National Wetlands Inventory

Notes to Users

Ft. Sumner

1:250,000 Scale Map

DRAFT

USER NOTES
NATIONAL WETLANDS INVENTORY
FT. SUMNER NE, SE, NW, SW

Map Preparation:

The wetlands classifications that appear on the Ft. Sumner National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) map are in accordance with Cowardin et al. (1977). The delineations were produced through stereoscopic interpretation of 1:58,000 scale color infrared photography taken from June, 1983 to June, 1984.

Field checks were made in December, 1985 to correlate photo signatures with qualifying descriptions of the field conditions in order to achieve consistency.

The user of the map is cautioned that, due to the limitation of mapping, primarily through aerial photo interpretation, a small percentage of wetlands may have gone unidentified. Changes in the landscape could have occurred since the time of photography, therefore some discrepancies between the map and current field conditions may exist. Any discrepancies that are encountered in the use of this map shuld be brought to the attention of Warren Hagenbuck, Regional Wetlands Coordinator; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 2, P.O. Box 1306, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87103.

Geography:

The area covered by the Ft. Sumner 1:250,000 scale base map is in east central New Mexico. It consists of two ecoregions defined by Bailey's Ecoregions of the United States (1980).

The area west of the Pecos River, Bailey defines as the Colorado Plateau Province. Topographically, this province consists of table lands of moderate relief with widely spaced, narrow stream valleys. The altitude ranges from 3,900 ft. above mean sea level at the Pecos River to 8,615 ft. at Gallinas Peak.

The area east of the Pecos is within the Great-Plains-Shortgrass Prairie Province (Bailey, Robert G.). Land forms consist of flat plains with valleys, canyons, mesas and buttes.

The Pecos River is the only major waterway within the work area. It runs north to south and is controlled by several dams. A network of tributaries and arroyos feed into the Pecos containing spring water and run off from higher elevations.

Running north to south through the center of the work area is a Karst region consisting of a combination of small dunes and depressions, the depressions consisting of limy, alkali soil.

To the southwest is the Cibola National Forest which contains the highest elevations within the Ft. Sumner base map.

Directly north of the mountains is an area of intermittently flooded salt lakes the largest being Laguna del Perro.

The land is primarily used for grazing livestock. With the exception of areas close to or in the Pecos River floodplain, this land is generally not used for commercial agriculture.

Climate:

The winters are cold, due to the generally high elevation. The summers are characterized by hot days and cold nights. Average annual temperature is between 40° and 55°F.

Summer rains come from thunder storms, but light showers occur in winter. Average annual precipitation is 10 to 20 inches.

Wetland Communities:

The most diverse and dynamic wetland community is the Pecos River. It is diked and controlled just north of the work area at the Santa Rosa Dam, and again at the Fort Sumner Dam. The flow is regulated according to water rights bought downstream.

The area immediately surrounding Santa Rosa, has a large concentration of springs and temporarily flooded wetlands, due to the local high water table. Common species here, and in other spring-fed locations within the map area are reed grass (Phragmites sp.), saltgrass (Distichlis spicata), rushes (Jurcus sp.), Giant Sacaton (Sporobolus sp.), bulrush (Scirpus sp.), cattail (Typha sp.), and sedges (Carex sp.). In the spring-fed Santa Rosa area, excess water after heavy rains feed into the Pecos.

The Pecos River's main channel consists of an unvegetated substrate of sand. Salt Cedar (Tamarix gallica), and occasionally cottonwood (Populus sp.) define the external boundary of the floodplain, with salt cedar clearly being the dominant vegetation. Saltgrass, smartweed (Polygonum sp.), cocklebur (Xanthium sp.) and common reed are all common emergent vegetaton found within the temporarily flooded region of the floodplain.

Common drawdown species present behind the dam at Ft. Sumner are cocklebur (Xanthium sp.) and smartweed (Polygonum sp.).

There are several playa lakes within the work area. They will generally be classified within the Palustrine system due to the presence of emergent vegetation. Common emergent species include saltgrass, smartweed, wheat grass (Agropyron sp.) and spikerush (Eleocharis sp.).

By far, the most common palustrine wetlands are the impounded arroyos. These impoundments provide water for the numerous cattle found in the area. These impoundments will be classified as temporarily or intermittently flooded (PUSAh, PUSJh). These appear quite often with temporarily or intermittently flooded emergents upstream, behind the impounded water. Occasionally, these impoundments no longer have standing water but are covered with emergent growth.

The Salt Lakes to the west support no vegetation due to their high alkalinity and salinity. They are however flooded, usually temporarily or seasonally.

NWI CODE	NWI DESCRIPTION	COMMON DESCRIPTION	CHARACTERISTIC VEGETATION AND PHYSIOGRAPHIC FEATURES
R4SB	Riverine, Intermittent, Streambed	Creek, Streambed	Unvegetated. Sand to Cobble-Gravel
R2UB	Riverine, Lower Perennial	River Unconsolidated Bottom	Unvegetated. Mud to Sand, Cobble-Gravel
R2US	Riverine Lower Perennial. Unconsolidated shore	River Flat	Unvegetated. Sand to Cobble-Gravel
L1UB	Lacustrine Limnetic Unconsolidated Bottom	Open Water Lake	Unvegetated. Sand to Mud
L2UB	Lacustrine Littoral Unconsolidated Bottom	Open Water Shallow Lake	Unvegetated Sand to Mud
L2US	Lacustrine Littoral Unconsolidated Shore	Lake Shore Salt Flat	Unvegetated. Sand to Cobble-Gravel
L1AB	Lacustrine Limnetic Aquatic Bed	Pond Weeds, Water Weeds	Duckweed (Lemna sp.)
PUB	Palustrine Unconsolidated Bottom	Open water, Pond	Unvegetated. Sand to Mud
PAB	Palustrine Aquatic Bed	Pond Weeds, Water Weeds	Duckweed (Lemna sp.)
PUS	Palustrine Unconsolidated Shore	Intermittent Pond	Unvegetated. Sand to Cobble-Gravel

NWI CODE	NWI DESCRIPTION	COMMON DESCRIPTION	CHARACTERISTIC VEGETATION AND PHYSIOGRAPHIC FEATURES
PEM1	Palustrine Persistent Emergents	Marsh or Meadow	Cattail (Typha sp.) Reedgrass (Phragmities sp.) Sedges (Carex sp.) Bulrush (Scirpus sp.) Rush (Juncus sp.) Spikerush (Eleocharis sp.) Cocklebur (Xanthium sp.) Salt Grass (Distichlis spicata) Wheatgrass (Agropyron sp.) Giant Sacaton (Sporobolus sp.)
PSS2	Palustrine Scrub Shrub Needle Leaved Deciduous	Shrub Wetland	Salt Cedar (Tamarix gallica)
PFO1	Palustrine Forested Broadleaved Deciduous	Forested Wetland	Cottonwood (Populus sp.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The purpose of this report is to provide general information about wetland classifications found within the area covered by the Base Map. There has been no attempt to describe all wetlands occurring in the area nor provide complete faunal and floral lists of those wetlands discussed. The references listed below refer to literature cited in the text of this report.

Cowardin, L.M., V. Carter, F.C. Golet, and E.T. LaRoe. 1977. Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States (an operational draft). USDI. Fish and Wildlife Serv. Wash., D.C. 100p.

Bailey, R.G. 1978. Description of the Ecoregions of the United States. USDA For. Serv., Intermt. Reg., Ogden, UT. 77p.

NWI#38