Lesser Prairie-Chicken under review
Kansas Threatened & Endangered List

- **Endangered**
  - 24 species

- **Threatened**
  - 36 species

- **SINC (species-in-need-of-conservation)**
  - 76 species

(majority of listed species are aquatic)

(if species is federally listed it is required by statute to be KS listed)
Kansas Threatened & Endangered List

- **History**
  - 1975 Authorized
    - Nongame and Endangered Species Act
  - 1978: First lists approved (26 species)
  - 1987: First SINC list approved
  - 1997: Recovery plans required
  - Five-year review required by statute
Lesser Prairie-Chicken
*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*

Greater Prairie-Chicken
*Tympanuchus cupido*
Lesser Prairie-Chicken Range
Kansas has most of the remaining LEPC range.
LEPC Distribution

- Kansas: 48.8%
- Texas: 17.7%
- New Mexico: 13.7%
- Oklahoma: 12.7%
- Colorado: 7%
EMERGENCY PETITION SPECIES REVIEW
6 July 2009

Petition for Species Review to List the Lesser Prairie-Chicken (Tympanuchus pallidicinctus)

Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) is responsible for listing rare species of fauna in KS as Endangered, Threatened, or Species-in-Need-of-Conservation (SINC). Every five years the list is reviewed as required by statute (K.S.A. 32-360). A Threatened and Endangered Species Task Committee oversees the process and makes listing recommendations to the Secretary of KDWP. The committee solicits input from other sources regarding listing, delisting, up-listing, or down-listing.

In 2008, KDWP completed a review of the Lesser Prairie-Chicken (Tympanuchus pallidicinctus) under the Emergency Species Review process. The US Fish and Wildlife Service was consulted, and the petition was reviewed and approved.

PETITION FOR EMERGENCY SPECIES REVIEW 6 July 2009

Species Common Name: Lesser Prairie-Chicken
Species Scientific Name: Tympanuchus pallidicinctus

Recommended change in petition species status (please circle or check):
List as: ___ Endangered ___ Threatened ___ Species-in-need-of-conservation (SINC)
And/or remove from: ___ Endangered ___ Threatened ___ SINC

1) Describe the species current distribution and abundance:
In Kansas: The current range in the western portion of the State is approximately 29,130 sq km, within all or part of 35 counties since 1999. Houts et al. (in press) using GIS and the KS GAP vegetation map determined that there is between 2,221,133 ha (5,488,539 ac) and 2,903,361 ha (7,174,360 ac) of suitable LPC habitat remaining. Recently, LPC distribution in Kansas has moved northward. At the same time the Greater Prairie-Chicken (hereafter GPC, Tympanuchus cupido) range has expanded northward in Kansas. As a result of these changes a hybridization rate of about 2.5% was estimated on at least one survey route (Bain and Farley 2002, USFWS 2008).

Based on survey routes and the National Gap Analysis, the estimated population for LPCs in 2006 was between 19,700 and 31,100 individuals (Rodgers 2007a, USFWS 2008). KDWP survey route data from 2005 and 2006 were not statistically significant from each other (n = 15 routes, 14.2 and 16.3 LPC/sq km respectively, Rodgers 2006, 2007). However, in 2007 there was a statistically significant reduction by 38%, down to 10.1 LPC/sq km. Factors for the sudden decline in 2007 were attributed to drought during the breeding season and heavy snow cover in the winter (Rodgers 2007b). Kansas is key to the species’ survival, as it contains the...
Petitioners

- Kansas Ornithological Society

- 6 Local Audubon Chapters
  - Wichita Audubon Society
  - Northern Flint Hills Audubon Society
  - Topeka Audubon Society
  - Jayhawk Audubon Society
  - Burroughs Audubon Society
  - Smoky Hills Audubon Society
T&E Task Committee

• Bill Busby
  Kansas Biological Survey
• Mark Eberle
  Ft. Hays State University
• Elmer Finck
  Ft. Hays State University
• James Larson
  KS Dept. Wildl. & Parks

• Edwin Miller
  KS Dept. Wildl. & Parks
• Tom Mosher
  KS Dept. Wildl. & Parks
• Dan Mulhern
  USFWS
Ness County, KS

Threat: End of CRP Contracts
Infrastructure at the Big Piney-LaBarge oil and gas field in the Upper Green River Basin of Wyoming occupies only 4% of the landscape, but 97% of the landscape falls within a quarter-mile of infrastructure.

Threat: Habitat Fragmentation
This too is fragmentation
Area that may be abandoned by prairie chickens (nesting & brood rearing activities)
Status in other states

- Texas: game species (no open season)

- New Mexico: petitioned to threatened in 1997, withdrawn in 1999 (gather info.)
  decision not to list 2006
  conservation actions enacted

- Oklahoma: remains game species (no open season)

- Colorado: listed as threatened on CO list (1973)
Is Federal listing pending?

- Priority elevated in 2008
  
  Listing priority 2

- Threat: High

- Immediacy: Imminent

- Petitioned in 1995
  
  - Warranted but precluded
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clait Braun</td>
<td>Grouse Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greg Farley</td>
<td>Fort Hays State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christian Hagen</td>
<td>Oregon Dept Fish &amp; Wildlife</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephanie Manes</td>
<td>Ranchland Trust of Kansas</td>
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<td>Jim Pitman</td>
<td>KS Dept. Wildlife &amp; Parks</td>
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<td>Robert Robel</td>
<td>Kansas State University</td>
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<td>Randy Rodgers</td>
<td>KS Dept. Wildlife &amp; Parks</td>
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<td>Brett Sandercock</td>
<td>Kansas State University</td>
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<td>Don Wolfe</td>
<td>Sutton Avian Research Center</td>
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Impending Threats to LEPC

- Reversion of CRP
- Overgrazing
- Fragmentation
- Commercial
- Tree Invasion

Mean Score
Is hunting a significant factor in LEPC population?
Is lek count data appropriate for estimating population trends?

- 8 yes
- 2 no
What is the LEPC trend since 1975?

- Gradual but significant decline (3)
- Rapid and significant decline (2)
- Stable (no significant trend) (2)
- One trend does not explain what has occurred since 1975 (2)
Are there pending conservation actions that alleviate the need for state listing?
Is there enough information to confidently make a listing decision?
Listing recommendation from ad hoc Committee

- Do not list (7)
  - implement strategies to alleviate need for listing (4)
  - to maintain better cooperation with landowners (2)
  - stays eligible for federal funds (P-R) and keep hunting tradition (1)

- List as threatened (2)
  - so Recovery Plan can be formulated and implemented
  - to ensure re-enrollment of CRP occurs
Conservation Strategies to Keep LEPC Population Viable

- Target CRP reenrollment to LEPC habitat
- Regulatory requirements to keep energy production away from LEPC habitat
- Incentives to landowners to reduce grazing pressure and remove trees
Recommendation: pending completion of review process (June)