

Interagency Special Status and Sensitive Species Program Update – February 2020

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Adaptive Management Changes

ISSSSP recently completed a 5-year strategy that guides future ISSSSP conservation work in Oregon (OR) and Washington (WA). The strategy is built around three main goals:

(1) Providing National Forests (NF) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) District Offices quality scientific information to make sound management decisions and ensure management meets agency sensitive species conservation policies by:

- Updating sensitive species lists so there is a common understanding of why certain species are a management concern and where they occur on BLM and NFs in OR and WA;
- Maintaining and developing species fact sheets and conservation assessments for little known or cryptic species like lichens, bryophytes, fungi, and invertebrates;
- Developing priority species action plans that display critical actions to help understand and improve conservation of these rare species;
- Refining the ISSSSP website so ISSSSP tools and services are easy to find;
- Continuing specimen identification of sensitive lichens, bryophytes, fungi, and invertebrates; and survey and species identification trainings to ensure field units have adequate biological and technical skills.

(2) Improving internal and external partnership communication and collaboration to promote sensitive species conservation by:

- Improving internal communication to raise awareness of conservation tools and services and increase participation of field biologists and botanists in the ISSSSP program;
- Integrating ISSSSP into and coordinating with other regional and state office programs (fuels, range, recreation, vegetation management, etc.); and
- Communicating and collaborating with other federal and state agencies, universities, professional societies, and other interested groups.

(3) Building a strong data stewardship culture internally and externally to support agency decisions and sensitive species conservation by:

- Improving internal data entry, quality, sharing, and analysis;
- Coordinating with partners to enhance data compilation, sharing, maintenance, and species assessment processes and documentation.

The strategy is intended to be adaptive and will be reviewed periodically to revisit priorities, timelines, measures and successes, and overarching goals and objectives.

Key Points in this issue:

- ISSSSP identified 80 sensitive species to focus on-the-ground conservation actions on and developed draft action plans to guide their management
- There are two new employees within ISSSSP
- There is ongoing, larger-scale eDNA survey work for lamprey, foothill yellow-legged frog
- To keep fact sheets for all sensitive lichens, bryophytes, fungi, and invertebrates current (within last 5 years), documents have been completed or are under contract

Priority species and Action plans

In August 2019 the Interagency Special Status and Sensitive Species Program (ISSSSP) transmitted a request to Oregon and Washington National Forests and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Districts asking the field units to identify high priority sensitive species for their unit. High-priority species are those that the ISSSSP will focus funding on for the next few years. The request included a reduced number of sensitive species from the larger list of sensitive species for Oregon and Washington for field units to select from. The reduced list of species was derived from conservation prioritization efforts from other entities such as ODFW and WDFW Species of Greatest Conservation Need, USFWS Species of Concern, USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern, ODA State listed T&E flora species, and species ranked as Extremely or Highly Vulnerable to climate change from assessments made using the NatureServe Climate Change Vulnerability Index.

The ISSSSP encouraged field units to select those species that are in need of on-the-ground conservation actions. This direction comes as a result of regional managers overseeing the program wanting to focus limited resources on management actions that can make the greatest difference in species conservation. Information gaps that focus on basic surveys for a species are not considered a high priority or should tier towards larger, more broad-scale survey efforts (for instance, surveys in support of the multi-agency Bumble Bee Atlas).

The ISSSSP reviewed the responses from the field to identify ISSSSP-priority species and further narrowed the number of priority species. The ISSSSP looked at why the species was identified as a priority by the field unit, how many other field units the species occurs on, and how many of those field units also identified the species as priority. In some cases only one or two field units out of many that had the species documented identified it as a priority. The ISSSSP did not identify these species as a priority. Other scenarios for when the species was determined to not be an ISSSSP-priority included when the field unit identified: 1) further basic surveys as the need, 2) the action is pre-project support for a non-ISSSSP project, and 3) an action that should be addressed by working internally on the Ranger District or Resource Area to mitigate impacts from FS/BLM projects.

The ISSSSP identified 80 sensitive species as priority including 56 plants, 12 wildlife, 6 invertebrates, and 6 fish. Action plans have been drafted for these species by pulling actions from different sources, including from the entities mentioned in the first paragraph above as well as from Conservation Assessments, Strategies, Site Management Plans and Species Fact Sheets. Actions focused solely on basic surveys were typically not included in these plans.

