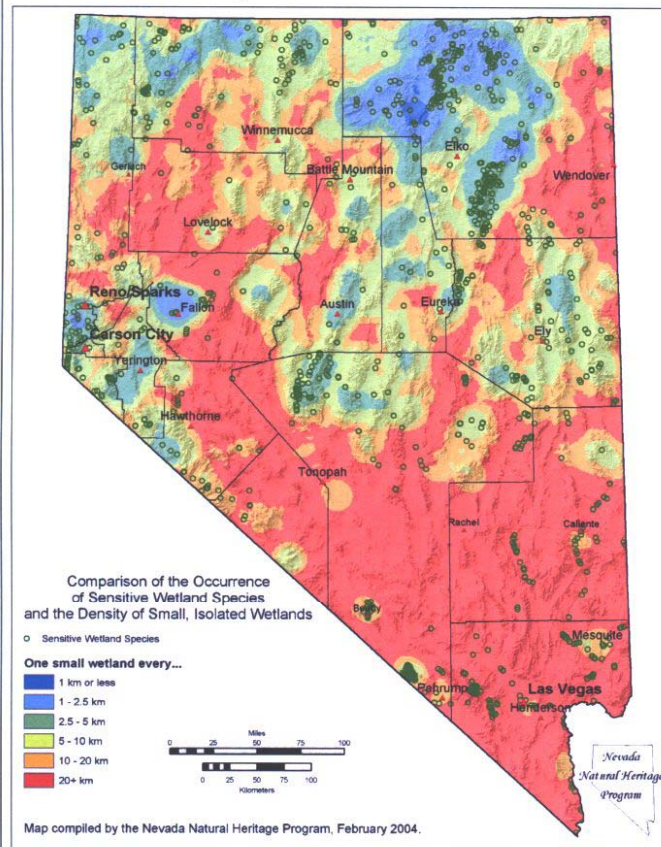


Figure 1.5 Cluster Distribution of Wetlands Features <40 Acres Combined with Mapped Occurrences of At Risk Wetland Species



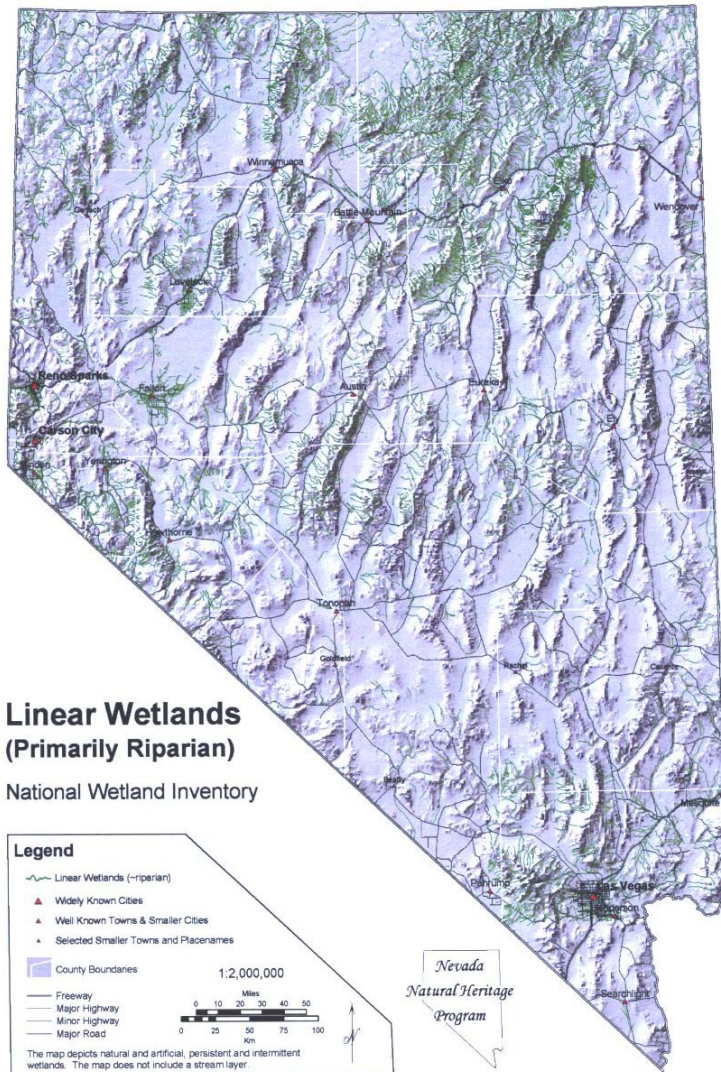
Source: Small wetland density cluster analysis by NNHP using NWI point data.  
 Notes: Small wetlands are features less than 40 acres, such as springs, ponds, and riparian fragments mapped by the NWI. The occurrence of wetland points per unit area is highest in blue areas, lowest in red.

