

**Seasonal Habitat Use, Movements and Vital Rates
in the Parachute/Piceance/Roan Population
of Greater Sage-Grouse**

**Progress Report
January – March 2008**



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BACKGROUND

The Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) is continuing a study of the Parachute/Piceance/Roan (PPR) population of greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) during 2008. The PPR is one of several small, naturally and spatially fragmented populations of sage-grouse in Colorado. This project is the result of a partnership among CDOW, industry, other land owners, and managers in the PPR area to sustain the PPR greater sage-grouse population. This information will be useful in assessing the current population status and expected future trend of PPR sage-grouse, and for identifying alternative management strategies for this population.

STUDY AREA

The area occupied by the PPR population of sage-grouse is located in Rio Blanco and Garfield counties (Fig. 1)

RESULTS

Monitoring of Sage-Grouse

From 1 January 2008 through 31 March 2008, technicians were actively radio-tracking 31 radio-marked female sage-grouse. A total of 185 UTM locations were obtained during this period (Fig. 2). Heavy snow and wind conditions persisted throughout the quarter. Birds were primarily accessed using snowmobiles and/or snowshoes. Three locations were obtained aurally.

Of 31 radio-marked birds, there were 2 mortalities, 1 radio failure, 1 bird on private property without access, and 27 which were located as often as logistically possible. There are currently 28 female sage-grouse actively being monitored within the PPR.

Future Work

Plans for the 2nd quarter

As snow depths begin to recede spring trapping will begin. Approximately 30-40 female grouse will be captured and radio-marked in an attempt to increase the sample sizes. Radio-tracking effort will also increase with improving ground conditions. All radio-marked birds will be located as often as logistics allow (i.e. weather, road conditions and access issues).

There will be personnel changes on the project. Brandon Miller will continue in his capacity of Lead Technician, but Evan Phillips has moved on to another technician position within Colorado. We are currently in the process of hiring a replacement for Evan.

