

Rogue Basin

Description

The Rogue River flows for 200 miles from its headwaters near Crater Lake to join the Pacific Ocean at Gold Beach. Its large drainage basin covers an area characterized by steep, forested, dissected mountains to gentle foothills and valley bottoms. Land use patterns in the basin range from the cities and towns of the Rogue Valley with their surrounding suburbs, orchards and farms, to commercial forestlands, to extensive public forest lands and wilderness areas.

The basin lies largely within the Klamath Mountains ecoregion, an area widely recognized for its complex geologic structure, vegetation patterns and overall biological diversity. Of note are the serpentine, limestone and granitic habitats, which are found only in this part of western Oregon and adjacent California. This unusual geology, and the fact that the mountains are the oldest in Oregon, have resulted in the evolution of many endemic plant species, a number of which are considered at-risk.

Major rivers include the Rogue, Applegate and Illinois. The lower 88 mile section of the Rogue is a state and federal wild and scenic river, and the lower 46 miles of the Illinois has been designated a state scenic waterway. While the basin's chinook salmon and steelhead fisheries are world-renowned, native stocks of almost all its anadromous fish are declining. Coho salmon are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

Douglas fir forests, oak woodlands and ponderosa pine woodlands once dominated most of the landscape in the Rogue Basin. All have declined significantly over the past 150 years due to fire suppression, rural residential development and timber harvesting. Important conservation issues in the basin include dealing with the long-term impacts of fire suppression, loss of wetlands, riparian habitat and floodplain connectivity along portions of the Rogue and its tributaries, restoration of coastal salmon populations, and conservation of at risk plant species, especially endemics, in developing areas.

Priority Ecological Systems

California – Southern Oregon coastal bluffs and headlands
Coastal sand dune
Deciduous swamp
Intertidal freshwater wetland
Intertidal mudflat
Lowland riparian woodland and shrubland
Montane riparian woodland and shrubland
Oak woodland
Ponderosa pine woodland
Serpentine barrens
Subalpine or Montane wet meadow
Tidal salt marsh

Basin Ecological Priorities
September 14, 2004

Western Oregon upland prairie and oak savanna
Western Oregon wet prairie

Rare or At-Risk Plant Communities

Annual hairgrass vernal pool
Bracted popcorn-flower - purslane speedwell vernal pool
Bractless hedge-hyssop - bracted popcorn flower vernal pool
Brodiaea prairie
Buckbrush / Lemmon needlegrass
California oatgrass - Roemer fescue
California oatgrass valley grassland
Cascade downingia - bracted popcorn flower vernal pool
Dense sedge - spreading rush marsh
Dwarf woolly-heads vernal pool
Greenleaf manzanita - cherry - bitterbrush chaparral
Hyacinth brodiaea - annual hairgrass vernal pool
Knobcone pine / hoary manzanita
Mousetail - bracted popcorn flower vernal pool
Navarretia - bracted popcorn flower vernal pool
Nuttall quillwort - bracted popcorn flower vernal pool
Ponderosa pine - white oak - black oak / woodland and savanna
Ponderosa pine - white oak / bunchgrass savanna
Rogue - Umpqua upland grassland
Tufted hairgrass - California oatgrass valley prairie
White oak - black oak / poison oak
White oak / buckbrush / Idaho fescue
White oak / Idaho fescue savanna

Rogue Basin – Priority Species

<i>Fish</i>	<i>Birds</i>	<i>Mammals</i>	<i>Amphibians and Reptiles</i>	<i>Invertebrates</i>	<i>Plants</i>
Coho Salmon Chinook Salmon (fall run)	Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher Bullock's Oriole Green Heron Lewis's Woodpecker Oak Titmouse Tricolored Blackbird White-Breasted Nuthatch	Fringed Bat Townsend's Big-Eared Bat	Cascade Frog Common Kingsnake Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog Red-Legged Frog Northwestern Pond Turtle Siskiyou Mountains Salamander	<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i> (Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp) <i>Flumincola</i> sp 19 (Keene Creek Pebblesnail) <i>Helminthoglypta hertleini</i> (Oregon Shoulderband – Snail) <i>Monadenia fidelis celeuthia</i> (Traveling Sideband) <i>Polites mardon</i> (Mardon Skipper Butterfly) <i>Prophysaon</i> Sp 1 (Klamath Tail-Dropper) <i>Stygobromus oregonensis</i> (Oregon Cave Amphipod)	<i>Agrostis hendersonii</i> ¹ (Henderson's Bentgrass) <i>Calochortus persistens</i> (Siskiyou Mariposa Lily) <i>Cirsium ciliolatum</i> (Ashland Thistle) <i>Fritillaria gentneri</i> (Gentner's Fritillaria) <i>Limnanthes floccosa</i> Ssp. <i>grandiflora</i> (Big-Flowered Woolly Meadowfoam) <i>Limnanthes gracilis</i> var. <i>gracilis</i> (Slender Meadow-Foam) <i>Lomatium cookii</i> (Agate Desert Lomatium) <i>Meconella oregana</i> (White Meconella) <i>Plagiobothrys figuratus</i> ssp. <i>Corallicarpus</i> (Coral Seeded Allocarya)

Rogue Basin – Priority Species

¹ This small vernal pool species is only known from the watershed, but has not been seen in over 40 years.