

ATTACHMENT SS2

REGION 2 SENSITIVE SPECIES EVALUATION FORM

Note: The eastern spotted skunk/plains spotted skunk, (*Spilogale putorius*), and the western spotted skunk, (*Spilogale gracilis*), are closely related and have alternately been considered the same, and separate species by different mammalogists. Often the two species are only distinguished by range. The two species do not occur together over much of their range except in Wyoming and Oklahoma. They apparently do not interbreed in these states where they are known to overlap, but their relationship elsewhere is unknown. If indeed they were capable of interbreeding, the two would likely be treated as separate subspecies of the same species (Whitaker Jr., J.O. 1980).

Species: **Western Spotted Skunk (*Spilogate gracilis gracilis*)**

Criteria	Rank	Rationale	Literature Citations
1 Distribution within R2	C	Although this subspecies is not found within all of the R2 designated areas, it is contiguous in western Wyoming and Colorado where it makes up the eastern periphery of the known range. It does occur just east of the Rocky Mountains and into the foothills in Colorado. This skunk is not found in South Dakota, Nebraska, or Kansas. This skunk prefers dry grass and shrub lands, but can be found in open plains, scrub, farmlands, and mixed woodlands as well. Confidence in Rank High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,2,3,4,5,6,7
2 Distribution outside R2	C	Outside of R2 this skunk occurs west of the Rocky Mountains from southern British Columbia south throughout most of the western United States and through much of Mexico and Central America. Confidence in Rank High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,2,3,4,5
3 Dispersal Capability	B	This criterion is difficult to assess. This species is most often associated with dry grass and shrub lands, but can be found in other habitats as well. It likely disperses to some degree through these areas, but it is not obligated to live in any specific habitat. This criterion may warrant a C ranking. Confidence in Rank Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,5,7
4 Abundance in R2	B	Abundance data is lacking, but it seems that this species is “uncommon” within Region 2. The WYNDD Database states that this species is a resident, but is considered uncommon in Wyoming. The Colorado Species Abundance Website indicates that this species is uncommon in some areas, but is considered fairly common in much of the western part of the state. Confidence in Rank Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,6
5 Population Trend in R2	B	This criterion is difficult to assess due to a lack of information. The WYNDD Database states that population trends in Wyoming are suspected to be stable, but unknown for certain. No pertinent population data was available indicating trends in Colorado. This criterion may warrant a D ranking. Confidence in Rank Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2

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Species: Western Spotted Skunk (<i>Spilogate gracilis gracilis</i>)			
Criteria	Rank	Rationale	Literature Citations
6 Habitat Trend in R2	D	There is not sufficient data available to make an assessment of this criterion. Habitat could be decreasing in areas where human development and disturbances are occurring. Confidence in Rank Medium	•
7 Habitat Vulnerability or Modification	B	Habitat is somewhat vulnerable, especially to human development and agricultural practices. Confidence in Rank Medium	• 1,7
8 Life History and Demographics	B	This species breeds in the fall, but implantation is delayed until April. Gestation lasts 28-31 days, and females produce one litter of 3-6 young per year. By the fall all young are independent and young females may breed. Predicted life expectancy is only 1-2 years in the wild. Humans and domestic dogs are the biggest threat to this skunk, but owls, badgers, coyotes, and foxes have been known to prey on this skunk as well. Significant mortalities are a result of humans, their pets, and cars on roadways. This species is likely to have some difficulty responding to disturbances that may occur. Confidence in Rank Medium	• 1,4,5,7
Initial Evaluator(s): Darby Dark-Smiley, Research Scientist, Wyoming Natural Diversity			Date: 9/18/2001

Literature Citations:

1. Clark, T.W. and M.R. Stromberg. 1987. Mammals in Wyoming. University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas.
2. Wyoming Natural Diversity Database. 2001. Unpublished data. University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming.
3. Colorado Gap Analysis Program. 2001. Species distribution models: <http://ndis.nrel.colostate.edu/cogap/cogaphome.html>.
4. Lechleitner, R.R. 1969. Wild Mammals of Colorado. Pruett Publishing Company, Boulder, Colorado.
5. Whitaker Jr., J.O. 1980. National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mammals. Alfred A. Knopf Publishing, New York, New York.
6. Colorado Species Occurrence and Abundance Tool. 2001. Species abundances by county: <http://ndis.nrel.colostate.edu/ndis/countyab/>.
7. Jones, Jr., J.K., D.M. Armstrong, and J.R. Choate. 1985. Guide to Mammals of the Plains States. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska.

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

<u>Colorado NF/NG</u>	<u>Known</u>	<u>Likely</u>	<u>Kansas NF/NG</u>	<u>Known</u>	<u>Likely</u>	<u>Nebraska NF/NG</u>	<u>Known</u>	<u>Likely</u>	<u>South Dakota NF/NG</u>	<u>Known</u>	<u>Likely</u>	<u>Wyoming NF/NG</u>	<u>Known</u>	<u>Likely</u>
Arapaho-Roosevelt NF	-	1,2	Cimmaron NG	-	-	Samuel R.McKelvie NF	-	-	Black Hills NF	-	-	Shoshone NF	3	-
White River NF	1,2	-				Halsey NF	-	-	Buffalo Gap NG	-	-	Bighorn NF	-	3
Routt NF	-	1,2				Nebraska NF	-	-	Ft. Pierre NG	-	-	Black Hills NF	-	-
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, Gunnison NF	1,2	-				Ogalala NG	-	-				Medicine Bow NF	3	-
San Juan NF	-	1,2										Thunder Basin NG	-	-
Rio Grande NF		1,2												
Pike-San Isabel NF	1,2	-												
Comanche NG	-	-												
Pawnee NG	-	-												

Primary Sources:

1. Colorado Gap, 2001 – predicted distribution map.
2. Colorado Species Occurrence & Abundance Tool: <http://ndis.nrel.colostate.edu/ndis/countyab/>.
3. Clark & Stromberg. 1987 – known distribution map in Wyoming.

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.