subalpine fir and mountain hemlock in the wetter climates and whitebark pine and subalpine larch in drier climates. If the environment allows, tree density slowly increases (over decades to centuries) through seedlings or branch layering by subalpine fir. The tree patches or individual trees change the local environment and create microsites for shade-tolerant trees, Pacific silver fir in wetter areas, and subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce in drier areas. Whitebark pine, an early invading tree, is dispersed long distances by Clark's nutcrackers and shorter distances by mammals. Most other tree species are wind dispersed.

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Fire suppression has contributed to change in habitat structure and functions. For example, the current "average" whitebark pine stand will burn every 3,000 years or longer because of fire suppression. Blister rust, an introduced pathogen, is increasing whitebark pine mortality in these woodlands [4]. Even limited logging can have prolonged effects because of slow invasion rates of trees. This is particularly important on drier sites and in subalpine larch stands. During wet cycles, fire suppression can lead to tree islands coalescing and the conversion of parklands into a more closed forest habitat. Parkland conditions can displace alpine conditions through tree invasions. Livestock use and heavy horse or foot traffic can lead to trampling and soil compaction. Slow growth in this habitat prevents rapid recovery.

Status and Trends. This habitat is generally stable with local changes to particular tree variants. Whitebark pine maybe declining because of the effects of blister rust or fire suppression that leads to conversion of parklands to more closed forest. Global climate warming will likely have an amplified effect throughout this habitat. Less than 10 percent of Pacific Northwest subalpine parkland community types listed in the National Vegetation Classification are considered imperiled [10].

Alpine Grassland and Shrublands

Christopher B. Chappell and Jimmy Kagan

Geographic Distribution. This habitat occurs in high mountains throughout the region, including the Cascades, Olympic Mountains, Okanogan Highlands, Wallowa Mountains, Blue Mountains, Steens Mountain in southeastern Oregon, and, rarely, the Siskiyous. It is most extensive in the Cascades from Mount Rainier north and in the Wallowa Mountains. Similar habitats occur throughout mountains of northwestern North America.

Physical Setting. The climate is the coldest of any habitat in the region. Winters are characterized by moderate to deep snow accumulations, very cold temperatures, and high winds. Summers are relatively cool. Growing seasons are short because of persistent snow pack or frost. Blowing snow and ice crystals on top of the snow pack at and above treeline prevent vegetation such as trees from growing above the depth of the snow pack. Snow pack protects vegetation from the effects of this winter wind-related disturbance and from excessive frost heaving. Community composition is much influenced by relative duration of snow burial and exposure to wind and frost heaving [75]. Elevation ranges from a minimum of 5,000 ft (1,524 m) in parts of the Olympics to ^{3}10,000 ft (3,048 m). The topography varies from gently sloping broad ridgetops, to glacial cirque basins, to steep slopes of all aspects. Soils are generally poorly developed and shallow, though in subalpine grasslands they may be somewhat deeper or better developed. Geologic parent material varies with local geologic history.

Landscape Setting. This habitat always occurs above upper treeline in the mountains or a short distance below it (grasslands in the subalpine parkland zone). Typically, it occurs adjacent to, or in a mosaic with, Subalpine Parkland. Occasionally, it may grade quickly from this habitat down into Montane Mixed Conifer Forest without intervening Subalpine Parkland. In southeastern Oregon, this habitat occurs adjacent to and above Upland Aspen Forest and Shrubsteppe habitats. Small areas of Open Water, Herbaceous Wetlands, and Subalpine Parkland habitats sometimes occur within a matrix of this habitat. Cliffs, talus, and other barren areas are common features within or adjacent to this habitat. Land use is primarily recreation, but in some areas east of the Cascade Crest, it is grazing, especially by sheep.

Structure. This habitat is dominated by grassland, dwarf-shrubland (mostly evergreen microphyllous), or forbs. Cover of the various life forms is extremely variable, and total cover of vascular plants can range from sparse to complete. Patches of krummholz (coniferous tree species maintained in shrub form by extreme environmental conditions) are a common component of this habitat, especially just above upper treeline. In subalpine grasslands, which are considered part of this habitat, widely scattered coniferous trees sometimes occur. Five major structural types can be distinguished: (1) subalpine and alpine bunchgrass grasslands, (2) alpine sedge turf, (3) alpine heath or dwarf-shrubland, (4) fellfield and boulderfield, and (5) snowbed forb community. Fellfields have a large amount of bare ground or rocks with a diverse and variable open layer of forbs, graminoids, and less commonly dwarf-shrubs. Snowbed forb communities have relatively sparse cover of few species of mainly forbs. In the alpine zone, these types often occur in a complex fine-scale mosaic with each other.

Composition. Most subalpine or alpine bunchgrass grasslands are dominated by Idaho fescue (Festuca idahoensis), alpine fescue (F. brachyphylla), green fescue (F. viridula), Rocky Mountain fescue (F. saximontana), or timber oatgrass (Danthonia intermedia), and to a lesser degree, purple reedgrass (Calamagrostis purpurascens), downy oat-grass (Trisetum spicatum) or muttongrass (Poa fendleriana). Forbs are diverse and sometimes abundant in the grasslands. Alpine sedge turfs may be moist or dry and are dominated by showy sedge (Carex spectabilis), black alpine sedge (C. nigricans), Brewer's sedge (C. breweri), capitate sedge (C. capitata), nard sedge (C. nardina), dunhead sedge (C. phaeocephala), or western single-spike sedge (C. pseudoscirpoidea).

One or more of the following species dominates alpine heaths: pink mountain-heather (Phyllodoce empetriformis), green mountain-heather (P. glanduliflora), white mountain-heather (Cassiope mertensiana), or black crowberry (Empetrum nigrum). Other less extensive dwarf-shrublands may be dominated by the evergreen coniferous common juniper (Juniperus communis), the evergreen broadleaf kinnikinnick (Arctostaphylos uva-ursi), the deciduous shrubby cinquefoil (Pentaphylloides floribunda) or willows (Salix cascadensis and S. reticulata ssp. nivalis). Tree species occurring as shrubby krummholz in the alpine are subalpine fir (Abies lasiocarpa), whitebark pine (Pinus albicaulis), mountain hemlock (Tsuga mertensiana), Engelmann spruce (Picea engelmannii), and subalpine larch (Larix lyallii).

Fellfields and similar communities are typified by variable species assemblages and co-dominance of multiple species, including any of the previously mentioned species, especially the sedges, as well as golden fleabane (Erigeron aureus), Lobb's lupine (Lupinus sellulus var. lobbii), spreading phlox (Phlox diffusa), eight-petal mountain-avens (Dryas octopetala), louseworts (Pedicularis contorta, P. ornithorhyncha) and many others. Snowbed forb communities are dominated by Tolmie's saxifrage (Saxifraga tolmiei), Shasta buckwheat (Eriogonum pyrolifolium), or Piper's woodrush (Luzula piperi).

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat is equivalent to the alpine communities and the subalpine Festuca communities of Franklin and Dyrness [88]. It is also referred to as Alpine meadows and barren No. 52 [136]. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] that would represent this type are subalpine grassland and alpine fell-snowfields; represented by non-forest in the alpine/parkland zone of Washington Gap [37]. Other references describe this habitat [61, 65, 75, 80, 94, 105, 112, 123, 139, 195, 207].

Natural Disturbance Regime. Most natural disturbances seem to be small scale in their effects or very infrequent. Herbivory and associated trampling disturbance by elk, mountain goats, and occasionally bighorn sheep seems to be an important disturbance in some areas, creating patches of open ground, though the current distribution and abundance of these ungulates is in part a result of introductions. Small mammals can also have significant effects on vegetation: e.g., the heather vole occasionally overgrazes heather communities [80]. Frost heaving is a climatically related small-scale disturbance that is extremely important in structuring the vegetation [80]. Extreme variation from the norm in snow pack depth and duration can act as a disturbance, exposing plants to winter dessication [80], shortening the growing season, or facilitating summer drought. Subalpine grasslands probably burn on occasion and can be formed or expanded in area by fires in subalpine parkland [139].

Succession and Stand Dynamics. Little is known about vegetation changes in these communities, in part because changes are relatively slow. Tree invasion rates into subalpine grasslands are relatively slow compared to other subalpine communities [139]. Seedling establishment for many plant species in the alpine zone is poor. Heath communities take about 200 years to mature after initial establishment and may occupy the same site for thousands of years [139].

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. The major human impacts on this habitat are trampling and associated recreational impacts, e.g., tent sites. Resistance and resilience of vegetation to impacts varies by life form [48]. Sedge turfs are perhaps most resilient to trampling and heaths are least resilient. Trampling to the point of significantly opening an alpine heath canopy will initiate a degradation and erosion phase that results in continuous bare ground, largely unsuitable for vascular plant growth [80]. Bare ground in the alpine zone left alone after recreational disturbance will typically not revegetate in a time frame that humans can appreciate. Introduction of exotic ungulates can have noticeable impacts (e.g., mountain goats in the Olympic Mountains). Domestic sheep grazing has also had dramatic impacts [196], especially in the bunchgrass habitats east of the Cascades.

Status and Trends. This habitat is naturally very limited in extent in the region. There has been little to no change in abundance over the last 150 years. Most of this habitat is still in good condition and dominated by native species. Some areas east of the Cascade Crest have been degraded by livestock use. Recreational impacts are noticeable in some national parks and wilderness areas. Current trends seem to be largely stable, though there may be some slow loss of subalpine grassland to recent tree invasion. Threats include increasing recreational pressures, continued grazing at some sites, and, possibly, global climate change resulting in expansion of trees into this habitat. Only 1 out of 40 plant associations listed in the National Vegetation Classification is considered imperiled[10].

Eastside (Interior) Grasslands
Rex. C. Crawford and Jimmy Kagan

Geographic Distribution. This habitat is found primarily in the Columbia Basin of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, at mid- to low elevations and on plateaus in the Blue Mountains, usually within the ponderosa pine zone in Oregon.

Idaho fescue grassland habitats were formerly widespread in the Palouse region of southeastern Washington and adjacent Idaho; most of this habitat has been converted to agriculture. Idaho fescue grasslands still occur in isolated, moist sites near lower treeline in the foothills of the Blue Mountains, the Northern Rockies, and east Cascades near the Columbia River Gorge. Bluebunch wheatgrass grassland habitats are common throughout the Columbia Basin, both as modified native grasslands in deep canyons and the dry Palouse and as fire-induced representatives in the shrubsteppe. Similar grasslands appear on the High Lava Plains ecoregion, where they occur in a matrix with big sagebrush or juniper woodlands. In Oregon they are also found in burned shrubsteppe and canyons in the Basin and Range and Owyhee Uplands. Sand dropseed and three-awn needlegrass grassland habitats are restricted to river terraces in the Columbia Basin, Blue Mountains, and Owyhee Uplands of Oregon and Washington. Primary location of this habitat extends along the Snake River from Lewiston south to the Owyhee River.

