

SPECIES: Scientific [common]	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i> [White-winged Crossbill]
Forest:	Bridger-Teton National Forest
Forest Reviewer:	Randall Griebel, James Wilder
Date of Review:	08/31/2018; reviewed 5/14/2025
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	Source of Information
6/24/2005	35	Coal Creek – Blackrock Ranger District	Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (July 2018)
5/12/2009	50	Crystal Creek – Jackson Ranger District	Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (July 2018)
1/7/2000	1	Horse Creek – Big Piney Ranger District	Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (July 2018)
8/18/2017	Unknown - Many	Green River Lakes Area – Pinedale Ranger District	eBird Basic Dataset. Nov 2017
9/4/1998	5	Travis Creek – Kemmerer Ranger District	Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (July 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___

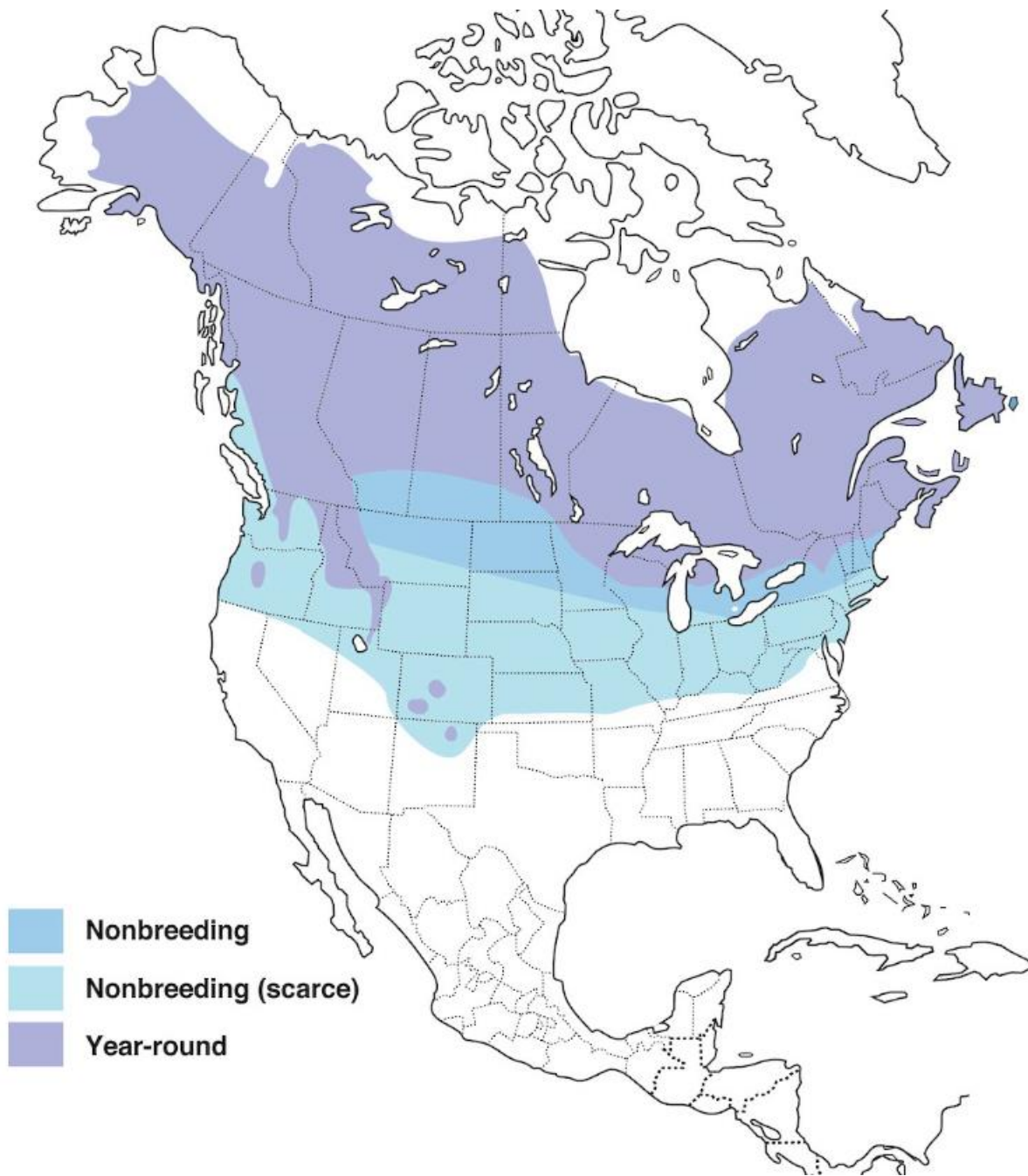
If no, provide explanation and stop assessment.

