

## Species of Conservation Concern Assessment

### Ashley National Forest

August, 2016

The 2012 Planning Rule defines Species Of Conservation Concern (SCC) as: a species, other than federally recognized as threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species, that is known to occur in the plan area and for which the regional forester has determined that the best available scientific information indicates substantial concern about the species' capability to persist over the long-term in the plan area. Substantial concern being defined as some combination of threats either directly to the species or indirectly to the species habitat. "Persistence over the long term of planning area" must be thought of as "continued existence" and needs to be thought of in ecological time. That being the time for the species to disperse, compete, and reproduce on to the longer end of forest succession. So persistence is longer than the 15 year forest planning cycle.

The original lists of species to consider were generated by the Forest Service's Region 4 Regional Office (RO). These lists consisted of 96 animal and 81 plant species as potential SCC for the Ashley National Forest. The following key criteria or questions were considered in the evaluation of SCC.

- ***Is the species native to the planning unit or not?***
- ***What is the Global and State status of each species?***
- ***In the past 20 years, how many occurrences and what year was the last occurrence for each species on the planning unit?***
- ***Are the species occurrences accidental or transient on the planning unit?***
- ***Is the species established or becoming established on the planning unit?***
- ***What is the distribution, abundance, and trend of the species on the planning unit?***
- ***What threats and risks does the species face on the planning unit?***
- ***What habitat requirement does the species have?***
- ***Finally, if present, is there substantial concern for this species to persist on the planning unit?***

Many of the animal species the Forest considered were NatureServe ranks of S1 (critically imperiled) or S2 (imperiled) in Wyoming. The part of the planning unit in Wyoming is limited to the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area (FGNRA). This popular recreation area is relatively limited in terms of its habitat diversity. Therefore, most of the S1/2 species in Wyoming were

not recommended for potential SCC because the FGNA does not support the species habitat requirements.

The Forest primarily used a number sources to determine Forest distribution and occurrences. These included the Forest Service corporate database, Natural Resource Manager (NRM), Utah Natural Heritage Database, Wyoming Natural Heritage Database, Rocky Mountain Herbarium, Brigham Young University Herbarium, University of Colorado Herbarium, Utah State University – Uintah Basin Herbarium, and NRCS Plants Database. Other sources of information were also used such as state level species reports/ Wildlife Action Plans, Birds of North America, A Utah Flora, Uinta Flora, Flora of Wyoming, Flora of North America, and other available information.

Threats, risks, and habitat requirements for each species were identified using NatureServe and long-term monitoring data. Distribution maps in NatureServe, NRCS Plants Database, corporate knowledge and data, floras, and herbaria specimens were used to determine if the species was native as well as if the species is established or becoming established on the planning unit.

Abundance and trend were difficult to assess for many animal species because of a lack of information. Animal species were not carried forward if the planning area had few (< 10) to no occurrences and the species was secure in adjacent states within the species core distribution. For plant species, abundance and trend data was sufficient to assess all species. Additional criteria were also considered during the assessment of plant species. These included margin of range, contrasting taxonomic treatments, species reaction to disturbance, existing laws and designations that provide protection, and level of taxonomic status.

The next step in the process is to receive and consider public comments on this preliminary list of SCC. After a careful review and consideration of public comments, the Forest and Regional Office will work together to address these comments. However, the final decision of which species to move forward in the plan revision process is made by the Regional Forester.

A more detailed description of the evaluation process is available in the Forest Service Handbook for conducting assessments, as well as the 2012 Planning Rule, both of which are available on our web site ([www.fs.usda.gov/goto/AshleyForestPlan](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/AshleyForestPlan)).