Physical Setting. This habitat develops in hot, dry climates in the Pacific Northwest. Annual precipitation totals 8-20 inches (20-51 cm); only 10 percent falls in the hottest months, July through September. Snow accumulation is low (1-6 inches [3-15 cm]) and occurs only in January and February in eastern portions of its range and November through March in the west. More snow accumulates in grasslands within the forest matrix. Soils are variable: (1) highly productive loess soils up to 51 inches (130 cm) deep, (2) rocky flats, (3) steep slopes, and (4) sandy, gravel or cobble soils. An important variant of this habitat occurs on sandy, gravelly, or silty river terraces or seasonally exposed river gravel or Spokane flood deposits. The grassland habitat is typically upland vegetation but it may also include riparian bottomlands dominated by non-native grasses. This habitat is found from 500 to 6,000 ft (152-1,830 m) in elevation.

Landscape Setting. Eastside grassland habitats appear well below and in a matrix with lower treeline Ponderosa Pine Forests and Woodlands or Western Juniper and Mountain Mahogany Woodlands. It can also be part of the lower elevation forest matrix. Most grassland habitat occurs in 2 distinct large landscapes: plateau and canyon grasslands. Several rivers flow through narrow basalt canyons below plateaus supporting prairies or shrubsteppe. The canyons can be some 2,132 ft (650 m) deep below the plateau. The plateau above is composed of gentle slopes with deep silty loess soils in an expansive rolling dune-like landscape. Grasslands may occur in a patchwork with shallow soil scablands or within biscuit scablands or mounded topography. Naturally occurring grasslands are beyond the range of bitterbrush and sagebrush species. This habitat exists today in the shrubsteppe landscape where grasslands are created by brush removal, chaining or spraying, or by fire. Agricultural uses and introduced perennial plants on abandoned or planted fields are common throughout the current distribution of eastside grassland habitats.

Structure. This habitat is dominated by short to medium-tall grasses (<3.3 ft [1 m]). Total herbaceous cover can be closed to only sparsely vegetated. In general, this habitat is an open and irregular arrangement of grass clumps rather than a continuous sod cover. These medium-tall grasslands often have scattered and diverse patches of low shrubs, but few or no medium-tall shrubs (<10 percent cover of shrubs are taller than the grass layer). Native forbs may contribute significant cover or they may be absent. Grasslands in canyons are dominated by bunchgrasses growing in lower densities than on deep-soil prairie sites. The soil surface between perennial plants can be covered with a diverse cryptogamic or microbiotic layer of mosses, lichens, and various soil bacteria and algae. Moister environments can support a dense sod of rhizomatous perennial grasses. Annual plants are a common spring and early summer feature of this habitat.

Composition. Bluebunch wheatgrass (Pseudoroegneria spicata) and Idaho fescue (Festuca idahoensis) are the characteristic native bunchgrasses of this habitat and either or both can be dominant. Idaho fescue is common in more moist areas and bluebunch wheatgrass more abundant in drier areas. Rough fescue (F. campestris) is a characteristic dominant on moist sites in northeastern Washington. Sand dropseed (Sporobolus cryptandrus) or three-awn (Aristida longiseta) are native dominant grasses on hot dry sites in deep canyons. Sandberg bluegrass (Poa sandbergii) is usually present, and occasionally codominant in drier areas. Bottlebrush squirreltail (Elymus elymoides) and Thurber needlegrass (Stipa thurberiana) can be locally dominant. Annual grasses are usually present; cheatgrass (Bromus tectorum) is the most widespread. In addition, medusahead (Taeniatherum caput-medusae), and other annual bromes (Bromus commutatus, B. mollis, B. japonicus) may be present to co-dominant. Moist environments, including riparian bottomlands, are often co-dominated by Kentucky bluegrass (Poa pratensis).

A dense and diverse forb layer can be present or entirely absent; >40 species of native forbs can grow in this habitat including balsamroots (Balsamorhiza spp.), biscuitroots (Lomatium spp.), buckwheat (Eriogonum spp.), fleabane (Erigeron spp.), lupines (Lupinus spp.), and milkvetches (Astragalus spp.). Common exotic forbs that can grow in this habitat are knapweeds (Centaurea solstitialis, C. diffusa, C. maculosa), tall tumblemustard (Sisymbrium altissimum), and Russian thistle (Salsola kali).

Smooth sumac (Rhus glabra) is a deciduous shrub locally found in combination with these grassland species. Rabbitbrushes (Chrysothamnus nauseosus, C. viscidiflorus) can occur in this habitat in small amounts, especially where grazed by livestock. In moist Palouse regions, common snowberry (Symphoricarpos albus) or Nootka rose (Rosa nutkana) may be present, but is shorter than the bunchgrasses. Dry sites contain low succulent pricklypear (Opuntia polyacantha). Big sagebrush (Artemisia tridentata) is occasional and may be increasing in grasslands on former shrubsteppe sites. Black hawthorn (Crataegus douglasii) and other tall shrubs can form dense thickets near Idaho fescue grasslands. Rarely, ponderosa pine (Pinus ponderosa) or western juniper (Juniperus occidentalis) can occur as isolated trees.

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat is called Palouse Prairie, Pacific Northwest grassland, steppe vegetation, or bunchgrass prairie in general ecological literature. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] called this habitat Fescue-Bunchgrass and Wheatgrass Bunchgrass and the dry Grass cover type. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] that would represent this type are northeast Oregon canyon grassland, forest-grassland mosaic, and modified grassland; Washington Gap [37] types 13, 21, 22, 24, 29-31, 82, and 99 map this habitat. Kuchler [136] includes this within Fescue-wheatgrass and wheatgrass-bluegrass. Franklin and Dyrness [88] include this habitat in steppe zones of Washington and Oregon. Other references describe this habitat [28, 60, 159, 166, 206, 207].

Natural Disturbance Regime. The fire-return interval for sagebrush and bunchgrass is estimated at 25 years [22]. The native bunchgrass habitat apparently lacked extensive herds of large grazing and browsing animals until the late 1800's. Burrowing animals and their predators likely played important roles in creating small-scale patch patterns.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. Currently fires burn less frequently in the Palouse grasslands than historically because of fire suppression, roads, and conversions to cropland [159]. Without fire, black hawthorn shrubland patches expand on slopes along with common snowberry and rose. Fires covering large areas of shrubsteppe habitat can eliminate shrubs and their seed sources and create eastside grassland habitat. Fires that follow heavy grazing or repeated early season fires can result in annual grasslands of cheatgrass, medusahead, knapweed, or yellow star-thistle. Annual exotic grasslands are common in dry grasslands and are included in modified grasslands as part of the Agriculture habitat.

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Large expanses of grasslands are currently used for livestock ranching. Deep soil Palouse sites are mostly converted to agriculture. Drier grasslands and canyon grasslands, those with shallower soils, steeper topography, or hotter, drier environments, were more intensively grazed and for longer periods than were deep-soil grasslands [207]. Evidently, these drier native bunchgrass grasslands changed irreversibly to persistent annual grass and forblands. Some annual grassland, native bunchgrass, and shrubsteppe habitats were converted to intermediate wheatgrass, or more commonly, crested wheatgrass (Agropyron cristatum)-dominated areas. Apparently, these form persistent grasslands and are included as modified grasslands in the Agriculture habitat. With intense livestock use, some riparian bottomlands become dominated by non-native grasses. Many native dropseed grasslands have been submerged by dam reservoirs.

Status and Trends. Most of the Palouse prairie of southeastern Washington and adjacent Idaho and Oregon has been converted to agriculture. Remnants still occur in the foothills of the Blue Mountains and in isolated, moist Columbia Basin sites. The Palouse is one of the most endangered ecosystems in the U.S. [166] with only 1 percent of the original habitat remaining; it is highly fragmented with most sites <10 acres. All these areas are subject to weed invasions and drift of aerial biocides. Since 1900, 94 percent of the Palouse grasslands have been converted to crop, hay, or pasture lands. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] concluded that Fescue-Bunchgrass and Wheatgrass bunchgrass cover types have significantly decreased in area since pre-1900, while exotic forbs and annual grasses have significantly increased since pre-1900. Fifty percent of the plant associations recognized as components of eastside grassland habitat listed in the National Vegetation Classification are considered imperiled or critically imperiled [10].

Shrubsteppe
Rex. C. Crawford and Jimmy Kagan

Geographic Distribution. Shrubsteppe habitats are common across the Columbia Plateau of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and adjacent Wyoming, Utah, and Nevada. It extends up into the cold, dry environments of surrounding mountains.

Basin big sagebrush shrubsteppe occurs along stream channels, in valley bottoms and flats throughout eastern Oregon and Washington. Wyoming sagebrush shrubsteppe is the most widespread habitat in eastern Oregon and Washington, occurring throughout the Columbia Plateau and the northern Great Basin. Mountain big sagebrush shrubsteppe habitat occurs throughout the mountains of the eastern Oregon and Washington. Bitterbrush shrubsteppe habitat appears primarily along the eastern slope of the Cascades, from north-central Washington to California and occasionally in the Blue Mountains. Three-tip sagebrush shrubsteppe occurs mostly along the northern and western Columbia Basin in Washington and occasionally appears in the lower valleys of the Blue Mountains and in the Owyhee Upland ecoregions of Oregon. Interior shrub dunes and sandy steppe and shrubsteppe habitat is concentrated at low elevations near the Columbia River and in isolated pockets in the Northern Basin and Range and Owyhee Uplands. Bolander silver sagebrush shrubsteppe is common in southeastern Oregon. Mountain silver sagebrush is more prevalent in the Oregon East Cascades and in montane meadows in the southern Ochoco and Blue Mountains.

Physical Setting. Generally, this habitat is associated with dry, hot environments in the Pacific Northwest although variants are in cool, moist areas with some snow accumulation in climatically dry mountains. Elevation range is wide (300-9,000 ft [91-2,743 m]) with most habitat occurring between 2,000 and 6,000 ft (610-1,830 m). Habitat occurs on deep alluvial, loess, silty or sandy-silty soils, stony flats, ridges, mountain slopes, and slopes of lake beds with ash or pumice soils.

Landscape Setting. Shrubsteppe habitat defines a biogeographic region and is the major vegetation on average sites in the Columbia Plateau, usually below Ponderosa Pine Forest and Woodlands, and Western Juniper and Mountain Mahogany Woodlands habitats. It forms mosaic landscapes with these woodland habitats and Eastside Grasslands, Dwarf Shrubsteppe, and Desert Playa and Salt Scrub habitats. Mountain sagebrush shrubsteppe occurs at high elevations occasionally within the dry Eastside Mixed Conifer Forest and Montane Mixed Conifer Forest habitats. Shrubsteppe habitat can appear in large landscape patches. Livestock grazing is the primary land use in the shrubsteppe although much has been converted to irrigation or dry land agriculture. Large areas occur in military training areas and wildlife refuges.

