

Western Small-footed Myotis - *Myotis ciliolabrum*

Abundance: Uncommon

Status: NSS4 (Cb)

NatureServe: G5 S3B

Population Status: distribution is secure and the species is widely distributed; The Western Bat Working Group considers rangewide population trend as unknown and at risk.

Limiting Factor: Human Activity: limiting factors is severe; similar to cave and abandoned mine dwelling bats, the species is extremely sensitive to human disturbance; disturbance results in abandonment of young and roosts; abandoned mines continue to be closed for human safety issues

Comment: change is due primarily to new matrix definitions

Introduction

The western small-footed myotis inhabits most of western North America from British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, south through most of the United States west of the 100th meridian, and into central Mexico (Holloway and Barclay 2001). Similar to other bat species, the western small-footed myotis emerges from its roost at dusk to begin foraging. The western small-footed myotis forages within proximity to boulders, shrubs, trees, and ground in an slow, erratic, and irregular manner (Holloway and Barclay 2001). It preys primarily on small soft-bodied insects moths, beetles, ants, etc. The western small-footed myotis hibernates during the winter months near their summer range often wedging itself into cracks or crevices (Holloway and Barclay 2001). It is a year-round resident in Wyoming, is found throughout the state, and is considered uncommon (Orabona et al. 2009).

Habitat

The western small-footed myotis inhabits a wide variety of habitats, it is most commonly associated with arid, rocky areas, such as canyons, cliffs, rock outcrops, and badlands, within a variety of habitats, such as montane forest, juniper woodlands, sagebrush steppe, and shortgrass prairie (Finley et al. 1983). During summer, the small-footed myotis roosts in a variety of settings, although it is usually associated with rock shelters, such as crevices, overhangs, cliffs, and under rocks, caves, and/or abandoned mines. During winter, it hibernates in caves and abandoned mines, and its reliance on these sites is significant (Holloway and Barclay 2001).

Problems

- h No ongoing efforts to delineate important habitats in Wyoming.
- h Population densities and trends are not well known.
- h Species is susceptible to decline from recreational activities (such as spelunking and rock climbing) that impact roosting habitat (e.g., caves, abandoned mines, and rock crevices).
- h Species is susceptible to declines due to broad-scale insect control programs.

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 Determine the effects of recreational and commercial activities on populations.
- h Educate the public about the ecological role of the species and their habitat requirements.
- h Minimize disturbance of caves or abandoned mines where species is roosting.

Monitoring/Research

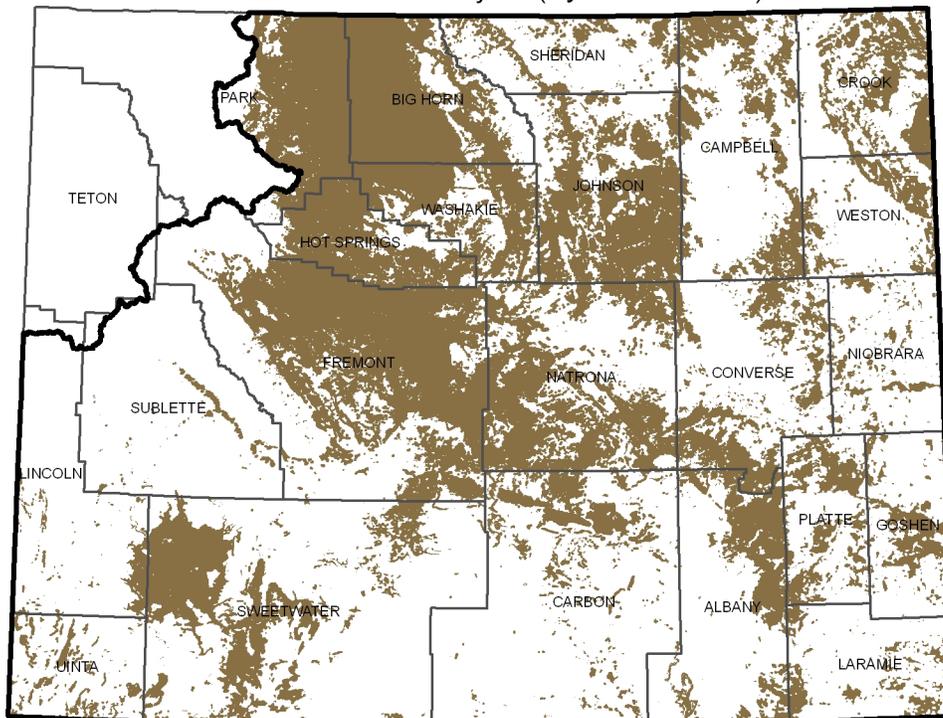
Forest habitats are being inventoried and funded through State Wildlife Grants. Project is scheduled to be completed in June 2012.

Recent Developments

None.

References

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- Schmidt CA. 2003. Conservation assessment for the small-footed myotis in the Black Hills National Forest, South Dakota and Wyoming. Custer (SD): USDA Forest Service, Black Hills National Forest. 16 p. Online www.fs.fed.us/r2/scp/species_assessment_reports.shtml.

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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.