



State Wildlife Action Plan E-Newsletter

Wyoming Game and Fish Department

September 2009

Focus group meetings held on leading wildlife challenges



Rural subdivisions, energy development, invasive species, disruption of natural disturbance regimes, and climate change have been identified as the leading challenges facing Wyoming's wildlife.

Focus groups comprised of experts and stakeholders are being used as part of the process for developing coordinated, statewide conservation strategies to address each issue. Focus groups are not only effective mechanisms for quickly receiving the most relevant information, but are also helpful in assembling a network of knowledgeable and engaged organizations for the future implementation of Wyoming's State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP).

Additionally, focus group discussions allow for the exchange of ideas, aid in prioritizing issues, and identify subject areas where there is both consensus and varying opinions.

At each meeting, participants are asked to provide their recommendations regarding:

- 1) The background and nature of the issue in Wyoming;
- 2) Information which would help to quantify the extent and location of problems;
- 3) Current conservation activities happening within the state;

- 4) Actions needed to more effectively address the issue;
- 5) Ways to monitor success; and
- 6) What groups should be consulted in forming and implementing conservation plans and who could provide additional information on the topic.

Focus group meetings have been conducted on all issues except climate change. State wildlife agencies will receive a report containing suggestions on how climate change can be integrated into SWAPs at the September 2009 meeting of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

At this early stage in the SWAP's revision, the purpose of focus groups is not to reach out to and incorporate the input of all interested parties, but rather to receive recommendations from individuals who are very knowledgeable about the issue, have a balanced outlook, and work effectively in groups. Once important issues have been identified, a framework for a conservation strategy can be created and shared with a wider audience for review and input. Draft conservation strategies for each of the five leading wildlife challenges are anticipated in early 2010.



“SWAP terrestrial habitats and aquatic basins have been selected by those that contain similar species and conservation issues.”

SWAP terrestrial habitats types and aquatic basins identified

Wyoming’s 2010 State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) will have a three-level conservation approach. One section will address leading wildlife conservation strategies at the statewide level (page 1). Secondly, the population status, life history, threats, monitoring, and conservation actions for individual Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) will be identified in species accounts. Lastly, the SWAP will include a habitat section.

The habitat section will be divided into ten terrestrial habitat types and six aquatic basins (reduced from eight aquatic basins). Habitat types and aquatic basins were identified based upon:

- 1) Plant communities and geographic areas that contain similar species and threats;
- 2) Habitat groupings that are frequently used in wildlife management decisions both within and outside the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. This was intended to support integrating existing conservation initiatives into the SWAP; and
- 3) Habitat types that the public and policy makers can understand and identify.

The number of habitat types also had to be manageable for planning purposes.

Each habitat section will contain the following information:

- 1) A physical description of the habitat;
- 2) Maps showing the location of the habitat in Wyoming;
- 3) Lists of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) and other notable species that occupy the habitat;
- 4) Identification and overview of the problems affecting the habitat and associated species;
- 5) Current conservation initiatives and progress toward addressing habitat problems. This topic heading will include identification of high priority conservation areas; and
- 6) Prioritized conservation actions for the next five years.

As with the portion of the SWAP addressing leading conservation challenges, external input is being collected in creating the habitat section for the 2010 SWAP. Input is being requested from individuals and agencies that have the most expertise, management authority, or resources for addressing the habitat type in question.

A list of terrestrial and aquatic habitats that will be addressed in the 2010 SWAP is found on page 3.

SWAP habitats types and aquatic basins



“SWAP habitat types are intended to be easy for the public and policy makers to understand and identify.”

TERRESTRIAL (10)

Upland Forest – Xeric
 Upland Forest – Aspen/deciduous
 Upland Forest – Montane/subalpine
 Mesic – Riparian
 Mesic – Wetland
 Grassland and prairie – Low elevation
 Grassland and prairie – High elevation
 Shrubland – Sagebrush
 Shrubland – Other
 Cliff/canyon/rock outcrops

AQUATIC (6)

Pacific Northwest
 Great Basin
 Upper Colorado
 Northwestern Missouri
 Northeastern Missouri
 North/South Platte

Range and distribution maps being created for SGCN species



“Maps will include both known locations for the species and suitable habitat.”

The 2010 SWAP will contain both range and distribution maps for all Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). Maps are being produced by the Wyoming Natural Diversity Data (WYNDD). Range maps provide information about known locations for species based upon recorded observations and sightings by qualified individuals. Distribution maps are created through a modeling process across five states and used to identify areas where the species has not been documented, but suitable habitat exists. Distribution maps are particularly useful in guiding future inventory work for species where little is known about the extent of their range in Wyoming.

As part of the process for creating range maps, WYNDD and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department are hosting meetings to share the latest monitoring and inventory data on SGCN species locations and review draft maps for accuracy. Meetings to review draft maps for SGCN fish, amphibians, and reptiles were held on May 26 and 27, 2009. Meetings to review range maps for Wyoming SGCN birds and mammals are planned for September 14-16, 2009 at the Casper Regional office of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. WYNDD will also supply the Wyoming Game and Fish Department with range maps for non-SGCN terrestrial vertebrates in the state.

State Wildlife Action Plan E-Newsletter

Questions or comments about the SWAP or this newsletter can be forwarded to:

Glenn Pauley

State Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator
Wyoming Game and Fish Department

5400 Bishop Boulevard

Cheyenne, WY 82006

Phone: (307) 777-4637

Email: glenn.pauley@wgf.state.wy.us

To be added to the mailing list, send an e-mail to joinswapenews@ewyoming.gov from the email account at which you would like to receive the newsletter. You may unsubscribe by sending an e-mail to leave-swapenews@ewyoming.gov. To subscribe or unsubscribe, leave the subject line and body of email blank.

State Wildlife Action Plan Inter-agency Advisory Team

DR. GARY BEAUVAIS
WYOMING NATURAL
DIVERSITY DATABASE

SUSAN CHILDS
WYOMING OFFICE OF
STATE LANDS AND
INVESTMENTS

DR. PAT DEIBERT
US FISH AND WILDLIFE
SERVICE

JOHN KECK
NATIONAL PARKS
SERVICE

ALAN WILLIAMSON
US FOREST SERVICE

PAUL OBERT
NATURAL RESOURCE
CONSERVATION
SERVICE

DENNIS SAVILLE
BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT

TEMPLE STEVENSON
WYOMING GOVERNOR'S
OFFICE

JUSTIN WILLIAMS
WYOMING DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://gf.state.wy.us/>