Structure. This habitat is a shrub savanna or shrubland with shrub coverage of 10-60 percent. In an undisturbed condition, shrub cover varies between 10 and 30 percent. Shrubs are generally evergreen although deciduous shrubs are prominent in many habitats. Shrub height typically is medium-tall (1.6-3.3 ft [0.5-1.0 m]) although some sites support shrubs approaching 9 ft (2.7 m) tall. Vegetation structure in this habitat is characteristically an open shrub layer over a moderately open to closed bunchgrass layer. The more northern or productive sites generally have a denser grass layer and sparser shrub layer than southern or more xeric sites. In fact, the rare good-condition site is better characterized as grassland with shrubs than a shrubland. The bunchgrass layer may contain a variety of forbs. Good-condition habitat has very little exposed bare ground, and has mosses and lichens carpeting the area between taller plants. However, heavily grazed sites have dense shrubs making up >40 percent cover, with introduced annual grasses and little or no moss or lichen cover. Moist sites may support tall bunchgrasses (>3.3 ft [1 m]) or rhizomatous grasses. More southern shrubsteppe may have native low shrubs dominating with bunchgrasses.

Composition. Characteristic and dominant mid-tall shrubs in the shrubsteppe habitat include all 3 subspecies of big sagebrush, basin (Artemisia tridentata ssp. tridentata), Wyoming (A. t. ssp. wyomingensis) or mountain (A. t. ssp. vaseyana), antelope bitterbrush (Purshia tridentata), and 2 shorter sagebrushes, silver (A. cana) and three-tip (A. tripartita). Each of these species can be the only shrub or appear in complex seral conditions with other shrubs. Common shrub complexes are bitterbrush and Wyoming big sagebrush, bitterbrush and three-tip sagebrush, Wyoming big sagebrush and three-tip sagebrush, and mountain big sagebrush and silver sagebrush. Wyoming and mountain big sagebrush can codominate areas with tobacco brush (Ceanothus velutinus). Rabbitbrush (Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus) and short-spine horsebrush (Tetradymia spinosa) are common associates and often dominate sites after disturbance. Big sagebrush occurs with the shorter stiff sagebrush (A. rigida) or low sagebrush (A. arbuscula) on shallow soils or high elevation sites. Many sandy areas are shrub-free or are open to patchy shrublands of bitterbrush and/or rabbitbrush. Silver sagebrush is the dominant and characteristic shrub along the edges of stream courses, moist meadows, and ponds. Silver sagebrush and rabbitbrush are associates in disturbed areas.

When this habitat is in good or better ecological condition a bunchgrass steppe layer is characteristic. Diagnostic native bunchgrasses that often dominate different shrubsteppe habitats are (1) mid-grasses: bluebunch wheatgrass (Pseudoroegneria spicata), Idaho fescue (Festuca idahoensis), bottlebrush squirreltail (Elymus elymoides), and Thurber needlegrass (Stipa thurberiana); (2) short grasses: threadleaf sedge (Carex filifolia) and Sandberg bluegrass (Poa sandbergii); and (3) the tall grass, basin wildrye (Leymus cinereus). Idaho fescue is characteristic of the most productive shrubsteppe vegetation. Bluebunch wheatgrass is co-dominant at xeric locations, whereas western needlegrass (Stipa occidentalis), long-stolon (Carex inops) or Geyer's sedge (C. geyeri) increase in abundance in higher elevation shrubsteppe habitats. Needle-and-thread (Stipa comata) is the characteristic native bunchgrass on stabilized sandy soils. Indian ricegrass (Oryzopsis hymenoides) characterizes dunes. Grass layers on montane sites contain slender wheatgrass (Elymus trachycaulus), mountain fescue (F. brachyphylla), green fescue (F. viridula), Geyer's sedge, or tall bluegrasses (Poa spp.). Bottlebrush squirreltail can be locally important in the Columbia Basin, sand dropseed (Sporobolus cryptandrus) is important in the Basin and Range and basin wildrye is common in the more alkaline areas. Nevada bluegrass (Poa secunda), Richardson muhly (Muhlenbergia richardsonis), or alkali grass (Puccinella spp.) can dominate silver sagebrush flats.

Many sites support non-native plants, primarily cheatgrass (Bromus tectorum) or crested wheatgrass (Agropyron cristatum) with or without native grasses. Shrubsteppe habitat, depending on site potential and disturbance history, can be rich in forbs or have little forb cover. Trees may be present in some shrubsteppe habitats, usually as isolated individuals from adjacent forest or woodland habitats.

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat is called Sagebrush steppe and Great Basin sagebrush by Kuchler [136]. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] that would represent this type are big sagebrush shrubland, sagebrush steppe, and bitterbrush-big sagebrush shrubland. Franklin and Dyrness [88] discussed this habitat in shrubsteppe zones of Washington and Oregon. Other references describe this habitat [60, 116, 122, 123, 212, 224, 225].

Natural Disturbance Regime. Barrett et al. [22] concluded that the fire-return interval for this habitat is 25 years. The native shrubsteppe habitat apparently lacked extensive herds of large grazing and browsing animals until the late 1800's. Burrowing animals and their predators likely played important roles in creating small-scale patch patterns.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. With disturbance, mature stands of big sagebrush are reinvaded through soil-stored or windborne seeds. Invasion can be slow because sagebrush is not disseminated over long distances. Site dominance by big sagebrush usually takes a decade or more depending on fire severity and season, seed rain, post-fire moisture, and plant competition. Three-tip sagebrush is a climax species that reestablishes (from seeds or commonly from sprouts) within 5-10 years following a disturbance. Certain disturbance regimes promote three-tip sagebrush and it can out-compete herbaceous species. Bitterbrush is a climax species that plays a seral role colonizing by seed onto rocky and/or pumice soils. Bitterbrush may be declining and may be replaced by woodlands in the absence of fire. Silver sagebrush is a climax species that establishes during early seral stages and coexists with later arriving species. Big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, and short-spine horsebrush invade and can form dense stands after fire or livestock grazing. Frequent or high-intensity fire can create a patchy shrub cover or can eliminate shrub cover and create Eastside Grasslands habitat.

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Shrub density and annual cover increase, whereas bunchgrass density decreases with livestock use. Repeated or intense disturbance, particularly on drier sites, leads to cheatgrass dominance and replacement of native bunchgrasses. Dry and sandy soils are sensitive to grazing, with needle-and-thread replaced by cheatgrass at most sites. These disturbed sites can be converted to modified grasslands in the Agriculture habitat.

Status and Trends. Shrubsteppe habitat still dominates most of southeastern Oregon although half of its original distribution in the Columbia Basin has been converted to agriculture. Alteration of fire regimes, fragmentation, livestock grazing, and the addition of >800 exotic plant species have changed the character of shrubsteppe habitat. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] concluded that Big Sagebrush and Mountain Sagebrush cover types are significantly smaller in area than before 1900, and that

Bitterbrush/Bluebunch Wheatgrass cover type is similar to the pre-1900 extent. They concluded that Basin Big Sagebrush and Big sagebrush-Warm potential vegetation type’s successional pathways are altered, that some pathways of Antelope Bitterbrush are altered and that most pathways for Big Sagebrush-Cool are unaltered. Overall this habitat has seen an increase in exotic plant importance and a decrease in native bunchgrasses. More than half of the Pacific Northwest shrubsteppe habitat community types listed in the National Vegetation Classification are considered imperiled or critically imperiled [10].

Agriculture, Pasture and Mixed Environs

W. Daniel Edge, Rex C. Crawford, and David H. Johnson

Geographic Distribution. Agricultural habitat is widely distributed at low to mid-elevations (<6,000 ft [1,830 m]) throughout both states. This habitat is most abundant in broad river valleys throughout both states and on gentle rolling terrain east of the Cascades.

Physical Setting. This habitat is maintained across a range of climatic conditions typical of both states. Climate constrains agricultural production at upper elevations where there are <90 frost-free days. Agricultural habitat in arid regions east of the Cascades with <10 inches (25 cm) of rainfall require supplemental irrigation or fallow fields for 1-2 years to accumulate sufficient soil moisture. Soils types are variable, but usually have a well developed A horizon. This habitat is found from 0 to 6,000 ft (0 to 1,830 m) elevation.

Landscape Setting. Agricultural habitat occurs within a matrix of other habitat types at low to mid-elevations, including Eastside grasslands, Shrubsteppe, Westside Lowlands Conifer-Deciduous Forest and other low to mid-elevation forest and woodland habitats. This habitat often dominates the landscape in flat or gently rolling terrain, on well-developed soils, broad river valleys, and areas with access to abundant irrigation water. Unlike other habitat types, agricultural habitat is often characterized by regular landscape patterns (squares, rectangles, and circles) and straight borders because of ownership boundaries and multiple crops within a region. Edges can be abrupt along the habitat borders within agricultural habitat and with other adjacent habitats.

Structure. This habitat is structurally diverse because it includes several cover types ranging from low-stature annual grasses and row crops (<3.3 ft [1 m]) to mature orchards (>66 ft [20 m]). However, within any cover type, structural diversity is typically low because usually only 1 to a few species of similar height are cultivated. Depending on management intensity or cultivation method, agricultural habitat may vary substantially in structure annually; cultivated cropland and modified grasslands are typified by periods of bare soil and harvest whereas pastures are mowed, hayed, or grazed 1 or more times during the growing season. Structural diversity of agricultural habitat is increased at local scales by the presences of non-cultivated or less intensively managed vegetation such as fencerows, roadsides, field borders, and shelterbelts.

Composition. Agricultural habitat varies substantially in composition among the cover types it includes. Cultivated cropland includes >50 species of annual and perennial plants in Oregon and Washington, and hundreds of varieties ranging from vegetables such as carrots, onions, and peas to annual grains such as wheat, oats, barley, and rye. Row crops of vegetables and herbs are characterized by bare soil, plants, and plant debris along bottomland areas of streams and rivers and areas having sufficient water for irrigation. Annual grains, such as barley, oats, and wheat are typically produced in almost continuous stands of vegetation on upland and rolling hill terrain without irrigation.

The orchard/vineyard/nursery cover type is composed of fruit and nut (apples, peaches, pears, and hazelnuts) trees, vineyards (grapes, Kiwi), berries (strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, and raspberries), Christmas trees, and nursery operations (ornamental container and greenhouses). This cover type is generally located on upland sites with access to abundant irrigation. Cultivation for most orchards, vineyards and Christmas tree farms includes an undergrowth of short-stature perennial grasses between the rows of trees, vines, or bushes. Christmas trees are typically produced without irrigation on upland sites with poorer soils.

Improved pastures are used to produce perennial herbaceous plants for grass seed and hay. Alfalfa and several species of fescue (Festuca spp.) and bluegrass (Poa spp.), orchardgrass (Dactylis glomerata), and timothy (Phleum pratensis) are commonly seeded in improved pastures. Grass seed fields are single-species stands, whereas pastures maintained for haying are typically composed of 2 to several species. The improved pasture cover type is one of the most common agricultural uses in both states and produced with and without irrigation.

