

Lynx Habitat Images

Examples from National Forests in the Southern Rockies

Background

Habitat images presented in this guide are examples of potential snowshoe hare and lynx habitat taken on some Southern Rockies National Forests. They are provided as a courtesy and without official endorsement, since interpretations may differ as to the quality of snowshoe hare/lynx habitat depicted in the images, especially without quantitative field measurements and data associated with the images. Nonetheless, these examples may be helpful in planning discussions for qualitative and quantitative interpretations, as well as for ‘training the eye’ of field-going personnel for field reconnaissance.

Ideally these examples will stimulate and expand interest in gathering and consolidating additional hare/lynx habitat images from throughout the National Forests and across different forest types and conditions. Images associated with field vegetation and habitat measurements and other local features are particularly valuable.¹ Additional suitable images will be added to the Implementation Guide over time, which will be periodically updated as knowledge and information about hare/lynx habitat needs grow. Forest personnel are encouraged to submit representative images for supplementing this guide, and to continue to capture habitat images as they work in the field.

Lynx Den Sites

The Colorado Division of Wildlife’s annual report for 2006 depicting images of actual den sites used by lynx in Colorado.

Medicine Bow-Routt NFs

The photos provided by the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest were taken for either two purposes 1) during field verification of lynx habitat for vegetation management projects following local protocol (2000-present), or 2) during the snowshoe habitat relationship study conducted on the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest (2001-2006). Both methods have quantitative measurements and/or a qualitative assessment that was used to evaluate lynx habitat. Photographs were taken either by Melissa Dressen, Jason Szyba, David Topolewski, or Robert Skorkowsky.

¹ Two useful references for planning photo point monitoring are:

Popp, John B.; Lundquist, John E. 2006. *Photo series for quantifying forest residues in managed lands of the Medicine Bow National Forest. Gen. Tech. Rep. RMRS-GTR-172. Fort Collins, CO: United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station. 105 p (available online at http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs/rmrs_gtr172.html)*

Hall, Frederick C. 2001. *Photo point monitoring handbook: part A—field procedures. Gen. Tech. Rep. PNW-GTR-526. Portland, OR: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station. 48 p. 2 parts (available online at <http://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/gtr526/>)*

White River NF

The photos provided by the White River National Forest were taken for a winter inventory and monitoring project (winter 2008-present). This inventory and monitoring project is being conducted on all major ski areas located on the White River National Forest. Overall goals of this project are to quantify and qualify the spatial distribution of available habitat connectivity, winter foraging habitat, and security habitat within each Landscape Analysis Unit (LAU) and between LAUs through linkage areas. To assess the quality of suitable habitat, horizontal cover measurements were taken at randomly selected polygons. These photos illustrate specific sample points on two different ski areas. The photos have qualitative measurements for the amount of horizontal cover present during the winter. Photographs were taken by Marcus Swan, Carol Burlingame, and Robert Rodriguez.

Arapaho-Roosevelt NFs

The photos were taken on a June 22, 2000 field trip with Jan Burke and Ken Emmert (Sulphur District Timber Staff), Doreen Sumerlin (Sulphur District Wildlife Biologist) and Gary Patton (FWS) to observe and discuss the attributes of regenerating coniferous stands and what conditions currently provided suitable conditions for snowshoe hares. Observations (qualitative) of cover, available forage and pellet presence were used to determine suitability. Cover boards were not used so dense horizontal cover estimates are not available.