

Region 2 Other Emphasis Species List

Yellow Mud Turtle (*Kinosternon flavescens flavescens*)

Recommendation Rationale: **Not R2 SS, But Should Be Considered For Other Emphasis Species Lists**

The core of this species range is the southern Great Plains. Within that core (Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas) the species is ranked as secure. Nebraska, on the northern periphery, considers the species vulnerable; and Colorado on the western periphery, ranks the species as critically imperiled. This ranking is likely a reflection of that state's position on the periphery of the species range. Even then, Hammerson's assessment of the species status does not seem to be consistent with the Heritage ranking. He considers this species to be relatively common in localized areas within several of Colorado's far eastern plains drainages. Distribution here is patchy. Habitats used by this species seem fairly broad. Hammerson states that they use both perennial and intermittent streams, permanent and temporary ponds (even those far from permanent water), irrigation ditches and soggy fields. Surrounding sand hills are used extensively in the summer for nesting and mid-summer dormancy. Hammerson further states "No major existing threats are known. Present populations should persist into the foreseeable future under current land use patterns." Consequently, there does not seem to be a basis for retention of this species on the Regional sensitive species list. However, because of the species limited and patchy distribution on the northern and western periphery of its range, individual populations could be vulnerable on certain NFS units. The yellow mud turtle is known or believed to occur on the Comanche NG in Colorado, the Cimarron NG in Kansas, and the Samuel R. McKelvie and Halsey National Forests in Nebraska. We recommend these units evaluate the status of the species on and in the vicinity of their units, and determine whether the species would be benefited by special management status on those units.

Revised on January 29, 2003 by Gary Patton