

## Northern Flying Squirrel - *Glaucomys sabrinus*

Abundance: Uncommon

Status: NSS4 (Bc)

NatureServe: G5 S4

Population Status: distribution is restricted but extirpation is not imminent; The IUCN considers the rangewide population to be stable.

Limiting Factor: Habitat (and Human Activity and Predation): limiting factors are moderate; primarily restricted to western Wyoming; limiting factors could increase in the future

Comment:

### Introduction

The northern flying squirrel occurs from Alaska through most of Canada, southward to the mountains of southern California, the southern Rocky Mountains, western South Dakota, the Great Lakes region, and the southern Appalachians. In Wyoming, it occurs primarily in the western mountain ranges, although there are isolated populations in the Black Hills and Sweetwater County. The northern flying squirrel is considered uncommon in Wyoming.

### Habitat

The northern flying squirrel inhabits coniferous, deciduous, mixed, and riparian forests and woodlands. It prefers cool, moist, mature forests with abundant standing and down snags, and is often most abundant near wetlands or streams. It prefers cavities in mature trees as den sites, although it also uses leaf nests and underground burrows. Although the northern flying squirrel occurs in stands of varying age, understory density, and composition, old-growth forests are most ideally-suited to its gliding form of locomotion, use of cavities for nesting, and reliance on wood-borne fungi and lichens for food.

### Problems

- h Although suitable habitat in Wyoming is widely distributed, it is naturally fragmented and very limited. Geographical isolation of existing populations may leave them vulnerable to demographic and genetic stochasticity.
- h No ongoing efforts to delineate important habitats in Wyoming.
- h Population densities and trends are not well known.
- h Species is susceptible to population declines as a result of large-scale habitat manipulation projects that destroy or remove suitable habitat.
- h Species is vulnerable to population declines resulting in loss of habitat due to climate change (e.g., mountain pine beetle kill).

### Conservation Actions

- h Conduct inventories for species in all suitable habitats in the state.
- h Delineate important habitats and work cooperatively with land management agencies to maintain these within the designated areas
- h Design vegetation treatments, fire management plans, and grazing regimes in habitat that mimic and restore natural landscape patterns and disturbance processes, retain and recruit old growth and woody debris, maintain habitat connectivity, and maintain the native composition of herbaceous plant and shrub communities.
- h Designate important habitats, habitat corridors, and identify where habitat conservation and management efforts should focus to protect, enhance, or improve suitable habitat.
- h Work cooperatively with the US Forest Service to conduct surveys for species in all potential habitat.

### Monitoring/Research

No on-going monitoring.

### Recent Developments

None.

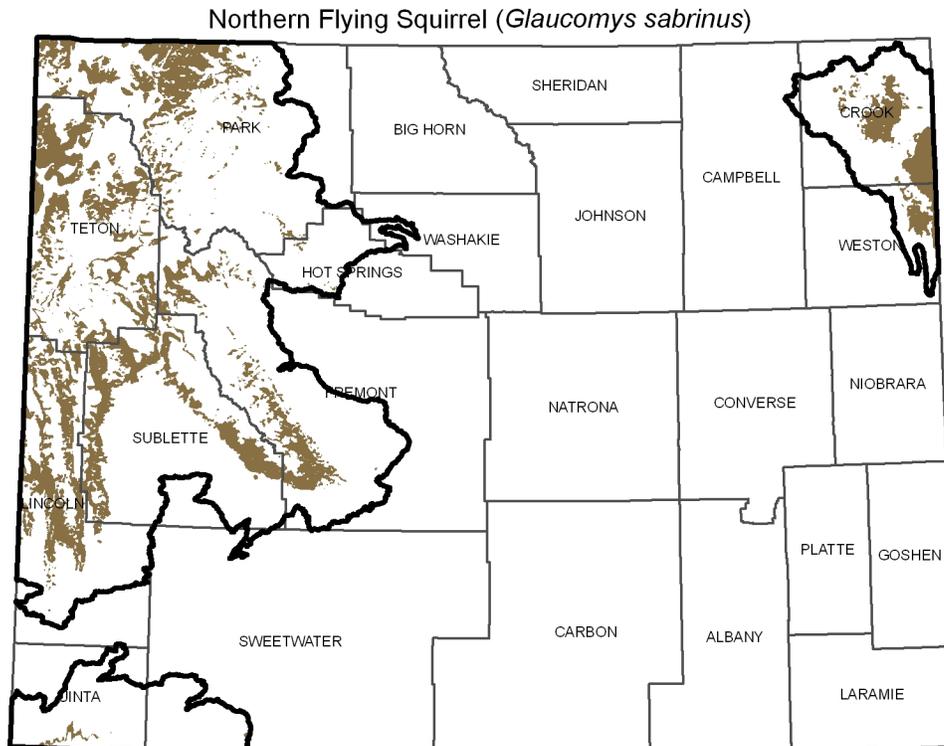
## References

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SOURCE: Digital maps of ranges and predicted distributions for Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need: April 2010. 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.