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___

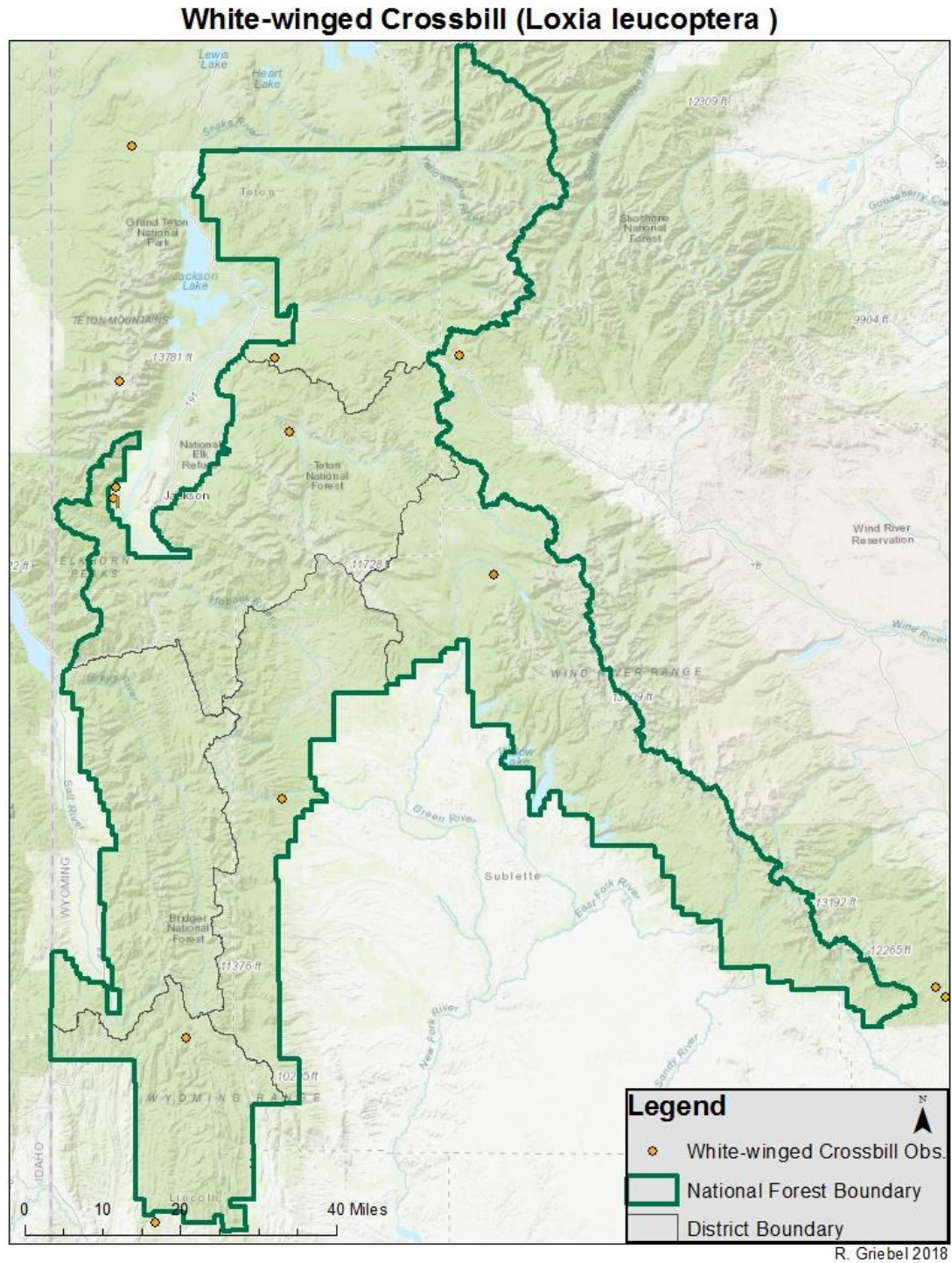
If no, provide explanation and stop assessment.

