

Bitterroot Mountains Section

This area comprises steep, dissected mountains with sharp crests and narrow valleys. Elevation ranges from 366–2135 m (1200–7000 ft). Soil is shallow to moderately deep with loamy to sandy textures and usually contains volcanic ash. Perennial streams are generally fairly steep and deeply incised. Major rivers include the Coeur d’Alene, St. Maries, St. Joe, and Clearwater.

Annual precipitation averages 102–203 cm (40–80 in). Most precipitation falls as snow, and summers are relatively dry. Annual average temperature ranges from 2–7°C (36–45°F). Climate is maritime–influenced, having cool and moist overall conditions with relatively mild winters and drier summers. The growing season varies with elevation and ranges from 45 to 100 days.

Communities are generally small and many are situated along major waterbodies. Coeur d’Alene is the major population center. Mining, timber harvest, and recreation are dominant land uses, and livestock grazing is locally important.

Table 1. Bitterroot Mountains land use and land ownership.

Land use	Area (ha)	Area (ac)	Percent
Dryland Agriculture	108,962	269,249	6
Timberland	1,584,989	3,916,578	84
Rangeland	148,423	366,759	8
Riparian	15,714	38,829	1
Urban	10,340	25,551	1
Water	19,512	48,215	1
Total	1,887,939	4,665,181	100

Land ownership	Area (ha)	Area (ac)	Percent
USDI Bureau of land Management	39,526	97,671	2
USDI Bureau of Indian Affairs	5659	13,983	<1
USDA Forest Service	1,103,911	2,727,812	58
US Department of Defense	5810	14,357	<1
USDI National Park Service	401	991	<1
Open water	21,611	53,401	1
Private	578,316	1,429,045	31
State of Idaho	132,707	327,926	7
Total	1,887,941	4,665,186	100

Species of Greatest Conservation Need in the Bitterroot Mountains

Lampreys

Pacific Lamprey *Lampetra tridentata*

Fishes

Westslope Cutthroat Trout *Oncorhynchus clarkii lewis*^a

Inland Redband Trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss gairdneri*

Steelhead (Snake River basin) *Oncorhynchus mykiss gairdneri*

Chinook Salmon (Snake River fall–run) *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*

Chinook Salmon (Snake River spring/summer–run) *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*

Pygmy Whitefish *Prosopium coulterii*

Bull Trout *Salvelinus confluentus*^a

Amphibians

Northern Leopard Frog *Rana pipiens*

Idaho Giant Salamander *Dicamptodon aterrimus*^a

Coeur d'Alene Salamander *Plethodon idahoensis*^a

Reptiles

Northern Alligator Lizard *Elgaria coerulea*

Ring-necked Snake *Diadophis punctatus*

Birds

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta*

Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*^a

Hooded Merganser *Lophodytes cucullatus*^a

Mountain Quail *Oreortyx pictus*

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*^a

Western Grebe *Aechmophorus occidentalis*

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*^a

Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Upland Sandpiper *Bartramia longicauda*

Long-billed Curlew *Numenius americanus*

Wilson's Phalarope *Phalaropus tricolor*

California Gull *Larus californicus*

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Boreal Owl *Aegolius funereus*^a

Black Swift *Cypseloides niger*^a

Lewis's Woodpecker *Melanerpes lewis*

White-headed Woodpecker *Picoides albolarvatus*^a

American Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides dorsalis*^a

Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea*

White-winged Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera*^a

Mammals

Pygmy Shrew *Sorex hoyi*
California Myotis *Myotis californicus*^a
Fringed Myotis *Myotis thysanodes*^a
Townsend's Big-eared Bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*
Red-tailed Chipmunk *Neotamias ruficaudus*^a
Gray Wolf *Canis lupus*^a
Fisher *Martes pennanti*^a
Wolverine *Gulo gulo*^a
Canada Lynx *Lynx canadensis*^a
Mountain Goat *Oreamnos americanus*

Bivalves

Western Pearlshell *Margaritifera falcata*

Gastropods

Fir Pinwheel *Radiodiscus abietum*
Pygmy Slug *Kootenaia burkei*^a
Pale Jumping-slug *Hemphillia camelus*
Magnum Mantleslug *Magnipelta mycophaga*^a
Smoky Taildropper *Prophysaon humile*^a
Sheathed Slug *Zacoleus idahoensis*
Lyre Mantleslug *Udosarx lyrata*^a
Thinlip Tightcoil *Pristiloma idahoense*
An Oregonian *Cryptomastix mullani blandi*^a
An Oregonian (Lower Clearwater River) *Cryptomastix mullani tuckeri*
Kingston Oregonian *Cryptomastix sanburni*^a
Humped Coin *Polygyrella polygyrella*

Insects

A Mayfly *Caurinella idahoensis*
A Mayfly *Ameletus suffusus*^a
A Mayfly *Ameletus tolae*^a
A Mayfly *Paraleptophlebia vaciva*
A Spur-throat Grasshopper *Melanoplus digitifer*
A Stonefly *Capnia zukeli*
A Stonefly *Megaleuctra kincaidi*^a
A Stonefly *Taenionema umatilla*^a
A Spring Stonefly *Cascadoperla trictura*^a
A Stonefly *Pictetiella expansa*
Gillette's Checkerspot *Euphydryas gillettii*

^a Species for which the Bitterroot Mountains represents a significant portion of their Idaho range.

