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A geospatial assessment on the distribution, condition, and vulnerability of Wyoming's wetlands

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Abstract

Wetlands serve critical functions including natural flood control and providing wildlife habitat, yet despite these values they remain highly threatened systems. Here we present a landscape-scale geospatial assessment of wetlands in Wyoming. Areas containing high densities of wetlands were identified and mapped, and wetland complexes were quantified as a function of their biological diversity, protection status, susceptibility to climate change, and proximity to sources of impairment. Our results indicate there are 280591 wetlands in Wyoming, totaling 371758 surface hectares, and 222 wetland complexes. The majority (67%) of wetlands are classified as temporary. Low elevation wetland complexes are the least protected, in the poorest current condition, and the most vulnerable to future land use changes. This fundamental information will provide a tool decision-makers can use to more effectively allocate

limited resources to conserve, manage, and restore Wyoming's wetlands.



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Keywords

Biodiversity assessment; Condition assessment; Vulnerability assessment; Climate change

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