

# Mesquite-Acacia



Mesquite bosque near Corn Creek, Clark County. Photo by Elisabeth Ammon.

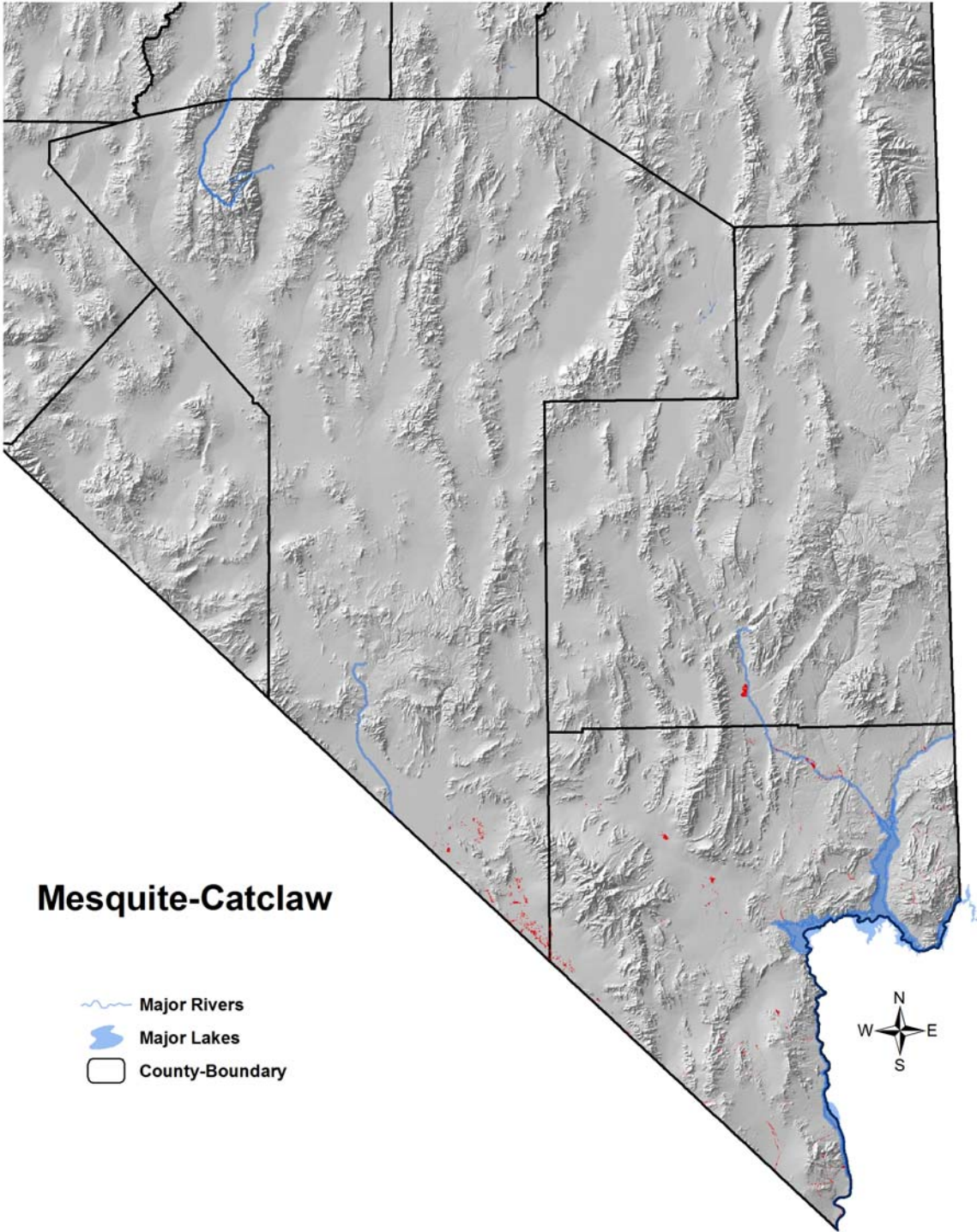
## Key Bird-Habitat Attributes

Stand Structure	Multi-aged, open stands of mesquite, acacia, or both with forb understory
Ideal Scale for Conservation Action	Whole stand (usually 40-60 ha or more)
Plant Species Composition	Both species of mesquite are useful, areas with tall-growing trees encouraged; mistletoe infections particularly beneficial
Plant Condition	Healthy trees that support mistletoe most useful; shrub and forb understory should be intact, particularly hummingbird plants
Distance to Riparian/Spring Habitats	Proximity of water-dependent habitat increases value to birds
Presence of Cliffs > 30 m (100 ft) Tall	Presence of tall cliffs increases value to birds

