

Northwestern Basin and Range Section

This area is characterized by north–south trending mountain ranges and volcanic plateaus interspersed with broad, nearly level basins and valleys. The elevational range is 1200–2200 m (4000–7200 ft). Large alluvial fans have developed at the mouths of most canyons, and playas and marshes occur in valleys and basins. Water is scarce except at higher elevations. Few streams are present, and groundwater is a major water source for agricultural and residential uses.

Summers are hot and dry, and winters are cold and dry. Precipitation ranges from 10–79 cm (4–20 in) annually. Precipitation is evenly distributed throughout fall, winter, and spring. Average annual temperature is 5–10°C (41–50°F). The growing season ranges from 30–140 days.

Residential communities are small and sparsely distributed. Livestock production is the primary land use. Mining occurs in some areas.

Table 1. Northwestern Basin and Range land use and land ownership.

Land use	Area (ha)	Area (ac)	Percent
Dryland Agriculture	327,240	808,625	22
Timberland	212,263	524,511	14
Irrigated–Gravity Flow	38,687	95,596	3
Irrigated–Sprinkler	71,394	176,417	5
Rangeland	796,819	1,968,975	54
Riparian	14,603	36,084	1
Urban	8037	19,859	1
Water	7526	18,596	1
Total	1,476,567	3,648,662	100

Land ownership	Area (ha)	Area (ac)	Percent
USDI Bureau of Land Management	455,420	1,125,363	31
USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs	113,588	280,681	8
USDA Forest Service	227,170	561,346	15
US Department of Defense	189	468	<1
Open water	9175	22,672	1
Private	577,226	1,426,352	39
State of Idaho	93,870	231,957	6
Total	1,476,639	3,648,840	100

Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Northwestern Basin and Range

Fishes

Leopard Dace *Rhinichthys falcatus*
Umatilla Dace *Rhinichthys umatilla*
Northern Leatherside Chub *Lepidomeda copei*^a
Bluehead Sucker *Catostomus discobolus*^a
Bonneville Cutthroat Trout *Oncorhynchus clarkii utah*
Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout *Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri*^a
Inland Redband Trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss gairdneri*
Bull Trout *Salvelinus confluentus*

Amphibians

Columbia Spotted Frog (populations south of the Snake River) *Rana luteiventris*
Northern Leopard Frog *Rana pipiens*

Reptiles

Ring-necked Snake *Diadophis punctatus*

Birds

Trumpeter Swan *Cygnus buccinator*
Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*
Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis*
Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*
Hooded Merganser *Lophodytes cucullatus*
Greater Sage-Grouse *Centrocercus urophasianus*^a
Sharp-tailed Grouse *Tympanuchus phasianellus*^a
Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*
Clark's Grebe *Aechmophorus clarkii*
American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*^a
Great Egret *Ardea alba*
Snowy Egret *Egretta thula*^a
Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*
Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*^a
Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*
Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*
Ferruginous Hawk *Buteo regalis*^a
Merlin *Falco columbarius*^a
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*
Sandhill Crane *Grus canadensis*
Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*
American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana*
Long-billed Curlew *Numenius americanus*^a
Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*
Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan*
California Gull *Larus californicus*^a
Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*
Yellow-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus americanus*
Flammulated Owl *Otus flammeolus*

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*^a
Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*
Boreal Owl *Aegolius funereus*
Lewis's Woodpecker *Melanerpes lewis*
Pinyon Jay *Gymnorhinus cyanocephalus*^a
Juniper Titmouse *Baeolophus ridgwayi*^a
Virginia's Warbler *Vermivora virginiae*^a
Brewer's Sparrow *Spizella breweri*
Grasshopper Sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*
Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*
South Hills Crossbill *Loxia* sp. [undescribed]^a
Lesser Goldfinch *Carduelis psaltria*^a

Mammals

Merriam's Shrew *Sorex merriami*^a
California Myotis *Myotis californicus*
Spotted Bat *Euderma maculatum*
Townsend's Big-eared Bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*
Pygmy Rabbit *Brachylagus idahoensis*
Cliff Chipmunk *Neotamias dorsalis*
Wyoming Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus elegans*
Great Basin Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus mollis*^a
Idaho Pocket Gopher *Thomomys idahoensis*
Townsend's Pocket Gopher *Thomomys townsendii*
Little Pocket Mouse *Perognathus longimembris*
Piñon Mouse *Peromyscus truei*^a
Kit Fox *Vulpes macrotis*
Wolverine *Gulo gulo*
Bighorn Sheep (populations south of the Snake River) *Ovis canadensis*

Gastropods

Green River Pebblesnail *Fluminicola coloradoensis*^a
Bear Lake Springsnail *Pyrgulopsis pilsbryana*
Mountain Marshsnail *Stagnicola montanensis*

Insects

A Mayfly *Centroptilum selanderorum*

^a Species for which the Northwestern Basin and Range represents a significant portion of their Idaho range.

Habitats in the Northwestern Basin and Range

Table 2. Northwestern Basin and Range habitats.

Habitat	Area (km ²)	Area (ac)	Percent
Urban	35	8749	<1
Arableland	3070	758,716	21
Non-native Herbaceous	785	193,976	5
Upland Deciduous Forest	556	137,324	4
Southern Woodland	554	136,804	4
Dry Conifer Forest	184	45,320	1
Subalpine Forest	177	43,809	1
Mesic Deciduous Shrubland	666	164,559	5
Southern Xeric Shrubland and Steppe	8367	2,067,387	57
Dry Grassland	24	5853	<1
Subalpine Grassland	56	14,039	<1
Open Water	81	19,976	1
Southern Wetland	29	7123	<1
Riparian Woodland	169	41,437	1
Total	14,753	3,645,072	100

Priority Habitats and Associated Vertebrate Species in the Northwestern Basin and Range

Arableland

Fishes

- Bonneville Cutthroat Trout *Oncorhynchus clarkii utah*
- Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout *Oncorhynchus clarkii bouvieri*

Amphibians

- Northern Leopard Frog *Rana pipiens*

Birds

- Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*
- Greater Sage-Grouse *Centrocercus urophasianus*
- Sharp-tailed Grouse *Tympanuchus phasianellus*
- Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*
- White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi*
- Merlin *Falco columbarius*
- Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus*
- Long-billed Curlew *Numenius americanus*
- Franklin's Gull *Larus pipixcan*
- California Gull *Larus californicus*
- Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*

Mammals

Wyoming Ground Squirrel *Spermophilus elegans*
Townsend's Pocket Gopher *Thomomys townsendii*

Non–native Herbaceous

Birds

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*
Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*
Grasshopper Sparrow *Ammodramus savannarum*
Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*

Mammals

Merriam's Shrew *Sorex merriami*
Townsend's Big–eared Bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*
Idaho Pocket Gopher *Thomomys idahoensis*
Townsend's Pocket Gopher *Thomomys townsendii*
Bighorn Sheep (populations south of the Snake River) *Ovis canadensis*

Mesic Deciduous Shrubland

Amphibians

Columbia Spotted Frog (populations south of the Snake River) *Rana luteiventris*

Birds

Blue Grosbeak *Passerina caerulea*

Mammals

Pygmy Rabbit *Brachylagus idahoensis*
Bighorn Sheep (populations south of the Snake River) *Ovis canadensis*

Southern Xeric Shrubland and Steppe

Fishes

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Reptiles

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Birds

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Kit Fox *Vulpes macrotis*

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