

Interagency Special Status and Sensitive Species Program-Update

Overview

A lot has happened since our last update in November 2010. Here's a sampling of some of the items you can read about inside:

A new Special Status and Sensitive Species (SSSS) list was transmitted for both Agencies in December 2011. The list is based on updated criteria for determining Sensitive and Strategic species, to correct some issues and discrepancies we discovered while using the 2007/2008 SSSS list. Also, updates in Documented or Suspected status were incorporated, new names utilized, and updated Natureserve and State Heritage Program ranks applied. The list can be found on our website at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/agency-policy/>.

In addition to the new SSSS list, for the Northwest Forest Plan area a new Survey and Manage (S&M) species list was created as a result of a settlement agreement. That new list can be found on the S&M webpage at: <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/surveyandmanage/gg.htm>. Many of the key elements of the S&M Standard and Guidelines (S&Gs) have some overlap with those of the ISSSSP. For instance, Management Recommendations under S&M are similar to Conservation Planning documents (Species Fact Sheets, Conservation Assessments, Conservation Strategies) produced under SSSS. Survey Protocol development and maintenance of species lists are also common to both S&M and SSSS. The ISSSSP staff will provide oversight and technical expertise associated with application of the S&M S&Gs in Oregon and Washington, and tasks associated with S&M S&Gs have been incorporated into the ISSSSP staff workload. We'll still be referred to as the ISSSSP (we won't be adding another S to our name!) If you have Survey and Manage related questions, your Agency Technical contacts are Rob Huff, BLM, 503-808-6479, rhuff@blm.gov and Carol Hughes, FS, 503-808-2661, cshughes@fs.fed.us.

In this update you'll also find some other highlights in the ISSSSP Conservation Planning, Inventory and Monitoring, and Data Management world. We hope you find this update interesting and informative. As always, please let us know if there is anything that would make this newsletter more useful for you.

New additions to the ISSSSP

The ISSSSP would like to welcome two new additions to our team.

Michele Huffman is our new NRIS TESP/Wildlife Data Coordinator. The need for increased capacity in the arena of data management was due, in part, to data management needs for S&M species, as well as in support of the inventory and conservation planning work done for ISSSSP. Michele was initially on a 6-month detail, but is now a permanent member of our team. She has been working on many projects that provide for efficiencies in data management both for the field units and the regional level analyses which will improve many aspects of rare species management. We look forward to working with her and her contributions to improvements in implementation of ISSSSP and S&M. Welcome Michele!

Mark Mousseaux is on a longer-term detail as the OR/WA BLM State Office Plant Conservation Lead. His main function is as the State Office Botanist, but one of his roles is as an ISSSSP team member. Mark has been an excellent addition, often offering to lead or participate in projects where his expertise is needed and utilized. He continues to work out of the Medford BLM District Office. We look forward to continuing to work with him. Welcome Mark!

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Key Points in this issue:

- SSSS List update occurred December 2011
- Numerous opportunities for SSS and S&M species training
- FS/BLM Agreements that you may utilize
- New vouchering policy

Our websites:

Survey and Manage: <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/surveyandmanage/>

ISSSSP: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/>

Conservation Planning

Conservation Planning efforts focus on providing informational documents such as species fact sheets for the little known SSSS (fungi, lichens, bryophytes, invertebrates), as well as creating more detailed conservation and management oriented documents (Conservation Assessments, Conservation Strategies, Conservation Agreements, Site Management Plans) for higher-priority species, or those species where more information is known about them. Please see the ISSSSP website for a full listing of documents created to date.

