

SPECIES: Scientific [common]	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i> [American White Pelican]
Forest:	Bridger-Teton National Forest
Forest Reviewer:	Randall Griebel, James Wilder
Date of Review:	07/16/2018; reviewed 5/20/2025
Forest concurrence (or recommendation if new) for inclusion of species on list of potential SCC: (Enter Yes or No)	NO

FOREST REVIEW RESULTS:

1. The Forest concurs or recommends the species for inclusion on the list of potential SCC:
Yes ___ No X ___
2. Rationale for not concurring is based on (check all that apply):
Species is not native to the plan area _____
Species is not known to occur in the plan area _____
Species persistence in the plan area is not of substantial concern X ___

FOREST REVIEW INFORMATION:

1. Is the Species Native to the Plan Area? Yes X ___ No ___

If no, provide explanation and stop assessment.
2. Is the Species Known to Occur within the Planning Area? Yes X ___ No ___

If no, stop assessment.

Table 1. All Known Occurrences, Years, and Frequency within the Planning Area

Year Observed	Number of Individuals	Location of Observations
<i>Greys River Ranger District</i>		
1980	6	Squaw Creek
1994	4	Unknown Tributary
1995	Ukn.	Palisades Reservoir Inlet
<i>Kemmerer Ranger District</i>		
1983	10	Southeast corner of Forest; Possible migrating flock
<i>Pinedale Ranger District</i>		
1989	1	Willow Creek
2009	3	Upper Green River
<i>Jackson Ranger District</i>		
1984-1989	4	Bailey Creek
1989	13	Grose Ventre River
1994-2012	78	Snake River Canyon
2009-2013	26	Grose Ventre River
<i>Blackrock Ranger District</i>		
1991	1	Yellowstone River
2004	1	Enos Lake
2014	3	Near Snake River; Near Teton National Park/Jackson Lake

Source of Information: *Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (January 2018)*

- a. Are all Species Occurrences Only Accidental or Transient?

Yes___ No__X__

If yes, document source for determination and stop assessment.

- b. For species with known occurrences on the Forest since 1990, based on the number of observations and/or year of last observation, can the species be presumed to be established or becoming established in the plan area?

