

Ringed crayfish - *Orconectes neglectus*

Abundance: Unknown

Status: NSS3 (Bb)

NatureServe: G5 S3

Population Status: Unknown

Limiting Factor: We do not have enough information to assess the limiting factors; however, the loss, degradation or alternation of habitat, chemical pollution, introduction of non-native species, and overexploitation are the main causes for decline in North American crayfish (Taylor et al. 2007).

Comment: NSSU to NSS3 (Bb)

Introduction

The ringed crayfish (*Orconectes neglectus*) is olive or red in color with characteristic black or brown rings near the end of their pincers (Pflieger 1996). The subspecies *O. n. neglectus* is olive in color with a black stripe down the lateral edge of the abdomen. The claws of this subspecies have orange tips with black rings. Adult crayfish are 3 to 9.7 cm (1.2 to 3.8 inches) in length. The ringed crayfish is native to the central United States from Nebraska to Arkansas and Missouri to Wyoming (NatureServe 2016). Within the native range, the crayfish is considered imperiled (Colorado and Kansas) to apparently secure (Oklahoma) and is ranked as vulnerable in Wyoming. The crayfish is ranked as secure across its entire native range. The ringed crayfish is exotic in Oregon and New York. The ringed crayfish makes burrows under rocks in streams (Pflieger 1996). This species tends to remain in burrows during the day, but comes out at night to feed on algae and coarse benthic organic matter (Pflieger 1996; Evans-White et al. 2001). Breeding can occur from late fall to spring and eggs are typically laid in late spring to early summer (Pflieger 1996). Individuals live 2.5 years on average but can live up to 5 years. In Wyoming, a subspecies of the ringed crayfish (*Orconectes neglectus neglectus*) was collected from Crystal Lake Reservoir on the headwaters of Crow Creek in the South Platte River drainage near Cheyenne (Hubert 1988) in its native range (Williams 1954).

Habitat

The ringed crayfish lives in small to large permanent streams that have clear water and rocky substrate. The crayfish may be found in both riffle and pool habitats that are free of fine sediments.

Problems

h None.

Conservation Actions

h None.

Monitoring/Research

Incidental observations would help refine range maps and the NSS rank.

Recent Developments

In 2009, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department personnel completed new statewide collections of crayfish to expand upon and update the survey by Hubert (1988). Hubert (2010) found the ringed crayfish in Crystal and Granite Reservoirs in the South Platte River drainages.

References

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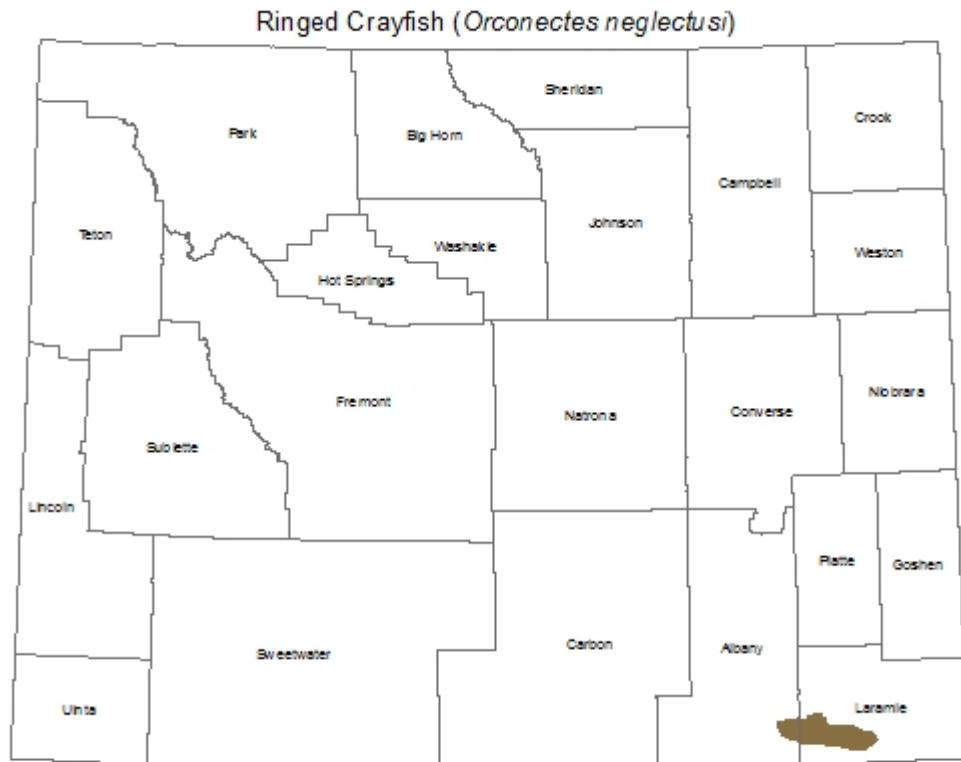
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SOURCE: Digital maps of ranges for Wyoming Species of Greatest Conservation Need: February 2016. Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Note that brown indicates the current known range of the species.