The “wettest” hydrographic regions within Nevada are the Snake River Basin and Northwestern Region, in the remote volcanic uplands and plateaus of northeastern and northwestern Nevada. More precipitation and lower evapotranspiration rates are due to higher latitude and basin elevations. Valleys receive ten to twelve inches of rain and snow each year, generating a relatively high density of wetlands smaller than 40 acres and linear wetlands (Figure 1.5). The Northwestern Region drains internally into playa lakes and small reservoirs, but the Snake River Basin Region watersheds are tributaries to the Snake River in Idaho. Riparian and aspen woodlands, wet meadows, and emergent marshes are distributed throughout. Snake River tributaries rise in the Jarbidge and Independence ranges. These include the Owyhee, Bruneau, Jarbidge, and Salmon Falls, which course

northward into Idaho. Wild Horse Reservoir is the largest water body (about 2,800 acres) and a popular water recreation area.

The Nevada portion of the Death Valley Basin Hydrographic Region expresses wetland resource attributes similar to the Colorado River Basin, but drier still. Spring systems fed by the regional carbonate aquifer emerge at Ash Meadows and in the Amargosa River valley. The wetlands of these sites also are biodiversity hot spots, inhabited by dozens of rare, endemic plant and animal species. Other hydrographic regions with relatively abundant and notable wetland features are the Black Rock Desert Basin Region and the Great Salt Lake Basin Region. The wetlands in the other hydrographic regions are less substantial and visible, but by no means less vital to the people and wildlife that depend upon them.

Figure 1.6 Linear Wetlands Map, Nevada NWI



Map compiled by the Nevada Natural Heritage Program, January 2005, from the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) database. The NWI mapped wetlands in Nevada at the 1:250,000 scale using 1:58,000 scale color infrared aerial photographs taken in the summer from 1980 through 1989. The NWI is a branch of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

40 acres)  
meadow,  
ble 1.5).



