

BC's Coast Region: Species & Ecosystems of Conservation

Ecological community: Grand fir / Dull Oregon-grape (*Abies grandis* / *Mahonia nervosa*) Global: G1, Provincial: S1, BC List: Red, BEC: CDFmm/04



Dull Oregon-grape



Palm Tree Moss

Notes: This ecological community is dominated by a coniferous overstory of Douglas-fir, grand fir and western redcedar. The dense shrub layer is well represented by dull Oregon-grape. A dense moss layer is dominated by Oregon beaked-moss. The presence of palm tree moss is a key indicator for this community. Once a relatively common ecological community, it is now limited to suitable site conditions within the driest and mildest (Mediterranean-like climate) of Coastal BC's climate regimes.

Description

This mature to old forest, small patch community (5-50 ha), has a moderately open to closed canopy with a coniferous overstory. Grand fir dominates the regeneration layer. There may be small amounts of western flowering dogwood, western yew and bigleaf maple. The dense shrub layer is well represented by dull Oregon-grape and also contains salal, and baldhip rose and often oceanspray, red huckleberry, Saskatoon berry and trailing blackberry. Some (or all) of the following species are found within the sparse herb layer: bearded fescue, sword fern, western trillium, three-leaved foamflower, sweet-scented bedstraw, vanilla-leaf and twinflower. The moss layer is dense, and is dominated by Oregon beaked-moss. Palm tree moss is a key indicator moss along with step moss. Electrified cat's-tail moss is often present.

Threats

Decline is due to extensive past timber harvesting as well as extensive agriculture and rural and urban development within a relatively small area. This geographic area is predominantly private land, where protective measures for red listed plant communities are limited, making the plant communities largely unprotected. All areas continue to have development pressures and it is thought that as low as 0.5% of the entire CDF zone remains as mature or old forest condition in British Columbia. Livestock grazing and ungulate browsing are considered threats. It is also thought to be very susceptible to introduction and spread of invasive species, especially after clearing.

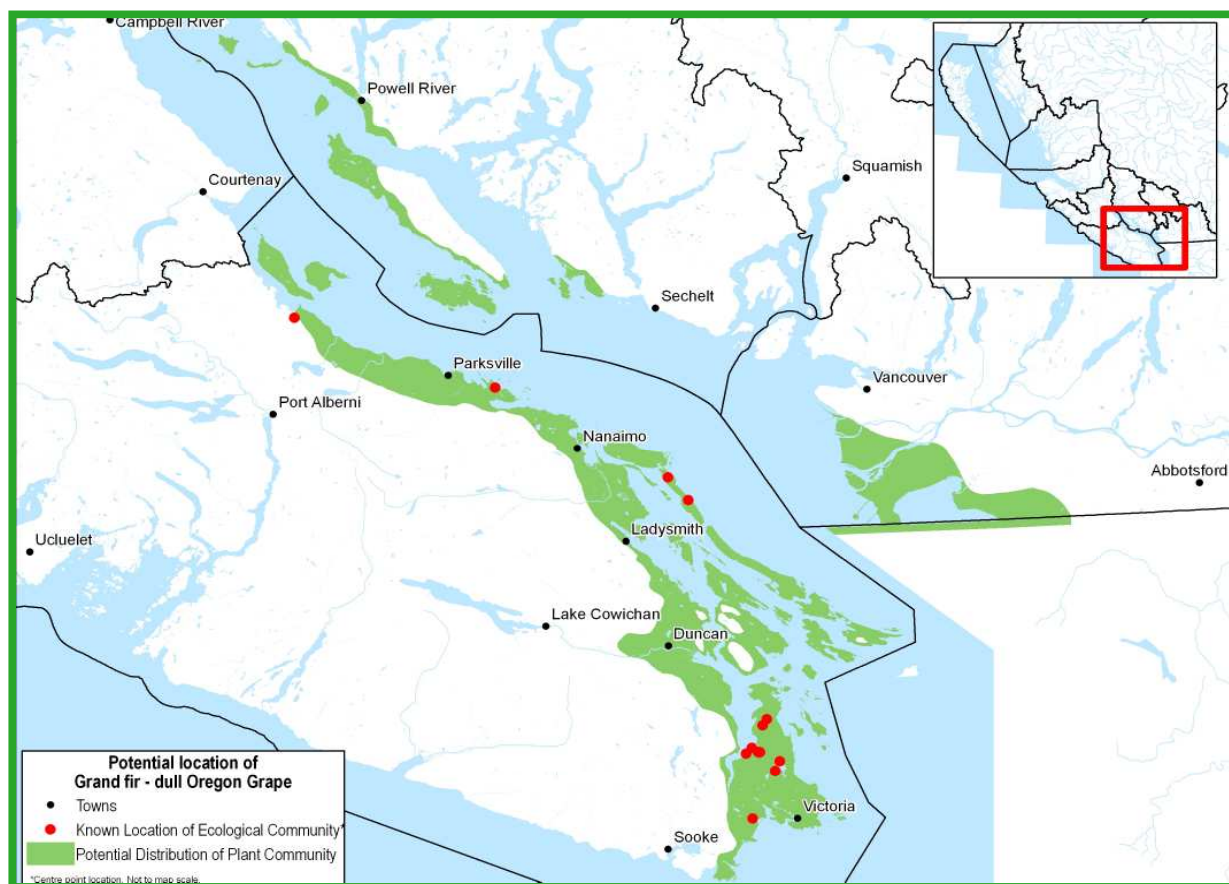
Conservation & Management Objectives

BC's Conservation Framework (CF) action plan sets out three goals that can be used to form the basis for conservation planning for BC's at risk plant communities: Contribute to global efforts for species and ecosystem conservation; prevent species and ecosystems from becoming at risk; and maintain the diversity of native species and ecosystems.

Specific activities should include: Ecosystem protection, planning (including developing or updating recovery plans), promotion of private land stewardship and compiling or updating status reports (trends, threats, ecological function and processes, successional pathways, identification of information gaps etc.).

Distribution

Occurs on all aspects of mid slopes at low elevations (0-200 m asl) and is found within the broader CDFmm/04 site series. Found on relatively dry, rich to very rich sites on morainal and stable colluvial materials, with soils that are medium textured and well drained. Potentially found on south-eastern Vancouver Island from its most southerly tip northward to between Courtenay and Parksville. This includes the southern Gulf Islands as well as Denman, Hornby, Lasquiti, Thormanby, Harwood, Savary, and Hemando Islands, as well as western Texada Island, and outer extremities of the Sunshine Coast from Halfmoon Bay area northward to the Powell River - Lund area. Although western parts of the Fraser River delta and White Rock are mapped within the CDFmm, the soil conditions there are largely unsuitable for this ecological community.



Content for this Factsheet has been derived from the following sources

B.C. Conservation Data Centre. 2010 [internet]. Ecological Community Summary: Grand fir / Dull Oregon-grape. B.C. MoE
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Prepared by: Warren Warttig, Interfor and Alex Inselberg for the South Coast Conservation Program (SCCP) in partnership with: International Forest Products (Interfor), Capacity Forestry (CapFor) and the BC Ministry of Environment (BC MoE), E-Flora and E-Fauna the Electronic Atlas of the Flora and Fauna of BC, Species at Risk & Local Government: A Primer for BC. Funding for this factsheet was made possible through the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI): <http://www.sfiprogram.org/>

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