d. **Map 1**, White-winged Crossbill range map of North America



Benkman, C. W. (2012). White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*), version 2.0. In *The Birds of North America* (A. F. Poole, Editor). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA.
<https://doi.org/10.2173/bna.27>.

- e. **Map 2**, Map of White-winged Crossbill occurrences on the Bridger-Teton National Forest (Wyoming Natural Diversity Database 2018, and eBird Basic Dataset: Nov 2017).



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	G5— Secure <i>Widespread in North America and Eurasia; in North America, areas with apparent declines seem to outnumber areas with seemingly stable or increasing populations, but overall there is no significant upward or downward trend.</i>
NatureServe State Status	S2— Imperiled <i>Imperiled because of rarity due to very restricted range, very few populations (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation.</i>
WGFD	No Special Status
WYNDD	Species of Potential Concern <i>Species that appear to be secure at present, but because they have limited distribution as regional or state endemics they could become vulnerable under large-scale changes. Species with this status warrant periodic checks. (Wyoming Natural Diversity Database - Species of Potential Concern)</i>
USDA Forest Service	No Special Status
UDI FWS	No Special Status
WY BLM	No Special Status
IUCN	LC – Least Concern <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. (IUCN – Red List Categories and Criteria)</i>

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

Species (Scientific and Common Name): <i>Loxia leucoptera</i> [White-winged Crossbill]		
Criteria	Rationale	Literature Citations
Distribution on Bridger-Teton National Forest	White-winged Crossbills are typically found in highly irregular occurrences throughout boreal forests containing white spruce (<i>Picea glauca</i>), black spruce (<i>P. mariana</i>) and tamarack (<i>Larix laricina</i>) from Alaska to Newfoundland; in the Rocky Mountains, Engelmann spruce (<i>P. engelmannii</i>) is the preferred conifer (Benkman 2012; Map 1). In Wyoming, the species is primarily considered “non-breeding” throughout most of the state, although its year-round range does contain a small portion of Northwest Wyoming and likely the Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF; Map 1). On the BTNF, the White-winged Crossbill has been documented on 5 of the 6 Ranger Districts (Map 2). Occurrence on the forest is sporadic and there are very few records of the species. However, where they have been observed, there can be many individuals at a single location (Table 1).	Benkman, C. W. (2012). White-winged Crossbill (<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>), version 2.0. In <i>The Birds of North America</i> (A. F. Poole, Editor). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. https://doi.org/10.2173/bna.27 .
Abundance on the Bridger-Teton National Forest	In Wyoming, the White-winged Crossbill is extremely rare and there have been few recordings of the species across the state. The Integrated Monitoring in Bird Conservation Regions (IMBCR) surveys conducted across the state indicate the species has only been identified twice since 2008: there were 6 individuals recorded on the Medicine Bow National Forest in 2008 and 7 individuals recorded at Devils Tower National Monument in 2010. On the BTNF, there have been 20+ plots surveyed annually since 2010 in accordance with the IMBCR program and White-winged crossbills are estimated to have increased 6%/year between 2010-2024. At the Intermountain Region scale, population density trends for White-winged Crossbills have increased 26% since 2017 (Shivik 2025).	Shivik, J. A. 2025. 2025 Intermountain Region Broad-Scale Bird Monitoring Report, draft. 76 pp.
Population Trend on the Bridger-Teton National Forest	Currently, there are no population estimates for Wyoming, though the population trend for the BTNF appears positive over the last 15 years (Shivik 2025). The species appears sporadically throughout its range and the BTNF is located at the cusp of its year-round (breeding) range – it is not known if the species attempts to nest on the BTNF; however, with observations in late June (Table 1), it is likely there is some level of nesting in specific locations on the Forest depending on the year.	Shivik, J. A. 2025. 2025 Intermountain Region Broad-Scale Bird Monitoring Report, draft. 76 pp.

