

Photointerpretation

Riparian photointerpretation follows established Service procedures and protocols. Most riparian signatures are transitional between wetland and upland signatures and are recognizable from aerial photographs (Figure 4). Riparian signatures may also exist independent from wetlands.

The conventions that follow are designed specifically for riparian mapping done in conjunction with standardized Service wetland and deepwater habitat mapping.

1. The tallest life form, making up at least 30% cover, defines the class.
2. The mixed subclass (8) is a mix of woody evergreen and deciduous vegetation. Each must comprise at least 30% of the vegetative cover.
3. Other than number 2 above, the only mixing permitted is of dominance types (each at least 30%). No more than two dominance types can be mixed.
4. Tilled fields used for grain production will not be mapped as riparian.
5. A linear showing wetland and riparian codes is used when both wetland and riparian units make up an area that is less than a pen width. This applies where the wetland and riparian areas are so narrow that they prevent mapping as a distinct polygon. Therefore, labels for both are applied to a single linear feature.

Digitization and Area Measurement

Data collected with these conventions are readily incorporated into a Geographic Information System. Area measurements for polygons are made from the delineations. Point data can be displayed as the number of points or given an average areal figure. Linear features can be displayed as a distance figure, or given an average areal figure.

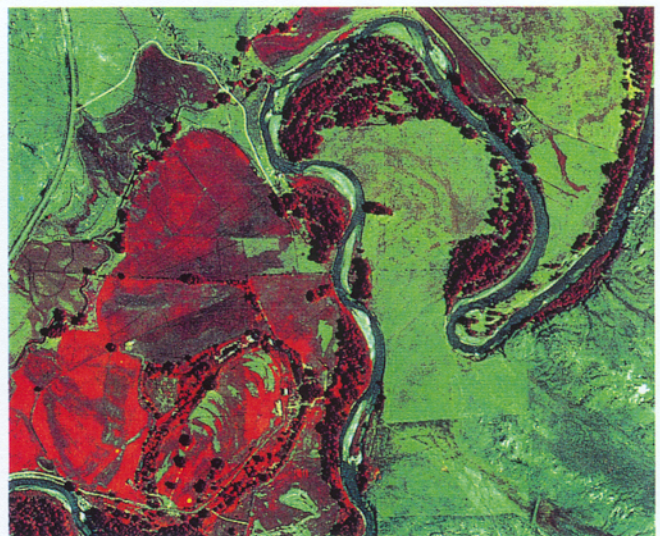


Figure 4. Color infrared photograph of the Tongue River, Wyoming area shown in Figures 2a and 2b (National High Altitude Program).