Unimproved pastures are predominately grassland sites, often abandoned fields that have little or no active management such as irrigation, fertilization, or herbicide applications. These sites may or may not be grazed by livestock. Unimproved pastures include rangelands planted to exotic grasses that are found on private land, state wildlife areas, federal wildlife refuges and U.S. Department of Agriculture Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) sites. Grasses commonly planted on CRP sites are crested wheatgrass (Agropyron cristatum), tall fescue (F. arundinacea), perennial bromes (Bromus spp.) and wheatgrasses (Elytrigia spp.). Intensively grazed rangelands, which have been seeded to intermediate wheatgrass (Elytrigia intermedia), crested wheatgrass, or are dominated by increaser exotics such as Kentucky wheatgrass (Poa pratensis) or tall oatgrass (Arrhenatherum elatius) are unimproved pastures. Other unimproved pastures have been cleared and intensively farmed in the past, but are allowed to convert to other vegetation. These sites may be composed of uncut hay, litter from previous seasons, standing dead grass and herbaceous material, invasive exotic plants (tansy ragwort [Senecio jacobea], thistle [Cirsium spp.], Himalaya blackberry [Rubus discolor], and Scot's broom [Cytisus scoparius]) with patches of native black hawthorn (Crataegus douglasii), snowberry (Symphoricarpos spp.), spirea (Spirea spp.), poison oak (Toxicodendron diversilobum), and encroachment of various tree species, depending on seed source and environment.

Modified grasslands are generally overgrazed habitats that formerly were native grasslands or shrubsteppe but are now dominated by annual plants with only remnant individual plants of the native vegetation. Cheatgrass (Bromus tectorum), other annual bromes, medusahead (Taeniatherum caput-medusae), bulbous bluegrass (Poa bulbosa), and knapweeds (Centaurea spp.) are common increasers that form modified grasslands. Fire, following heavy grazing or repeated early season fires can create modified grassland monocultures of cheatgrass.

Agricultural habitat also contains scattered dwellings and outbuildings such as barns and silos, rural cemeteries, ditchbanks, windbreaks, and small inclusions of remnant native vegetation. These sites typically have a discontinuous tree layer or 1 to a few trees over a ground cover similar to improved or unimproved pastures.

Other Classifications and Key References. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] referred to this as agricultural and exotic forbs-annual grasses cover types. Csuti et al. [58] referred to this habitat as agricultural. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Type [127] that would represent this type is agriculture. U.S. Department of Agriculture Conservation Reserve Program lands are included in this habitat.

Natural Disturbance Regime. Natural fires are almost totally suppressed in this habitat, except for unimproved pastures and modified grasslands, where fire-return intervals can resemble those of native grassland habitats. Fires are generally less frequent today than in the past, primarily because of fire suppression, construction of roads, and conversion of grass and forests to cropland [159]. Bottomland areas along streams and rivers are subject to periodic floods, which may remove or deposit large amounts of soil.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. Management practices disrupt natural succession and stand dynamics in most of the agricultural habitats. Abandoned eastside agricultural habitats may convert to other habitats, mostly grassland and shrub habitats from the surrounding native habitats. Some agricultural habitats that occur on highly erodible soils, especially east of the Cascades, have been enrolled in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Conservation Reserve Program. In the absence of fire or mowing, west side unimproved pastures have increasing amounts of hawthorn, snowberry, rose (Rosa spp.), Himalaya blackberry, spirea, Scot’s broom, and poison oak. Douglas-fir or other trees can be primary invaders in some environments.

Ef**fects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts.** The dominant characteristic of agricultural habitat is a regular pattern of management and vegetation disturbance. With the exception of the unimproved pasture cover type, most areas classified as agricultural habitat receive regular inputs of fertilizer and pesticides and have some form of vegetation harvest and manipulation. Management practices in cultivated cropland include different tillage systems, resulting in vegetation residues during the non-growing season that range from bare soil to 100 percent litter. Cultivation of some crops, especially in the arid eastern portions of both states, may require the land to remain fallow for 1-2 growing seasons in order to store sufficient soil moisture to grow another crop. Harvest in cultivated cropland, Christmas tree plantations, and nurseries, and mowing or haying in improved pasture cover types substantially change the structure of vegetation. Harvest in orchards and vineyards are typically less intrusive, but these crops as well as Christmas trees and some ornamental nurseries are regularly pruned. Improved pastures are often grazed after haying or during the non-growing season. Livestock grazing is the dominant use of unimproved pastures. All of these practices prevent agricultural areas from reverting to native vegetation. Excessive grazing in unimproved pastures may increase the prevalence of weedy or exotic species.

Status and Trends. Agricultural habitat has steadily increased in amount and size in both states since Eurasian settlement of the region. Conversion to agricultural habitat threatens several native habitat types [166]. The greatest conversion of native habitats to agricultural production occurred between 1950 and 1985, primarily as a function of U.S. agricultural policy [96]. Since the 1985 Farm Bill and the economic downturn of the early to mid 1980's, the amount of land in agricultural habitat has stabilized and begun to decline [164]. The 1985 and subsequent Farm Bills contained conservation provisions encouraging farmers to convert agricultural land to native habitats [96, 153]. Clean farming practices and single-product farms have become prevalent since the 1960's, resulting in larger farms and widespread removal of fencerows, field borders, roadsides, and shelterbelts [96, 153, 164]. In Oregon, land-use planning laws prevent or slow urban encroachment and subdivisions into areas zoned as agriculture. Washington's growth management is currently controlled by counties and agricultural land conversion to urban development is much less regulated.

Urban and Mixed Environs
Howard L. Ferguson

Geographic Distribution. Urban habitat occurs throughout Oregon and Washington. Most urban development is located west of the Cascades of both Oregon and Washington, with the exception of Spokane, Washington, which developed because of early railroad systems and connections to the East. However, urban growth is being felt in almost every small town throughout the Pacific Northwest.

Physical Setting. Urban development occurs in a variety of sites in the Pacific Northwest. It creates a physical setting unique to itself: temperatures are elevated and background lighting is increased; wind velocities are altered by the urban landscape, often reduced except around the tallest structures downtown, where high-velocity winds are funneled around the skyscrapers. Urban development often occurs in areas with little or no slope and frequently includes wetland habitats. Many of these wetlands have been filled in and eliminated. Today, ironically, many artificial "wetland" impoundments are being created for stormwater management, whose function is the same as the original wetland that was destroyed.

Landscape Setting. Urban development occurs within or adjacent to nearly every habitat type in Oregon and Washington, and often replaces habitats that are valuable for wildlife. The highest urban densities normally occur in lower elevations along natural or human-made transportation corridors, such as rivers, railroad lines, coastlines, or interstate highways. These areas often contain good soils with little or no slope and lush vegetation. Once level areas become crowded, growth continues along rivers or shores of lakes or oceans, and eventually up elevated sites with steep slopes or rocky outcrops. Because early settlers often modified the original landscape for agricultural purposes, many of our urban areas are surrounded by agricultural and grazing lands.

Structure. The original habitat is drastically altered in urban environments and is replaced by buildings, impermeable surfaces, bridges, dams, and planting of non-native species. Some human-made structures provide habitats similar to those of cavities, caves, fissures, cliffs, and ledges. With the onset of urban development, total crown cover and tree density are reduced to make way for the construction of buildings and associated infrastructure. Many structural features typical of the historical vegetation, such as snags, dead and downed wood, and brush piles, are often completely removed from the landscape. Understory vegetation may be completely absent, or if present, is diminutive and single-layered. Typically, 3 zones are characteristic of urban habitat.

High-density Zone. The high-density zone is the downtown area of the inner city. It also encompasses the heavy industrial and large commercial interests of the city in addition to high-density housing areas such as apartment buildings or high-rise condominiums. This zone has =60 percent of its total surface area covered by impervious surfaces. This zone has the smallest lot size, the tallest buildings, the least amount of total tree canopy cover, the lowest tree density, the highest percentage of exotics, the poorest understory and subcanopy, and the poorest vegetative structure [4a, 116a, 185a]. Human structures have replaced almost all vegetation [23b, 148a]. Road density is the highest of all zones. An example of road density can be seen from Washington’s Growth Management Plan requiring Master Comprehensive Plans to set aside 20 percent of the identified urban growth area for roads and road rights-of-way. For example, Spokane’s urban growth area is approximately 57,000 acres (23,077 ha); therefore >11,000 acres (4,453 ha) were set aside for road surfaces.

In the high-density zone, land-use practices have removed most of the native vegetation. Patch sizes of remaining natural areas often are so small that native interior species cannot be supported. Not only are remaining patches of native vegetation typically disconnected, but also they are frequently missing the full complement of vertical strata [149]. Stream corridors become heavily impacted and discontinuous. Most, if not all, wetlands have been filled or removed. Large buildings dominate the landscape and determine the placement of vegetation in this zone [30a]. This zone has the most street tree strips or sidewalk trees, most of which are exotics. There is virtually no natural tree replacement, and new trees are planted only when old ones die or are removed. Replacement trees are chosen for their small root systems and are generally short in stature with small diameters. Ground cover in this zone, if not synthetic or impervious, is typically exotic grasses or exotic annuals, most of which are rarely allowed to go to seed. Snags, woody debris, rock piles, and any other natural structures are essentially nonexistent. There are few tree cavities because of cosmetic pruning, cavity filling, snag removal, and tree thinning [149].

Medium-density Zone. This zone, continuing out from the center of the continuum is the medium-density zone, composed of light industry mixed with high-density residential areas. Housing density of 3-6 single-family homes per acre (7-15 per ha) is typical. Compared with the high-density zone, this zone has more potential wildlife habitat. With 30-59 percent impervious soil cover, this zone has 41-70 percent of the ground available for plants. Road density is less than the high-density zone.

Vegetation in this mid-zone is typically composed of non-native plant species. Native plants, when present, represent only a limited range of the natural diversity for the area.

The shrub layer is typically clipped or minimal, even in heavily vegetated areas. Characteristic of this zone are manicured lawns, trimmed hedges, and topped trees. Lawns can be highly productive [82a, 97a]. Tree canopy is still discontinuous and consists of 1-2 levels, if present at all. Consequently, vertical vegetative diversity and total amount of understory are still low. Coarse and fine woody debris is minimal or absent; most snags and diseased live trees are still removed as hazards in this zone [119a, 119b].

Isolated wetlands, stream corridors, open spaces, and greenbelts are more frequently retained in this zone than in the high-density zone. However, remnant wetland and upland areas are often widely separated by urban development.

Low-density Zone. The low-density zone is the outer zone of the urban-rural continuum. This zone contains only 10-29 percent impervious ground cover and normally contains only single-family homes. It has more natural ground cover than artificial surfaces. Vegetation is denser and more abundant than in the previous two zones. Typical housing densities are 0.4-1.6 single-family homes per acre (1-4 per ha). Road density is lowest of all 3 zones and consists of many secondary and tertiary roads.

Roads, fences, livestock paddocks, and pets are more abundant than in neighboring rural areas. With many animals and limited acreage, pasture conditions may be more overgrazed in this zone than in the rural zone; overgrazing can significantly affect shrub layers as well. Areas around home sites are often cleared for fire protection. Dogs are more likely to be loose and allowed to run free, increasing disturbance levels and wildlife harassment in this zone. Vegetable and flower gardens are widespread; fencing is prevalent.