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Habitat Trend on the Bridger-Teton National Forest	<p>White-winged Crossbills prefer conifer forests; especially where there are large crops of spruce or tamarack cones. The critical factor influencing crossbill breeding is conifer seed availability, not necessarily the detailed characteristics of the habitat (Benkman 2012).</p> <p>Using a spatial model, biologists estimated that the BTNF currently supports about 300,000 acres (approx. 8.8%) of mature or old subalpine forests that potentially provide nesting, roosting, and/or foraging habitat for White-winged crossbills. A vegetation assessment completed in 2012 for the BTNF determined that “Rocky Mountain Subalpine Mesic-Wet Spruce-Fir Forest and Woodland” vegetation class – the preferred habitat type of White-winged Crossbills encompasses 9% of the BTNF. This system is typically found on north facing slopes, high elevation ravines, or other areas where cold, mesic conditions exist, where Engelmann spruce and subalpine fir dominate the overstory but Lodgepole pine may be found on drier sites or in early successional stages (Helmbrecht et al. 2012). Of the 9% identified habitat, 60% has been identified as providing ideal habitat for the species, where late development Engelmann spruce, Sub-alpine fir, and Lodgepole pine is present. With increased fire suppression and less stand replacing wildfires on the landscape, early successional stands are being converted to late successional, resulting in an increase in desirable habitat.</p>	<p>Benkman, C. W. (2012). White-winged Crossbill (<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>), version 2.0. In <i>The Birds of North America</i> (A. F. Poole, Editor). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. https://doi.org/10.2173/bna.27.</p> <p>Helmbrecht, D., M. Williamson, and D. Abendroth. 2012. Bridger-Teton National Forest Vegetation Condition Assessment.</p>
Threats to the Species and its Habitat on the Bridger-Teton National Forest	<p>The primary threat to White-winged crossbills may be through indirect effects of forest harvesting practices. Forest management, insect infestations, disease, and wildfires threaten the species by reducing the amount of mature forest and therefore, reducing nesting and foraging habitat. Habitat shifts due to climate change also could affect the species in parts of its range. Crossbills generally tolerate human disturbance in regards to individuals approaching nest sites and may nest near heavily used roads (Benkman 2012).</p>	<p>Benkman, C. W. (2012). White-winged Crossbill (<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>), version 2.0. In <i>The Birds of North America</i> (A. F. Poole, Editor). Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ithaca, NY, USA. https://doi.org/10.2173/bna.27.</p>
<p>Summary and recommendations: The Bridger-Teton National Forest (BTNF) may contain some year-round habitat, but it is primarily identified as non-breeding (Map 1). Although few White-winged Crossbill observations have been</p>		Date: August 31, 2018

Species (Scientific and Common Name): <i>Loxia leucoptera</i> [White-winged Crossbill]		
Criteria	Rationale	Literature Citations
	<p>recorded across the BTNF, incidental sightings indicate the species can sporadically show-up in relatively large numbers at specific locations depending on the year. Threats to the species are primarily associated with processes that decrease old-growth spruce-fir forest. On the BTNF, this type of habitat is typically found on north-facing slopes, high elevation ravines, or other areas where cold, mesic conditions exist. These areas are characterized by long fire return intervals and are typically not a primary focus for large-scale forest management actions. It is unknown whether the impacts of climate change on these cooler-mesic sites will result in minor or major changes to the vegetative conditions.</p> <p>With increased fire suppression and less stand replacing wildfires on the landscape, early successional stands are being converted to late successional, resulting in an increase in desirable habitat across the forest. Thus, evidence suggests that White-winged crossbill populations are not of substantial concern on the BTNF. The Subalpine Mesic-Wet Spruce-Fir Forest and Woodland vegetation class is stable and there is little concern for habitat decline, concluding that the species' capability to persist over the long-term within the planning unit is currently adequate. Therefore, it is recommended that the White-winged Crossbill is not a Species of Conservation Concern for the Bridger-Teton National Forest.</p> <p>Evaluator(s): Randall Griebel</p>	