Yes_X__ No___

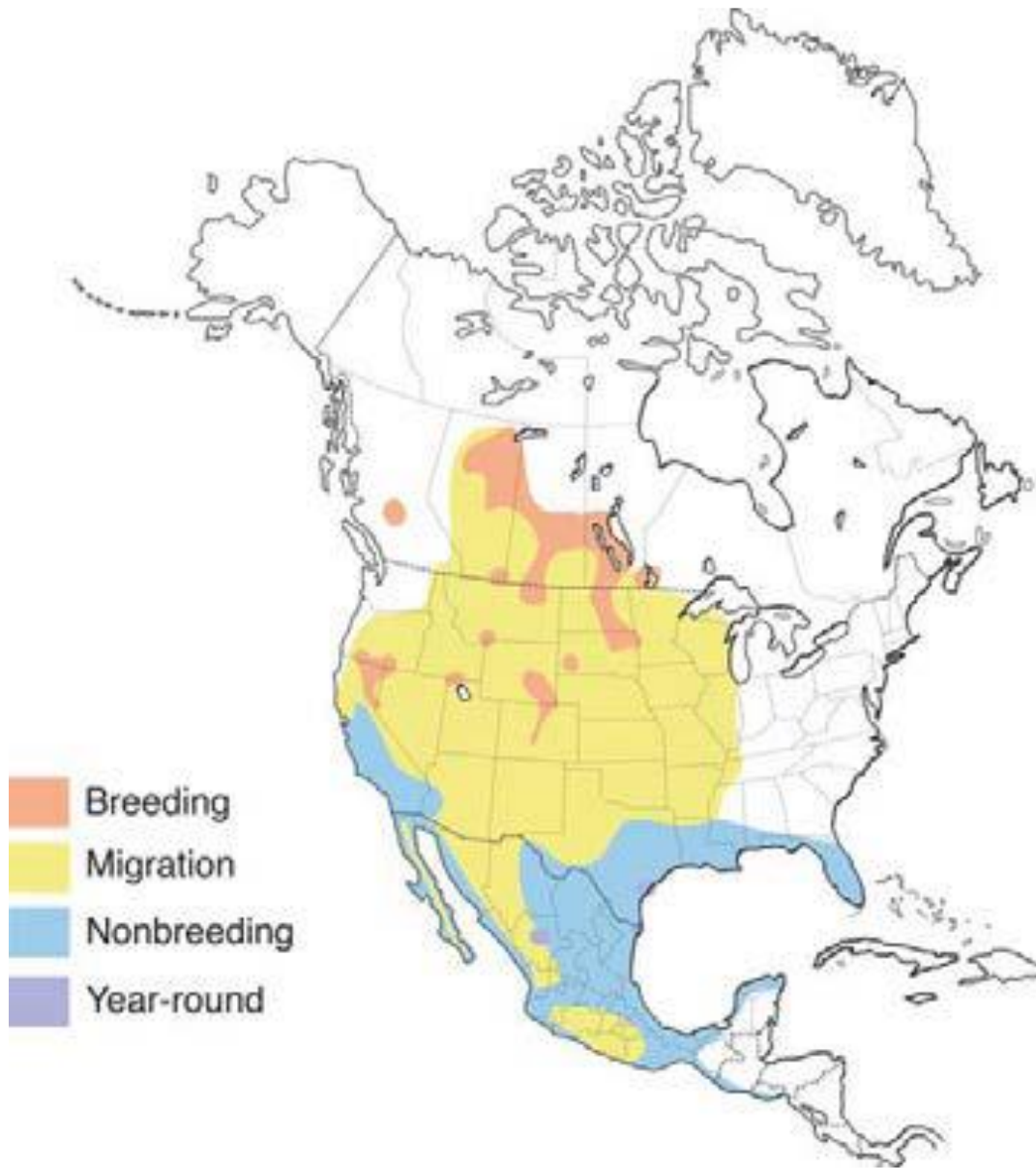
If no, provide explanation and stop assessment

- c. For species with known occurrences on the Forest predating 1990, does the weight of evidence suggest the species still occurs in the plan area?

Yes_X__ No___

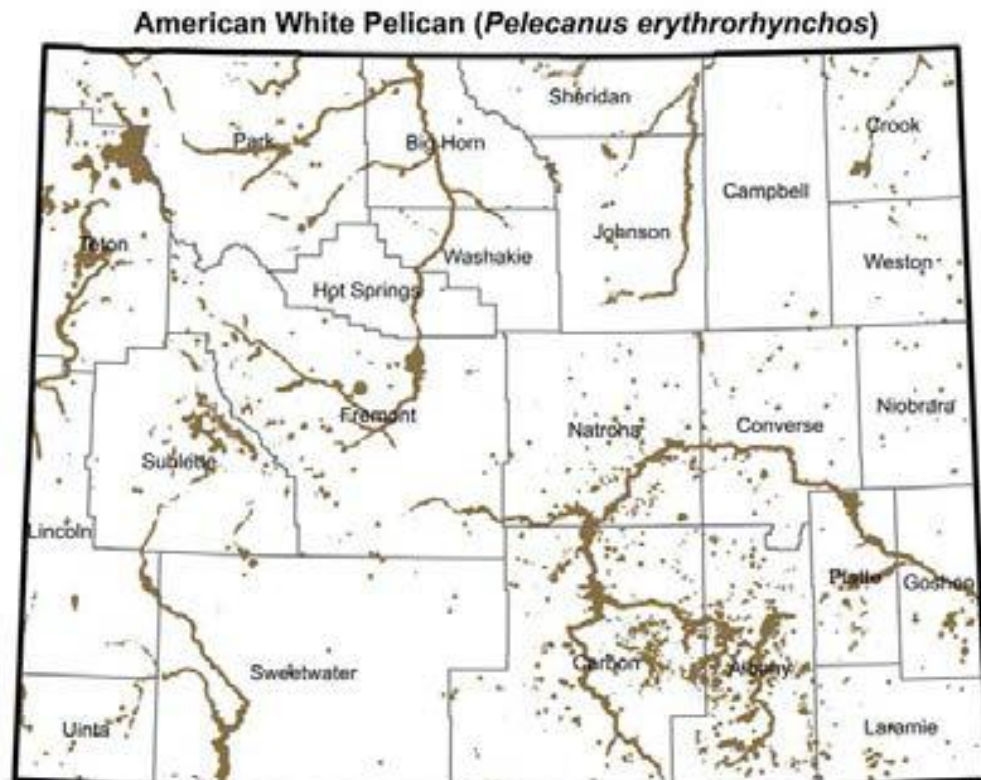
If no, provide explanation and stop assessment