Forests and BLM Districts can select any action listed in these plans to implement, to help move the conservation needle for that species. The ISSSSP will not have a competitive funding process this year; instead we'll try to fund any of the actions that our Forests and BLM Districts identify from these plans.

We'll review and update these plans as new information becomes available but it's expected that the ISSSSP-priority species and action plans will have at least a 3-year lifespan (until we update our sensitive species list again). When the sensitive species list is updated we'll review the list of ISSSSP-priority species to see if any modifications should occur.

New faces in ISSSSP

We've got two new botanists in our Program!

Clint Emerson started as the Pacific Northwest Region 6 Botanist in December 2019. Like a moth to a flame he returned to his roots in the PNW after a one year stint as a District Ranger on the Huron-Manistee National Forest in Michigan. Clint started in the USFS as a seasonal firefighter in 1992 in his hometown of Glide, Oregon. In 1997 he obtained his botany degree and went to work on the Tiller Ranger District of the Umpqua National Forest under the tutelage of longtime Forest Botanist Richard Helliwell. He worked for 8 more years on the Umpqua NF as a District Botanist before deciding to travel and live abroad for a year. Upon return he spent a year with the Medford BLM before working in private consulting for 2 years. Eventually he came back to the USFS in 2007 and spent nearly a decade as a District Botanist for the Gold Beach Ranger District, Rogue River-Siskiyou NF. In 2016 he became the Forest Botanist on the Rogue and completed a detail as the Natural Resource Staff Officer there before leaving for Michigan. Clint enjoys adventuring with his wife and two kids (6 and 8 years old) and looks forward to continuing to help his kids learn the plants and fungi of the PNW. Clint replaces Mark Skinner who retired in October 2018.

Susan Carter started as the BLM OR/WA State Botanist in early October 2019. Just like other animals and plants adapting to climate change, she has moved north with each job move. Susan started her federal career as a seasonal botanist with the Sequoia National Forest, Greenhorn Ranger District, and then was hired as a permanent botanist in 1990 with the BLM Bakersfield Field Office (it was the Caliente Resource Area at that time). In 2002, Susan moved to Roseburg, OR, to take the BLM Roseburg District botanist position. Susan was fortunate to have two detail opportunities while in Roseburg: 120-days as the Associate District Manager and about 4 months as the Assistant Field Manager for the Swiftwater Field Office. She was also the botanist on the Resource Management Plans for the BLM in Western Oregon (signed 2016) interdisciplinary team. Susan has two adult daughters and two adult cats. She is learning her way around Portland and enjoying all the cultural and vegetarian restaurant choices in the big city. Susan is looking forward to exploring hiking/camping areas as the weather gets warmer and plans to visit many of the BLM offices this year. Susan replaces Mark Mousseaux who retired in December 2018.

Inventory and Monitoring

Specimen Identification Services

When you think you've found a sensitive species of invertebrate, lichen, bryophyte, or fungi, collecting a voucher specimen is required. For some groups like bumble bees, clear photos with identifying characteristics is enough, but identification of other taxa groups require the individual to be properly collected and associated data collected. The Regional Office/Oregon State Office has a list of experts who provide identification services. Darci Rivers-Pankratz, the ISSSSP Inventory Coordinator Assistant, handles the regional expert identification contracts and curates the target species for regional repositories. The backlog of approximately 1000 lichen and bryophyte vouchers are due to be delivered to OSC (the Oregon State University herbarium) this spring. The Specimen ID Service section of the ISSSSP website has collection guidelines and Darci's contact info. Always contact Darci before sending her specimens, especially if you're planning to collect mollusks. It is preferred that they are sent live so that DNA sampling can take place if needed. <http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/sfpnw/issssp/inventories/identification.shtml>

Larger-scale survey efforts

eDNA-based, Broad-scale Lamprey Inventory and Monitoring Project (eBLIMP)

Numerous entities including R6 Forest Service and OR/WA BLM are working together to promote collaborative implementation of conservation measures for Pacific lamprey. Reliable information on the current distribution of larval and adult Pacific lamprey is needed before meaningful conservation action can occur. However, traditional methods for surveying Pacific lamprey are inefficient, particularly at the upstream extent of their distribution where densities are often low. Where larvae are observed, field identification of individuals to the genus and species level is often challenging. Thus, the use of environmental DNA (eDNA) sampling has proven to be a highly accurate and efficient sampling method that can be conducted at a broad scale.

