

Interagency Special Status and Sensitive Species Program-Update

Websites – ISSSSP and Survey & Manage

The Survey and Manage website, hosted by BLM, has a new look. BLM required all websites to be moved into a new standard format. The information has been updated and moved from the old website, but there are recognized errors on the website. Correcting these errors is a priority for ISSSSP personnel over the next few months. As you use the website, if you find errors, please be sure to notify the ISSSSP/S&M Specialist with that information. Thank you.

Web addresses are:

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

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

CONTENTS

Inventory and Monitoring	2
Conservation Planning	2
Data Management Update	3
Program Information	4
Contact Information	5

Inventory and Monitoring

The majority of ISSSSP project proposals request funding for inventories to expand range and distribution knowledge or to monitor by simply revisiting sites. There are often requests to establish monitoring protocols; ISSSSP can help establish monitoring, but it's up to each field unit to commit the resources necessary to continue monitoring projects. We also fund projects involving mapping suitable habitat including the development and testing of habitat models, examining the effects of management activities, clearing up confusing taxonomic questions, and a hodgepodge of other questions. Genetic sampling has become a key tool not only to resolve taxonomy, but also to test for species presence. Look for the ISSSSP Inventory and Monitoring reports and habitat models online at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/inventories/>.

Specimen Identification Services

With the addition of a vouchering requirement for all invertebrates (see memo at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/inventories/identification.shtml>), this is a reminder that the Regional Office/Oregon State Office has a list of experts who can provide identification services. Contact Darci Rivers-Pankratz, the ISSSSP Inventory Assistant, in Portland. She handles the regional expert identification contracts and curates target species.

Key Points in this issue:

- Survey and Manage website updated
- Draft habitat models developed for Columbia spotted frog and *Sisyrinchium sarmentosum*
- Taxonomic inconsistencies in species lists and databases completed
- FY13 Project Proposals selected and shared with field units
- ISSSSP Mardon skipper work group received national butterfly conservation award



Inventory and Monitoring cont.

Southwestern Oregon Sideband Snail Specimen Re-examination

For quite a few years now, Dr. Barry Roth, an expert malacologist who does many of our PNW terrestrial snail identifications has thought there is an undescribed sideband (*Monadenia*) snail he calls the 'Winema' sideband. Specimens of this 'Winema' sideband may have been mis-identified as our Sensitive and Survey and Manage species *Monadenia chaceana*. We are beginning a contract with Dr. Roth to determine what our existing specimen collections are, whether this is a new species, and what the geographic boundaries or overlap might be.

Habitat Modeling Highlight

We have biologists and botanists in Region 6 with the technical skills to create species habitat models. The Umpqua NF has several people who are skilled at using BioMapper and MaxEnt software. Josh Chapman recently created a habitat model for the Columbia spotted frog (*Rana luteiventris*) in SE Oregon, which we will test as funding allows. This past spring Richard Helliwell created a habitat model for the pale blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium sarmentosum*) on the Mt. Hood NF and Gifford Pinchot NF. Botanists on those two Forests tested the model in July by visiting 60 random "high likelihood" plots. In some cases, it was rather funny, or startling, where the random plots ended up, such as in someone's back yard. We did find several new populations, however, in places where no one would have guessed to look. With this summer's results, we'll tighten up the model and have a better idea of where else to conduct inventories for new populations.

There are plenty of cautions for using habitat models, but there are strengths as well. Josh and Richard are writing a white paper that will provide a background on the types of species distribution models that exist, and types of input and output variables and evaluations. They will also describe how the models can be applied for FS/BLM species and habitat management.

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

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.

Focal species/species group

An interagency team facilitated by FS/BLM bat specialist Pat Ormsbee and comprised of personnel from FS, BLM, NPS, USFWS, WDFW, and ODFW has been crafting an integrated "response strategy" to help guide education and management activities associated with the threat of "white-nose syndrome" (WNS) to bat species. WNS is a disease caused by the fungus, *Geomyces destructans*, and impacts wintering bats in cave and mine habitat. In the eastern United States, WNS has killed millions of bats. Since initially discovered in New York in 2006, WNS has been documented as far west as Missouri, with the fungus (but not yet WNS affecting bats) also in Oklahoma. Given the quick spread of this deadly disease, it's important for western states to prepare, as best as possible, to deter or minimize spread. With 16 bat species that could potentially be affected in Oregon and Washington, the interagency team hopes to have the Response Strategy completed in the near future.

