

- 1. Species:** American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*)
- 2. Status:** Table 1 summarizes the current status of this species or subspecies by various ranking entity and defines the meaning of the status.

Table 1. Current status of *Falco peregrinus anatum*

Entity	Status	Status Definition
NatureServe	G4T4	<i>Species is Apparently Secure</i> At fairly low risk of extinction or elimination 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.
CNHP	S2B	<i>Species is Imperiled</i> At high risk of extinction or elimination due to restricted range, few populations or occurrences, steep declines, severe threats, or other factors. (B=Breeding Only)
Colorado State List Status	SGCN, Tier 2	Species of Greatest Conservation Need
USDA Forest Service	R2 Sensitive	Region 2 Regional Forester’s Sensitive Species
USDI FWS ^b	BCC	Identified by USFWS as a Bird of Conservation Concern
USDI FWS	Delisted	Removed from Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife (08/25/1999)
^a Colorado Natural Heritage Program. ^b US Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service.		

The 2012 U.S. Forest Service Planning Rule defines Species of Conservation Concern (SCC) as “a species, other than federally recognized threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species, that is known to occur in the plan area and for which the regional forester has determined that the best available scientific information indicates substantial concern about the species’ capability to persist over the long-term in the plan area” (36 CFR 219.9). This overview was developed to summarize information relating to this species’ consideration to be listed as a SCC on the Rio Grande National Forest, and to aid in the development of plan components and monitoring objectives.

3. Taxonomy

Genus/species *Falco peregrinus anatum* is accepted as valid (ITIS 2015).

4. Distribution, abundance, and population trend on the planning unit [12.53.2,3,4]:

Peregrine falcons breed throughout the Colorado Plateau and Southern Rocky Mountain ecological provinces of Colorado. However, nesting does not occur on the eastern plains. Intensive inventory of 22 historical sites in 1973 yielded only 10 adult pairs, of which only two were known to have produced eggs. By 1976, occupancy continued to decline and adult pairs then defended only five sites (Craig and Enderson 2004). From 1974 to 1989, a total of 134 combined hacking and fostering attempts were conducted in Colorado, averaging nearly 80% success rate in producing successful young. The number of birds seen on territory sharply

increased after 1985. Number of known territories in Colorado totaled 93 in 1999 and had increased to 144 by 2009 (Enderson et al. 2012).

A total of 22 peregrine falcon occurrences have been reported within the planning area over the past 20 years (Table 2, Figure 1). As of 2015, at least 12 eyries have been known to occur on the planning area. This includes six active eyries, five recent or historic eyries, and one potential eyrie. Population trends for this species within the planning area have not been reported but active eyries appear to have decreased during the past decade (R. Ghormley, pers. comm. 2015). However, based on species trends within the state as a whole, a stable or slightly increasing trend is likely.

Table 2. Known Occurrence Frequency within the Planning Area (NRIS database)

Known Occurrences in the past 20 years	22
Known Eyries (current and inactive)	12
Year Last Observed	2014

5. Brief description of natural history and key ecological functions [basis for other 12.53 components]:

Peregrine falcons utilize a wide variety of landscapes for foraging, but require prominent cliffs overlooking surrounding lowlands, often with water, for nesting (Craig et al. 2004).

In Colorado, timing of egg-laying can range from late March through early May, but most occurs from April 1 – April 29. Clutches average 2-4 eggs, with fledging broods of 2-3 young most prevalent. Hatching occurs throughout the month of May, peaking during the first week of the month. Young fledge beginning the first of June through early July, with the peak occurring in mid-June (Craig and Enderson 2004).

Prey items consist nearly exclusively of living birds. In the southern Rocky Mountains and Colorado Plateau, most common prey species include white-throated swift, mourning dove, common nighthawk, rock dove, American robin, and a variety of other passerine species (Craig and Enderson 2004).

Estimated home range based on minimum convex polygons for peregrines in Colorado varied between 313 mi² and 556 mi². Females tended to have larger ranges than males. About 60 % of the foraging by males was done less than 5 miles from the eyrie, and males rarely moved 15 miles from the site; about 25% of female flights ranged beyond 15 miles (Enderson and Craig 1997).

Peregrines breeding in Colorado have been observed during the winter in Arizona, New Mexico, and Mexico (Craig and Enderson 2004).

6. Overview of ecological conditions for recovery, conservation, and viability [12.53 7, 9?, 10, 11, 12]:

Craig et al. (2004) reported that, overall, peregrines in Colorado tend to use ledges with southern exposures. At the lowest altitudinal range of 4,500 - 6,000 feet northern exposures were prominent. Exposures were in nearly all aspects in the 6,000-7,500 feet range, but in the 7,000 - 10,500 feet elevation ranges, aspects were mainly southerly to easterly. Romin and Muck (1999) recommended seasonal buffers of 1 mile from nest sites during the period 2/1 – 8/31 to avoid negative disturbance to breeding and fledging birds.

7. Threats and Risk Factors

Primary threats and risk factors consist of environmental toxins, habitat loss, human disturbance, and illegal take. Pesticide-caused reproductive failure now apparently is rare or absent in northern populations, though organochlorine levels in the environment are still high in some areas (NatureServe 2015). Disturbance from recreational activities (rock climbing and hiking) can cause nest failure (Colorado Partners in Flight 2000).

