

NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY

NOTES TO USERS

Los Angeles NW

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of Notes to Users is to provide general information regarding the production of National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps and wetlands found within a relatively similar geographic area. Notes to Users are not intended to include descriptions of all wetlands found in the area nor provide complete plant species information.

2. AREA COVERED

The area covered is defined by Cuyama U.S.G.S. intermediate scale maps (see attached index maps). According to Bailey's ecoregions, the area is in the Humid Temperate Domain, Mediterranean Division, California Chaparral Province.

The climate is characterized by hot, dry summers and rainy, mild winters. Precipitation ranges from 12 to 40 inches (300 to 1,000 mm.) evenly distributed through fall, winter, and spring; precipitation increases with elevation. Most of this is rain; the little snow that falls in winter melts quickly. Frost and short periods of freezing weather occur occasionally in the winter. Temperatures average 32° to 60° F. (0° to 15° C.) in the mountains, always decreasing at progressively higher altitudes.

The montane vegetation of this region consists of species having thick, hard, evergreen leaves. One climax, dominated by trees, is called sclerophyll forest. The other, called chaparral, is a shrub climax. These two climaxes appear in alternating patches in almost any part of the region, but chaparral occupies the greater area. The forest consistently appears on north-facing slopes and the moister sites, chaparral on south-facing slopes and drier sites.

Valleys have sagebrush and grassland communities. A riparian forest, containing many broadleaf species, grows along streams.

The pattern of Alfisols, Entisols, and Mollisols is complex in this mostly mountainous region.

3. MAP PREPARATION

Wetland classification for the NWI maps is in accordance with "Classification of Wetlands and Deep-Water Habitats of the United States (An Operational Draft)," Cowardin, et al, 1977.^{1/}

Wetland classification and delineations were produced by air photointerpretation of high level aerial photography. The following aerial photography was used for wetlands photointerpretation:

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Film</u>	<u>Date</u>
1:80,000	Black and White	6/76, 5/76
1:130,000	Color infrared	11/73

Limited field reconnaissance was conducted in December of 1978.

Stereoscopically reviewed aerial photographs had wetland boundaries and labels delineated on the photographs. Delineations were enlarged to a scale of 1:24,000 using a zoom-transfer scope and fitted to USGS 7 1/2 minute topographic maps. The 1:100,000 scale wetland maps were prepared from the 7 1/2 minute series. Large scale NWI wetland maps (1:24,000 scale) are available for the USGS 7 1/2 minute topographic sheets indicated on the attached index map.

The Project Officer for production of the wetland maps was Dennis Peters, Regional Wetlands Coordinator, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1, Lloyd 500 Building, 500 NE Multnomah Street, Portland, Oregon 97232, telephone (503) 231-6154. Aerial photo interpretation was completed by Area Information Systems (AIS), Crestline, California. Maps were prepared by Martel Laboratories, Inc., and the NWI National Team in St. Petersburg, Florida.

4. USER CAUTION

The map documents were prepared primarily by stereoscopic analysis of high altitude aerial photographs. Wetlands were

^{1/}The classification system was published in 1979: Cowardin, Lewis M., Virginia Carter, Francis C. Golet, and Edward T. LaRoe. 1979. Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States, Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, DC, December 1979.

identified on the photographs based on vegetation, visible hydrology, and geography. The aerial photographs typically reflected conditions during the specific year and season when they were taken. In addition, there is a margin of error inherent in the use of aerial photographs. Thus a detailed on-the-ground and historical analysis of a single site may result in revision of the wetland boundaries established through photographic interpretation. In addition, some small wetlands and those obscured by dense forest cover may not be included in the map document.

Federal, state, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands may define and describe wetlands in a different manner than that used in this inventory. There is no attempt, in either the design or products of this inventory, to define limits of proprietary jurisdiction of any federal, state, or local government or to establish the geographical scope of regulatory programs of government agencies. Persons intending to engage in activities involving modifications within or adjacent to wetland areas should seek the advice of appropriate federal, state, or local agencies concerning specific agency regulatory programs and proprietary jurisdictions that may affect such activities.

5. WETLAND COMMUNITIES

Three wetland systems, Lacustrine, Riverine, and Palustrine are represented in the subject area. The dominant Palustrine wetlands are characterized by persistent emergent, scrub-shrub, and forest classes.