d. **Map 1**, American white Pelican range map of North America



Wyoming Game and Fish Department. 2017. State Wildlife Action Plan. American white pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*).

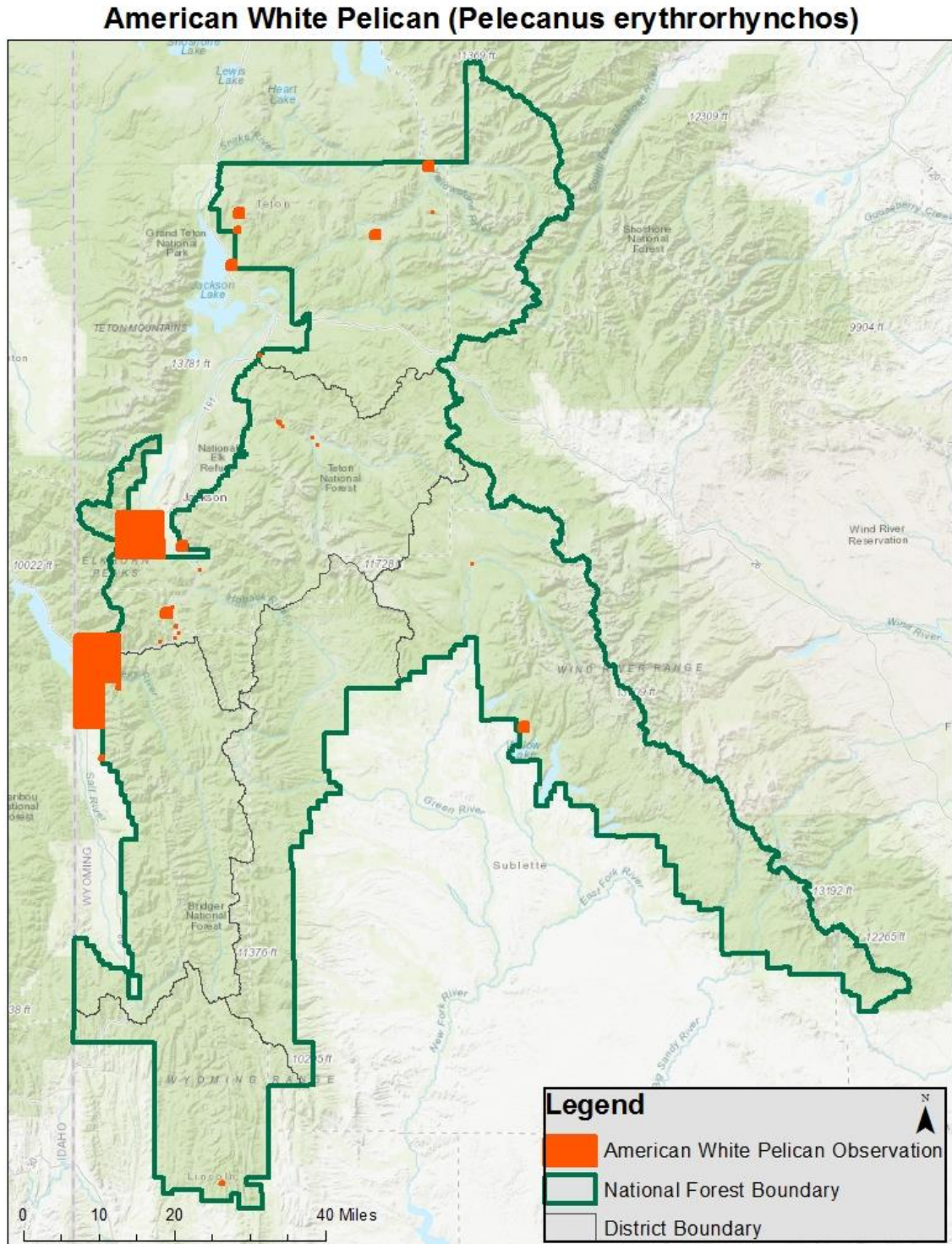
e. **Map 2**, Range and predicted distribution of *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* in Wyoming.