**Potential Species of Conservation Concern**

<b>Animals</b>		<b>Plants</b>	
<b>Greater sage grouse</b>	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	<b>Graham’s columbine</b>	<i>Aquilegia grahamii</i>
<b>Peregrine falcon</b>	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	<b>Evert's Waferparsnip</b>	<i>Cymopterus evertii</i>
<b>Black Rosy Finch</b>	<i>Leucosticte atrata</i>	<b>Clustered Lady's-slipper</b>	<i>Cypripedium fasciculatum</i>
<b>Colorado River cutthroat trout</b>	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus</i>	<b>Wasatch Draba</b>	<i>Draba brachystylis</i>

Pygmy rabbit	<i>Brachylagus idahoensis</i>	Rockcress Draba	<i>Draba globosa</i>
Fringed myotis	<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	Tundra Draba	<i>Draba ventosa</i>
		Untermann's Daisy	<i>Erigeron untermannii</i>
		Huber's Pepperplant	<i>Lepidium huberi</i>
		Goodrich's Blazingstar	<i>Mentzelia goodrichii</i>
		Alpine Poppy	<i>Papaver radicum ssp. kluanense</i>
		Stemless beardtongue	<i>Penstemon acaulis</i>
		Desert glandular phacelia	<i>Phacelia glandulosa var. deserta</i>
		Silvery Primrose	<i>Primula incana</i>
		Ownbey's Thistle	<i>Cirsium ownbeyi</i>
		Compound Kobresia	<i>Kobresia simpliciuscula</i>
		Marsh Cinquifol	<i>Potentilla palustris</i>
		Handsome Pussytoes	<i>Antennaria pulcherrima</i>

# Process for Determining Species of Conservation Concern

Is the species native to the Forest plan area?

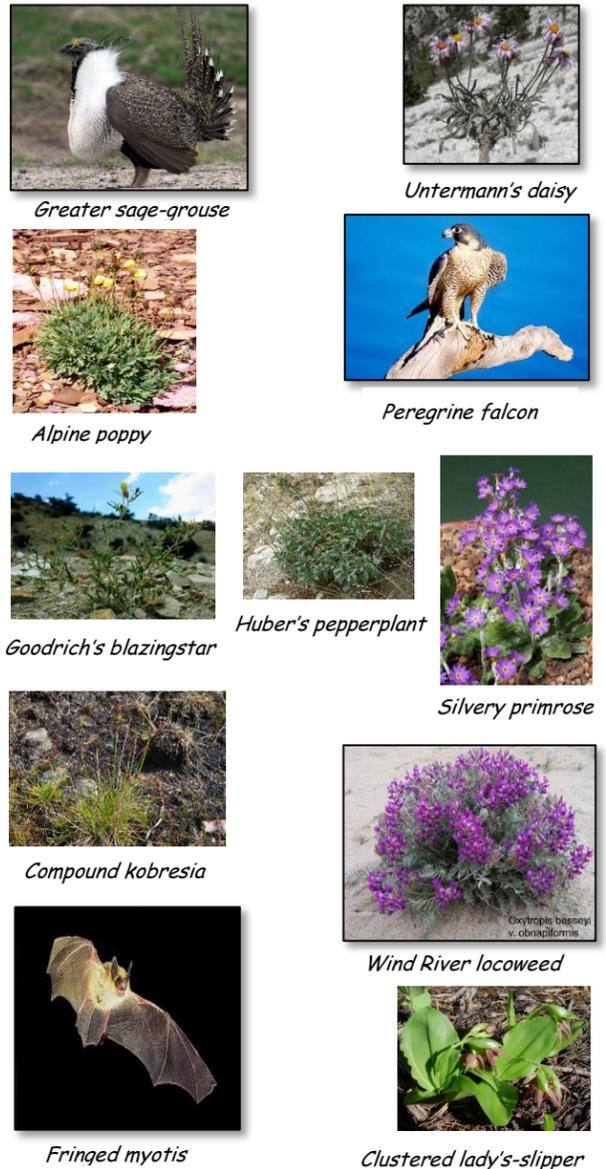


Is the species identified elsewhere with an "at risk" Conservation Status?

**Conservation Status**

The conservation status of a species is determined by looking at assessments completed by various conservation organizations (including both governmental and non-governmental sources). The objective is to understand how likely it is to occur in the planning area, whether its population is stable or declining, and what factors may threaten its continued existence both locally and globally.

What is the occurrence of the species in the plan area?



Is the species established in the plan area and what is the distribution, abundance, and trend?



Habitat requirements and threats

Is there substantial concern for the species to persist in the area?

- Other threats and risks