

# **Habitat Definitions and Species Lists**

For the Colorado Wildlife Habitat Protection Program

*The following definitions provide general guidelines to those submitting proposals, and to screening by CDOW staff reviewing proposals, but are not meant to preclude proposals for good projects whose values as wildlife habitat fall outside these definitions.*

## **Big Game Winter Range**

For purposes of this RFP, Big Game Winter Range shall include any of the following:

**Elk Winter Concentration Areas:** That part of the winter range of elk in Colorado excluding areas East of Interstate 25 and areas in Las Animas County where densities are at least 200% greater than the surrounding winter range density during the average five winters out of ten from the first heavy snowfall to spring green-up, or during a site specific period of winter as defined for each Data Analysis Unit.

**Mule Deer Critical Winter Range:** A delineation of those parts of Mule Deer Winter Range that CDOW considers being of highest priority for protection from disturbance from development. The current definition of Mule Deer Critical Winter Range excludes areas East of Interstate 25 and areas in Las Animas County. Mule Deer Critical Winter Range was created by combining subsets of Mule Deer Winter Concentration Areas, high-density Mule Deer Severe Winter Range, and Deer Data Analysis Units (DAUs). Standard CDOW definitions for Mule Deer habitat referenced:

- a. Mule Deer Winter Range** is defined as that part of the overall range where 90% of the individuals are located during the average five winters out of ten from the first heavy snowfall to spring green-up, or during a site specific period of winter as defined for each Date Analysis Unit.
- b. Mule Deer Winter Concentration Area** is defined as that part of the winter range where densities are at least 200% greater than the surrounding winter range density during the same period used to define winter range in the average five winters out of ten.
- c. Mule Deer Severe Winter Range** is defined as that part of the overall range where 90% of the individuals are located when the annual snowpack is at its maximum and/or temperatures are at a minimum in the two worst winters out of ten.

## **Big Game Migration Corridors**

A relatively narrow, well-defined area where a higher than average density of animals traditionally makes movements between seasonal ranges.

## **Threatened and Endangered Species and Species of Concern**

These are listed on CDOW's website at the following link:

<http://wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies/SpeciesOfConcern>  
Then click on "Threatened and Endangered List"

Or a printed copy of the list may be requested by contacting Diane Gansauer at (303) 291-7217.

## **Wetland and Riparian Definitions and Priority Species**

"Wetlands are lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. For purposes of this classification, wetlands must have one or more of the following three attributes: (1) at least periodically, the area supports predominantly wetland plants; (2) the area is predominantly undrained soil; and (3) the area is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of the year." (adapted from National Wetlands Inventory, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

"Riparian areas are those plant communities adjacent to and affected by surface or ground water of perennial or ephemeral water bodies such as rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, or playas. These areas have distinctly different vegetation than adjacent areas or have species similar to surrounding areas but exhibit more vigorous or robust growth." (adapted from definition used in CDOW's riparian mapping project)

For the purpose of evaluation, the significance of a wetland or riparian habitat is how it supports priority wildlife species listed below. While the size of the target habitat will have some influence in judging the merits of the habitat, the availability and persistence of habitat useful to priority wildlife species and documented use by any of these species are most important.

**Priority Species for wetland and riparian areas** (see also the list of Threatened and Endangered Species and Species of Concern, referenced above)

### Game Birds

Mallard  
Northern Pintail  
Gadwall  
American Wigeon  
American Green-winged Teal  
Blue-winged Teal  
Cinnamon Teal  
Lesser Scaup

### Nongame Birds

Bald Eagle  
Least Tern  
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher  
Piping Plover

Western Snowy Plover  
Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo  
Long-billed Curlew  
Greater Sandhill Crane  
American Bittern  
Short-eared Owl  
Red-naped Sapsucker  
Lewis's Woodpecker

#### Fish

Northern Redbelly Dace  
Southern Redbelly Dace  
Brassy Minnow  
Arkansas Darter  
Plains Orangethroat Darter

#### Mammals

Meadow Jumping Mouse (both subspecies)  
River Otter  
Dwarf Shrew

#### Herps

Yellow Mud Turtle  
Common Garter Snake  
Boreal Toad (S. Rocky Mtn. Population)  
Northern Leopard Frog  
Plains Leopard Frog