SOURCE: Digital maps of ranges for Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need: Sept. 2016. Wyoming Game and Fish Department and Wyoming Natural Diversity Database, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming. Note that brown indicates the predicted distribution of the species; heavy black lines indicate outermost boundaries of possible occurrence.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department. 2017. State Wildlife Action Plan. American white pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*).

- f. **Map 3**, Map of American white pelican occurrences on the Bridger-Teton National Forest (Wyoming Natural Diversity Database [July 2018])



3. Is There Substantial Concern for the Species' Capability to persist Over the Long-term in the Plan Area Based on Best Available Scientific Information?

Table 2. Status summary based on existing conservation assessments

Entity	Status/Rank (include definition if Other)
NatureServe Global Status	<p>G4— Apparently Secure</p> <p><i>Apparently Secure: Uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.</i></p>
NatureServe State Status	<p>S3S4B— Critically imperiled (Breeding)</p> <p><i>Vulnerable- — At moderate risk of extirpation in the jurisdiction due to a fairly restricted range, relatively few populations or occurrences, recent and widespread declines, threats, or other factors.</i></p> <p><i>Apparently Secure- — At a fairly low risk of extirpation in the jurisdiction due to an extensive range and/or many populations or occurrences, but with possible cause for some concern as a result of local recent declines, threats, or other factors.</i></p>
WGFD	<p>NSS4 (Bc), Tier II</p> <p><i>Population Status: Vulnerable; Population size or distribution is restricted or declining but extirpation is not imminent</i></p> <p><i>Limiting Factors: Moderate; Limiting factors are moderate and appear likely to increase in severity</i></p> <p><i>Tier II: Moderate priority</i></p> <p><i>[The WGFD's Species of Greater Conservation Need (SGCN) designation process is based upon its Native Species Status (NSS) classification system that compares population and limiting factor variables using a 16 cell matrix. As a species moves from a placement closest to the upper left corner of the matrix (Aa/NSS1) toward the lower right corner (Dd/NSS7) the species' population status in Wyoming is considered more secure. Numerical scores were assigned to each of these variables and summed to provide a total score (i.e. NSS3). SGCN were placed into one of three tiers based on their total score: Tier I – highest priority, Tier II – moderate priority, and Tier III – lowest priority.]</i></p> <p><i>(WGFD - Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need)</i></p>
WYNDD	<p>Species of Concern</p> <p><i>Species vulnerable to extirpation at the global or state level due to:</i></p> <p><i>a. their rarity (e.g., restricted distribution, small population size, low population density)</i></p>

