

Wyoming Pocket Gopher - *Thomomys clusius*

Abundance: Rare

Status: NSS3 (Bb)

NatureServe: G2 S2

Population Status: distribution is restricted but extirpation is not imminent; limited ability to increase species distribution; genetically unique and isolated; restricted to a small portion of south central Wyoming; The IUCN reports that population trend is unknown, information is not available to assess trends, but it is possibly stable.

Limiting Factor: Human Activity (and Ecology and Climate Change): limiting factors are severe

Comment: Change attributed to new information

Introduction

This is the only species of mammal that occurs exclusively in Wyoming. It is found in southeastern Sweetwater County and southwestern Carbon County, is a year-round resident and considered uncommon (Thaler and Hinesley 1979; Orabona 2009). Similar to other pocket gophers, the species is primarily fossorial and solitary except during the breeding season. The Wyoming pocket gopher feeds primarily on leaves and roots of forbs and grasses and utilize food caches extensively during the winter months (Keinath and Beauvais 2006).

Habitat

The Wyoming pocket gopher uses upland dry ridge tops, shallow and gravelly loose soils, in greasewood habitats (Thaler and Hinesley 1979). It typically occurs on sites with 50-80% bare ground, little to no grass or litter cover, and where Wyoming big sagebrush is absent (Griscom et al. 2010). The sympatric Northern pocket gopher typically occupies Wyoming big sagebrush stands with loamy or sandy soils (Griscom et al. 2010).

Problems

- h No ongoing efforts to delineate important habitats in Wyoming.
- h Population densities and trends are not well known.
- h Natural history of the species make surveys difficult and costly to implement.

Conservation Actions

- h Delineate important habitats and work cooperatively with land management agencies to maintain these within the designated areas
- h Improve survey methodology (e.g., capture, detection, etc.).

Monitoring/Research

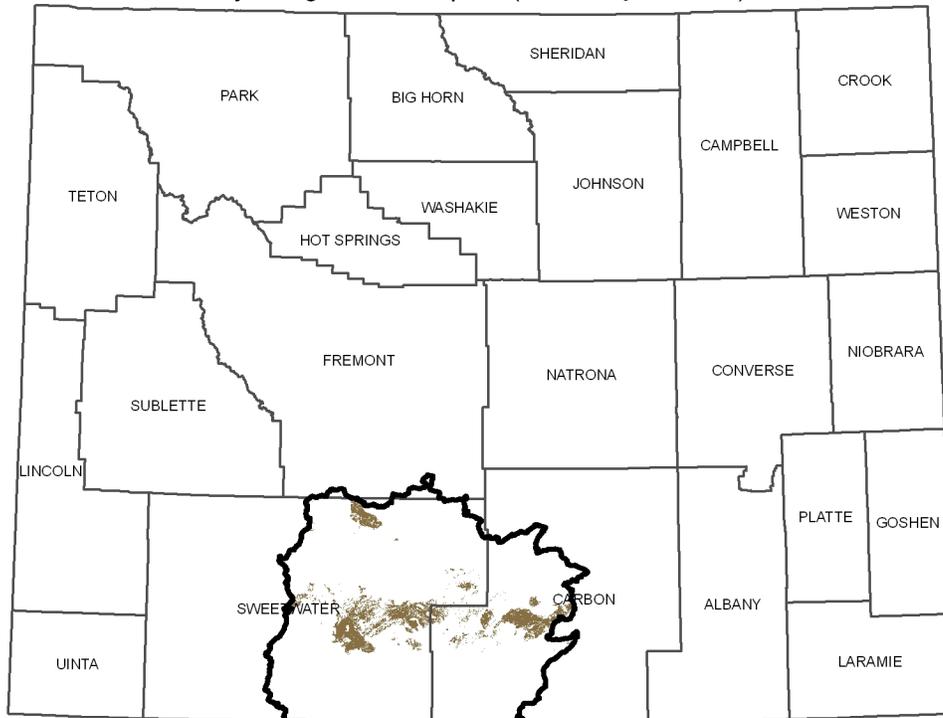
No on-going monitoring.

Recent Developments

None.

References

- Keinath, D. and G. Beauvais. 2006. Wyoming pocket gopher (*Thomomys clusius*): a technical conservation assessment. USFS Rocky Mountain Region.
- Griscom, H., D. Keinath, and M. Andersen. 2010. POCKET GOPHER SURVEYS IN SOUTHWESTERN WYOMING DRAFT PROJECT REPORT. WYNDD.
- Thaler, C.S. and L.L. Hinesley. 1979. *Thomomys clusius*, a rediscovered species of pocket gopher. *Journal of Mammalogy* 60:480-488.
- Cerovski AO, Grenier M, Oakleaf B, Van Fleet L, Patla S. 2004. Atlas of birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles in Wyoming. Lander: Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Nongame Program. 206 p.
- Clark TW, Stromberg MR . 1987. Mammals in Wyoming. Lawrence (KS): Univ Kansas, Museum Nat Hist. 314 p.

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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.