

Vegetation Inventory for OMBIL

Nation wide land cover data is available from the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium (MRLC) at www.mrlc.gov.

The National Land Cover Database 2001 land cover was produced through a cooperative project conducted by the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics (MRLC) Consortium. The MRLC Consortium is a partnership of federal agencies consisting of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), the National Park Service (NPS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). One of the primary goals of the project was to generate a current, consistent, seamless, and accurate National Land cover Database (NLCD) circa 2001 for the United States at medium spatial resolution. For a detailed definition and discussion on MRLC and the NLCD 2001 products, refer to Homer et al. (2004) and <http://www.mrlc.gov/mrlc2k.asp>.

Land cover mapping was based on satellite triplicates collected during the growing season (spring, summer, and fall). The national streams network, the National Wetlands Inventory, and the Wetlands Restoration Program lands were used to improve the classification.

NLCD 2001 Land Cover Class Definitions

[Download](#) the NLCD 2001 Land Cover Color Classification Legend

11. Open Water - All areas of open water, generally with less than 25% cover of vegetation or soil.

12. Perennial Ice/Snow - All areas characterized by a perennial cover of ice and/or snow, generally greater than 25% of total cover.

21. Developed, Open Space - Includes areas with a mixture of some constructed materials, but mostly vegetation in the form of lawn grasses. Impervious surfaces account for less than 20 percent of total cover. These areas most commonly include large-lot single-family housing units, parks, golf courses, and vegetation planted in developed settings for recreation, erosion control, or aesthetic purposes

22. Developed, Low Intensity - Includes areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Impervious surfaces account for 20-49 percent of total cover. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units.

23. Developed, Medium Intensity - Includes areas with a mixture of constructed materials and vegetation. Impervious surfaces account for 50-79 percent of the total cover. These areas most commonly include single-family housing units.

24. Developed, High Intensity - Includes highly developed areas where people reside or work in high numbers. Examples include apartment complexes, row houses and commercial/industrial. Impervious surfaces account for 80 to 100 percent of the total cover.

31. Barren Land (Rock/Sand/Clay) - Barren areas of bedrock, desert pavement, scarps, talus, slides, volcanic material, glacial debris, sand dunes, strip mines, gravel pits and other accumulations of earthen material. Generally, vegetation accounts for less than 15% of total cover.

32. Unconsolidated Shore* - Unconsolidated material such as silt, sand, or gravel that is subject to inundation and redistribution due to the action of water. Characterized by substrates lacking vegetation except for pioneering plants that become established during brief periods when growing conditions are favorable. Erosion and deposition by waves and currents produce a number of landforms representing this class.

41. Deciduous Forest - Areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75 percent of the tree species shed foliage simultaneously in response to seasonal change.

42. Evergreen Forest - Areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. More than 75 percent of the tree species maintain their leaves all year. Canopy is never without green foliage.

43. Mixed Forest - Areas dominated by trees generally greater than 5 meters tall, and greater than 20% of total vegetation cover. Neither deciduous nor evergreen species are greater than 75 percent of total tree cover.

51. Dwarf Scrub - Alaska only areas dominated by shrubs less than 20 centimeters tall with shrub canopy typically greater than 20% of total vegetation. This type is often co-associated with grasses, sedges, herbs, and non-vascular vegetation.

52. Shrub/Scrub - Areas dominated by shrubs; less than 5 meters tall with shrub canopy typically greater than 20% of total vegetation. This class includes true shrubs, young trees in an early successional stage or trees stunted from environmental conditions.

71. Grassland/Herbaceous - Areas dominated by graminoid or herbaceous vegetation, generally greater than 80% of total vegetation. These areas are not subject to intensive management such as tilling, but can be utilized for grazing.

72. Sedge/Herbaceous - Alaska only areas dominated by sedges and forbs, generally greater than 80% of total vegetation. This type can occur with significant other grasses or other grass like plants, and includes sedge tundra, and sedge tussock tundra.

73. Lichens - Alaska only areas dominated by fruticose or foliose lichens generally greater than 80% of total vegetation.

74. Moss - Alaska only areas dominated by mosses, generally greater than 80% of total vegetation.

81. Pasture/Hay - Areas of grasses, legumes, or grass-legume mixtures planted for livestock grazing or the production of seed or hay crops, typically on a perennial cycle. Pasture/hay vegetation accounts for greater than 20 percent of total vegetation.

82. Cultivated Crops - Areas used for the production of annual crops, such as corn, soybeans, vegetables, tobacco, and cotton, and also perennial woody crops such as orchards and vineyards. Crop vegetation accounts for greater than 20 percent of total vegetation. This class also includes all land being actively tilled.

90. Woody Wetlands - Areas where forest or shrubland vegetation accounts for greater than 20 percent of vegetative cover and the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with or covered with water.

91. Palustrine Forested Wetland* - Includes all tidal and non-tidal wetlands dominated by woody vegetation greater than or equal to 5 meters in height and all such wetlands that occur in tidal areas in which salinity due to ocean-derived salts is below 0.5 percent. Total vegetation coverage is greater than 20 percent.

