

Most of the low slopes are dominated by evergreen scrub or chaparral. Various oaks are also common. Soils consist of Alfisols at lower elevations and Entisols in the narrow valleys and floodplains.

The Grassland Province is characterized by a broad, nearly level valley edged by sloping alluvial fans and foothills. Elevations range from sea level to 500 feet. Winters receive most of the rainfall while summers are typically hot and dry. Annual rainfall is approximately 6 inches within the valley. Annual temperatures average between 55° F - 60° F. Historically, the Central Valley was once dominated by bunch grasses; in particular, needlegrass. Presently, introduced annual grasses (i.e., avens, brome, fescue and barley) comprise these grassland areas. Cattail and hardstem bulrush dominate the natural as well as managed seasonally flooded marshes. Along the river floodplains there is greasewood, picklewood, saltgrass and shadscale. Entisols (valley floor) and Alfisols (low foothills) are the dominant soils in the Grasslands Province.

III. BIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS:

- A. Riverine System -- Lower perennial, upper perennial and intermittent subsystems are present in the Riverine System of the study area. The Sacramento River is the major lower perennial river (R2UBH). The river provides valuable riparian habitat for wildlife; as well as a water supply for natural and man-made irrigation systems throughout the Sacramento Valley. Irrigation canals and ditches are labelled R2UBKHx or R4SBKCx depending on topographic information.

In the foothills, intermittent (R4SBA or C) and upper perennial subsystems (R3UBH) dominate.

- B. Lacustrine System -- Lacustrine areas, open-water bodies greater than 20 acres, include both the limnetic and littoral subsystems. Oroville reservoir is a deepwater lacustrine system (L1UBHh). The reservoir, located in the foothills, empties down to the valley into two shallow lacustrine water bodies (L2UBHh): the Tormalito Forebay and Afterbay. These shallow water bodies are used to warm the water temperature which in turn can be used for irrigation of rice fields. Nearly 20 percent of California's rice acreage is found in this area.

- C. Palustrine System -- Forested, scrub shrub, emergent, aquatic bed, unconsolidated shore and unconsolidated bottom are all classes which form the Palustrine System.

Naturally occurring ponds, less than 20 acres, are identified as PUBH. Retention ponds or borrow pits are labelled PUBKx. Within the foothills, impounded water bodies will be delineated as PUBFh or Hh.

Unconsolidated shore is restricted to areas which indicate water still remaining but only as deep pockets. In man-made areas, e.g., retention ponds, they will be labelled PUSKx. Naturally occurring alkali flats are delineated PUSA or C.

Aquatic beds are commonly found within drainage ditches or water managed areas (PABKFx). Species include water lilies and duckweed. Emergents constitute the majority of wetlands, particularly within the managed areas. They may also be found in river channels, meadows and vernal pools. Vernal pools are more prevalent in the eastern section of the study area. They are labelled PEMA or C. Most of the managed emergents are controlled on a seasonal basis (PEMKCh or PEMKCx). Species include: saltgrass (Distichlis spicata), rush (Juncus spp.), rabbitsfoot grass (Polypogon monspeliensis), hardstem bulrush (Scirpus acutus), alkali sacaton (Sporobolus airoides), swamp timothy (Heleochloa schoenoides), cattails (Typha spp.), alkali heath (Frankenia grandifolia), spike rush (Eleocharis spp.), sprangletop (Leptochloa fascicularis), et. al.

Also semipermanently flooded (PEMKFh) and temporarily flooded (PEMKAh) emergents are found in these areas. They are comprised of one or more of the species above.

Scrub shrub communities are found along streams or in meadows (PSSA or C). Species include: willow (Salix spp.) or fremont cottonwood (Populus fremontii). Red alder may be prevalent in the spring fed meadows.

Riparian habitats are comprised of forested vegetation. In the natural environment they are labelled PFOA or C. Within managed areas they are delineated as PFOKAh or Ch.

IV. IMAGERY:

The color infrared photography was taken from the fall of 1983 to the fall of 1984. Overall, the quality is good to excellent.

V. SUMMARY:

Soil information, in the form of county soil surveys, was limited at the time the photography was delineated.

Wetland/upland signatures were difficult to distinguish in a few areas due to extensive manipulations by man to the natural wetlands.

Overall, the good quality of photography along with the close use of collateral data made photointerpretation of the study areas as accurate as possible.