Figure 1.7 Large Wetlands (Vegetated, Playas, and Open Waters) Map, Nevada NWI

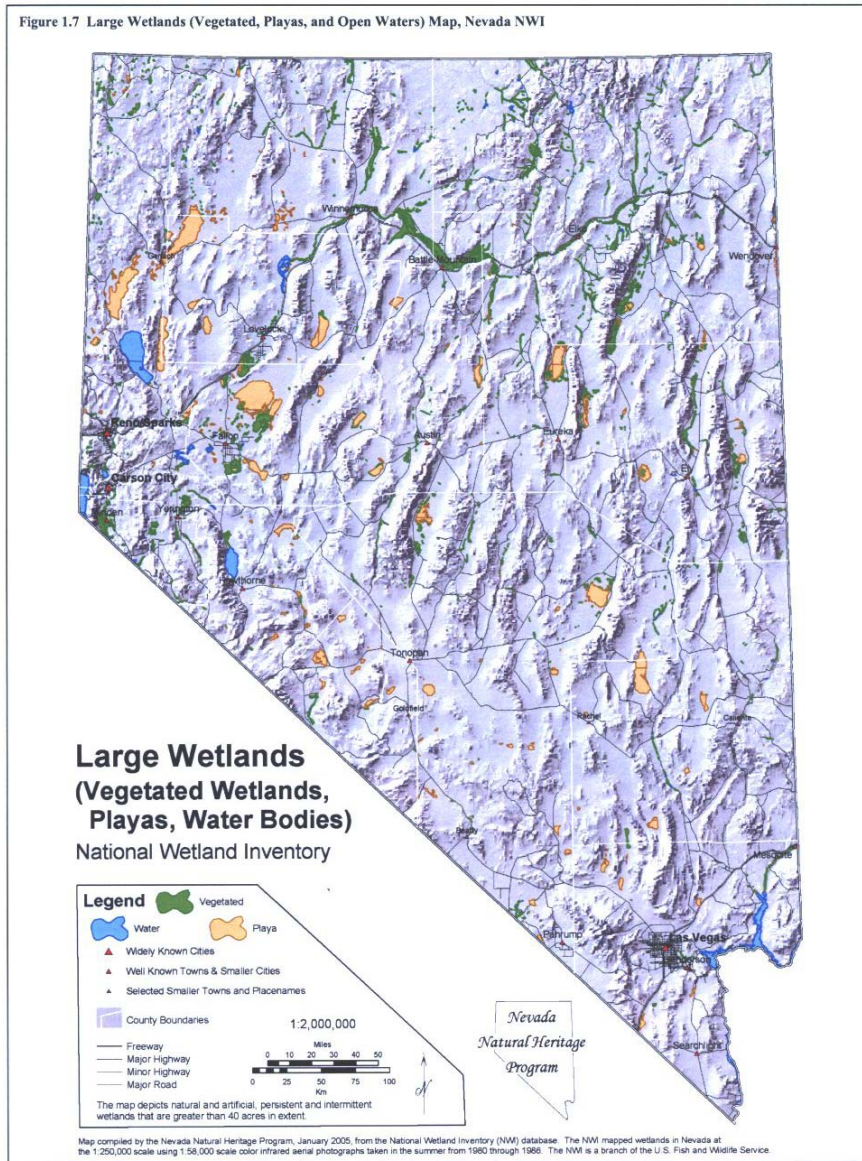
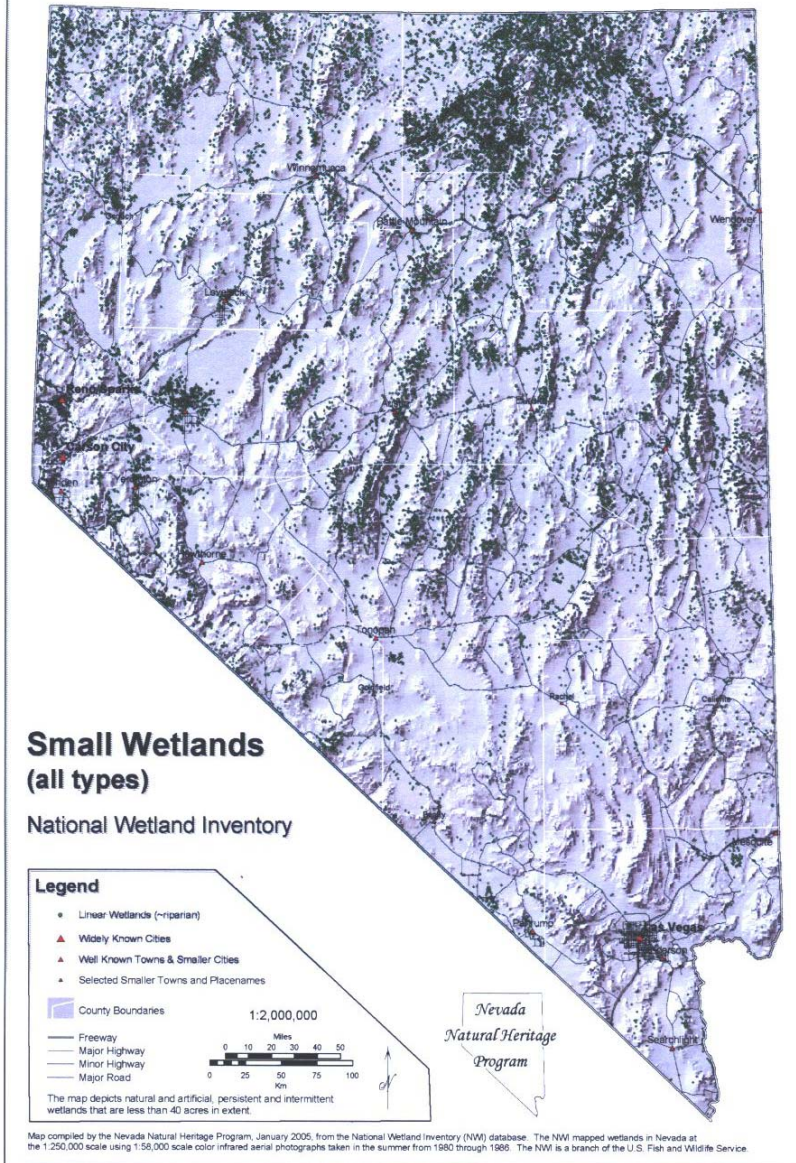