8. Key literature:

Colorado Partners in Flight. 2000. Colorado Land Bird Conservation Plan. Accessed online at: <http://www.rmbo.org/pif/bcp/intro/exsum.htm> [07/01/2015].

Craig, G.R. and J.H. Enderson. 2004. Peregrine falcon biology and management in Colorado, 1973-2001. Colorado Division of Wildlife, Technical Publication No. 43. 80 pp.

Enderson, J.H., R.J. Oakleaf, R.R. Rogers, and J.S. Sumner. 2012. Nesting performance of peregrine falcons in Colorado, Montana, and Wyoming, 2005-2009. *Wilson Journal of Ornithology* 124(1): 127-132.

Ghormley, R. 2015. Randy Ghormley, Forest Wildlife Biologist, Rio Grande National Forest. Personal Communication.

NatureServe. 2015. Explorer, an online encyclopedia of life. Accessed online at: <http://explorer.natureserve.org/index.htm> [06/25/2015].

Romin, L.A. and J.A. Muck. 1999. Utah Field Office guidelines for raptor protection from human and land use disturbances. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Utah Field Office, Salt Lake City, UT. 42 pp.

USDI Fish and Wildlife Service. 1999. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Final Rule To Remove the American Peregrine Falcon From the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife, and To Remove the Similarity of Appearance Provision for Free-Flying Peregrines in the Conterminous United States. *Federal Register* 64(164): 46542-46558.

9. Map of Known Occurrences

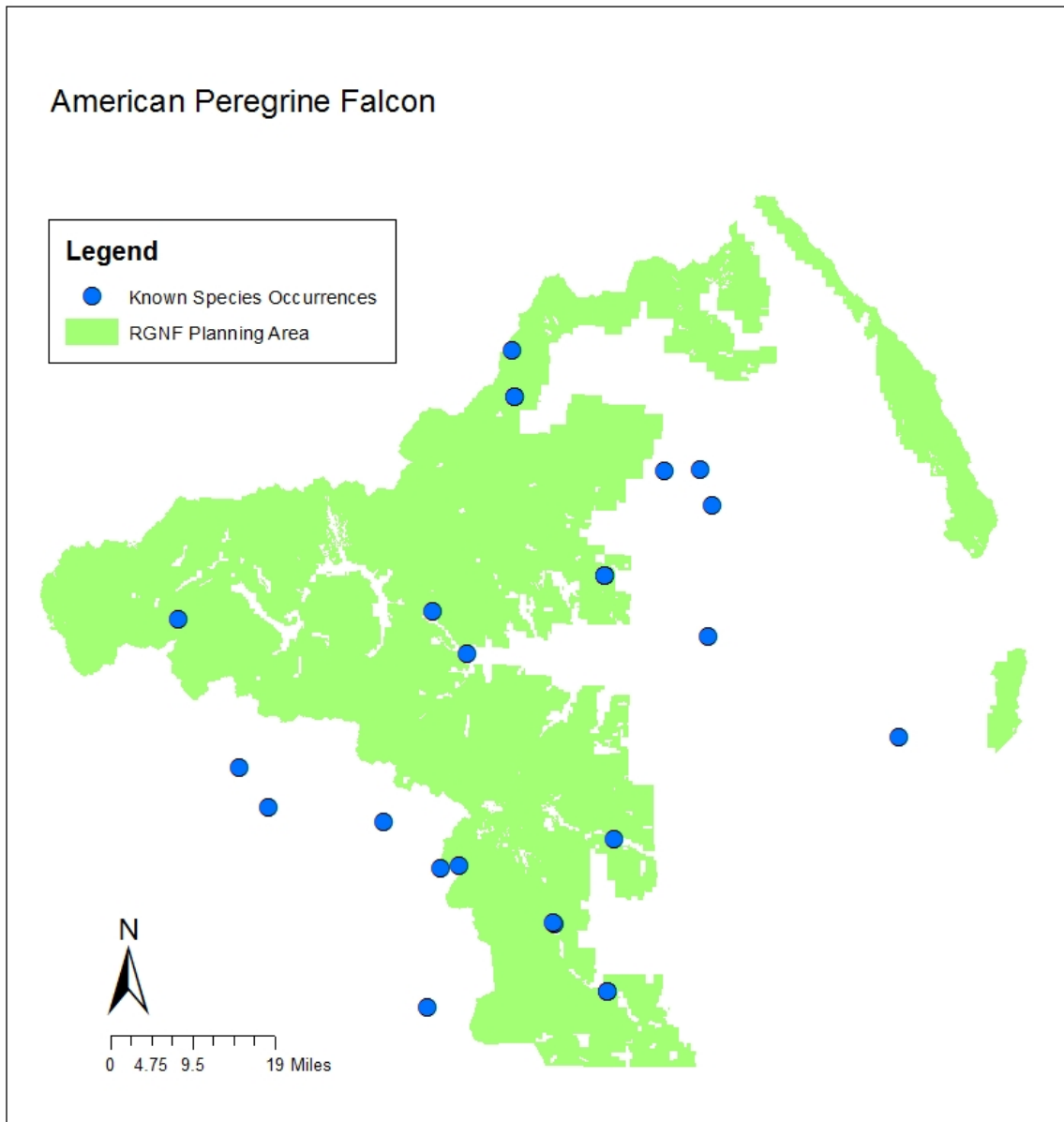


Figure 1. Peregrine Falcon Known Occurrences.