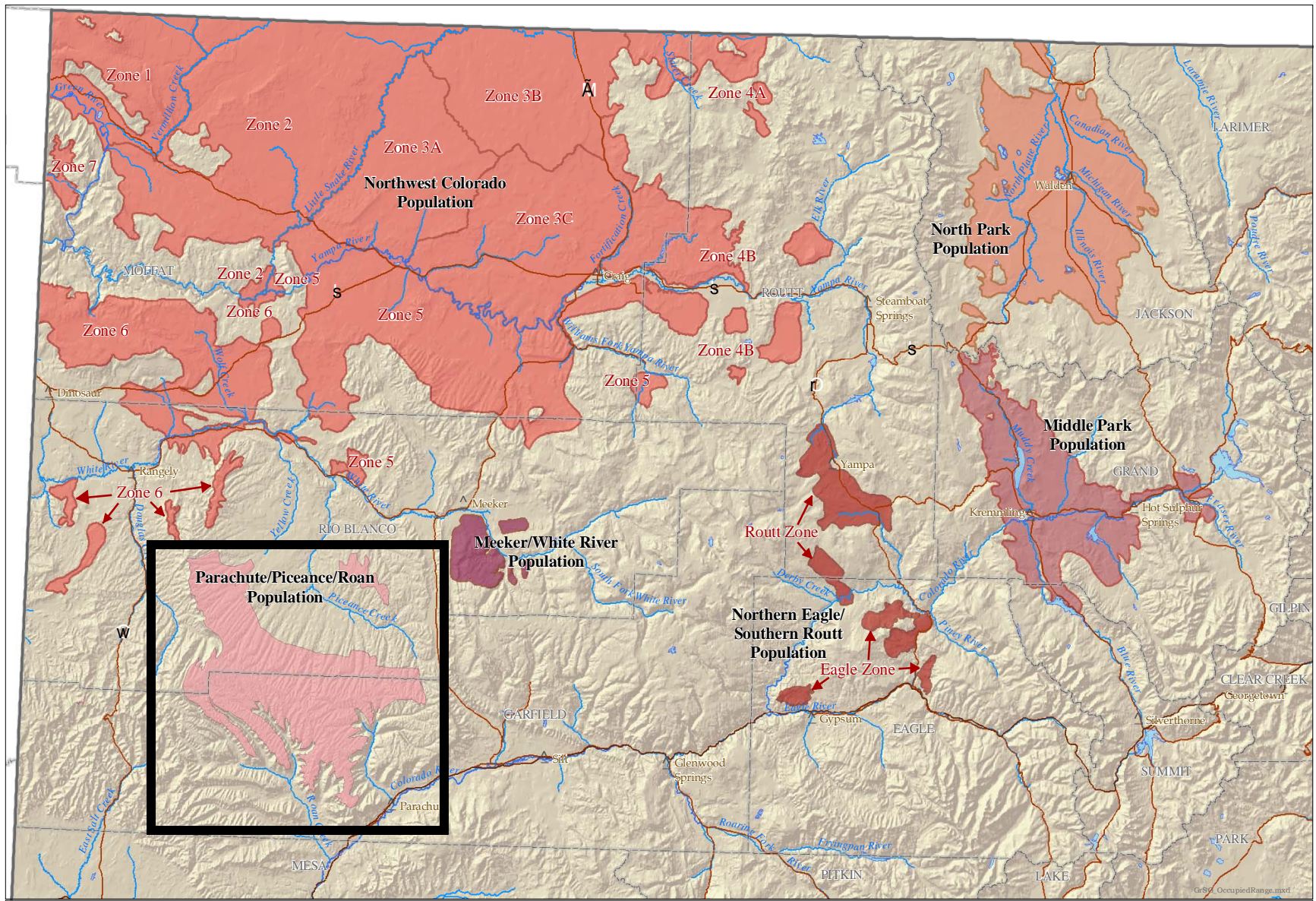


Figure 1. Location of the PPR study area in relation to the overall statewide range of greater sage-grouse in northwestern Colorado.

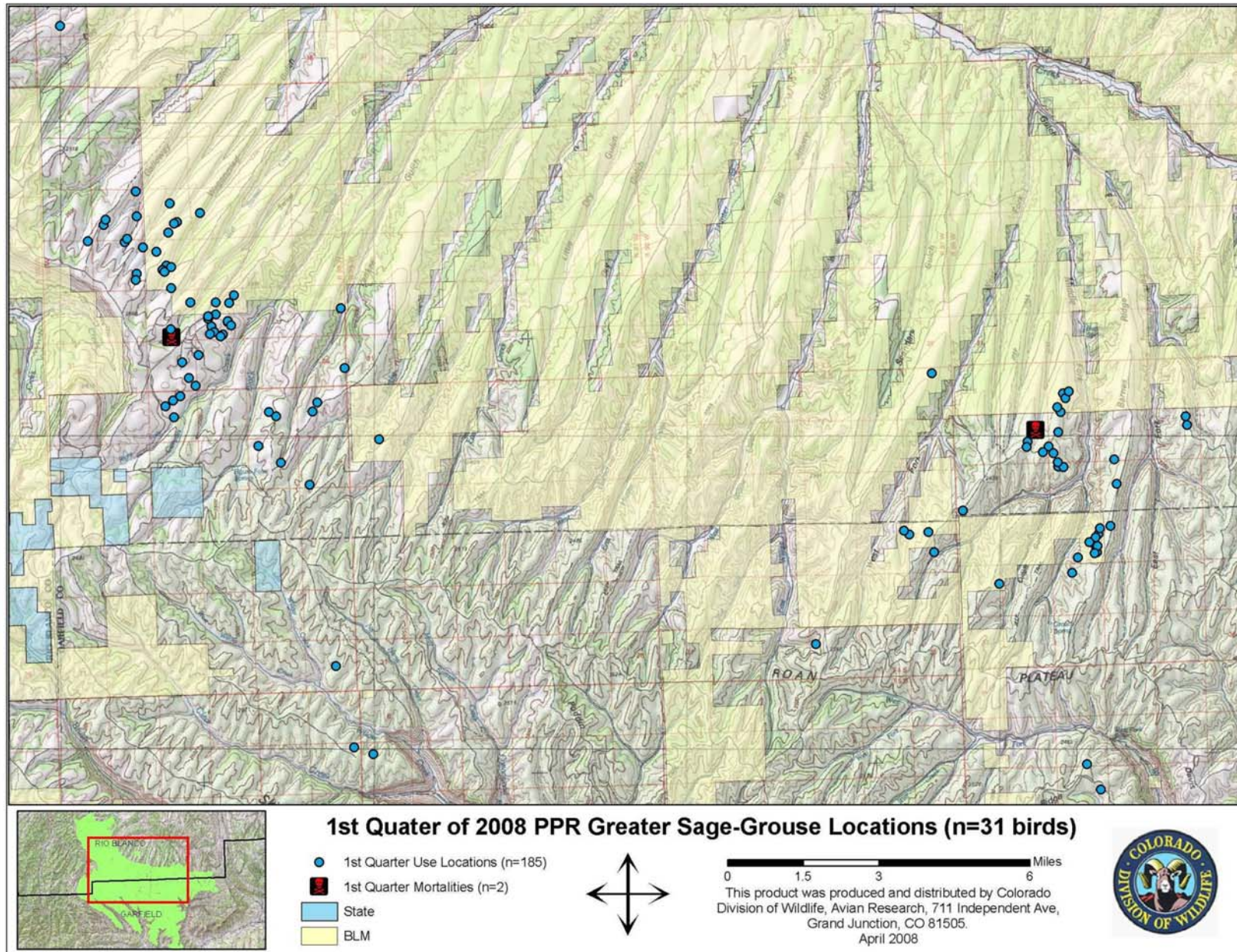


Figure 2. 2008-1st quarter greater sage-grouse UTM location within the PPR population.