Many wetlands remain and are less impacted. Water levels are more stable and peak flows are more typical of historical flows. Water tables are less impacted and vernal wetlands are more frequent; stream corridors are less impacted and more continuous.

Although this zone may have large areas of native vegetation and is generally the least impacted of all 3 zones; it still has been significantly altered by human activities and associated disturbances.

This zone has the most vertical and horizontal structure and diversity of any of the 3 urban zones [30a, 80a, 140a, 187a]. In forested areas, tree conditions are semi-natural, although stand characteristics vary from parcel to parcel. The tree canopy is more continuous and may include multiple levels. Patch sizes are large enough to support native interior species. Large blocks of native vegetation may still be found, and some of these may be connected to large areas of native undeveloped land. In this zone, snags, diseased trees, coarse and fine woody debris, brush piles, and rock piles are widespread. Structural diversity approaches historical levels. Non-native hedges are nearly nonexistent and the native shrub layer, except for small areas around houses, is relatively intact. Lawns are fewer, and native ground covers are more common than in the previous two zones.

Composition. Remnant isolated blocks of native vegetation may be found scattered throughout a town or city mixed with a multitude of introduced exotic vegetation. As urban development increases, these remnant native stands become fragmented and isolated. The dominant species in an urban setting may be exotic or native; for example, in Seattle, the dominant species in 1 area may be Douglas-fir (Pseudotsuga menziesii), whereas a few blocks away it may be the exotic silver maple (Acer saccharinum). Dominant species will not only vary from city to city but also within each city and within each of the 3 urban zones. Nowack [167] found that in the high-density urban zone, species richness is low, and in 1 case, 4 species made up almost 50 percent of the cover. In the same study, exotics made up 69 percent of the total species.

In urban and suburban areas, species richness is often increased because of the introduction of exotics. The juxtaposition of exotics interspersed with native vegetation produces a diverse mosaic with areas of extensive edge. Also, because of irrigation and the addition of fertilizers, the biomass in the urban communities is often increased [149].

Interest in the use of native plants for landscaping is rapidly expanding [135, 172], particularly in the more arid sites where drought-resistant natives are the only plants able to survive without water.

Across the U.S., urban tree cover ranges from 1 to 55 percent [167]. As expected, tree cover tends to be highest in cities developed in naturally forested areas with an average of 32 percent cover in forested areas, 28 percent in grasslands, and 10 percent in arid areas. Yakima, Washington, has an overall city tree cover of 18 percent, ranging from 10 percent to 12 percent in the industrial/commercial area to 23 percent in the low-density residential zone [167]. Remnant blocks of native vegetation or native trees left standing in yards and parks will compositionally be related to whatever native habitat was present on site prior to development. In the Puget Sound and Willamette Valley areas, Douglas-fir is a major constituent, whereas the Spokane area has a lot of ponderosa pine (Pinus ponderosa).

Other Classifications and Key References. Many attempts have been made to classify or describe the complex urban environment. The Washington GAP Analysis [37] classified urban environments as "developed" land cover using the same 3 zones as described above: (1) high density (>60 percent impervious surface); (2) medium density (30-60 percent impervious surface); and (3) low density (10-30 percent impervious surface). The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] represented this type as an urban class. Several other relevant studies characterizing the urban environment have been reported [182, 129, 34, 70, 151].

Natural Disturbance Regime. In many instances, natural disturbances are modified or prevented from occurring by humans over the landscape and this is particularly true of urban areas. However, disturbances such as ice, wind, or firestorms still occur. The severity of these intermittent disturbances varies greatly in magnitude and their impact on the landscape varies accordingly. One of the differences between urban and non-urban landscapes is the lengthening of the disturbance cycles. Another is found in the aftermath of these disturbances. In urban areas, damaged trees are often entirely removed and if they are replaced, a shorter, smaller tree, often non-native, is selected. The natural fire disturbance interval is highly modified in the urban environment. Fire (mostly accidental or arson) still occurs, and is quickly suppressed. Another natural disturbance in many of our Pacific Northwest towns is flooding, which historically altered and rerouted many of our rivers and streams, and still scarifies fields and deposits soil on flood plains and potentially recharges local aquifers. Floods now are more frequent and more violent than in the past because of the many modifications made to our watersheds. Attempts to lessen flooding in urban areas often lead to channelization, paving, or diking of our waterways, most of which fail in their attempt to stem the flooding and usually result in increased flooding for the communities farther downstream.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. Due to anthropogenic influences found in the urban environment, succession differs in the urban area from that expected for a native stand. Rowntree [185] emphasized that urbanization is not in the same category as natural disturbance in affecting succession. He points out that urbanization is anthropogenic and acts to remove complete vegetation associations and creates new ones made of mixes of native residual vegetation and introduced vegetation. Much human effort in the city goes toward either completely removing native vegetation or sustaining or maintaining a specific vegetative type, e.g., lawns or hedges. Much of the vegetative community remains static. Understory and ground covers are constantly pruned or removed, seedlings are pulled and lawns are planted, fertilized, mowed, and meticulously maintained. Trees may be protected to maturity or even senescence, yet communities are so fragmented or modified that a genuine old-growth community never exists. However, a type of "urban succession" occurs across the urban landscape. The older neighborhoods with their mature stands are at a later seral stage than new developments; species diversity is characteristically higher in older neighborhoods as well. An oddity of the urban environment is the absence of typical structure generally found within the various seral stages. For example, the understory is often removed in a typical mid-seral stand to give it a "park-like" look. Or if the understory is allowed to remain, it is kept pruned to a consistent height. Lawns are the ever-present substitute for native ground covers. Multi-layered habitat is often reduced to 1 or 2 heights. Vertical and horizontal structural diversity is drastically reduced.

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. These additional, often irreversible, impacts include more impervious surfaces, more and larger human-made structures, large-scale storm and wastewater management, large-scale sewage treatment, water and air pollution, toxic chemicals, toxic chemical use on urban lawns and gardens, removal of species considered to be pests, predation and disturbance by pets and feral cats and dogs, and the extensive and continual removal of habitat due to expanding urbanization, and in some cases, uncontrolled development. Another significant impact is the introduction and cultivation of exotics in urban areas. Native vegetation is often completely replaced by exotics, leaving little trace of the native vegetative cover.

Status and Trends. From 1970 to 1990, >30,000 mile^2 (77,700 km^2) of rural lands in the U.S. became urban, as classified by the U.S. Census Bureau. That amount of land equals about one third of Oregon's total land area [12]. From 1940 to 1970, the population of the Portland urban region doubled and the amount of land occupied by that population quadrupled [201]. More than 300 new residents arrive in Washington each day, and each day, Washington loses 100 acres (41 ha) of forest to development [215]. Using satellite photos and GIS software, American Forests [9] discovered that nearly one third of Puget Sound's most heavily timbered land has disappeared since the early 1970's. The amount of land with few or no trees more than doubled, from 25 percent to 57 percent, an increase of >1 million acres (404,858 ha). Development and associated urban growth was blamed as the single biggest factor affecting the area's environment. This urban growth is predicted to continue to increase at an accelerated pace, at the expense of native habitat.

Open Water - Lakes, Rivers, and Streams
Eva L. Greda, David H. Johnson, and Tom O'Neil

Lakes, Ponds, and Reservoirs

Geographical Distribution. Lakes in Oregon and Washington occur statewide and are found from near sea level to about 10,200 ft (3,110 m) above sea level. There are 3,887 lakes and reservoirs in western Washington and they total 176,920 acres (71,628 ha) [226]. In contrast, there are 4,073 lakes and reservoirs in eastern Washington that total 436,843 acres (176,860 ha) [227]. There are 6,000 lakes, ponds, and reservoirs in Oregon including almost 1,800 named lakes and over 3,800 named reservoirs, all amounting to 270,641 acres (109,571 ha). Oregon has the deepest lake in the nation, Crater Lake, at 1,932 ft (589 m) [23].

Physical Setting. Continental glaciers melted and left depressions, where water accumulated and formed many lakes in the region. These kinds of lakes are predominantly found in Lower Puget Sound. Landslides that blocked natural valleys also allowed water to fill in behind them to form lakes, like Crescent Lake, Washington. The lakes in the Cascades and Olympic ranges were formed through glaciation and range in elevation from 2,500 to 5,000 ft (762 to 1,524 m). Beavers create many ponds and marshes in Oregon and Washington. Craters created by extinct volcanoes, like Battleground Lake, Washington, also formed lakes. Human-made reservoirs created by dams impound water that creates lakes behind them, like Bonneville Dam on the main stem of the Columbia River. In the lower Columbia Basin, many lakes formed in depressions and rocky coulees through the process of seepage from irrigation waters [226].

Structure. There are 4 distinct zones within this aquatic system: (1) the littoral zone at the edge of lakes is the most productive with diverse aquatic beds and emergent wetlands (part of Herbaceous Wetland's habitat); (2) the limnetic zone is deep open water, dominated by phytoplankton and freshwater fish, and extends down to the limits of light penetration; (3) the profundal zone below the limnetic zone, devoid of plant life and dominated with detritivores; (4) and the benthic zone reflecting bottom soil and sediments. Nutrients from the profundal zone are recycled back to upper layers by the spring and fall turnover of the water. Water in temperate climates stratifies because of the changes in water density. The uppermost layer, the epilimnion, is where water is warmer (less dense). Next, the metalimnion or thermocline, is a narrow layer that prevents the mixing of the upper and lowermost layers. The lowest layer is the hypolimnion, with colder and most dense waters. During the fall turnover, the cooled upper layers are mixed with other layers through wind action.

Natural Disturbance Regime. There are seasonal and decadal variations in the patterns of precipitation. In the Coast Range, there is usually 1 month of drought per year (usually July or August) and 2 months of drought once in a decade. The Willamette Valley and the Cascades experience 1 month with no rain every year and a 2-month dry period every third year. In eastern Oregon, dry periods last 2 or 3 months every year, with dry spells as long as 4-6 months occurring once every 4 years. Dry years, with <33 percent of normal precipitation occur once every 30 years along the coast, every 20 years in the Willamette Valley, every 30 years in the Cascades, and every 15 years in most of eastern Oregon [23].

Floods occur in Oregon and Washington every year. Flooding season west of the Cascades occurs from October through April, with more than half of the floods occurring during December and January. Floods are the result of precipitation and snow melts. Floods west of the Cascades are influenced by precipitation mostly and thus are short-lived, while east of the Cascades floods are caused by melting snow, and the amount of flooding depends on how fast the snow melts. High water levels frequently last up to 60 days. In 1984, heavy precipitation flooded Malheur and Harney lakes to the point where the 2 lakes were joined together for several years. The worst floods have resulted from cloudbursts caused by thunderstorms, like Heppner, Oregon’s 1903 flood. Other "flash floods" in the region were among the largest floods in the U.S. and occurred in the John Day Basin’s Meyers Canyon in 1956 and the Umatilla Basin’s Lane Canyon in 1965 [23].

