

Idaho Fish & Wildlife Office Landscape Conservation

Blue Mountains Priority Landscape

The Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office (IFWO) identified the Blue Mountains in west central Idaho as one of its Priority Landscapes for prioritizing conservation efforts. This landscape contains natural resources that are important to state, Tribal, and federal managers as well as numerous stakeholders. Its vast undeveloped mountains, forests, and grasslands provide a corridor from the greater Rocky Mountain ecosystem to the Willowa and Cascade ranges of California and Oregon, while the Snake and Salmon Rivers provide a critical conduit for aquatic migratory species such as salmon, lamprey, and sturgeon. These connections help ensure ecological and genetic connectivity between these western regions, helping to ensure their sustainability and resilience in a changing world. Many of the species and habitats are protected and/or provide important revenues to local and regional economies, and contribute to Idaho's iconic and wild mystique. These are among the reasons this landscape was identified by the IFWO as an important landscape worthy of elevated conservation practice, with the intent to ensure these values are not lost as climate and land-use patterns change.

The Blue Mountains Priority Landscape covers an estimated 1,600 square miles in west central Idaho, accounting for 2% of the state's total area. It includes the Hells Canyon Wilderness Area (Forest Service), numerous Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (Bureau of Land Management), Craig Mountain Wildlife Management Area (Idaho Department of Fish and Game), and



The Blue Mountains Priority Landscape, located in west-central Idaho, contains habitats from canyon grasslands to alpine summits. Its major river drainages connect salmon and other important fisheries to the central Idaho Mountains along an important wilderness corridor.

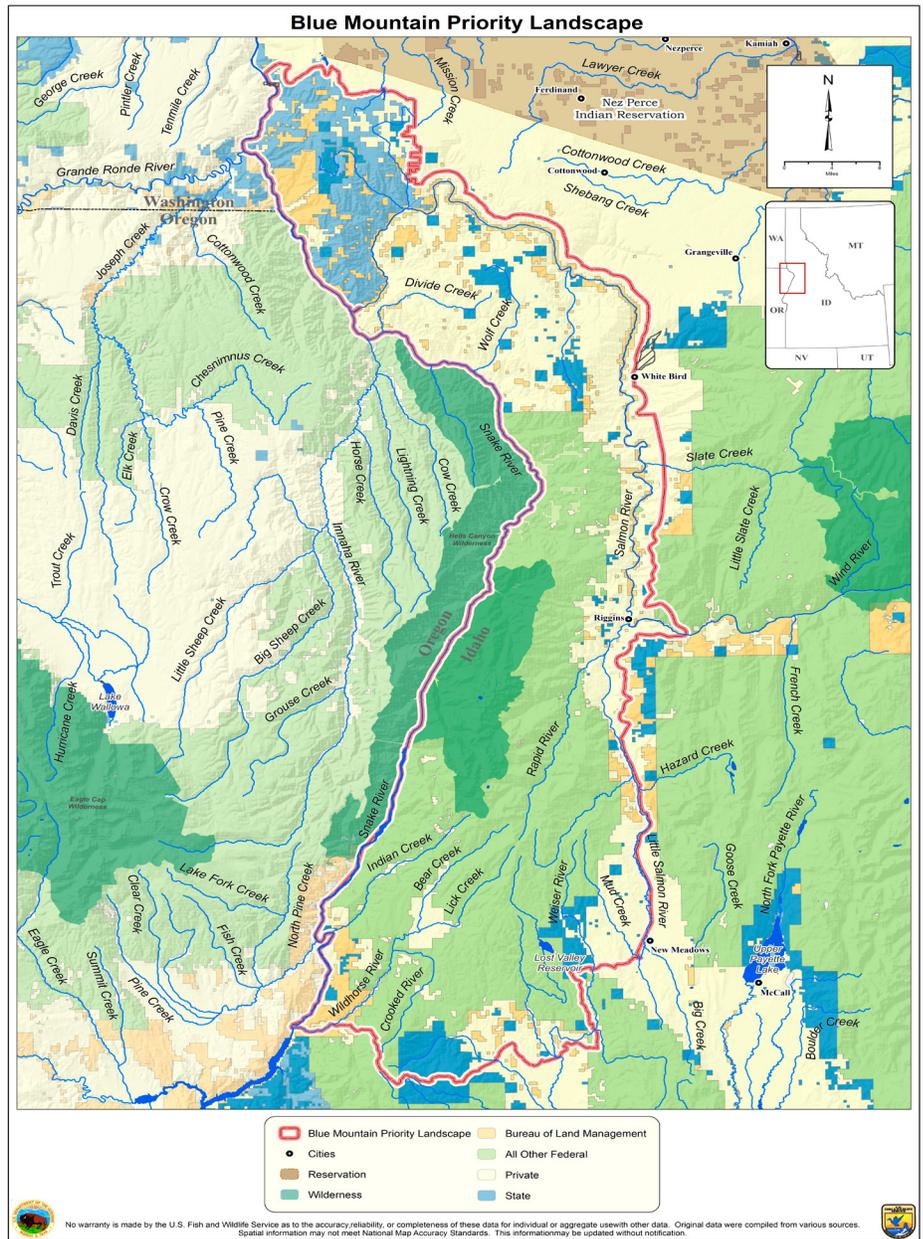


Listed as federally threatened, the perennial native plant MacFarlane's four-o'clock is restricted to canyon grassland habitats within the Blue Mountains Priority Landscape.

large areas of privately held lands. The landscape hosts a suite of recreational opportunities including hunting, angling, backpacking, and whitewater rafting.

The IFWO has identified three broad conservation targets: aquatic salmonid habitats; canyon grasslands; and ponderosa pine forest, each of which are accompanied with a Landscape Strategy designed to protect and restore these habitats and support its native species. The three strategies also identify 11 Priority Species, many of which are protected under the Endangered Species Act or other state or federal laws, and/or serve as good indicators of habitat health.

While IFWO's Landscape Strategies identify important conservation targets and needs in the Blue Mountains, these strategies are intended as a starting point for initiating dialog and planning with resource professionals already engaged in management on this landscape. Priority Species and Conservation Actions identified in each of three Landscape Strategies will not be inclusive, or final, of all conservation needs identified by our partners. Along with the conservation priorities of other partners, IFWO's Blue Mountains Landscape Strategies will provide an opportunity to collaboratively identify the most productive conservation actions and encourage sharing to achieve their successful implementation.



The Blue Mountains Priority Landscape includes large areas of Forest Service, state of Idaho, and private lands, as well as smaller protected lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The Snake and Salmon Rivers and their tributaries in this landscape support and connect important anadromous and resident fisheries.

Priority Species identified in Blue Mountains Priority Landscape:

- Bull trout
- Flammulated owl
- MacFarlane's four-o'clock
- Mountain quail
- Northern goshawk
- Northern Idaho ground squirrel

- Rocky Mountain tailed frog
- Spalding's catchfly
- Westslope cutthroat trout
- White-headed woodpecker
- Willow flycatcher

For more information contact:

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