Ongoing work

Work is underway on the following products:

- Conservation Strategies: *Botrychium pumicola*, *Cypripedium fasciculatum*, *Castilleja chlorotica*
- Conservation Assessments: *Achnatherum wallowaensis*, *Achnatherum hendersonii*, Van Dyke's salamander, Gray flycatcher, Great gray owl, White-headed and Lewis' woodpeckers, updates for 16 Lichen species, updates for 7 mollusk species
- Species fact sheets: 25 invertebrates, 6 lichens, 32 fungi, 1 plant
- Site management plans: *Amasinckia carinata*, *Sisyrrinchium hitchcockii*, *Horkelia congesta*, Townsend's big-eared bats, Mardon skippy (45), Oregon spotted frog (11)

Completed documents

Here's a select list of documents posted (or in line for posting) on our website since the last ISSSSP update:

- Conservation Strategies: *Calochortus longebarbatus* var. *peckii*, *Sisyrrinchium sarmentosum*, *Calmagrostis breweri*
- Conservation Planning Tools: Annotated Bibliography of studies on Overwintering Habitat on the Oregon spotted frog
- Updated or new species fact sheets for 97 species (mainly invertebrates, lichens, and bryophytes)
- Conservation Assessments: *Sidalcea hirtipes*, Rocky mountain tailed frog, Cascade torrent salamander, Mardon skipper, Oregon spotted frog, Jenny Creek sucker, 11 Bryophyte species
- Conservation Agreement: *Sisyrrinchium sarmentosum*
- Site Management Plans: 1 Bat Site, 1 Oregon spotted frog site

Work Groups-highlight

The Oregon spotted frog work group has expanded significantly over the last few years, to include a number of USFWS, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife employees, in addition to the original group of FS, BLM and USGS folks. Our focus over the last couple of years has been on completing site management plans for Deschutes, Fremont-Winema, and Medford sites. We're close to completion with this initial group of plans, and will put those plans into action over the next few years. The Work Group will hold a winter meeting in February to evaluate progress to date and determine future actions needed and tasks to work on.

For more information about Conservation Planning contact Rob Huff.

Inventory and Monitoring

Specimen Identification Services

An official memo (IM-OR-2012-010) updating the Sensitive, Strategic, and Survey and Manage species vouchering policy was recently transmitted to the field. The policy is being revised to:

- acknowledge that some target species of non-vascular plants, fungi, or invertebrates may occur frequently within a geographic area and that the vouchering workload can be reduced by making representative collections dispersed over a project area. If there is any identification doubt, please do continue to voucher every site;
- include vouchering requirements for all other Sensitive and Strategic invertebrates in addition to the mollusks that were already required; and to
- include vouchering requirements for vascular plants in cases where the species has few documented sites, generally less than 20 per state, or the new site is a range extension such as in a previously undocumented county.

Darci Rivers-Pankratz at the R6 Regional Office/OR-WA State Office continues to handle the regional expert identification contracts and curating target species including the additional invertebrates. Vascular plant curation can continue to be handled at the local level with vouchers submitted to the regional herbaria.

ISSSSP Participating in the Barcode of Life Project

Currently researchers worldwide are working to barcode DNA for all species (see <http://www.barcodeoflife.org/>). ISSSSP is participating by ensuring that rare Oregon and Washington fungi and mollusk species are represented in this effort and to make these species and their genetic information available to the public for further research and for species-specific markers to eventually be developed. ISSSSP has initiated a "rare species genetics IDIQ" contract to have the Sensitive, Strategic, and Survey and Manage fungi and mollusk vouchers that are collected during BLM/FS surveys sampled genetically, sequenced, and submitted to the public database GenBank. This step would be done after the expert identification and prior to curation with a regional herbaria or museum. If there are other taxa for which this would be beneficial, please contact Kelli Van Norman.

Inventory and Monitoring, continued

Invertebrate Highlight

ISSSSP has funded an Assistance Agreement with Dr. Robert Hershler at the Smithsonian Institution to clarify the taxonomic status of undescribed pebblesnails (genus *Fluminicola*) from the upper Klamath basin in Oregon. Sixteen putatively undescribed pebblesnail species were delineated in the upper portion of the Klamath basin in unpublished contract reports prepared by Deixis Consultants (Frest & Johannes 1998, 2000). Several are thought to be endemic to single springs or single spring complexes while the others have varying ranges, consisting of between 4-59 localities. Sympatry is frequent, with up to four of the pebblesnails co-occurring at some sites. All of these pebblesnails are currently being managed as special status species by the ISSSSP.

