

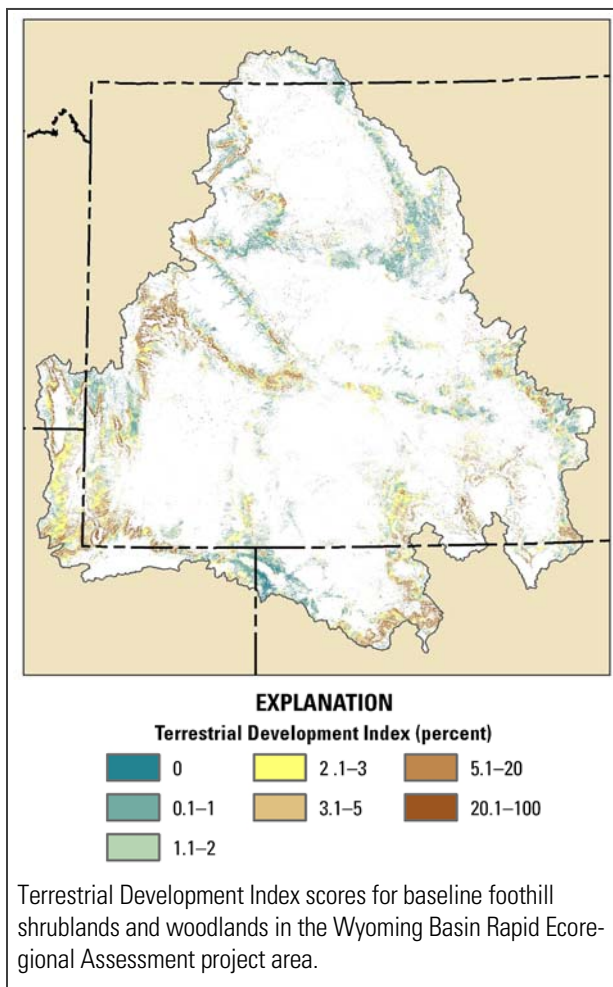
Foothill Shrublands and Woodlands

Management Questions

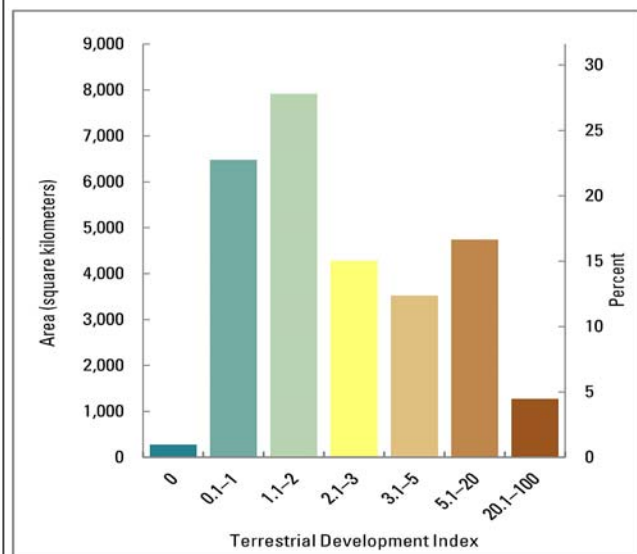
- Where are baseline foothill shrublands and woodlands, and what is the total area?
- Where does development pose the greatest threat to baseline foothill shrublands and woodlands, and where are the relatively undeveloped areas? (Left map below)
- How has development fragmented baseline foothill shrublands and woodlands, and where are the large, relatively undeveloped patches? (Top left map following page)
- How has development affected structural connectivity of foothill shrublands and woodlands relative to baseline conditions?

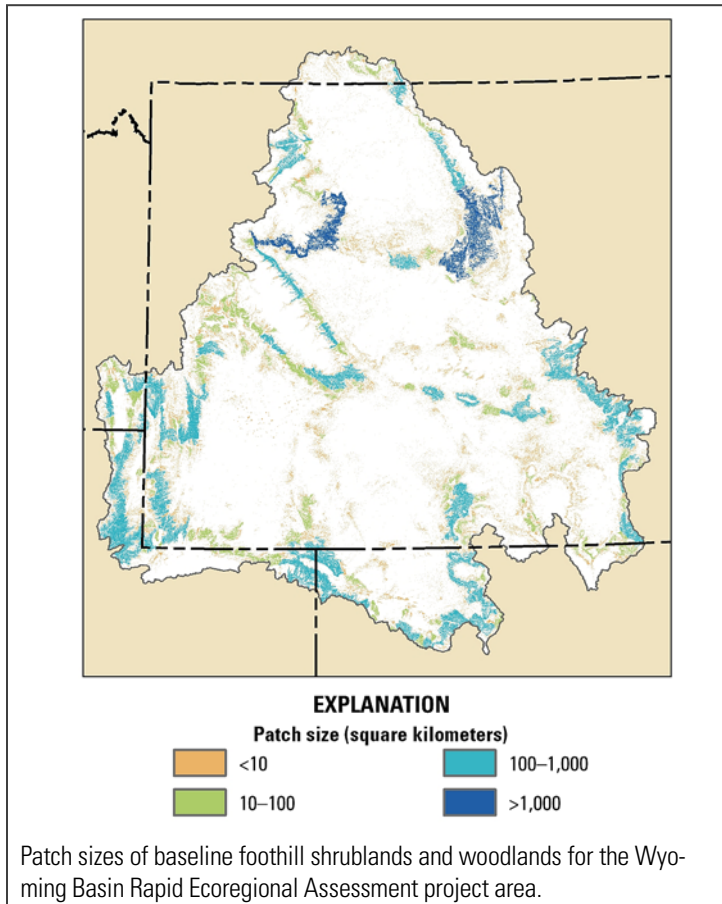


Photo credit: Natasha B. Carr, U.S. Geological Survey.



