Level III Ecoregions of the Continental United States

(Revised August 2002)

National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

1. Coast Range
2. Puget Lowland
3. Willamette Valley
4. Cascades
5. Sierra Nevada
6. Southern and Central California Chaparral and Oak Woodlands
7. Central California Valley
8. Southern California Mountains
9. Eastern Cascades Slopes and Foothills
10. Columbia Plateau
11. Blue Mountains
12. Snake River Plain
13. Central Basin and Range
14. Mojave Basin and Range
15. Northern Rockies
16. Idaho Batholith
17. Middle Rockies
18. Wyoming Basin
19. Wasatch and Uinta Mountains
20. Colorado Plateaus
21. Southern Rockies
22. Arizona/New Mexico Plateau
23. Arizona/New Mexico Mountains
24. Chihuahuan Deserts
25. Western High Plains
26. Southwestern Tablelands
27. Central Great Plains
28. Flint Hills
29. Central Oklahoma/Texas Plains
30. Edwards Plateau
31. Southern Texas Plains
32. Texas Blackland Prairies
33. East Central Texas Plains
34. Western Gulf Coastal Plain
35. South Central Plains
36. Ouachita Mountains
37. Arkansas Valley
38. Boston Mountains
39. Ozark Highlands
40. Central Irregular Plains
41. Canadian Rockies
42. Northwestern Glaciated Plains
43. Northwestern Great Plains
44. Nebraska Sand Hills
45. Piedmont
46. Northern Glaciated Plains
47. Western Corn Belt Plains
48. Lake Agassiz Plain
49. Northern Minnesota Wetlands
50. Northern Lakes and Forests
51. North Central Hardwood Forests
52. Driftless Area
53. Southeastern Wisconsin Till Plains
54. Central Corn Belt Plains
55. Eastern Corn Belt Plains
56. Southern Michigan/Northern Indiana Drift Plains
57. Huron/Erie Lake Plains
58. Northeastern Highlands
59. Northeastern Coastal Zone
60. Northern Appalachian Plateau and Uplands
61. Erie Drift Plain
62. North Central Appalachians
63. Middle Atlantic Coastal Plain
64. Northern Piedmont
65. Southeastern Plains
66. Blue Ridge
67. Ridge and Valley
68. Southwestern Appalachians
69. Central Appalachians
70. Western Allegheny Plateau
71. Interior Plateau
72. Interior River Valleys and Hills
73. Mississippi Alluvial Plain
74. Mississippi Valley Loess Plains
75. Southern Coastal Plain
76. Southern Florida Coastal Plain
77. North Cascades
78. Klamath Mountains
79. Madrean Archipelago
80. Northern Basin and Range
81. Sonoran Basin and Range
82. Laurentian Plains and Hills
83. Eastern Great Lakes and Hudson Lowlands
84. Atlantic Coastal Pine Barrens

0 100 200 300 400 Mi

0 200 400 600 Km

Albers Equal Area Projection

Status of Ecoregion Revision and Subdivision Projects as of August 2002

Complete
Draft
In progress
Planned

101. Arctic Coastal Plain
102. Arctic Foothills
103. Brooks Range
104. Interior Forested Lowlands and Uplands
105. Interior Highlands
106. Interior Bottomlands
107. Yukon Flats
108. Ogilvie Mountains
109. Subarctic Coastal Plains
110. Seward Peninsula
111. Ahklun and Kilbuck Mountains
112. Bristol Bay-Nushagak Lowlands
113. Alaska Peninsula Mountains
114. Aleutian Islands (Western portion not shown)
115. Cook Inlet
116. Alaska Range
117. Copper Plateau
118. Wrangell Mountains
119. Pacific Coastal Mountains
120. Coastal Western Hemlock-Sitka Spruce Forests

0 100 200 300 400 Mi

0 200 400 600 Km

Scale 1:16,000,000

Albers Equal Area Projection

The ecoregions shown here have been derived from Omernik (1987) and from refinements of Omernik's framework that have been made for other projects. These ongoing or recently completed projects, conducted in collaboration with the U.S. EPA regional offices, state resource management agencies, and with other federal agencies, involve refining ecoregions, defining subregions, and locating sets of reference sites. Designed to serve as a spatial framework for environmental resource management, ecoregions denote areas within which ecosystems (and the type, quality, and quantity of environmental resources) are generally similar. The most immediate needs are to develop regional biological criteria and water quality standards and to set management goals for nonpoint source pollution.

The approach used to compile this map is based on the premise that ecological regions can be identified through the analysis of the patterns and the composition of biotic and abiotic phenomena that affect or reflect differences in ecosystem quality and integrity (Wiken 1986; Omernik 1987, 1995). These phenomena include geology, physiography, vegetation, climate, soils, land use, wildlife, and hydrology. The relative importance of each characteristic varies from one ecological region to another regardless of the hierarchical level. Because of possible confusion with other meanings of terms for different levels of ecological regions, a Roman numeral classification scheme has been adopted for this effort. Level I is the coarsest level, dividing North America into 15 ecological regions, whereas at Level II the continent is subdivided into 52 classes (CEC 1997). Level III is the hierarchical level shown on this map. For portions of the United States (see map inset) the ecoregions have been further subdivided to Level IV. The applications of the ecoregions are explained in Gallant et al. (1989) and in reports and publications from the state and regional projects. For additional information, contact James M. Omernik, U.S. EPA National Health and Environmental Effects Laboratory (NHEERL), 200 SW 35th Street, Corvallis, OR 97333; phone: (541) 754-4458, email: omernik@mail.cor.epa.gov.

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ECOLOGICAL REGIONS OF NORTH AMERICA

LEVEL I

LEVEL II

The names and identification numbers for level I and II ecological regions are given in CEC 1997.

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