

Ecological Classification System--Spring '98 Update

Landtype Associations (LTAs)

Efforts to complete delineation of Missouri Landtype Associations have progressed substantially over the winter. Currently, the first approximation of LTAs has been mapped and digitized for over two thirds of the state. All of the Central Dissected Till Plains and most of the Ozark Highlands Sections are complete. The balance of the Ozark Highlands and all of the Osage Plains will be completed by July, and finally the Mississippi Alluvial Plain Section will be completed by October. Initial descriptions are being developed in conjunction with the MDC Regional Management Guidelines effort. A natural resource inventory uses LTAs as a framework for describing the distribution of historic prairie, current land cover, natural heritage sites, national wetland inventory wetlands and public lands. This application of the ECS is proving useful in assessing current resource status and identifying resource management priorities. Complete reports describing each LTA more thoroughly will follow next year.

Ecological Landtypes

Analysis of over 400 plots describing the vegetation and environment at sites throughout the Current River Hills Subsection is near completion. These analyses are contributing to the development of Ecological Landtype definitions in the region. In addition, early attempts to model the distribution of individual species look promising. Initial definitions and models will be shared and evaluated in the field with local natural resource managers this fall.

Site index and soils data were collected on all ECS plots this winter. Continued sampling of ELTs this summer is focused on the riparian system of the Current and Jacks Fork rivers, and the Eminence Igneous Knobs. After final analysis next winter, a manual describing the ELTs of this region will be produced by July of 1999.

Posters and Presentations

A poster describing the current progress of the ECS project was developed and presented at several meetings including the Missouri Natural Resources Conference, the Missouri GIS Conference and the Missouri Academy of Sciences. In addition, a series of four papers describing the project and initial results were delivered at the Missouri Natural Resource Conference. A poster describing the Riparian ECS part of the project was developed and presented at the Riparian Ecosystems of the Eastern United States conference in Ohio. Another poster illustrating the integration of landform, geology, soils and ecological processes into predicting natural vegetation is being developed for presentation at the Ecological Society of America conference in Maryland this summer.