	<p><i>b. inherent vulnerability (e.g., specialized habitat requirements, restrictive life history)</i></p> <p><i>c. threats (e.g., significant loss of habitat, sensitivity to disturbances)</i></p> <p>(Wyoming Natural Diversity Database - Species of Concern)</p>
USDA Forest Service	No Special Status
UDI FWS	No Special Status; Migratory Bird
WY BLM	No Special Status
IUCN	<p>LC – Least Concern</p> <p><i>A taxon is Least Concern when it has been evaluated against the criteria and does not qualify for Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable or Near Threatened. Widespread and abundant taxa are included in this category.</i></p> <p>(IUCN – Red List Categories and Criteria)</p>
Partners in Flight (PIF) Continental Concern Score	Not Ranked

Table 3. Status summary based on best available scientific information.

Species (Scientific and Common Name): <i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i> [American White Pelican]		
Criteria	Rationale	Literature Citations
Distribution on Bridger-Teton National Forest	The American white pelican is primarily a migrant species of Wyoming and is scattered across the state during the breeding season, occupying wherever suitable habitat exists (Map 1). Suitable habitat is found throughout the state, including parts of the BTNF (Map 2). The species is moderately distributed throughout the Forest, with occupancy records located on 5 of the 6 ranger districts (Table 1). American white pelican occurrence records suggest the species is occupying the most ideal habitat on the Forest, including the Snake, Gros Ventre, and Yellowstone River drainages (Map 3). Most of the species habitat in Northwest Wyoming is located in Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, and the surrounding Jackson hole-Snake River valley, adjacent to the BTNF. The closest known breeding colony is located in Yellowstone National Park.	

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Abundance on the Bridger-Teton National Forest	The American white pelican has a statewide abundance rank of <i>uncommon</i> and is based on the limited area of the state known to be occupied in any given season, and the relatively small coverage of suitable habitat within that area (WGFD 2017). Abundance in Wyoming, and likely the BTNF, is difficult to determine due to the nomadic nature of the species and annual variation in occupancy of individual breeding colonies (WGFD 2017). Similar to the BTNF, small colonies and non-breeding individuals are scattered across Wyoming. Limited suitable habitat on the BTNF likely reflects a low overall abundance of American white pelicans on the Forest. However, within suitable habitat in an occupied area, the species appears to be common and is usually encountered during surveys if habitat characteristics are present (WGFD 2017).	Wyoming Game and Fish Department. 2017. State Wildlife Action Plan. American White Pelican (<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>).
Population Trend on the Bridger-Teton National Forest	Wyoming trend data from the North American Breeding Bird Survey suggest that American white pelican experienced a long-term (1966–2015) significant increase of 9.73% and short-term (2005–2015) increase of 12.71% annually (Sauer et al 2017). Population trend data is not available for the BTNF. However, an increase in pelican populations across the state, and the species current occupancy within suitable habitat on the Forest, suggests that the populations on the BTNF are likely stable.	Sauer, J. R., D. K. Niven, J. E. Hines, D. J. Ziolkowski, Jr, K. L. Pardieck, J. E. Fallon, and W. A. Link. 2017. The North American Breeding Bird Survey, Results and Analysis 1966 - 2015. Version 2.07.2017 USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, MD. Wyoming Game and Fish Department. 2017. State Wildlife Action Plan. American White Pelican (<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>).
Habitat Trend on the Bridger-Teton National Forest	On the BTNF, American white pelicans use various freshwater habitats, including marshes, lakes, and rivers. Breeding habitat is often isolated islands within these habitats. Foraging areas typically consist of shallow waters in marshes, ponds, and streams, and are often over 50 km away from the breeding colony (WGFD 2017). Suitable pelican habitat makes up less than 2% of the habitat type on the BTNF (Helmbrecht 2012). However, the species appears to occupy the little suitable habitat available on the Forest. Recreation on lakes and rivers on the BTNF is common and American white pelican habitat is likely influenced by human	Helmbrecht, D., M. Williamson, and D. Abendroth. 2012. Bridger-Teton National Forest Vegetation Condition Assessment. Wyoming Game and Fish Department. 2017. State Wildlife Action Plan. American White Pelican (<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>).