Habitats in the Bitterroot Mountains

Table 2. Bitterroot Mountains habitats.

Habitat	Area (km ²)	Area (ac)	Percent
Urban	36	8989	<1
Arableland	214	52,779	1
Upland Deciduous Forest	148	36,570	1
Dry Conifer Forest	6726	1,661,921	36
Northern Mesic Conifer Forest	6054	1,496,152	32
Subalpine Forest	2281	563,700	12
Mesic Deciduous Shrubland	1824	450,598	10
Dry Grassland	280	69,092	1
Palouse Prairie	258	63,751	1
Subalpine Grassland	237	58,499	1
Open Water	217	53,582	1
Riparian Woodland	418	103,197	2
Dune, Canyon, and Rockland	183	45,223	1
Total	18,876	4,664,053	100

Priority Habitats and Associated Vertebrate Species in the Bitterroot Mountains

Dry Conifer Forest

Lampreys

Pacific Lamprey *Lampetra tridentata*

Fishes

Westslope Cutthroat Trout *Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi*

Chinook Salmon (Snake River fall–run) *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*

Chinook Salmon (Snake River spring/summer–run) *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*

Pygmy Whitefish *Prosopium coulterii*

Bull Trout *Salvelinus confluentus*

Amphibians

Northern Leopard Frog *Rana pipiens*

Idaho Giant Salamander *Dicamptodon aterrimus*

Coeur d'Alene Salamander *Plethodon idahoensis*

Reptiles

Ring-necked Snake *Diadophis punctatus*

Birds

Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*

Mountain Quail *Oreortyx pictus*

Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*
Merlin *Falco columbarius*
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*
Boreal Owl *Aegolius funereus*
Black Swift *Cypseloides niger*
White-headed Woodpecker *Picoides albolarvatus*
American Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides dorsalis*
Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea*
White-winged Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera*

Mammals

Pygmy Shrew *Sorex hoyi*
Fringed Myotis *Myotis thysanodes*
Townsend's Big-eared Bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*
Red-tailed Chipmunk *Neotamias ruficaudus*
Gray Wolf *Canis lupus*
Fisher *Martes pennanti*
Wolverine *Gulo gulo*
Canada Lynx *Lynx canadensis*
Mountain Goat *Oreamnos americanus*

Northern Mesic Conifer Forest

Lampreys

Pacific Lamprey *Lampetra tridentata*

Fishes

Westslope Cutthroat Trout *Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi*
Chinook Salmon (Snake River fall-run) *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*
Chinook Salmon (Snake River spring/summer-run) *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*
Pygmy Whitefish *Prosopium coulterii*
Bull Trout *Salvelinus confluentus*

Amphibians

Northern Leopard Frog *Rana pipiens*
Idaho Giant Salamander *Dicamptodon aterrimus*
Coeur d'Alene Salamander *Plethodon idahoensis*

Birds

Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*
Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*
Boreal Owl *Aegolius funereus*
Black Swift *Cypseloides niger*
Pygmy Nuthatch *Sitta pygmaea*

White-winged Crossbill *Loxia leucoptera*

Mammals

Pygmy Shrew *Sorex hoyi*
Townsend's Big-eared Bat *Corynorhinus townsendii*
Red-tailed Chipmunk *Neotamias ruficaudus*
Gray Wolf *Canis lupus*
Fisher *Martes pennanti*
Wolverine *Gulo gulo*
Canada Lynx *Lynx canadensis*

Subalpine Forest

Fishes

Pygmy Whitefish *Prosopium coulterii*

Amphibians

Northern Leopard Frog *Rana pipiens*
Idaho Giant Salamander *Dicamptodon aterrimus*

Birds

Harlequin Duck *Histrionicus histrionicus*
Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*
Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*
Boreal Owl *Aegolius funereus*
Black Swift *Cypseloides niger*
White-headed Woodpecker *Picoides albolarvatus*
American Three-toed Woodpecker *Picoides dorsalis*

Mammals

Pygmy Shrew *Sorex hoyi*
Fisher *Martes pennanti*
Wolverine *Gulo gulo*
Canada Lynx *Lynx canadensis*
Mountain Goat *Oreamnos americanus*

Mesic Deciduous Shrubland

Lampreys

Pacific Lamprey *Lampetra tridentata*

Fishes

Westslope Cutthroat Trout *Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi*
Chinook Salmon (Snake River spring/summer-run) *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*
Bull Trout *Salvelinus confluentus*

Amphibians

Coeur d'Alene Salamander *Plethodon idahoensis*

Birds

Mountain Quail *Oreortyx pictus*

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Mammals

Townsend's Big-eared Bat *Corynorhinus townsendi*

Gray Wolf *Canis lupus*