

REGION 2 SENSITIVE SPECIES EVALUATION FORM

Species: Cassin's sparrow (<i>Aimophila cassinii</i>)			
Criteria	Rank	Rationale	Literature Citations
1 Distribution within R2	B	Cassin's sparrow is found in eastern Colorado, southwestern Nebraska, extreme southeastern Wyoming, and western Kansas. Confidence in Rank High or Medium or Low	•
2 Distribution outside R2	C	BREEDING: mainly southeastern Arizona, New Mexico (except northwest), central and northeastern Colorado, southwestern Nebraska, west-central Kansas, and western Oklahoma south to northern Mexico and central and southern Texas. NON-BREEDING: southeastern Arizona, southern New Mexico, western and south-central Texas and northern Mexico (AOU 1983). Confidence in Rank High or Medium or Low	• Ruth 2000
3 Dispersal Capability	C	This migratory bird likely disperses regularly across its range. Confidence in Rank High or Medium or Low	•
4 Abundance in R2	D	There are no abundance data for this species in Region 2. Trend data below is the best available information. Confidence in Rank High or Medium or Low	•
5 Population Trend in R2	A	Breeding Bird Survey data indicate a significant population decrease in North America between 1966 and 1989 (Droege and Sauer 1990). Colorado and Kansas show a highly significant downward trend. However, numbers fluctuate markedly from year to year. Confidence in Rank High or Medium or Low	• http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/ • Ruth 2000
6 Habitat Trend in R2	D	Ruth (2000) summarizes the habitat of the Cassin's sparrow. Open grassland and short-grass plains with scattered bushes or shrubs, sagebrush, mesquite or yucca (AOU 1983). In southeastern Arizona, avoided recently burned grassland habitats (Southwest. Nat. 37:73). Nests on or near ground. May nest in grasses, in patch of ground cactus, at base of shrub, or in lower branches of bush or cactus. Although the transformation of grasslands into scrubland may be one of the most serious threats	• Ruth (2000) • www.natureserve.org

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		facing Cassin's sparrow, there is no habitat trend data in Region 2. Confidence in Rank High or Medium or Low	
7 Habitat Vulnerability or Modification	B	Shrubby arid grasslands are the primary habitat of Cassin's sparrow. Such habitats are vulnerable, especially in Colorado where land management practices often eliminate shrub vegetation. Confidence in Rank High or Medium or Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ruth 2000
8 Life History and Demographics	B	The Cassin's sparrow's year-to-year status may be strongly linked to fluctuating precipitation and habitat conditions. Significant distributional changes in the species suggests a species that might be able to find suitable habitat wherever it exists within the breeding range. Confidence in Rank High or Medium or Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ruth 2000
Initial Evaluator(s): John Sidle			Date: 7/10/01

National Forests in the Rocky Mountain Region where species is KNOWN (K) or LIKELY(L)¹ to occur:

<u>Colorado NF/NG</u>	Known	Likely	<u>Kansas NF/NG</u>	Known	Likely	<u>Nebraska NF/NG</u>	Known	Likely	<u>South Dakota NF/NG</u>	Known	Likely	<u>Wyoming NF/NG</u>	Known	Likely
Arapaho-Roosevelt NF	K		Cimmaron NG	K		Samuel R. McKelvie NF			Black Hills NF			Shoshone NF		
White River NF						Halsey NF			Buffalo Gap NG			Bighorn NF		
Routt NF						Nebraska NF			Ft. Pierre NG			Black Hills NF		
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, Gunnison NF						Ogalala NG						Medicine Bow NF		
San Juan NF												Thunder Basin NG		
Rio Grande NF														
Pike-San Isabel NF														
Comanche NG	K													

References

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Kaufman, K. 1989. Cassin's and Botteri's sparrows. Birding 21:293-297.

¹ Likely is defined as more likely to occur than not occur on the National Forest or Grassland. This generally can be thought of as having a 50% chance or greater of appearing on NFS lands.

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