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Sewage effluents caused eutrophication of Lake Washington in Seattle, where plants increased in biomass and caused decreased light transmission. The situation was corrected, however, before it became serious as a result of a campaign of public education, and timely cleanup of the lake [146]. Irrigation projects aimed at watering drier portions of the landscape may pose flooding dangers, as was the case with Soap Lake and Lake Leonore in eastern Washington. Finally, natural salinity of lakes can decrease as a result of irrigation withdrawal and can change the biota associated with them [92].

Rivers and Streams

Geographic Distribution. Streams and rivers are distributed statewide in Oregon and Washington, forming a continuous network connecting high mountain areas to lowlands and the Pacific coast. There are >12,000 named rivers and streams in Oregon, totaling 112,640 miles (181,238 km) [23] in length. Oregon’s longest stretch of river is the Columbia (309 miles [497 km]) that borders Oregon and Washington. The longest river in Oregon is the John Day (284 miles [457 km]) and the shortest river is the D River (440 ft [134 m]) that is the world’s second shortest river. Washington has more streams than any other state except Alaska. In Washington, the coastal region has 3,783 rivers and streams totaling 8,176 miles (13,155 km) [174]. The Puget Sound Region has 10,217 rivers and streams, which add to 16,600 miles (26,709 km) in length [223]. The rivers and streams range from cold, fast-moving high-elevation streams to warmer lowland valley rivers [223]. In all, there are 13,955 rivers and streams that add up to 24,774 miles (39,861 km) [174]. There are many more streams in Washington yet to be catalogued [174].

Physical Setting. Climate of the area’s coastal region is very wet. The northern region in Washington is volcanic and bordered to the east by the Olympic Mountain Range, on the north by the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and on the west by the Pacific Ocean. In contrast, the southern portion in Washington is characterized by low-lying, rolling hills [174]. The Puget Sound Region has a wet climate. Most of the streams entering Puget Sound have originated in glacier fields high in the mountains. Water from melting snowpacks and glaciers provide flow during the spring and winter. Annual rainfall in the lowlands ranges from 35 to 50 inches (89-127 cm), from 75 to 100 inches (191 to 254 cm) in the foothills, and from 100 to >200 inches (254 to 508 cm) in the mountains (mostly in the form of snow) [174].

Rivers and streams in southwestern Oregon are fed by rain and are located in an area composed of sheared bedrock and is thus an unstable terrain. Streams in that area have high suspended-sediment loads. Beds composed of gravel and sand are easily transported during floods. The western Cascades in Washington and Oregon are composed of volcanically derived rocks and are more stable. They have low sediment-transport rates and stable beds composed largely of cobbles and boulders, which move only during extreme events [81]. Velocities of river flow ranges from as little as 0.2 to 12 mph (0.3 to19.3 km/hr) while large streams have an average annual flow of 10 cubic feet (0.3 m^3) per second or greater [23, 169]. Rivers and streams in the Willamette Valley are warm, productive, turbid, and have high ionic strength. They are characterized by deep pools, and highly embedded stream bottoms with claypan and muddy substrates, and the greatest fish species diversity. High desert streams of the interior are similar to those of the Willamette Valley but are shallower, with fewer pools, and more runs, glides, cobbles, boulders, and sand. The Cascades and Blue mountains are similar in that they have more runs and glides and fewer pools, similar fish assemblages, and similar water quality [218].

Landscape setting. This habitat occurs throughout Washington and Oregon. Ponds, lakes, and reservoirs are typically adjacent to Herbaceous Wetlands, while rivers and streams typically adjoin the Westside Riparian Wetlands, Eastside Riparian Wetlands, Herbaceous Wetlands, or Bays and Estuaries habitats.

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat is called riverine and lacustrine in Anderson et al. [10], Cowardin et al. [53], Washington Gap Analysis Project [37], Mayer and Laudenslayer [150], and Wetzel [217]. However, this habitat is referred to as Open Water in the Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127].

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Removal of gravel results in reduction of spawning areas for anadromous fish. Overgrazing, and loss of vegetation caused by logging produces increased water temperatures and excessive siltation, harming the invertebrate communities such as that reported in the John Day River Basin, Oregon [146]. Incorrectly installed culverts may act as barriers to migrating fish and may contribute to erosion and siltation downstream [174]. Construction of dams is associated with changes in water quality, fish passage, competition between species, loss of spawning areas because of flooding, and declines in native fish populations [146]. Historically, the region's rivers contained more braided multi-channels. Flood control measures such as channel straightening, diking, or removal of streambed material along with urban and agriculture development have all contributed to a loss of oxbows, river meanders, and flood plains. Unauthorized or over-appropriated withdrawals of water from the natural drainages also have caused a loss of open water habitat that has been detrimental to fish and wildlife production, particularly in the summer [174].

Agricultural, industrial, and sewage runoff such as salts, sediments, fertilizers, pesticides, and bacteria harm aquatic species [146]. Sludge and heavy waste buildup in estuaries is harmful to fish and shellfish. Unregulated aerial spraying of pesticides over agricultural areas also poses a threat to aquatic and terrestrial life [174]. Direct loss of habitat and water quality occurs through irrigation [130]. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, after a study of water quality of the Willamette River, determined that up to 80 percent of water pollution enters the river from nonpoint sources and especially agricultural activity [23]. Very large floods (e.g., Oregon Flood of 1964) may change the channels permanently through the settling of large amounts of sediments from hillslopes, through debris flow, and through movement of large boulders, particularly in the montane areas. The width of the channel along the main middle fork of the Willamette increased over a period of 8 years. Clearcutting creates excessive intermittent runoff conditions and increases erosion and siltation of streams as well as diminishes shade, and therefore causes higher water temperatures, fewer terrestrial and aquatic food organisms, and increased predation. Landslides, which contributed to the widening of the channel, were a direct result of clearcutting. Clearcut logging can alter snow accumulation and increase the size of peak flows during times of snowmelt [197]. Clearcutting and vegetation removal affects the temperatures of streams, increasing them in the summer and decreasing in winter, especially in eastern parts of the Oregon and Washington [24]. Building of roads, especially those of poor quality, can be a major contributor to sedimentation in the streams [82].

Status and Trends. The principal trend has been in relationship to dam building or channelization for hydroelectric power, flood control, or irrigation purposes. As an example, in 1994, there were >900 dams in Washington alone. The dams vary according to size, primary purpose, and ownership (state, federal, private, local) [214]. The first dam and reservoir in Washington was the Monroe Street Dam and Reservoir, built in 1890 at Spokane Falls. Since then the engineering and equipment necessary for dam building developed substantially, culminating in such projects as the Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River [214]. In response to the damaging effects of dams on the indigenous biota and alteration and destruction of freshwater aquatic habitats, Oregon and Washington state governments questioned the benefits of dams, especially in light of the federal listing of several salmon species. There are now talks of possibly removing small dams, like the Savage Rapids Dam in Oregon, to removing large federal dams like those on the lower Snake River [23].

Herbaceous Wetlands
Rex C. Crawford, Jimmy Kagan, and Christopher B. Chappell

Geographic Distribution. Herbaceous wetlands are found throughout the world and are represented in Oregon and Washington wherever local hydrologic conditions promote their development. This habitat includes all those except bogs and those within Subalpine Parkland and Alpine.

Freshwater aquatic bed habitats are found throughout the Pacific Northwest, usually in isolated sites. They are more widespread in valley bottoms and high rainfall areas (e.g., Willamette Valley, Puget Trough, coastal terraces, coastal dunes), but are present in montane and arid climates as well. Hardstem bulrush-cattail-burred marshes occur in wet areas throughout Oregon and Washington. Large marshes are common in the lake basins of Klamath, Lake, and Harney counties, Oregon. Sedge meadows and montane meadows are common in the Blue and Ochoco mountains of central and northeastern Oregon, and in the valleys of the Olympic and Cascade Mountains and Okanogan Highlands. Extensive wet meadow habitats occur in Klamath, Deschutes, and western Lake Counties in Oregon.

Physical Setting. This habitat is found on permanently flooded sites that are usually associated with oxbow lakes, dune lakes, or potholes. Seasonally to semi-permanently flooded wetlands are found where standing freshwater is present through part of the growing season and the soils stay saturated throughout the season. Some sites are temporarily to seasonally flooded meadows and generally occur on clay, pluvial, or alluvial deposits within montane meadows, or along stream channels in shrubland or woodland riparian vegetation. In general, this habitat is flat, usually with stream or river channels or open water present. Elevation varies from sea level to 10,000 ft. (3,048 m), although infrequently above 6,000 ft (1,830 m).

Landscape Setting. Herbaceous wetlands are found in all terrestrial habitats except Subalpine Parkland, Alpine Grasslands, and Shrublands habitats. Herbaceous wetlands commonly form a pattern with Westside and Eastside Riparian-Wetlands and Montane Coniferous Wetlands habitats along stream corridors. These marshes and wetlands also occur in closed basins in a mosaic with open water by lakeshores or ponds. Extensive deflation plain wetlands have developed between Coastal Dunes and Beaches habitat and the Pacific Ocean. Herbaceous wetlands are found in a mosaic with alkali grasslands in the Desert Playa and Salt Scrub habitat.

Structure. The herbaceous wetland habitat is generally a mix of emergent herbaceous plants with a grass-like life form (graminoids). These meadows often occur with deep or shallow water habitats with floating or rooting aquatic forbs. Various wetland communities are found in mosaics or in nearly pure stands of single species. Herbaceous cover is open to dense. The habitat can be comprised of tule marshes >6.6 ft (2 m) tall or sedge meadows and wetlands <3.3 ft (1 m) tall. It can be a dense, rhizomatous sward or a tufted graminoid wetland. Graminoid wetland vegetation generally lacks many forbs, although the open extreme of this type contains a diverse forb component between widely spaced tall tufted grasses.

Composition. Various grasses or grass-like plants dominate or co-dominate these habitats. Cattails (Typha latifolia) occur widely, sometimes adjacent to open water with aquatic bed plants. Several bulrush species (Scirpus acutus, S. tabernaemontani, S. maritimus, S. americanus, S. nevadensis) occur in nearly pure stands or in mosaics with cattails or sedges (Carex spp.). Burreed (Sparganium angustifolium , S. eurycarpum) are the most important graminoids in areas with up to 3.3 ft (1m) of deep standing water. A variety of sedges characterize this habitat. Some sedges (Carex aquatilis, C. lasiocarpa, C. scopulorum, C. simulata, C. utriculata, C. vesicaria) tend to occur in cold to cool environments. Other sedges (C. aquatilis var. dives, C. angustata, C. interior, C. microptera, C. nebrascensis) tend to be at lower elevations in milder or warmer environments. Slough sedge (C. obnupta), and several rush species (Juncus falcatus, J. effusus, J. balticus) are characteristic of coastal dune wetlands that are included in this habitat. Several spike rush species (Eleocharis spp.) and rush species can be important. Common grasses that can be local dominants and indicators of this habitat are American sloughgrass (Beckmannia syzigachne), bluejoint reedgrass (Calamagrostis canadensis), mannagrass (Glyceria spp.) and tufted hairgrass (Deschampsia caespitosa). Important introduced grasses that increase and can dominate with disturbance in this wetland habitat include reed canary grass (Phalaris arundinacea), tall fescue (Festuca arundinacea) and Kentucky bluegrass (Poa pratensis).

