

HABITAT ASSESSMENT FOR HIGH GRADIENT STREAMS

| Habitat Parameter | Condition Category | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| | Optimal | Suboptimal | Marginal | Poor |
| 1. Epifaunal Substrate/Available Cover | Greater than 70% of substrate favorable for epifaunal colonization and fish cover; mix of snags, submerged logs, undercut banks, cobble or other stable habitat and at stage to allow full colonization potential (i.e., logs/snags that are <u>not</u> new fall and <u>not</u> transient). | 40-70% mix of stable habitat; well-suited for full colonization potential; adequate habitat for maintenance of populations; presence of additional substrate in the form of newfall, but not yet prepared for colonization (may rate at high end of scale). | 20-40% mix of stable habitat; habitat availability less than desirable; substrate frequently disturbed or removed. | Less than 20% stable habitat; lack of habitat is obvious; substrate unstable or lacking. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 2. Embeddedness | Gravel, cobble, and boulder particles are 0-25% surrounded by fine sediment. Layering of cobble provides diversity of niche space | Gravel, cobble, and boulder particles are 25-50% surrounded by fine sediment. | Gravel, cobble, and boulder particles are 50-75% surrounded by fine sediment. | Gravel, cobble, and boulder particles are more than 75% surrounded by fine sediment. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 3. Velocity/Depth Regimes | All 4 velocity/depth regimes present (slow-deep, slow-shallow, fast-deep, fast-shallow). (slow is <0.3 m/s, deep is >0.5 m) | Only 3 of the 4 regimes present (if fast-shallow is missing, score lower than if missing other regimes). | Only 2 of the 4 habitat regimes present (if fast-shallow or slow-shallow are missing, score low). | Dominated by 1 velocity / depth regime (usually slow-deep). |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 4. Sediment Deposition | Little or no enlargement of islands or point bars and less than 5% (<20% for low-gradient streams) of the bottom affected by sediment deposition. | Some new increase in bar formation, mostly from gravel, sand or fine sediment; 5-30% (20-50% for low-gradient) of the bottom affected; slight deposition in pools. | Moderate deposition of new gravel, sand or fine sediment on old and new bars; 30-50% (50-80% for low-gradient) of the bottom affected; sediment deposits at obstructions, constrictions, and bends; moderate deposition of pools prevalent. | Heavy deposits of fine material, increased bar development; more than 50% (80% for low-gradient) of the bottom changing frequently; pools almost absent due to substantial sediment deposition. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 5. Channel Flow Status | Water reaches base of both lower banks, and minimal amount of channel substrate is exposed. | Water fills >75% of the available channel; or <25% of channel substrate is exposed. | Water fills 25-75% of the available channel, and/or riffle substrates are mostly exposed. | Very little water in channel and mostly present as standing pools. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 6. Channel Alteration | Channelization or dredging absent or minimal; stream with normal pattern. | Some channelization present, usually in areas of bridge abutments; evidence of past channelization, i.e., dredging, (greater than past 20 yr) may be present, but recent channelization is not present. | Channelization may be extensive; embankments or shoring structures present on both banks; and 40 to 80% of stream reach channelized and disrupted. | Banks shored with gabion or cement; over 80% of the stream reach channelized and disrupted. In stream habitat greatly altered or removed entirely. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 7. Frequency of Riffles (or bends) | Occurrence of riffles relatively frequent; ratio of distance between riffles divided by width of the stream <7:1 (generally 5 to 7); variety of habitat is key. In streams where riffles are continuous, placement of boulders or other large, natural obstruction is important. | Occurrence of riffles infrequent; distance between riffles divided by the width of the stream is between 7 to 15. | Occasional riffle or bend; bottom contours provide some habitat; distance between riffles divided by the width of the stream is between 15 to 25. | Generally all flat water or shallow riffles; poor habitat; distance between riffles divided by the width of the stream is a ratio of >25. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 8. Bank Stability (score each bank) Note: determine left or right side by facing downstream. | Banks stable; evidence of erosion or bank failure absent or minimal; little potential for future problems. <5% of bank affected. | Moderately stable; infrequent, small areas of erosion mostly healed over. 5-30% of bank in reach has areas of erosion. | Moderately unstable; 30-60% of bank in reach has areas of erosion; high erosion potential during floods. | Unstable; many eroded areas; "raw" areas frequent along straight sections and bends; obvious bank sloughing; 60-100% of bank has erosional scars. |
| SCORE ___ (LB) | Left Bank 10 9 | 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |
| SCORE ___ (RB) | Right Bank 10 9 | 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |
| 9. Bank Vegetative Protection (score each bank) | More than 90% of the streambank surfaces and immediate riparian zone covered by native vegetation, including trees, under story shrubs, or nonwoody macrophytes; vegetative disruption through grazing or mowing minimal or not evident; almost all plants allowed to grow naturally. | 70-90% of the streambank surfaces covered by native vegetation, but one class of plants is not well-represented; disruption evident but not affecting full plant growth potential to any great extent; more than one-half of the potential plant stubble height remaining. | 50-70% of the streambank surfaces covered by vegetation; disruption obvious; patches of bare soil or closely cropped vegetation common; less than one-half of the potential plant stubble height remaining. | Less than 50% of the streambank surfaces covered by vegetation; disruption of streambank vegetation is very high; vegetation has been removed to 5 centimeters or less in average stubble height. |
| SCORE ___ (LB) | Left Bank 10 9 | 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |
| SCORE ___ (RB) | Right Bank 10 9 | 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |
| 10. Riparian Vegetative Zone Width (score each bank riparian zone) | Width of riparian zone >18 meters; human activities (i.e., parking lots, roadbeds, clear-cuts, lawns, or crops) have not impacted zone. | Width of riparian zone 12-18 meters; human activities have impacted zone only minimally. | Width of riparian zone 6-12 meters; human activities have impacted zone a great deal. | Width of riparian zone <6 meters; little or no riparian vegetation due to human activities. |
| SCORE ___ (LB) | Left Bank 10 9 | 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 | 2 1 0 |
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HABITAT SCORE