Dr. Hershler will be making a collecting trip to Oregon next spring. We have arranged for him to conduct a workshop in Klamath Falls and another in the Columbia River Gorge for the BLM and Forest Service. The focus will be on aquatic mollusk identification, survey, and collection training with an emphasis on the Special Status and Survey and Manage species.

Pristiloma Snail Specimen Re-examination & Upcoming Training

In the process of visiting the Oregon State Arthropod Collection (OSAC) and writing his *PNW Terrestrial Mollusk Field Guide*, retired USFS biologist Tom Burke noticed that some *Pristiloma* snail vouchers at OSAC did not all look correctly identified. *P. arcticum crateris* is both a Sensitive and Survey and Manage species. We contracted with Dr. Barry Roth to re-examine all 191 *Pristiloma* specimens housed at OSAC. Dr. Roth's conclusions are:

- Most samples previously identified as *P. arcticum crateris* (96) were confirmed as *crateris* by this study; two others were re-identified as *P. lansingi*. *Pristiloma crateris* is a readily recognizable species with a distinctive range within the study area.
- Of 19 samples previously identified as *P. arcticum arcticum*, only one sample (WEN01-001) was arguably identifiable as that taxon. The rest were either *P. lansingi*, *P. crateris*, or tentatively identifiable as juvenile *P. stearnsii*.
- *Pristiloma lansingi* is a widespread and common species in the study area. The presence of a toothed rib in the aperture should not be relied on for identification, as it appears only when an individual is fully mature (and possibly not always then).

Dr. Roth is developing a *Pristiloma* identification table and will be presenting to FS/BLM biologists a 1-hour LiveMeeting training on January 24th at 2pm.

Old PNW Fungi Lab Records

During the Survey and Manage years from approximately 1998-2004, a PNW Fungi Lab operated out of the Forest Service PNW Research Station in Corvallis to help collect and process Survey and Manage fungal vouchers and information. The Lab kept a spreadsheet database of the thousands of vouchered specimens they collected or received from the National Forests and BLM Districts in the Northwest Forest Plan area. There are more than 16,000 records. When the Lab received vouchered specimens, they entered the data into their spreadsheet, triaged the specimen to determine if it was potentially a target Survey and Manage species, got expert identifications, let the BLM/FS botanist know what the expert identification was, and then, if it was a Survey and Manage species, the Lab curated the vouchered specimen and gave it to the OSU Herbarium. Unfortunately, the Lab was overwhelmed with vouchers and in 2004 when they shut down they had a backlog. It is also apparent that not all the Survey and Manage fungal sites have been entered into ISMS/GeoBOB/NRIS TESP.

With the recent return of the Survey and Manage Standards and Guidelines, and after receiving more boxes of vouchers from the defunct Lab, we decided to get some help to sort through the vouchers and the spreadsheet database to close out this project and get our historic Survey and Manage fungal data in order. Darci Rivers-Pankratz has been working with interns and more recently we have contracted with Jeanmarie Wheeler, a former botanist on the Naches Ranger District of the Okanogan-Wenatchee NF. All the remaining vouchers have been sorted, data entered into the spreadsheet database, and Jeanmarie has completed "cleaning-up" the spreadsheet. Jeanmarie has now begun ensuring that all data for the target Survey and Manage species records in the spreadsheet have been entered into NRIS TESP database for Region 6 beginning with the Washington NWFP Forests. She will contact each Forest as she begins work on the Forest. This winter we will have a contractor do the same for the BLM records in GeoBOB. We expect to have everything completed by June 2012. The portion of fungal data for Region 5 will soon be sent south for them to compare and input into NRIS TESP.