Aquatic beds are part of this habitat and support a number of rooted aquatic plants, such as, yellow pond lily (Nuphar lutea) and unrooted, floating plants such as pondweeds (Potamogeton spp.), duckweed (Lemna minor), or water-meals (Wolffia spp.). Emergent herbaceous broadleaf plants, such as Pacific water parsley (Oenanthe sarmentosa), buckbean (Menyanthes trifoliata), water star-warts (Callitriche spp.), or bladderworts (Utricularia spp.) grow in permanent and semi-permanent standing water. Pacific silverweed (Argentina egedii) is common in coastal dune wetlands. Montane meadows occasionally are forb dominated with plants such as arrowleaf groundsel (Senecio triangularis) or ladyfern (Athyrium filix-femina). Climbing nightshade (Solanum dulcamara), purple loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria), and poison hemlock (Conium maculatum) are common non-native forbs in wetland habitats.

Shrubs or trees are not a common part of this herbaceous habitat although willow (Salix spp.) or other woody plants occasionally occur along margins, in patches or along streams running through these meadows.

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat is called palustrine emergent wetlands in Cowardin et al. [53]. Other references describe this habitat [43, 44, 57, 71, 131, 132, 138, 147, 219]. This habitat occurs in both lotic and lentic systems. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] that would represent this type are wet meadow, palustrine emergent, and National Wetland Inventory (NWI) palustrine shrubland.

Natural Disturbance Regime. This habitat is maintained through a variety of hydrologic regimes that limit or exclude invasion by large woody plants. Habitats are permanently flooded, semi-permanently flooded, or flooded seasonally and may remain saturated through most of the growing season. Most wetlands are resistant to fire and those that are dry enough to burn usually burn in the fall. Most plants are sprouting species and recover quickly. Beavers play an important role in creating ponds and other impoundments in this habitat. Trampling and grazing by large native mammals is a natural process that creates habitat patches and influences tree invasion and success.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. Herbaceous wetlands are often in a mosaic with shrub- or tree-dominated wetland habitat. Woody species can successfully invade emergent wetlands when this herbaceous habitat dries. Emergent wetland plants invade open-water habitat as soil substrate is exposed; e.g., aquatic sedge and Northwest Territory sedge (Carex utriculata) are pioneers following beaver dam breaks. As habitats flood, woody species decrease to patches on higher substrate (soil, organic matter, large woody debris) and emergent plants increase unless the flooding is permanent. Fire suppression can lead to woody species invasion in drier herbaceous wetland habitats; e.g., Willamette Valley wet prairies are invaded by Oregon ash (Fraxinus latifolia) with fire suppression.

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Direct alteration of hydrology (i.e., channeling, draining, damming) or indirect alteration (i.e., roading or removing vegetation on adjacent slopes) results in changes in amount and pattern of herbaceous wetland habitat. If the alteration is long term, wetland systems may reestablish to reflect new hydrology, e.g., cattail is an aggressive invader in roadside ditches. Severe livestock grazing and trampling decreases aquatic sedge, Northwest Territory sedge (Carex utriculata), bluejoint reedgrass, and tufted hairgrass. Native species, however, such as Nebraska sedge, Baltic and jointed rush (Juncus nodosus), marsh cinquefoil (Comarum palustris), and introduced species dandelion (Taraxacum officinale), Kentucky bluegrass, spreading bentgrass (Agrostis stolonifera), and fowl bluegrass (Poa palustris) generally increase with grazing.

Status and Trends. Nationally, herbaceous wetlands have declined and the Pacific Northwest is no exception. These wetlands receive regulatory protection at the national, state, and county level; still, herbaceous wetlands have been filled, drained, grazed, and farmed extensively in the lowlands of Oregon and Washington. Montane wetland habitats are less altered than lowland habitats even though they have undergone modification as well. A keystone species, the beaver, has been trapped to near extirpation in parts of the Pacific Northwest and its population has been regulated in others. Herbaceous wetlands have decreased along with the diminished influence of beavers on the landscape. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] concluded that herbaceous wetlands are susceptible to exotic, noxious plant invasions.

Montane Coniferous Wetlands
Christopher B. Chappell

Geographic Distribution. This habitat occurs in mountains throughout much of Washington and Oregon, except the Basin and Range of southeastern Oregon, the Klamath Mountains of southwestern Oregon, and the Coast Range of Oregon. This includes the Cascade Range, Olympic Mountains, Okanogan Highlands, Blue and Wallowa mountains.

Physical Setting. This habitat is typified as forested wetlands or floodplains with a persistent winter snow pack, ranging from moderately to very deep. The climate varies from moderately cool and wet to moderately dry and very cold. Mean annual precipitation ranges from about 35 to >200 inches (89 to >508 cm). Elevation is mid- to upper montane, as low as 2,000 ft (610 m) in northern Washington, to as high as 9,500 ft (2,896 m) in eastern Oregon. Topography is generally mountainous and includes everything from steep mountain slopes to nearly flat valley bottoms. Gleyed or mottled mineral soils, organic soils, or alluvial soils are typical. Subsurface water flow within the rooting zone is common on slopes with impermeable soil layers. Flooding regimes include saturated, seasonally flooded, and temporarily flooded. Seeps and springs are common in this habitat.

Landscape Setting. This habitat occurs along stream courses or as patches, typically small, within a matrix of Montane Mixed Conifer Forest, or less commonly, Eastside Mixed Conifer Forest or Lodgepole Pine Forest and Woodlands. It also can occur adjacent to other wetland habitats: Eastside Riparian-Wetlands, Westside Riparian-Wetlands, or Herbaceous Wetlands. The primary land uses are forestry and watershed protection.

Structure. This is a forest or woodland (>30 percent tree canopy cover) dominated by evergreen conifer trees. Deciduous broadleaf trees are occasionally co-dominant. The understory is dominated by shrubs (most often deciduous and relatively tall), forbs, or graminoids. The forb layer is usually well developed even where a shrub layer is dominant. Canopy structure includes single-storied canopies and complex multi-layered ones. Typical tree sizes range from small to very large. Large woody debris is often a prominent feature, although it can be lacking on less productive sites.

Composition. Indicator tree species for this habitat, any of which can be dominant or co-dominant, are Pacific silver fir (Abies amabilis), mountain hemlock (Tsuga mertensiana), and Alaska yellow-cedar (Chamaecyparis nootkatensis) on the westside, and Engelmann spruce (Picea engelmannii), subalpine fir (Abies lasiocarpa), lodgepole pine (Pinus contorta), western hemlock (T. heterophylla), or western redcedar (Thuja plicata) on the eastside. Lodgepole pine is prevalent only in wetlands of eastern Oregon. Western hemlock and redcedar are common associates with silver fir on the westside. They are diagnostic of this habitat on the east slope of the central Washington Cascades, and in the Okanogan Highlands, but are not diagnostic there. Douglas-fir (Pseudotsuga menziesii) and grand fir (Abies grandis) are sometimes prominent on the eastside. Quaking aspen (Populus tremuloides) and black cottonwood (P. balsamifera ssp. trichocarpa) are in certain instances important to co-dominant, mainly on the eastside.

Dominant or co-dominant shrubs include devil's-club (Oplopanax horridus), stink currant (Ribes bracteosum), black currant (R. hudsonianum), swamp gooseberry (R. lacustre), salmonberry (Rubus spectabilis), red-osier dogwood (Cornus sericea), Douglas' spirea (Spirea douglasii), common snowberry (Symphoricarpos albus), mountain alder (Alnus incana), Sitka alder (Alnus viridis ssp. sinuata), Cascade azalea (Rhododendron albiflorum), and glandular Labrador-tea (Ledum glandulosum). The dwarf shrub bog blueberry (Vaccinium uliginosum) is an occasional understory dominant. Shrubs more typical of adjacent uplands are sometimes co-dominant, especially big huckleberry (V. membranaceum), oval-leaf huckleberry (V. ovalifolium), grouseberry (V. scoparium), and fools huckleberry (Menziesia ferruginea).

Graminoids that may dominate the understory include bluejoint reedgrass (Calamagrostis canadensis), Holm's Rocky Mountain sedge (Carex scopulorum), widefruit sedge (C. angustata), and fewflower spikerush (Eleocharis quinquiflora). Some of the most abundant forbs and ferns are ladyfern (Athyrium filix-femina), western oakfern (Gymnocarpium dryopteris), field horsetail (Equisetum arvense), arrowleaf groundsel (Senecio triangularis), two-flowered marshmarigold (Caltha leptosepala ssp. howellii), false bugbane (Trautvetteria carolinensis), skunk-cabbage (Lysichiton americanus), twinflower (Linnaea borealis), western bunchberry (Cornus unalaschkensis), clasping-leaved twisted-stalk (Streptopus amplexifolius), singleleaf foamflower (Tiarella trifoliata var. unifoliata), and five-leaved bramble (Rubus pedatus).

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat includes nearly all of the wettest forests within the Abies amabilis and Tsuga mertensiana zones of western Washington and northwestern Oregon and most of the wet forests in the Tsuga heterophylla and Abies lasiocarpa zones of eastern Oregon and Washington [88]. On the eastside, they may extend down into the Abies grandis zone also. This habitat is not well represented by the Gap projects because of its relatively limited acreage and the difficulty of identification from satellite images. But in the Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] the vegetation types that include this type would be higher elevation palustrine forest, palustrine shrubland, and NWI palustrine emergent. These are primarily palustrine forested wetlands with a seasonally flooded, temporarily flooded, or saturated flooding regime [54]. They occur in both lotic and lentic systems. Other references describe this habitat [36, 57, 90, 101, 108, 111, 114, 115, 118, 123, 132, 221].