The Rocky Mountain Research Station (RMRS) National Genomics Center for Wildlife and Fish Conservation is developing model-guided eDNA sampling to precisely delineate the distribution of Pacific lamprey in 4th-code hydrologic units. In FY2020, the ISSSSP has funded a joint project between the NW Oregon BLM District, Siuslaw NF, and Malheur NF to use the model, collect eDNA water samples, and then RMRS will extract the DNA and analyze the samples. We also have an ongoing project in SW Oregon on the Umpqua NF, Rogue River-Siskiyou NF, Roseburg BLM, and Medford BLM. RMRS will provide the eDNA data in an online, open-access format (via the eDNAtlas) to managers for efficient and immediate use in decision making. They'll also use these data to refine the species distribution model that predicts habitat occupancy by Pacific lamprey.

We still have a few areas in Oregon and Washington on Forest Service and BLM lands where this type of broad-scale Pacific lamprey surveys are needed. Contact Kelli Van Norman if you are interested in participating.

Foothill yellow-legged frog surveys by USGS

In late 2018, the BLM Washington Office and USFWS funded the USGS Amphibian Research and Monitoring Initiative (ARMI) group based out of Corvallis to conduct Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*) surveys in the Oregon part of the species' range. The intent was to acquire fresh data prior to the USFWS considering the species for ESA listing.

USGS conducted the surveys in 2019 using visual encounter survey methods and eDNA sampling. A total of 52 historic sites were surveyed. Of these, 24 sites were on BLM lands and 23 sites were on Forest Service lands (some sites were a combination of land ownerships). They observed Foothill yellow-legged frogs at 16 sites and detected them through eDNA at 21 sites (some sites were both visual and eDNA detections). The data are being entered centrally into GeoBOB and NRM Wildlife.

For additional information about ISSSSP Inventory and Monitoring Work, contact Kelli Van Norman.



Photo by Kelli Van Norman



Photo by Ray Davis

Conservation Planning

ISSSSP Conservation Planning includes the creation of informational documents such as species fact sheets for the little known SSSS (fungi, lichens, bryophytes, invertebrates), as well as more detailed conservation and management oriented documents (Conservation Assessments, Conservation Strategies, Conservation Agreements, Site Management Plans) for higher-priority species or species with more information known about them. Conservation Planning also includes planning and implementation of habitat restoration, enhancement, protection, and maintenance projects.

Species Fact Sheets

The ISSSSP is trying to keep species fact sheets for sensitive lichens, bryophytes, fungi, and invertebrates current, so that our field biologists and botanists have the most up-to-date information about these cryptic or little known species. As such, we're trying to make sure every species fact sheet is no older than 5 years. We're on track to get caught up to that goal. Sensitive lichen and bryophyte fact sheets are up-to-date. Invertebrate and fungi fact sheets that are older than 5 years, are all under a contract or agreement to be completed in the near future. These include the following species:

Invertebrates (41): *Aeshna sitchensis*, *Aeshna subarctica*, *Boloria astarte*, *Boloria bellona*, *Boloria freija*, *Bombus occidentalis*, *Callophrys gryneus chalcosiva*, *Callophrys gryneus rosneri*, *Carinacauda stormi*, *Coenagrion interrogatum*, *Colias nastes*, *Colligyrus depressus*, *Cupido comyntas*, *Fisherola nuttalli*, *Fluminicola fuscus*, *Fluminicola virens*, *Gonidea angulata*, *Habrodais grunus*, *Helicodiscus salmonaceus*, *Juga newberryi*, *Lycaena cupreus*, *Lycaena mariposa charlottensis*, *Nanonemoura wahkeena*, *Neothremma andersoni*, *Oeneis chryxus valerata*, *Oeneis melissa*, *Philotiella leona*, *Plebejus icarioides blackmorei*, *Plebejus lupini spangelatus*, *Polites peckius*, *Polites themistocles*, *Pristiloma idahoense*, *Pristiloma johnsoni*, *Pristiloma wascoense*, *Pyrgulopsis owyheensis*, *Rhyacophila chandleri*, *Rhyacophila leechi*, *Speyeria coronis coronis*, *Speyeria egleis*, *Speyeria zerene bremerii*, *Vertigo andrusiana*.