For additional information about ISSSSP inventory or monitoring efforts, please contact Kelli Van Norman.

List of Agreements in Place that Support ISSSSP and S&M

Attached is a list of agreements established by the ISSSSP for FY12 that support the inventory and conservation of rare species for both BLM and FS in Oregon and Washington. These Agreements can provide efficiency for transfer of funds or completion of work associated with rare species inventory and management, and they can be modified to support rare species work at the field unit level. Please contact Carol Hughes if you have a need to work with one of these agencies/organizations.

Agency	Agreement Type	Partner	Project Description
BLM	IGO	Forest Service, R6, Ormsbee	Bat inventory/data entry/conservation
BLM	IGO	Forest Service, R6	General ISSSSP support, Inventory and Conservation of rare species
FS	IA	BLM, OR/WA State Office	General ISSSSP support, Inventory and Conservation of rare species
FS	CCS	Oregon Wildlife Institute	Conservation of rare vertebrates/Oregon spotted frog Site Mgmt. Plan-Jack Creek, Fremont-Winema NF
FS	IA	USGS, Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center, Corvallis	Implement the Oregon spotted frog study plan
BLM	AA	The Xerces Society, Portland	Invertebrate inventory and conservation
BLM	AA	Chicago Botanic Gardens	Conservation Land Management intern
BLM	AA	NW Lichenologists	Lichen species fact sheets, and inventory and conservation of, and training for rare lichens and bryophytes
BLM	CCS-AA	Carex Working Group, LLC	CCR Field Guide & Workshop - Grasses of the Pacific Northwest
BLM	CESU-AA	Portland State University (Berry Botanical Garden)	Plant conservation
BLM	CESU-AA	University of Washington (RareCare)	Plant conservation
BLM	CESU	ORBIC/Portland State University	Data services and support to ISSSSP
BLM	Purchase order	WNHP/WDNR	Data services
FS	Purchase order	WNHP/WDNR	Data services and support to ISSSSP
FS	Purchase order	ORBIC/Portland State University	Data services and support to ISSSSP

IGO = Intergovernmental Order

AA = Financial Assistance Agreement

IA = Interagency Agreement

CCS = Challenge Cost Share Agreement

CESU = Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Units

Oregon Biodiversity Information Center (ORBIC) & Washington Natural Heritage Program (WNHP) Coordination

The ISSSSP held separate coordination meetings with ORBIC (formerly ORNHIC) and WNHP. One key meeting objective is to collaborate and determine where we can combine resources to provide for efficient and effective inventory and conservation of rare species. Work that ORBIC and/or WNHP will focus on for us in FY12 includes:

- Continuing information management and data transfer.
- Continuing to utilize the NatureServe rank calculator tool for assessing species' ranks and then posting the documentation for the species assessments on the ORBIC/PSU website; this is working toward our goal of transparency on species assessments.
- Reviewing and editing the ISSSSP draft Strategic species information gap spreadsheet that identifies the information gap or the reason why a species qualifies in the Strategic category, and once the spreadsheet is complete, coordinate with ISSSSP to develop a strategy to fill identified information gaps for Strategic species in Oregon.
- Reviewing 12 species (ORBIC) and 33 species (WNHP) with range ranks (e.g. S2S3), identifying what information may be needed to firm up the rank (make it a solid S2 or S3). In Oregon, this includes 3 vertebrates, 7 fungi, 1 lichen and 1 vascular plant. In Washington, this includes 12 invertebrates, 13 vertebrates, 1 lichen and 7 vascular plants. If the reason for the range rank is that more information on rarity, threats, or population trends is needed, for example, then the ISSSSP can assist in gathering that information. ORBIC/WNHP would then reassess the species status with this new information and potentially change the rank. Depending on that outcome, the species may no longer qualify for inclusion as Sensitive or Strategic. For example, for a species that is G5, N4 and S2S3 in Oregon, if the reassessment results in the species' state rank being S3, that particular species would no longer qualify for inclusion in ISSSSP.
- For 179 species, WNHP will provide habitat information and where the species are documented or suspected on National Forests and BLM lands in Washington, and if not documented or suspected, they will note why. These species qualify as Sensitive or Strategic, but have not yet been added to our agencies' SSSS lists since we have no information on their distribution on federal lands or habitat information. The list of 179 species includes 107 invertebrates, 3 vertebrates, 39 bryophytes, and 30 lichens.