Figure 1.8 Wetland Features Smaller Than Forty Acres Map, Nevada NWI



r the  
is not



bitats  
*ginosus*  
rainages  
which  
mit and  
he  
l

re is the  
to.

iewed  
s a  
ised  
wing  
00.

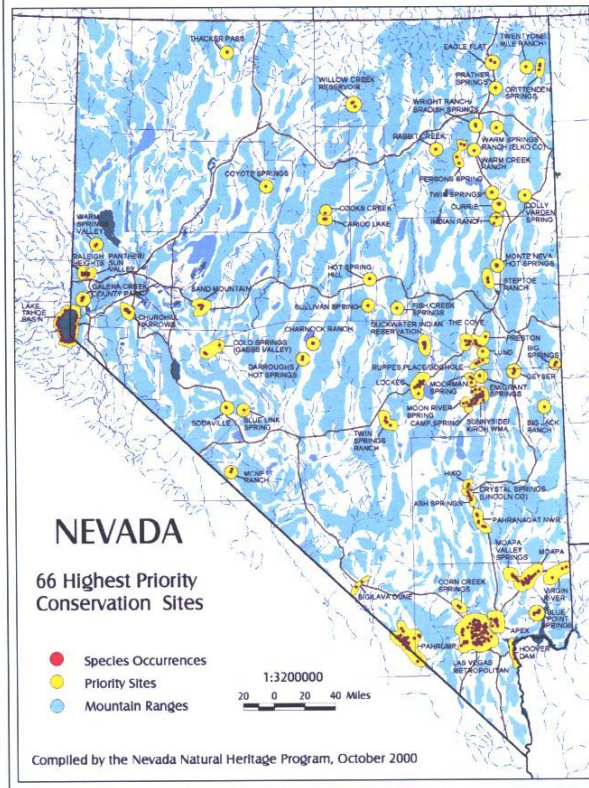
th a  
tify

e.

4-25

appropriate site. Once the NNHP staff determines stable site definitions and Biodiversity Significance Ranks, they meet with a network of expert biologists, botanists, and ecologists to review the sites. Each site is ranked according to its Protection Urgency and Management Urgency, again on scales from one to five (one signifying most urgent). Sites that rank highest (the lowest sum) for the combination of Biodiversity Significance, Protection Urgency, and Management Urgency, form the working list of "highest-priority" conservation sites. Biologists, land management, and conservation professionals, and other knowledgeable people throughout the state review the draft list and provide additional data and recommendations that are incorporated into the assessment process. The NNHP Scorecard points to sites with flora and fauna requiring immediate remedies to reduce the risk of extirpation or extinction.

Figure 4.1 Map of NNHP Highest Priority Conservation Sites – Scorecard 2000



Though wetlands cover a tiny fraction of the land base, a third of the at-risk species tracked by the NNHP are aquatic-wetland dependent. This means the species is found: 1) only in aquatic or wetland habitats; 2) in such habitats for a portion of their life cycle; or, 3) in habitats in close proximity to, or are otherwise influenced by, aquatic or wetland habitats (e.g., dry meadow margins, the shade of riparian vegetation, soils derived from parent material created by spring outflows, or the shore zones of lakes or ponds). Figure 4.2 shows the known occurrences of wetland dependent species considered to be of high biodiversity significance, vulnerable to human activities or degraded conditions resulting from land uses and development, and urgently requiring appropriate management action.

Using the NNHP Scorecard method in 2000 to evaluate the current conservation status of at-risk species and their known occurrences resulted in identification of sixty-six highest priority biodiversity conservation sites were identified. Fifty-eight of the priority conservation sites host one or more aquatic-wetland dependent sensitive species. Table 4.8 lists the Scorecard 2000 sites and pertinent where at-risk and sensitive wetland species occur.