Natural Disturbance Regime. Flooding, debris flow, fire, and wind are the major natural disturbances. Many of these sites are seasonally or temporarily flooded. Floods vary greatly in frequency depending on fluvial position. Floods can deposit new sediments or create new surfaces for primary succession. Debris flows/torrents are major scouring events that reshape stream channels and riparian

surfaces, and create opportunities for primary succession and redistribution of woody debris. Fire is more prevalent east of the Cascade Crest. Fires are typically high in severity and can replace entire stands, as these tree species have low fire resistance. Although fires have not been studied specifically in these wetlands, fire frequency is probably low. These wetland areas are less likely to burn than surrounding uplands, and so may sometimes escape extensive burns as old forest refugia [1]. Shallow rooting and wet soils are conducive to windthrow, which is a common small-scale disturbance that influences forest patterns. Snow avalanches probably disturb portions of this habitat in the northwestern Cascades and Olympic Mountains. Fungal pathogens and insects also act as important small-scale natural disturbances.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. Succession has not been well studied in this habitat. Following disturbance, tall shrubs may dominate for some time, especially mountain alder, stink currant, salmonberry, willows (Salix spp.), or Sitka alder. Quaking aspen and black cottonwood in these habitats probably regenerate primarily after floods or fires, and decrease in importance as succession progresses. Lodgepole pine is often associated with post-fire conditions in eastern Oregon [131], although in some wetlands it can be an edaphic climax species. Pacific silver fir, subalpine fir, or Engelmann spruce would be expected to increase in importance with time since the last major disturbance. Western hemlock, western redcedar, and Alaska yellow-cedar typically maintain co-dominance as stand development progresses because of the frequency of small-scale disturbances and the longevity of these species. Tree size, large woody debris, and canopy layer complexity all increase for at least a few hundred years after fire or other major disturbance.

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Roads and clearcut logging practices can increase the frequency of landslides and resultant debris flows/torrents, as well as sediment loads in streams [198, 199, 229]. This in turn alters hydrologic patterns and the composition and structure of montane riparian habitats. Logging typically reduces large woody debris and canopy structural complexity. Timber harvest on some sites can cause the water table to rise and subsequently prevent trees from establishing [221]. Wind disturbance can be greatly increased by timber harvest in or adjacent to this habitat.

Status and Trends. This habitat is naturally limited in its extent and has probably declined little in area over time. Portions of this habitat have been degraded by the effects of logging, either directly on site or through geohydrologic modifications. This type is probably relatively stable in extent and condition, although it may be locally declining in condition because of logging and road building. Five of 32 plant associations representing this habitat listed in the National Vegetation Classification are considered imperiled or critically imperiled [10].

Eastside (Interior) Riparian-Wetlands
Rex C. Crawford and Jimmy Kagan

Geographic Distribution. Riparian and wetland habitats dominated by woody plants are found throughout eastern Oregon and eastern Washington.

Mountain alder-willow riparian shrublands are major habitats in the forested zones of eastern Oregon and eastern Washington. Eastside lowland willow and other riparian shrublands are the major riparian types throughout eastern Oregon and Washington at lower elevations. Black cottonwood riparian habitats occur throughout eastern Oregon and Washington, at low to middle elevations. White alder riparian habitats are restricted to perennial streams at low elevations, in drier climatic zones in Hells Canyon at the border of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, in the Malheur River drainage and in western Klickitat and south central Yakima counties, Washington. Quaking aspen wetlands and riparian habitats are widespread but rarely a major component throughout eastern Washington and Oregon. Ponderosa pine-Douglas-fir riparian habitat occurs only around the periphery of the Columbia Basin in Washington and up into lower montane forests.

Physical Setting. Riparian habitats appear along perennial and intermittent rivers and streams. This habitat also appears in impounded wetlands and along lakes and ponds. Their associated streams flow along low to high gradients. The riparian and wetland forests are usually in fairly narrow bands along the moving water that follows a corridor along montane or valley streams. The most typical stand is limited to 100-200 ft (31-61 m) from streams. Riparian forests also appear on sites subject to temporary flooding during spring runoff. Irrigation of streamsides and toeslopes provides more water than precipitation and is important in the development of this habitat, particularly in drier climatic regions. Hydrogeomorphic surfaces along streams supporting this habitat have seasonally to temporarily flooded hydrologic regimes. Eastside riparian and wetland habitats are found from 100- 9,500 ft (31-2,896 m) in elevation.

Landscape Setting. Eastside riparian habitats occur along streams, seeps, and lakes within the Eastside Mixed Conifer Forest, Ponderosa Pine Forest and Woodlands, Western Juniper and Mountain Mahogany Woodlands, and part of the Shrubsteppe habitat. This habitat may be described as occupying warm montane and adjacent valley and plain riparian environments.

Structure. The Eastside riparian and wetland habitat contains shrublands, woodlands, and forest communities. Stands are closed to open canopies and often multi-layered. A typical riparian habitat would be a mosaic of forest, woodland, and shrubland patches along a stream course. The tree layer can be dominated by broadleaf, conifer, or mixed canopies. Tall shrub layers, with and without trees, are deciduous and often nearly completely closed thickets. These woody riparian habitats have an undergrowth of low shrubs or dense patches of grasses, sedges, or forbs. Tall shrub communities (20-98 ft [6-30 m], occasionally tall enough to be considered woodlands or forests) can be interspersed with sedge meadows or moist, forb-rich grasslands. Intermittently flooded riparian habitat has ground cover composed of steppe grasses and forbs. Rocks and boulders may be a prominent feature in this habitat.

Composition. Black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera ssp. trichocarpa*), quaking aspen (*P. tremuloides*), white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*), peachleaf willow (*Salix amygdaloides*) and, in northeast Washington, paper birch (*Betula papyrifera*) are dominant and characteristic tall deciduous trees. Water birch (*B. occidentalis*), shining willow (*Salix lucida ssp. caudata*) and, rarely, mountain alder (*Alnus incana*) are co-dominant to dominant mid-size deciduous trees. Each can be the sole dominant in stands. Conifers can occur in this habitat, rarely in abundance, more often as individual trees. The exception is ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) and Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) that characterize a conifer-riparian habitat in portions of the shrubsteppe zones.

A wide variety of shrubs are found in association with forest/woodland versions of this habitat. Red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), mountain alder, gooseberry (*Ribes spp.*), rose (*Rosa spp.*), common snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*) and Drummonds willow (*Salix drummondii*) are important shrubs in this habitat. Bog birch (*B. nana*) and Douglas spiraea (*Spiraea douglasii*) can occur in wetter stands. Red-osier dogwood and common snowberry are shade-tolerant and dominate stand interiors, while these and other shrubs occur along forest or woodland edges and openings. Mountain alder is frequently a prominent shrub, especially at middle elevations. Tall shrubs (or small trees) often growing under or with white alder include chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), water birch, shining willow, and netleaf hackberry (*Celtis reticulata*).

Shrub-dominated communities contain most of the species associated with tree communities. Willow species (*Salix bebbiana*, *S. boothii*, *S. exigua*, S geyeriana, or S. lemmonii) dominate many sites. Mountain alder can be dominant and is at least codominant at many sites. Chokecherry, water birch, serviceberry (Amelanchier alnifolia), black hawthorn (Crataegus douglasii), and red-osier dogwood can also be codominant to dominant. Shorter shrubs, Woods rose, spiraea, snowberry and gooseberry are usually present in the undergrowth.

The herb layer is highly variable and is composed of an assortment of graminoids and broadleaf herbs. Native grasses (Calamagrostis canadensis, Elymus glaucus, Glyceria spp., and Agrostis spp.) and sedges (Carex aquatilis, C. angustata, C. lanuginosa, C. lasiocarpa, C. nebrascensis, C. microptera, and C. utriculata) are significant in many habitats. Kentucky bluegrass (Poa pratensis) can be abundant where heavily grazed in the past. Other weedy grasses, such as orchard grass (Dactylis glomerata), reed canarygrass (Phalaris arundinacea), timothy (Phleum pratense), bluegrass (Poa bulbosa, P. compressa), and tall fescue (Festuca arundinacea) often dominate disturbed areas. A short list of the great variety of forbs that grow in this habitat includes Columbian monkshood (Aconitum columbianum), alpine leafybract aster (Aster foliaceus), ladyfern (Athyrium filix-femina), field horsetail (Equisetum arvense), cow parsnip (Heracleum maximum), skunkcabbage (Lysichiton americanus), arrowleaf groundsel (Senecio triangularis), stinging nettle (Urtica dioica), California false hellebore (Veratrum californicum), American speedwell (Veronica americana), and pioneer violet (Viola glabella).

Other Classifications and Key References. This habitat is called Palustrine scrub-shrub and forest in Cowardin et al. [53]. Other references describe this habitat [44, 57, 60, 131, 132, 147, 156]. This habitat occurs in both lotic and lentic systems. The Oregon Gap II Project [126] and Oregon Vegetation Landscape-Level Cover Types [127] that would represent this type are eastside cottonwood riparian gallery, palustrine forest, palustrine shrubland, and National Wetland Inventory (NWI) palustrine emergent.

Natural Disturbance Regime. This habitat is tightly associated with stream dynamics and hydrology. Flood cycles occur within 20-30 years in most riparian shrublands although flood regimes vary among stream types. Fires recur typically every 25-50 years but fire can be nearly absent in colder regions or on topographically protected streams. Rafted ice and logs in freshets may cause considerable damage to tree boles in mountain habitats. Beavers crop younger cottonwood and willows and frequently dam side channels in these stands. These forests and woodlands require various flooding regimes and specific substrate conditions for reestablishment. Grazing and trampling is a major influence in altering structure, composition, and function of this habitat; some portions are very sensitive to heavy grazing.

Succession and Stand Dynamics. Riparian vegetation undergoes "typical" stand development that is strongly controlled by the site’s initial conditions following flooding and shifts in hydrology. The initial condition of any hydrogeomorphic surface is a sum of the plants that survived the disturbance, plants that can get to the site, and the amount of unoccupied habitat available for invasions. Subsequent or repeated floods or other influences on the initial vegetation select species that can survive or grow in particular life forms. A typical woody riparian habitat dynamic is the invasion of woody and herbaceous plants onto a new alluvial bar away from the main channel. If the bar is not scoured in 20 years, a tall shrub and small deciduous tree stand will develop. Approximately 30 years without disturbance or change in hydrology will allow trees to overtop shrubs and form woodland. Another 50 years without disturbance will allow conifers to invade and in another 50 years a mixed hardwood-conifer stand will develop. Many deciduous tall shrubs and trees cannot be invaded by conifers. Each stage can be reinitiated, held in place, or shunted into different vegetation by changes in stream or wetland hydrology, fire, grazing, or an interaction of those factors.

Effects of Management and Anthropogenic Impacts. Management effects on woody riparian vegetation can be obvious, e.g., removal of vegetation by dam construction, roads, logging, or they can be subtle, e.g., removing beavers from a watershed, removing large woody debris, or construction of a weir dam for fish habitat. In general, excessive livestock or native ungulate use leads to less woody cover and an increase in sod-forming grasses particularly on fine-textured soils. Undesirable forb species, such as stinging nettle and horsetail, increase with livestock use.

Status and Trends. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] concluded that the Cottonwood-Willow cover type covers significantly less in area now than before 1900 in the Inland Pacific Northwest. The authors concluded that although riparian shrubland was a minor part of the landscape, occupying 2 percent, they estimated it to have declined to 0.5 percent of the landscape. Approximately 40 percent of riparian shrublands occurred above 3,280 ft (1,000 m) in elevation pre-1900; now nearly 80 percent is found above that elevation. This change reflects losses to agricultural development, roading, dams and other flood-control activities. The current riparian shrublands contain many exotic plant species and generally are less productive than historically. Quigley and Arbelbide [181] found that riparian woodland was always rare and the change in extent from the past is substantial.

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