If you have any questions about these efforts please contact Carol Hughes.

Data Management

GeoBOB

Bat grid data

The Bat Grid data migration has been completed and the BLM portion of the data is now in GeoBOB. The Oregon Bat Grid layer has now been posted to the G:corp and to the Layer Browser. This layer is being provided because there was no place in GeoBOB to house the Bat Grid information (i.e. in which bat grid cell a particular bat observation is located.) This should make it easier for BLM employees to access and update their part of the data. The Forest Service has completed a parallel migration of the Forest Service portion of the data, and data from other ownerships will be preserved by the Oregon Biodiversity Information Center (ORBIC) and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW).

Removal of FS data from GeoBOB

GeoBOB has its roots in a previous database that was designed to hold species data on Survey & Manage species. This database known as ISMS (Interagency Species Management System) covered only the west side of Washington and Oregon, and parts of Northern California. ISMS was an interagency database that held records from the FS and the BLM.

When the Survey & Manage Standards and Guidelines were removed briefly starting in 2004, ISMS was scrapped and GeoBOB was developed to hold Special Status Species data for all of Oregon and Washington BLM lands, east and west of the Cascades. All of the data from ISMS was migrated (more or less successfully) into GeoBOB. For this reason, there have been FS records in GeoBOB since the inception of GeoBOB. However, the FS developed a national database, NRIS, which they are mandated to use, and the FS GeoBOB records were migrated into it. Since then, none of the FS records in GeoBOB have been maintained or updated. It has long been planned to remove these records from GeoBOB.

The data removal has begun with Washington State, since there are fewer issues with FS data being close to BLM boundaries. After the next maintenance, you may notice that there are fewer records visible for Washington. The valid information for these records should now be contained in NRIS and in Washington state database records (WNHP & WDFW). (A recent snapshot from NRIS will be posted to G:corp.) Once Washington Forest Service data removal is completed, data removal will begin for Oregon. Users will need to consult ORBIC, WDFW, WNHP and NRIS layers along with GeoBOB to provide the landscape wide picture for species.

For additional information or questions, contact Diane Stutzman, GeoBOB Data Steward at dstutzma@blm.gov, 509-536-1250

Upcoming training

Botany

March 13-14, Calicoid and Liverwort Workshop – Salem BLM, Contact Ron Exeter Salem BLM rexeter@blm.gov \$200

March 26-28, Moss Class, @ OSU, Dr. David Wagner, davidwagner@mac.com \$300

March 3/24-25, Intro to Mosses – Siskiyou Field Institute, Scot Loring www.thesfi.org/index.asp \$100

March 28-29, Survey and Manage Bryophytes and Lichens, Siskiyou Field Institute, Scot Loring, www.thesfi.org/index.asp \$150

April 9-11, Bryophyte Class, @ Salem BLM with Dr. David Wagner. For info, contact Ron Exeter, rexeter@blm.gov Free

April 14-15, Intro to Lichens, Siskiyou Field Institute, Dr. Daphne Stone, www.thesfi.org/index.asp \$150

April TBA, Survey and Manage & SSSS lichens and Bryophytes, Dr. Daphne Stone. Location TBA

May 22 – 23 Wildland Grass Identification, Siskiyou Field Institute, Dr. Cindy Roche, www.thesfi.org/index.asp \$150

November 14-16, Survey and Manage Fungi, Siskiyou Field Institute, Scot Loring, www.thesfi.org/index.asp \$225

Great Gray Owl and Mollusk Training

For those in need of training field crews or refreshing their own skills:

Tiffany Young, Willamette NF, is available to provide terrestrial mollusk identification and survey protocol training this spring. If interested, please contact Tiffany Young directly at tayoung@fs.fed.us, and provide a courtesy copy (cc) to Carol Hughes, cshughes@fs.fed.us.