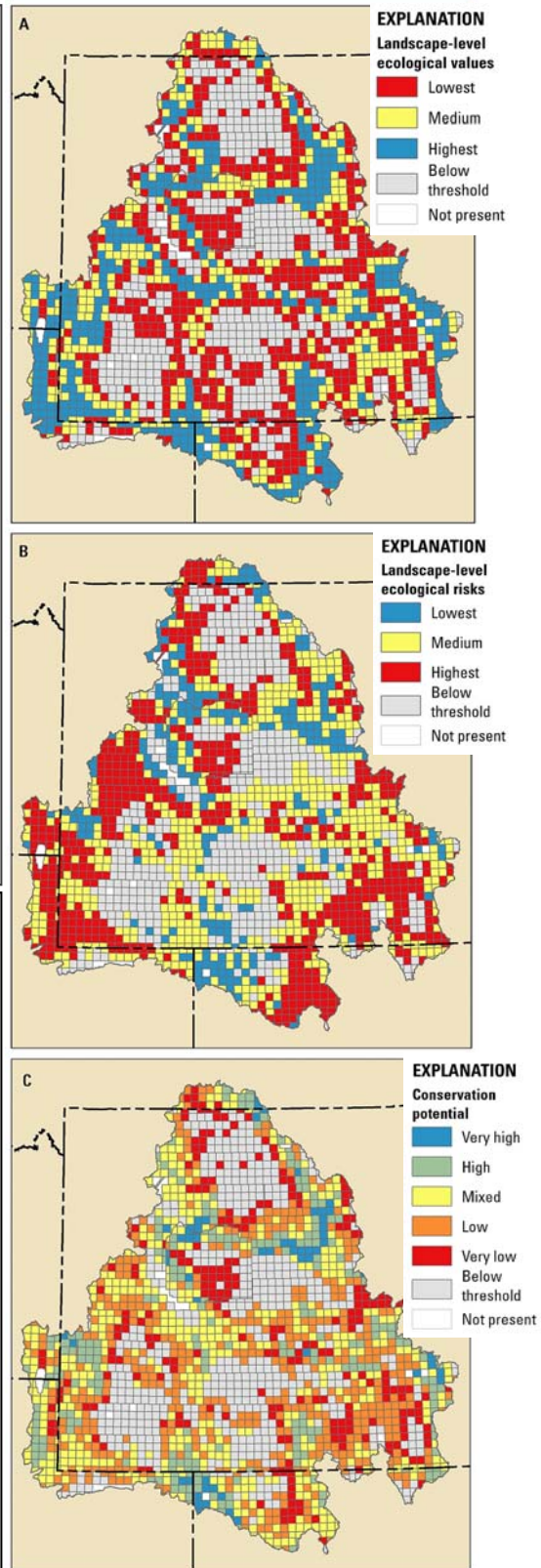
- Where are potential barriers and corridors that may affect animal movements among relatively undeveloped foothill shrubland and woodland patches?
- Where have recent fires occurred in baseline foothill shrublands and woodlands, and what is the total area burned per year?
- What is the potential distribution of foothill shrublands and woodlands in 2030?
- How does risk from development vary by land ownership or jurisdiction for foothill shrublands and woodlands?
- Where are the townships with the greatest landscape-level ecological values? (Top right map following page)
- Where are the townships with the greatest landscape-level risks? (Center right map following page)
- Where are the townships with the greatest conservation potential? (Bottom right map following page)





Summary

Foothill shrublands and woodlands are associated with lower elevations of all of the mountain ranges in the Basin and account for 16 percent of the Wyoming Basin. Development is pervasive, as 27 percent of the foothill shrublands and woodlands remain relatively undeveloped. Much of the foothill areas that remain relatively undeveloped occur in scattered patches, all of which are <1,000 square kilometers (386 square miles). Foothill shrublands and woodlands were once well connected within the Basin, but development (including roads, energy, and agriculture) has fragmented and decreased structural connectivity. Based on current rates of development, particularly energy development, foothill shrublands and woodlands are expected to undergo further fragmentation, loss, and degradation. This ecological community provides crucial winter range for mule deer and habitat for sagebrush obligate species, including greater sage-grouse, sagebrush-obligate songbirds, and pygmy rabbits; thus, the high development rates can affect numerous species. Other foothill species, including aspen, juniper woodlands, and limber pine (five-needle pine assemblage), also face threats (including sudden aspen decline and white pine blister rust), which could alter the structure and functions of the ecological community. The potential risk from invasive plant species, such as cheatgrass, could further compound these problems.



(A) Landscape-level ecological values, (B) ecological risks, and (C) conservation potential of foothill shrublands and woodlands summarized by township