## Conservation Profile

Estimated Cover in Nevada	11,700 ha (28,900 acres) 0.04% of state
Landownership Breakdown	BLM = 57% Private = 26% USFS = 8% NPS = 7% Other = 2%
Priority Bird Species	Gambel's Quail Costa's Hummingbird Le Conte's Thrasher Lucy's Warbler Abert's Towhee
Indicator Species	Phainopepla
Past Impacts	Habitat Conversion Livestock
Most Important Current Threats	Habitat Conversion Groundwater Depletion Livestock Invasive Plants OHV Recreation Climate Change
Habitat Recovery Time	25 years
Regions of Greatest Conservation Interest	Southern Nye County, Sandy Valley, Las Vegas Valley, southern Clark County
Important Bird Areas	Catclaw Washes, Moapa Valley

# Mesquite-Acacia



## Mesquite-Acacia

Mesquite-acacia habitats occur only in the Mojave region of Nevada and are very restricted on the landscape. For the purpose of this plan, we do not include mesquite stands that are associated with lowland riparian, as these are covered in the Mojave Lowland Riparian account. Most mesquite-acacia that grows away from riparian areas is associated with either ephemeral washes in the Mojave scrub landscape, or it occurs in the form of bosques that take advantage of groundwater upwellings in the Mojave Salt Desert. Both types are important to a small diversity priority species, such as Gambel's Quail, Costa's Hummingbird, and Abert's Towhee, and of course, the indicator species *Phainopepla* is most famously dependent on this habitat type.

Past threats included primarily traditional land uses, such as livestock and urban development. Today's threats are more complex, even though livestock has been largely removed from Clark County, which supports a significant portion of Nevada's mesquite-acacia resources. OHV recreation often focuses on ephemeral washes, and invasive plants, groundwater retrieval, climate change, and continued habitat conversion for urban development threaten to reduce this habitat type even further. Our strategies therefore focus on groundwater, recreation, and invasive plant management, as well as public outreach that encourages responsible recreation.

# Mesquite-Acacia

## Mesquite-Acacia: Washes and Bosques

*Not To Scale*

### 1. Wash

*Costa's Hummingbird*  
*Lucy's Warbler*  
*Gambel's Quail*



Mesquite-Acacia (can be one or the other, or both)

Suitable Patch Size: > 40-60 ha

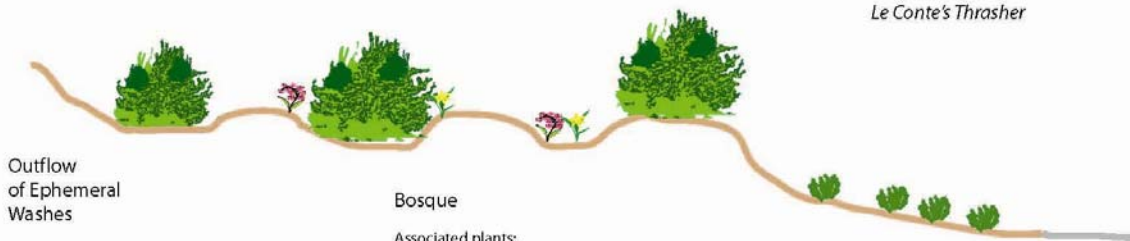
Associated plants:

mesquite  
acacia  
flowering forbs and shrubs  
mistletoe  
desert willow  
grasses  
quailbush

Recommended Indicator Species: Phainopepla

### 2. Bosque

*Costa's Hummingbird*  
*Lucy's Warbler*  
*Gambel's Quail*  
*Abert's Towhee*



Outflow  
of Ephemeral  
Washes

Bosque

Associated plants:

mesquite (primarily honey mesquite)  
quailbush  
mistletoe

*Le Conte's Thrasher*

Salt Desert

Playa

Suitable Patch Size: > 40-60 ha

# Mesquite-Acacia

## Conservation Strategies

### Habitat Strategies

1. Manage at the scale of a whole stand (usually about 20 ha or 40 acres, but larger patches more valuable) with the goal of maintaining healthy trees in their natural density, mistletoe infections, and intact understory plants, particularly forbs and shrubs that provide hummingbird resources.
2. Recent increases in groundwater pumping may be addressed through regulation in intense use areas.
3. Recreation may be managed to keep motorized uses away from mesquite-acacia stands to the extent possible. Established trails may be placed in a way to avoid the healthiest stands and alternate shade opportunities may be provided.
3. Mesquite-acacia near urban or rural settlements in particular attract feral cats and other predators. Management of these predators may be a good strategy, if public outreach cannot accomplish the same.
4. Management of invasive plants is a high priority for this habitat type, as they pose a direct threat to habitat integrity, and an indirect threat through increasing fire frequencies.

### Public Outreach

1. Promote responsible OHV uses and more compatible types of recreation, such as hiking, bird-watching, and photography.

### Research, Planning, and Monitoring

1. Mitigation opportunities should be sought throughout the historic range of mesquite-acacia, both to mitigate for future impacts and for past habitat conversions.
2. Mapping of current extent and vigor of mesquite-acacia beyond Clark County is a priority for monitoring future impacts.