92. Palustrine Scrub/Shrub Wetland* - Includes all tidal and non-tidal wetlands dominated by woody vegetation less than 5 meters in height, and all such wetlands that occur in tidal areas in which salinity due to ocean-derived salts is below 0.5 percent. Total vegetation coverage is greater than 20 percent. The species present could be true shrubs, young trees and shrubs or trees that are small or stunted due to environmental conditions.

93. Estuarine Forested Wetland* - Includes all tidal wetlands dominated by woody vegetation greater than or equal to 5 meters in height, and all such wetlands that occur in tidal areas in which salinity due to ocean-derived salts is equal to or greater than 0.5 percent. Total vegetation coverage is greater than 20 percent.

94. Estuarine Scrub/Shrub Wetland* - Includes all tidal wetlands dominated by woody vegetation less than 5 meters in height, and all such wetlands that occur in tidal areas in which salinity due to ocean-derived salts is equal to or greater than 0.5 percent. Total vegetation coverage is greater than 20 percent.

95. Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands - Areas where perennial herbaceous vegetation accounts for greater than 80 percent of vegetative cover and the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with or covered with water.

96. Palustrine Emergent Wetland (Persistent)* - Includes all tidal and non-tidal wetlands dominated by persistent emergent vascular plants, emergent mosses or lichens, and all such wetlands that occur in tidal areas in which salinity due to ocean-derived salts is below 0.5 percent. Plants generally remain standing until the next growing season.

97. Estuarine Emergent Wetland* - Includes all tidal wetlands dominated by erect, rooted, herbaceous hydrophytes (excluding mosses and lichens) and all such

wetlands that occur in tidal areas in which salinity due to ocean-derived salts is equal to or greater than 0.5 percent and that are present for most of the growing season in most years. Perennial plants usually dominate these wetlands.

98. Palustrine Aquatic Bed* - The Palustrine Aquatic Bed class includes tidal and nontidal wetlands and deepwater habitats in which salinity due to ocean-derived salts is below 0.5 percent and which are dominated by plants that grow and form a continuous cover principally on or at the surface of the water. These include algal mats, detached floating mats, and rooted vascular plant assemblages.

99. Estuarine Aquatic Bed* - Includes tidal wetlands and deepwater habitats in which salinity due to ocean-derived salts is equal to or greater than 0.5 percent and which are dominated by plants that grow and form a continuous cover principally on or at the surface of the water. These include algal mats, kelp beds, and rooted vascular plant assemblages.

Steps to obtain Land Cover data

1. From website (www.mrlc.gov) select “Access Data” and select “Download NLCD 2001 Data”. Choose area of United States that covers district lakes. You may need to download several map areas.
2. Select to Download the Land Cover zip file.
3. The downloaded will have a land cover raster file for the map area. Use Spatial Analysis to convert the raster to polygon features in a shapefile.
4. Use the project boundary shapefile to clip the land cover shapefile to include only the areas that lie within the project boundary.
5. Using the attribute table for the clipped shapefile, calculate acreage and then summarize each land cover category.
6. Some projections were made in several vegetative categories to arrive at the acreage for some vegetative sub classes. For instance, this system only breaks the wooded vegetation down to deciduous, evergreen and mixed forests. It does not identify open tree canopy verses closed tree canopy. Aerial photos and field surveys were conducted to estimate the percent of open tree canopy and closed tree canopy for these three sub classes.

Assessing Conditions of Corps lands

(From document “Natural Resources Level One Inventories: What are the Needs and Process for Corps Projects?” by Chester O. Martin, Jeff Krause, and Donald N. Wiese)

Part of the SAT directive is the development of project lands “natural resources condition measures”. This system assigns condition ratings for assessed acreage of each vegetative subclass occurring on a project as (a) sustainable, (b) transitioning, (c) degraded, or

(d) not assessed. The following definitions have been developed by the SAT to standardize condition ratings:

SUSTAINABLE – Meeting desired state. The acreage is not significantly impacted by any factors that can be managed and does not require intensive management. The acreage also meets operational goals and objectives set out in project OMP or other applicable management document. These acres are considered healthy and sustainable for future generations. Only minor management practices may be required to maintain the health.

TRANSITIONING – Managed to meet desired goals. The acreage is impacted by human or other environmental factors that require management of the acreage to meet goals and objectives outlined in the project OMP or other applicable management document.

DEGRADED – Does not meet desired goals. The acreage is significantly impacted by human or other environmental factors that prevent the acreage from meeting desired goals outlined in the project OMP or other management documents. The acreage is not considered healthy. Intense management may be required to meet desired goals.

These ratings will be applied to each vegetation category by assessing the land or water components or parcels that make up each vegetative sub-class. Project staff should evaluate Operation Management Plan objectives and environmental impacts against the stated definitions to assess acreages within the different vegetation types. Impacts may be any factor that potentially degrades a resource such as erosion, foot traffic, invasive species, overbrowsing of deer, lack of desired species diversity, and development. Acreage that has not been evaluated or impacts that are not understood should not be classified and left as not assessed.