Good sources of information on this disease are available at the following website:
<http://www.whitenosesyndrome.org/>

Completed documents

These are documents that have been completed and posted since the last ISSSSP update:

- Conservation Planning Tools:
 - Effects of Forest Land Management on Terrestrial Mollusks
 - Mycorrhizal Fungi: Biological/Ecological information and effects of selected types of forest management actions.
- Updated or new Species Fact Sheets: 18 invertebrates, 6 lichens
- Conservation Assessments: Gray flycatcher, Great gray owl
- Site Management Plans: 3 Oregon spotted frog sites

For additional information about Conservation Planning please contact Rob Huff

Data Management Update

Taxonomy clarification

Work to resolve inconsistencies in species names and synonymy has been completed and requests to add missing species and correct errors have been submitted to NRIS Taxa and incorporated into the GeoBOB master species list. A notable change in taxonomic reference for un-described species is that numbers are being removed from scientific names, replaced by a reference to common name in the scientific name. This change will eliminate confusion over multiple numbers being used to reference un-described species, improve consistency in our data, and improve our ability to evaluate data for ISSSSP and Survey and Manage species.

Changes resulting from this effort will be incorporated into the official Survey and Manage list through the ASR process and the next ISSSSP list update.

Data Use Agreements

Agreements were updated for data sharing and use of data acquired from ORBIC (Oregon Biodiversity Information Center) and WDFW (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife). These agreements govern the use and distribution of state data on sensitive species. State data are updated bi-annually and posted in a restricted location, accessible to biologists and botanists throughout the Region. Anyone using these data is responsible for understanding and complying with the data use agreements. Contact Michele Huffman for more information.

NRIS Data migration

Data from external datasets were imported into NRIS, expanding the data available for analysis for ISSSSP and Survey and Manage species:

Whitebark pine – Dr. Andrew Bury, Regional Whitebark Pine restoration program lead provided data from several datasets. Data migrated included: Whitebark pine habitat data migrated as survey polygons; plot surveys where Whitebark pine was collected (CVS, FIA, ecology plots); and whitebark pine monitoring and seed collection data. CVS and FIA plot locations are restricted, so those data were migrated as polygons with precise plots located randomly within the polygons. Precise location information requests will be evaluated case-by-case.

Air Quality lichen database – Lichen data for ISSSSP and Survey and Manage lichen species were loaded from a spreadsheet provided by Doug Glavich. This represents data collected over several years (1993-2011).

MBS and OLY ecology plots – Robin Leshner compiled and provided data for ISSSSP and Survey and Manage species on more than 300 ecology plots.

Contact Michele Huffman for additional information on these data.

For more information about Data Management, please contact Michele Huffman with the Forest Service and Diane Stutzman with the BLM.

GeoBOB update

GeoBOB Mobile for Wildlife data collection was recently deployed. These ArcGIS and ArcPad tools were developed by Dana Baker and Aaron Dick in OR 955. GeoBOB Mobile is intended to be used on GIS devices, to collect wildlife data and to easily move it into the GeoBOB database. Use of this new application should streamline data collection and entry for special status wildlife species, and result in more accurate data with significant savings in time and cost. Support for Botany data collection will be added to the GeoBOB Mobile application this summer or fall.

FS Data Removal for Oregon and Washington completed

ISMS (Interagency Species Management System), the original database for Survey and Manage under the Northwest Forest Plan, included data from both BLM and Forest Service lands. That data was migrated into GeoBOB, and has been held there since. The Forest Service ISMS data was also migrated into the Forest Service's NRIS application, where it has been maintained and updated. That same data has not been maintained in GeoBOB, so the decision was made to remove it from the database. OR/WA BLM receives snapshots of the Forest Service's NRIS database at least twice a year, that are kept in G:corp for use as a reference layer. Outdated ISMS data from Forest Service lands within Oregon and Washington has now been removed from GeoBOB, with just a few exceptions. (Some Districts requested records on adjacent lands to be retained.)

Training Under Development

Training materials for GeoBOB data entry are being updated. Diane Stutzman and Carrie Sakai will work together to record four training modules that will be made available to users on the GeoBOB website early in FY 2013.

Program Information

Personnel Updates

Sarah Madsen, the Region 6 Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive Species Program Manager and a member of the ISSSSP/Survey & Manage (S&M) Team, retired on June 29, 2012. With her departure, Carol Hughes stepped in as the Acting TES Program Manager for an 120-day detail. Jenifer Ferriell (Ecologist on the Umatilla, Wallowa-Whitman and Malheur National Forests) has stepped in as the Acting ISSSSP/Survey & Manage Specialist. Both Carol and Jenifer will be in their acting roles through October 20, 2012.

FY2013 Project Proposals

Seventy-three proposals were received for competitive funding through the ISSSSP Project Proposal Process. An evaluation team met in May to review the proposals. With the FY13 budget recently coming out, final proposal selections were made. The list of selected proposals was sent out last week to all of the individuals who sent in projects. Thanks to everyone who submitted proposals last March and to the evaluation team, which included Beth Christensen (Umpqua NF), Gene Yates (Wallowa-Whitman NF), Chris Rossel (Mt Hood NF), David Roelofs (Medford BLM), and Brennan Hauk (Lakeview BLM). The Fungi Work Group reviewed the 10 fungal proposals.

