

MANAGING FORESTED LANDS FOR WILDLIFE

Developed in cooperation with U.S. Department of
Agriculture, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region

Robert L. Hoover and Dale L. Wills, Editors

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COLORADO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE
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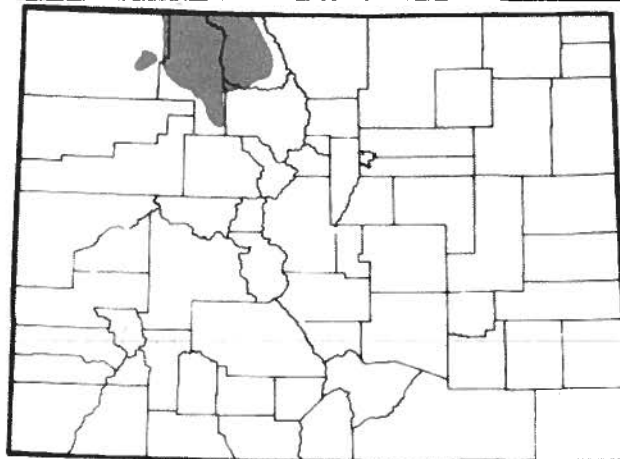
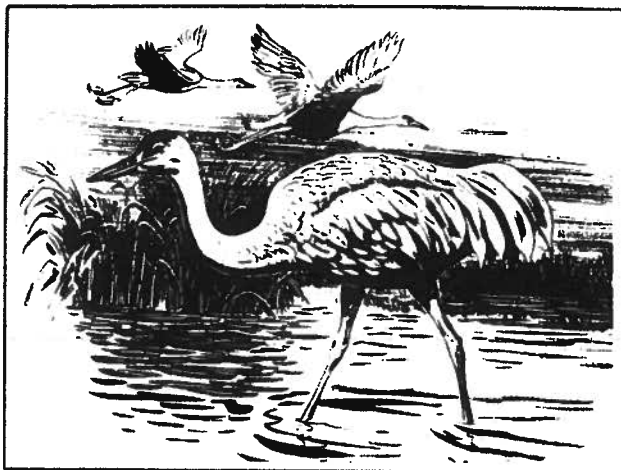
CONTRIBUTIONS

Administrators, biologists and foresters in the Colorado Division of Wildlife and the Rocky Mountain Region of the U.S. Forest Service have joined forces in a unique effort to provide this book. The work of 15 authors from the Division of Wildlife and the Forest Service has been supported by the advice and counsel of many others in these two organizations as well as other institutions and agencies. Information provided by scientists in previously published records has been of immeasurable value in preparation of this book and in advancement of our knowledge on management of forested ecosystems for the benefit of wildlife.



The book is out of print.

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GREATER SANDHILL CRANE

Greater sandhill cranes use 2 principal areas in Colorado: the river island system of a portion of the Yampa River and the wet meadow, beaver pond riparian systems located adjacent to or among aspen stands in Routt and Jackson counties. These birds are seldom found at elevations above 9,500 feet in Colorado.

ECOSYSTEMS USED

Forested ecosystems used seasonally by this species and the relative abundance of the species in each are shown below.

| Ecosystem used | Season of use | Relative abundance |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| High Elevation Riparian | Spring and summer | Common locally |
| Cottonwood Riparian | Fall | Common locally |

HABITAT REQUIREMENTS

Various habitat characteristics and requirements for the greater sandhill crane are presented here.

REARING REQUIREMENTS.—In Colorado, this species uses willow-lined stream courses, wetlands, beaver dams, or other features, such as hummocks surrounded by dense willows, rushes, et cetera, for nesting. These cranes are intolerant to disturbances during incubation and rearing periods.

FEEDING REQUIREMENTS. — Sandhill cranes are omnivorous and opportunistic in their feeding habits. Food items taken include small reptiles, amphibians, rodents, grains, berries, roots, and insects. They will feed in such diverse habitats as wetlands, sagebrush stands, and croplands.

COVER REQUIREMENTS.—Specific cover requirements are not available for this species. Therefore it is assumed that the feeding and rearing requirements provide sufficient cover. Additionally, spring and fall staging areas should be relatively free of trees.

MINIMUM VIABLE POPULATION AND HABITAT AREA

Estimates of a minimum viable population for this species are not available in the literature. For the purpose of this book, such a population is estimated to be 10 nesting pairs. Reported nesting territory sizes range from 1/2 to 1 mile in radius. Home ranges as large as 28 square miles have been reported. Based on these figures, a minimum population would require approximately 24,300 acres of optimum habitat for nesting and its overall activities.

REFERENCES

Drewien (1973), Blake (1974), Jackman and Scott (1975), Bieniasz (1978), and Torres, et al. (1978).

Minimum Population and Area Requirements Matrix

| MINIMUM VIABLE POPULATION 10 pairs | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|--------|----------------|------|
| MINIMUM HABITAT AREA IN ACRES 24,300 | | | | |
| AREA REQUIRED FOR | PER INDIVIDUAL | | PER POPULATION | |
| | SUMMER | WINTER | SUM. | WIN. |
| FEEDING | 895 | | 17,900 | |
| COVER | 320 | | 6,400 | |
| SPACE | 1,215 | | 24,300 | |

Structural Stage Values by Ecosystem Matrices

| ECOSYSTEM HIGH ELEVATION RIPARIAN | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| SEASON OF USE SUMMER | | | | | | | | | |
| TYPE OF USE | STRUCTURAL STAGES | | | | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3A | 3B | 3C | 4A | 4B | 4C | 5 |
| FEEDING | 1 | 2 | | | | | | | |
| COVER | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | |

| ECOSYSTEM COTTONWOOD RIPARIAN | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| SEASON OF USE SUMMER | | | | | | | | | |
| TYPE OF USE | STRUCTURAL STAGES | | | | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3A | 3B | 3C | 4A | 4B | 4C | 5 |
| FEEDING | 1 | 5 | | | | | | | |
| COVER | 1 | | | | | | | | |