Palustrine emergent wetlands (PEM) are characterized by numerous and various species; some of the most common being bulrush (Scirpus spp.), sedges (Carex spp.), horsetails (Equisetum spp.), rushes (Juncus spp.), spike rushes (Eleocharis spp.), cattail (Typha spp.), smartweeds (Polygonum spp.) reed grass (Calamagrostis spp.), nutgrass (Cyperus spp.), and bentgrass (Agrostis spp.).

Palustrine scrub shrub (PSS) wetlands are characterized by woody species. Common wetland shrub species include willow (Salix spp.), red alder (Alnus rubra), baccharus (Baccharus spp.), and elderberry (Sambucus spp.). Typical forest (PFO) species are red alder, sycamore (Plantanus racemosa) and cottonwood (Populus fremonti). Some forested wetlands of a temporary nature (PFO) contain cottonwood, or eucalyptus (Eucalyptus spp.). The classification of scrub/shrub or forested wetlands is determined by height-forested greater than 6m. and scrub/shrub less than 6m.

The Riverine system includes the classes open water (OW), flats (FL), and streambeds (SB). Open water and flats are restricted to the lower (R2OW), and upper (R3OW) perennial subsystems. While the flats are not covered by a perennial flow, they are associated with the reach of the river that contains permanent water and are included in the perennial subsystems.

Streams which do not flow year round are classified as Riverine intermittent streambeds (R4SB). Some Riverine systems have their banks lined with trees or shrubs. In cases where streamside Palustrine scrub/shrub or Palustrine forested wetlands cannot be separately delineated from the Riverine system, the wetlands are mapped as linear Palustrine wetland features (PSS or PFO).

Natural or artificial basins greater than 20 acres are in the Lacustrine system. The Lacustrine system on the NWI maps includes the classes Lacustrine open water (L1OW, L2OW), and flats (L2FL). The open water areas are covered by water whereas the flats are exposed at some time during the growing season. Basins less than 20 acres are classified as Palustrine, with classes as described above; i.e., Palustrine open water (POW), and Palustrine flat (PFL).

Modifiers

The intermediate-scale (1:100,000) NWI maps' legends do not include water regime nor special modifiers. Mapping codes for these modifiers are indicated in parentheses in the discussion that follows.

Hydrologic characteristics are an important aspect of wetlands. The water regime modifiers describe in general terms the duration and timing of surface inundation, as well as groundwater fluctuations.

For the purpose of mapping, nontidal water regime modifiers have been lumped into three broad categories. These are:

Intermittently flooded-temporarily flooded (W). The substrate is usually exposed, but surface water is present for variable periods without detectable seasonal periodicity, or surface water is present for brief periods during the growing season.

Saturated/Seasonally-flooded/Semipermanently flooded (Y). The substrate is saturated to the surface for extended periods during the growing season, or surface water is present for extended periods especially early in the growing season but is absent by the end of the season in most years, or surface water persists throughout the growing season in most years.

Intermittently exposed/Permanently flooded (Z). Surface water is present throughout the year except in years of extreme drought, or water covers the land surface throughout the year in all years.

An artificially flooded (K) water regime modifier can be applied with all water regime modifiers. In this case, flooding is under the direct and purposeful control of man.

Special modifiers included on 1:100,000 scale NWI maps, where applicable, are:

Diked/impounded (h). Created or modified by a barrier, dike, or dam which obstructs the inflow or outflow of water.

Excavated (x). Lies within a basin or channel excavated by man.

6. SOURCES OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since the purpose of the Notes to Users is to provide a general overview of a relatively large geographic area, in this case about 1600 square miles, it is important to be aware of sources of additional information. The following is a list of reports providing information about the area of concern.

Bailey, Robert G. 1978. Description of the ecoregions of the United States. U. S. Forest Service, USDA, Ogden, Utah.

Barbour, M. G. and J. Major (eds). 1977. Terrestrial Vegetation of California. John Wiley and Sons, New York.

Cowardin, Lewis M., Virginia Carter, Francis C. Golet, and Edward T. LaRoe. 1977. Classification of wetlands and deep-water habitats of the United States (An Operational Draft), U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, October 1977.

Mason, H. L. 1969. A Flora of the Marshes of California. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Warner, Richard E. (ad). 1982. California Riparian Systems: Proceeding of a Conference on Their Ecology, Conservation and Productive Management. University of California Press.

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1:100,000 locations