Steve Godwin, Medford BLM, is available to provide great gray owl survey protocol this spring. Dates and locations are yet to be determined, but we are thinking that by early April field crews may be hired and that will be the best time to offer the training. Please contact Carol Hughes, cshughes@fs.fed.us, if interested.

Program Information

Special Status and Sensitive Species (SSSS) List Update

The updated Region 6 Regional Forester (RF) Threatened, Endangered, Sensitive, and Strategic Species List was transmitted on December 9, 2011. The OR/WA State Director (SD) Special Status Species List was transmitted on December 21, 2011.

There were many delays in getting the draft SSSS list to "final". The most recent delay was due to taxonomic inconsistencies between the name used on the SSSS list and names used in NRIS and GeoBOB. The NRIS TESP species list is a national list downloaded from USDA Plants database. The NRIS Wildlife species list is derived from names used in the Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS). GeoBOB also uses the same sources as its data standards for the master species list. The ISSSSP relies on Washington Natural Heritage Program (WNHP) and Oregon Biodiversity Information Center (ORBIC) rare species lists for development of the SSSS list. WNHP and ORBIC rely on a mix of Flora of North America, USDA Plants, and other local sources for their species names. This was the main reason for the naming inconsistencies. In addition, undescribed species are not in USDA Plants or ITIS so we had to develop a format for naming that worked for NRIS and GeoBOB. Mark Skinner, Mark Mousseaux, Michele Huffman, Diane Stutzman, Carol Hughes, and Terri Stone worked together to resolve the inconsistencies. You will see these updated names and formats in the final December 2011 RF and SD SSSS species lists.

If you note any errors or problems in the transmitted lists, please contact Carol Hughes.

FY2012 Project Proposals

Sixty-four proposals were received for competitive funding through the ISSSSP Project Proposal Process, and 32 were selected for a total of \$350,000. Thanks to everyone who submitted proposals last March and to the evaluation team, which included Ron Exeter (botanist, Salem BLM), Lisa Renan (wildlife biologist, Roseburg BLM), Cyndi Kranich (wildlife biologist, Malheur NF), and Andrea Ruchty (botanist, Gifford Pinchot NF). The fungal proposals were evaluated by the Fungi Work Group. The request for FY13 project proposals will be out this winter, with proposals due by April.

Websites - ISSSSP and Survey & Manage

We want to continue to remind folks that the ISSSSP and Survey and Manage (S&M) websites are a good source of information on species and NWFP S&M S&Gs implementation. In particular, the S&M website has been updated to include the 2011 Settlement Agreement and three "tools" to assist in implementation. The three tools include a: 1) species list spreadsheet, 2) range change spreadsheet, and 3) S&M exemptions summary table. The species list spreadsheet lists all species names and associated categories from the January 2001 ROD, December 2003 (post 2001-2003 ASR changes), and the 2011 Settlement Agreement lists. This allows comparison from one list to the other. The range change spreadsheet notes all the range extensions and contractions recognized by the 2001-2003 Annual Species Reviews, and incorporated into the 2011 species list. The S&M exemption summary table notes which physiographic provinces the exemptions are applicable in and any restrictions to dry forest plant association groups.

Web addresses are:

Survey and Manage:

<http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/surveyandmanage/>

ISSSSP: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/>

Contact Information and Feedback

We're looking for feedback. Is this newsletter helpful? Is the format okay, or would you recommend something different? What other kind of information or topics would you like to hear about?

Please send any comments you have to Rob Huff, rhuff@blm.gov

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