ISSSSP Mardon Skipper Work Group wins National FS award

The Work Group, facilitated by ISSSSP personnel Kelli Van Norman and Rob Huff, won the national Wings Across the Americas Butterfly Conservation Award this past spring. The Work Group was founded in 2005 to help identify key information and conservation needs regarding this federal candidate species, and develop and implement tasks to address those gaps.

Extensive surveys were undertaken by the Group resulting in a significant increase in the number of known populations/sites. Site Management Plans covering most of the southern Oregon sites have been developed, and extensive restoration actions implemented. A range-wide Conservation Assessment identified key management objectives and research needs.

In August, the US Fish and Wildlife Service determined that listing the Mardon Skipper is not warranted at this time, referencing the extensive work done by the Forest Service and BLM in making that determination.

Besides Kelli and Rob, other personnel receiving the award included: FS: Carol Chandler, Mitch Wainwright, Ruby Seitz, Joan St. Hilare; BLM: Tony Kerwin, Steve Godwin, Carole Jorgensen (now with FS), Holly Witt (now with FS); Other agency/organizations: Ann Potter (WDFW), Vince Harke (USFWS), Scott Hoffman Black (Xerces Society). Certificate recipients included: Norm Barrett (FS-retired), Tom Kogut (FS-retired), Ted Thomas (USFWS), Dr. Cheryl Schultz (WSU), and Loni Beyer (WSU).

New Agreement in Place that Supports ISSSSP and S&M

In addition to the list of agreements previously shared in the January 2012 ISSSSP Update, BLM has established a new financial assistance agreement with the non-profit organization Oregon Wildlife Institute (OWI). The focus of the work will be for inventory and conservation of vertebrate wildlife species.

The specific species that they will initially be focusing on are the red tree vole and kit fox. The specific objectives of the red tree vole project are to design, implement, and analyze the results from strategic surveys of red tree voles in the Northwest Forest Plan area. Information provided by strategic surveys helps address fundamental questions of Survey and Manage species. For this project, strategic surveys address whether the reserve land allocations and other standards and guidelines of the Northwest Forest Plan provide a reasonable assurance of species persistence. Additional information on population status, habitat use, and site quality may be refined.

For the kit fox, Burns and Vale BLM Districts need to improve their understanding of the status of the kit fox in Oregon with an emphasis on information that will aid in wildlife management planning on BLM Districts where the species occurs. The work will be directed towards two primary objectives: 1) a reconnaissance survey to determine whether the kit fox still occurs on BLM lands, and 2) preparation of a conservation assessment to examine kit fox status, distribution in Oregon, ecology, limiting factors, and management recommendations.

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

A coordination meeting between ORBIC, WNHP, OR/WA BLM and Region 6 Forest Service occurred in June. A key objective of these meetings is to collaborate to determine where we can combine resources to provide for efficient and effective inventory and conservation of rare species. Work that ORBIC and WNHP will focus on for FY13 is as follows:

- Information management and data transfer
- Utilize the NatureServe rank calculator for assessment of species ranks
- Continued coordination on Strategic species, determining the information gaps and prioritizing species and actions in order to fill information gaps
- Utilize the Climate Change Vulnerability Index for a specific list of vascular plants
- Assess and rank lichen species in Washington State; WNHP is coordinating with NW Lichenologists on this task

If you have any questions, please contact Carol Hughes.

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, Rob_Huff@blm.gov

Interagency personnel contact info:

Rob Huff, rhuff@blm.gov, 503-808-6479, Conservation Planning Coordinator

Kelli Van Norman, kvannorm@blm.gov, 503-808-6606, Inventory Coordinator

Jenifer Ferriel, jferriel@fs.fed.us, 503-808-2673, Acting SSSS Specialist

Darci Rivers-Pankratz, dpankratz@fs.fed.us, 503-808-2688, Inventory Coordinator Assistant

Agency Program leads contact info:

Mark Skinner, msskinner02@fs.fed.us, 503-808-2150, Region 6 Botanist

Carol Hughes, cmhughes@fs.fed.us, 503-808-2661, Region 6 Acting TES Program Leader

Mark Mousseaux, mmousseaux@blm.gov, 503-618-2232, OR/WA BLM Botanist

Michele Huffman, mhuffman@fs.fed.us, 503-808-2691, NRIS TESP and NRIS Wildlife Data Coordinator

Cindy Lou McDonald, clmcdonald@blm.gov, 503-808-6571, Natural Resource Specialist

Diane Stutzman, dstutzma@blm.gov, 509-536-1250, GeoBOB Data Steward

