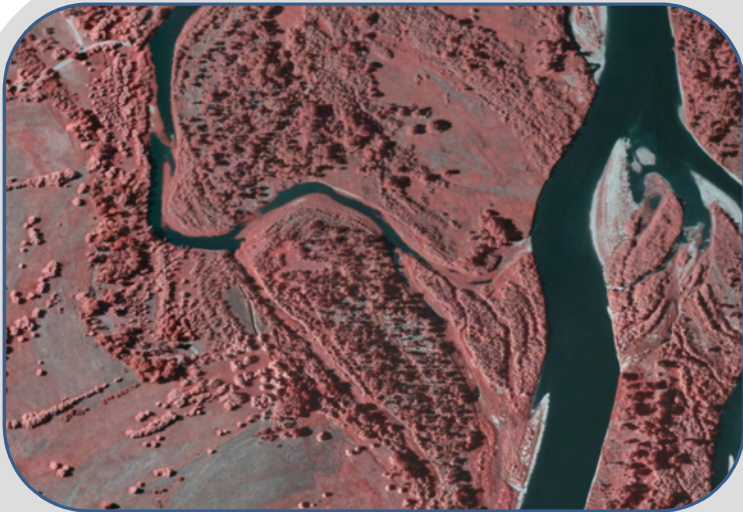


MONTANA WETLAND AND RIPARIAN MAPPING CENTER



The Wetland and Riparian Mapping Center (WRMC) of the Montana Natural Heritage Program (MTNHP) is creating digital wetland and riparian maps with the support of multiple project partners. Our goal is to create a statewide digital wetland and riparian layer as a resource for management, planning, conservation, and restoration efforts. The maps provide information on the type, size, and location of wetland and riparian resources. Digital wetland mapping is necessary to effectively and efficiently assess and monitor Montana's wetland resources.

Wetlands are one of the 14 Montana Framework Layers within the Montana Spatial Data Infrastructure. The WRMC follows the national wetland mapping standard. Wetlands are mapped using the Cowardin classification system of the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI). Riparian mapping follows the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's System for Mapping Riparian Areas.



Mapping is completed through photointerpretation of 1-m resolution color infrared aerial imagery. Ancillary data layers such as topographic maps, digital elevation models, soils data, and other aerial imagery sources are also used to improve mapping accuracy.

Wetland mapping data can be enhanced with the addition of hydrogeomorphic (HGM) modifiers, which provide information on the potential function of wetlands by incorporating information on their landscape position, water source, and water flow patterns.

WETLAND AND RIPARIAN MAPPING

Federal, State, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands may define and describe wetlands differently than the NWI. Mapped wetlands do not represent precise wetland boundaries, and digital wetland data cannot substitute for an on-site determination of jurisdictional wetlands.



Online Resources:

<http://mtnhp.org/nwi/>
<http://mtnhp.org/nwi/FGDC.pdf>
<http://mtnhp.org/nwi/riparian.pdf>
<http://mtnhp.org/nwi/Cowardin.pdf>
<http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/mapper.html>

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