Fungi (3): *Chamonixia caespitosa*, *Gymnomyces fragrans*, *Rhizopogon chamaleontinus*.

Conservation assessments for one bird (purple martin) and 7 lichens (*Erioderma solediatum*, *Leioderma solediatum*, *Niebla cephalota*, *Pannaria rubiginosa*, *Pilophorus nigricaulis*, *Teloschistes flavicans*, and *Tholurna dissimilis*) were completed since the last ISSSSP update and have been posted on the ISSSSP webpage.

Site Management Plans were completed for two sites with Townsend's big-eared bat on the Willamette National Forest.

Conservation Management Actions were completed for a variety of sensitive species including: Mardon skipper, Northwestern pond turtle, *Sisyrinchium sarmentosum*, *Pinus albicaulis*, *Thelypodium eucosmum*, and a number of serpentine-associated species. A variety of actions were implemented including conifer and shrub removal, fencing construction, boulder placement, prescribed fire use, basking structure creation, invasive plant treatments, vegetative plantings, and timber stand thinnings.

For additional information about ISSSSP Conservation Planning contact Rob Huff.

Conservation Management Action highlight

Fencing Illinois Valley ACEC to prevent OHV and dumping damage; Medford District BLM

The ISSSSP funded a project last year to address illegal off-highway vehicle use and trash dumping in an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, that provides habitat for the endangered *Lomatium cookii* as well as two sensitive species: *Limnanthes alba* ssp. *gracilis* and *Erythronium howellii*. Working with a group of 15 volunteers, the District constructed 400 feet of fencing, picked up trash, and installed informational signs at the site. Botanist Stacy Johnson led the effort for the District.



BLM Wildlife, Botany, and Fisheries Data Resources

GeoBOB - Wildlife & Botany Data Resources

GeoBOB (Geographic Biotic Observations) is the BLM Oregon/Washington's database for rare wildlife and botanical species. Species in GeoBOB include Bureau Sensitive Species, Federally listed and candidate species, District Priority species, and ORBIC/WNHP priority species. The database is also an excellent resource for Survey & Manage species locations and species that have historically been on the ISSSSP List. It is a fantastic resource for rare wildlife and botanical species observations, sites, and surveys on BLM lands.

- Upcoming GeoBOB Training Sessions : These trainings provide crucial information to Wildlife Biologists, Botanists, and field staff in the Districts about how to collect and maintain records of Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Species locations.
 - April 1: Webinar – Botany Desktop
 - April 2: Webinar – Wildlife Desktop
 - Mobile: Will be included in S1 Mobile training "Field User Experiences" with Paul Ferro.
- March 1st Deadline: Please remember to get all 2019 records into GeoBOB by March 1, 2020.
- How to Request GeoBOB Data: Please contact Chelsea Waddell.
- Rare Species Data Resources: We share and receive data from a wide variety of partners throughout the region. Partners include the US Forest Service, Oregon Biodiversity Information Center (ORBIC), Washington Natural Heritage Program (WNHP), Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW), Oregon Eagle Foundation, and many more. Data resources from these important partner organizations are a vital part of all project analyses since these datasets may have records for species within your project areas that the GeoBOB database does not have.
- GeoBOB SharePoint Site: GeoBOB has a new SharePoint site that is available for BLM employees: https://doimsp.sharepoint.com/teams/blm-or-apps_tools/GeoBOB/SitePages/Home.aspx

Aquatic Data & Tools - Fisheries Data Resources

Aquatic Data & Tools is where fisheries location and distribution data can be entered and maintained. In 2017, BLM staff coordinated with partner agencies to integrate Fish Distribution data to improve data quality. The goal was to match BLM and other agency data across the landscape. Much of the data in the Resident, Anadromous, and Nonnative layers was updated as part of this process. BLM incorporated fish distribution information from other agencies, including: the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) and others.