| HABITAT SCORES | VALUE |
|----------------|-----------|
| OPTIMAL | 160 - 200 |
| SUB-OPTIMAL | 110 - 159 |
| MARGINAL | 60 - 109 |
| POOR | < 60 |

HABITAT ASSESSMENT OF LOW GRADIENT STREAMS

| Habitat Parameter | Condition Category | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| | Optimal | Suboptimal | Marginal | Poor |
| 1. Epifaunal Substrate/Available Cover | Greater than 50% of substrate favorable for epifaunal colonization and fish cover; mix of snags, submerged logs, undercut banks, cobble or other stable habitat and at stage to allow full colonization potential (i.e., logs/snags that are <u>not</u> new fall and <u>not</u> transient). | 30-50% mix of stable habitat; well-suited for full colonization potential; adequate habitat for maintenance of populations; presence of additional substrate in the form of newfall, but not yet prepared for colonization (may rate at high end of scale). | 10-30% mix of stable habitat; habitat availability less than desirable; substrate frequently disturbed or removed. | Less than 10% stable habitat; lack of habitat is obvious; substrate unstable or lacking. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 2. Pool Substrate Characterization | Mixture of substrate materials, with gravel and firm sand prevalent; root mats and submerged vegetation common. | Mixture of soft sand, mud, or clay; mud may be dominant; some root mats and submerged vegetation present. | All mud or clay or sand bottom; little or no root mat; no submerged vegetation. | Hard-pan clay or bedrock; no root mat or vegetation. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 3. Pool Variability | Even mix of large-shallow, large-deep, small-shallow, small-deep pools present. | Majority of pools large-deep; very few shallow. | Shallow pools much more prevalent than deep pools. | Majority of pools small-shallow or pools absent. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 4. Sediment Deposition | Little or no enlargement of islands or point bars and less than 5% (<20% for low-gradient streams) of the bottom affected by sediment deposition. | Some new increase in bar formation, mostly from gravel, sand or fine sediment; 5-30% (20-50% for low-gradient) of the bottom affected; slight deposition in pools. | Moderate deposition of new gravel, sand or fine sediment on old and new bars; 30-50% (50-80% for low-gradient) of the bottom affected; sediment deposits at obstructions, constrictions, and bends; moderate deposition of pools prevalent. | Heavy deposits of fine material, increased bar development; more than 50% (80% for low-gradient) of the bottom changing frequently; pools almost absent due to substantial sediment deposition. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 5. Channel Flow Status | Water reaches base of both lower banks, and minimal amount of channel substrate is exposed. | Water fills >75% of the available channel; or <25% of channel substrate is exposed. | Water fills 25-75% of the available channel, and/or riffle substrates are mostly exposed. | Very little water in channel and mostly present as standing pools. |
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| 6. Channel Alteration | Channelization or dredging absent or minimal; stream with normal pattern. | Some channelization present, usually in areas of bridge abutments; evidence of past channelization, i.e., dredging, (greater than past 20 yr) may be present, but recent channelization is not present. | Channelization may be extensive; embankments or shoring structures present on both banks; and 40 to 80% of stream reach channelized and disrupted. | Banks shored with gabion or cement; over 80% of the stream reach channelized and disrupted. In stream habitat greatly altered or removed entirely. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 7. Channel Sinuosity | The bends in the stream increase the stream length 3 to 4 times longer than if it was in a straight line. (Note - channel braiding is considered normal in coastal plains and other low-lying areas. This parameter is not easily rated in these areas.) | The bends in the stream increase the stream length 2 to 3 times longer than if it was in a straight line. | The bends in the stream increase the stream length 2 to 1 times longer than if it was in a straight line. | Channel straight; waterway has been channelized for a long distance. |
| SCORE | 20 19 18 17 16 | 15 14 13 12 11 | 10 9 8 7 6 | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 8. Bank Stability (score each bank) | Banks stable; evidence of erosion or bank failure absent or minimal; little potential for future problems. <5% of bank affected. | Moderately stable; infrequent, small areas of erosion mostly healed over. 5-30% of bank in reach has areas of erosion. | Moderately unstable; 30-60% of bank in reach has areas of erosion; high erosion potential during floods. | Unstable; many eroded areas; "raw" areas frequent along straight sections and bends; obvious bank sloughing; 60-100% of bank has erosional scars. |
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