
Dwarf Shrew

Sorex nanus

Mammalia — Insectivora — Soricidae

CONSERVATION STATUS / CLASSIFICATION

Rangewide: Apparently secure (G4)
Statewide: Imperiled (S2)
ESA: No status
USFS: Region 1: No status; Region 4: No status
BLM: No status
IDFG: Unprotected wildlife

BASIS FOR INCLUSION

Lack of essential information pertaining to status in Idaho.

TAXONOMY

The dwarf shrew is a monotypic species.

DISTRIBUTION AND ABUNDANCE

The dwarf shrew is locally distributed across the interior western U. S., including portions of the Rocky Mountains, Colorado Plateau, Great Basin, and northern Great Plains (Hoffman and Owen 1980). Only a single record of this species has been reported in Idaho, although the potential range includes the upper-most reaches of the Snake and Bear River basins near the Idaho-Wyoming border and the vast central interior of Idaho.

The species appears to occur in relatively small, isolated populations. However, species rarity may be related to sampling method and effort rather than actual abundance. Relatively high rates of capture in pitfall traps in Colorado suggest that dwarf shrews may be locally common in appropriate habitat (Armstrong et al. 1973). In Idaho, measures of population trends and estimates of population size for the dwarf shrew are not available.

POPULATION TREND

Population trend is unknown.

HABITAT AND ECOLOGY

The sole Idaho record is from an area with vegetation consisting of mesic shrubs, including choke cherry, Saskatoon serviceberry, tobacco ceanothus, and Scouler's willow. Throughout much of its range, the dwarf shrew is associated with rocky, montane habitat, especially talus fields and rocky areas in alpine and subalpine habitat. However, in some areas individuals have been found in mixed-shrub meadows in lower-elevation forests, sagebrush, pinyon-juniper woodland, shortgrass prairie, or stubble fields at elevations as low as 600 m (2000 ft). The species is relatively tolerant of arid

environments and has been found up to 0.8 km (0.5 mi) from surface water (Clothier 1957).

ISSUES

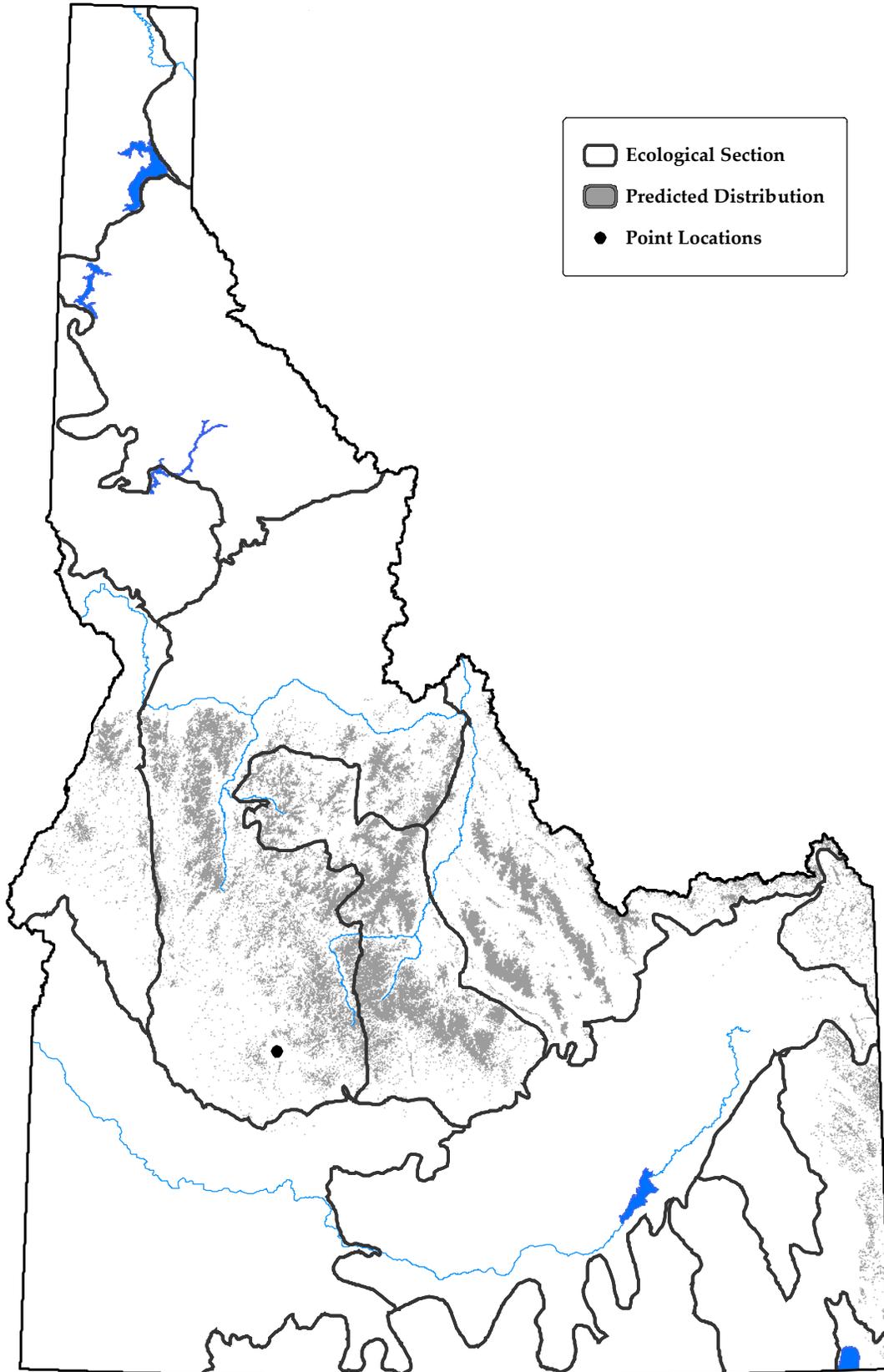
Information regarding the distribution and status of populations is lacking. Few data are available to suggest habitat associations or threats to habitat integrity or population viability. Ever-increasing levels of human activity in alpine and subalpine ecosystems have the potential to affect habitat.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The population status, trends, distribution, and habitat associations are poorly known, as are many aspects of life history (food habits, reproductive biology, predator-prey interactions). Baseline surveys are needed throughout the potential range.

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Map created on September 28, 2005

and prepared by Idaho Conservation Data Center.

Sources: Point data are from Idaho Conservation Data Center, Idaho Department of Fish and Game (2005). Predicted distribution is from the Wildlife Habitat Relationships Models (WHR),

A Gap Analysis of Idaho: Final Report. Idaho Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Moscow, ID (Scott et al. 2002).

Predicted distribution is approximate (for more information, go to http://www.wildlife.uidaho.edu/idgap/idgap_report.asp).