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	<p>disturbance to some degree. This is particularly important on the Pinedale Ranger District where identified pelican habitat overlaps lakes which have a large amount of motorized recreation and human disturbance. This type of forest use may be contributing to a decline in available habitat for American white pelican forest wide. See the next section below for more details on human disturbance to American white pelican.</p>	
<p>Threats to the Species and its Habitat on the Bridger-Teton National Forest</p>	<p><u>Natural Threats</u> American white pelicans are particularly vulnerable due to its restrictive breeding habitat (WGFD 2017). Specifically, suitable breeding habitat is restricted to islands in various freshwater habitats in Wyoming. Availability of these habitats is likely the limiting factor for this species on the BTNF. The species may also be naturally limited by its reproductive capacity, given they are only able to raise one or two young annually and nest success within a colony can be highly variable, ranging from complete failure, to nearly complete success (WGFD 2017).</p> <p><u>Human Disturbance & Habitat Loss</u> This species is highly sensitive to human intrusion into breeding colonies, which causes desertions and exposure of eggs and young to temperature extremes and gull predation (Knopf and Evans 2004 <i>in</i> NatureServe 2018). Disturbance from motor boats and low flying airplanes has been known to cause birds to flee from nesting colonies, feeding, or roosting areas (Knopf and Evans 2004 <i>in</i> NatureServe 2018).</p> <p>Human-caused hydrological alterations have resulted in a loss of breeding and feeding habitat (Murphy 2005 <i>in</i> NatureServe 2018). Habitat loss remains an important potential limiting factor. However, some hydrological site modifications have created or improved nesting habitat.</p> <p><u>Disease</u> Diseases (particularly Type C botulism and West Nile virus) have caused</p>	<p>NatureServe. 2018. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available http://explorer.natureserve.org. (Accessed: July 12, 2018).</p> <p>Wyoming Game and Fish Department. 2017. State Wildlife Action Plan. American White Pelican (<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>).</p>

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	<p>significant die-offs and mortality of American white pelican (Rocke et al. 2005 <i>in</i> NatureServe 2018). There is concern that increased incidence and severity of disease in pelicans may be related to pesticide contamination (Murphy 2005 in NatureServe 2018).</p> <p><u>Drought</u> Several nesting colonies have been jeopardized by consecutive years of drought, likely from decreased water levels and increase in predation (Ehrlich et al. 1992 <i>in</i> NatureServe 2018). Decreasing water levels can connect islands where breeding colonies occur to mainland habitats, allowing predators to access nest sites (WGFD 2017).</p>	
<p>Summary and recommendations: The Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF) is within the migration range of the American white pelican and while few occurrence records have been documented across the forest, the species appears to utilize the limited suitable habitat available. American white pelicans are typically scattered in small groups on the Forest, with a large amount of annual variation in occupied sites. This contributes to the low occupancy and abundance on the BTNF. While some occupied habitat has been identified across the Forest, the species prefers the large water bodies and wetlands associated with Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks, adjacent to the BTNF. Based on the best available trend data, American white pelican populations are increasing for the state, and likely stable for the BTNF and surrounding area. American pelican habitat on the Forest is potentially decreasing slightly due to human disturbance/recreation. However, the majority of the threats to the species are related to natural breeding characteristics and other non-Forest related environmental factors. For these reasons, there is not a substantial concern for the species capability to persistence on the Forest over the long-term at this time, and it is recommended that the American white pelican is not a Species of Conservation Concern for the Bridger-Teton National Forest.</p> <p>Evaluator(s): Ashley Egan, Randall Griebel</p>		Date: July 12, 2018