Contacts

Program Support & Data Sharing: Chelsea Waddell, Regional Wildlife, Botany & Fisheries Data Coordinator, cwaddell@blm.gov, 503-808-6302

GIS Technical Support: Noah Layosa, GeoBOB GIS Specialist, nlayosa@blm.gov, 503-808-6206

Mobile GIS Technical Support: Paul Ferro, Mobile GIS Specialist, pferro@blm.gov, 503-808-6753

Aquatic Data & Tools (Fisheries Data Resources): Matt Groce, GIS Specialist, mgroce@blm.gov, 208-373-3959

Forest Service, Data management and Sharing

For improved project analyses, data snapshots of flora and fauna data from OR/WA BLM (GeoBOB), ORBIC, WNHP and WDFW are filed at the following locations and updated approximately every six months: T:\FS\Reference\GIS\r06\LayerFile\Wildlife\WildlifeObservations and T:\FS\Reference\GIS\r06\LayerFile\Vegetation\ . We received an update from WNHP in November 2019 and from BLM in October 2019. ORBIC's data snapshot is from March 2019 and WDFW is from February 2018.

Please remember to get all 2019 and any other legacy data into the appropriate NRM application by March 31, 2020.

Please contact Christine Pyle if you have any questions.

ISSSSP Website

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

In the March 2019 program update, we shared that the ISSSSP website had a backlog of documents that needed to be posted. Since that time, all documents have been posted and the site is currently up-to-date with all inventory and conservation planning documents. This has been accomplished by content management for the website having been turned over to Christine Pyle, plus a Data Resource Management (DRM) staff member was able to focus on helping with the backlog.

Christine is also working in coordination with the DRM Webmaster to develop a new and more modern website. This website will include a search tool for ease in finding documents of interest to the website visitor. In addition, it will reduce the workload on the backend in relation to posting documents on the website. Please stay tuned!

List of Available Agreements and Contracts

The following is a list of agreements and contracts that support the inventory and conservation of rare species for both BLM and FS in Oregon and Washington. These tools can provide an efficiency for you when working with these partners or needing support for flora surveys or professional services. **Please contact Carol Hughes, Darci Pankratz, or Kelli Van Norman if you have a need to work with one these agencies/organizations.**

Agency	Agreement/Contract Type	Partner	Project Description
FS	Interagency Agreement	Bureau of Land Management, Oregon/Washington	General ISSSSP support, and inventory and conservation of rare species
FS	Purchase order	Washington Natural Heritage Program/Washington Department of Natural Resources	Data services and support to rare flora and fauna conservation and inventory
FS	Purchase order	Oregon Biodiversity Information Center/Portland State University	Data services and support to rare flora and fauna conservation and inventory
FS	Challenge Cost Share Agreement	The Xerces Society, Portland	Invertebrate inventory, conservation, and education
FS/BLM	Botanical Surveys Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA)*	Variety of contractors	Botanical surveys
FS/BLM	Professional and Forestry Services BPA*	Variety of contractors	Variety of professional services (forestry, fish, wildlife, NEPA, etc.)
FS/BLM	Restoration BPA*	Variety of contractors	Restoration services, plant materials, seed collection and production, plant propagation
BLM	Interagency Agreement	Forest Service, Region 6	General ISSSSP support, and inventory and conservation of rare species
BLM	Financial Assistance Agreement	The Xerces Society, Portland	Invertebrate inventory, conservation, and education

*<https://apps.fs.usda.gov/contract-portal/>

Contact Information and Feedback

Interagency personnel:

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John Chatel, john.chatel@usda.gov, 503-808-2972, Region 6 TES Program Leader

Susan Carter, scarter@blm.gov, 503-808-6592, OR/WA BLM State Botanist

Clint Emerson, clint.emerson@usda.gov, 503-808-2305, Region 6 Botanist

Christine Pyle, christine.pyle@usda.gov, 503-808-2691, ISSSSP web content manager, FS data contact

Chelsea Waddell, cwaddell@blm.gov, 503-808-6302, BLM Regional Wildlife, Botany & Fisheries Data Coordinator

We're always looking for feedback.

Is this newsletter helpful? What other kind of information or topics would you like to hear about?

Please send any comments you have to Rob Huff.