

used to approximate our delineation of critical habitat did not allow us to exclude all developed areas such as roads and rural development. In addition, some developed stream reaches serve as essential connectors within Preble's populations. Existing structures and features within the boundaries of the mapped units, such as buildings, roads, parking lots, other paved areas, lawns, other urban and suburban landscaped areas, regularly plowed or disced agricultural areas, and certain other areas are not likely to contain primary constituent elements for the Preble's and, therefore, are not critical habitat. Federal actions limited to these areas would not trigger a section 7 consultation unless they affect the Preble's or primary constituent elements within designated critical habitat.

We could not depend solely on federally-owned lands to designate critical habitat, as these lands are limited in geographic location, size, and habitat quality within the range of the Preble's. In addition to the federally-owned lands, we are designating critical habitat on non-Federal public lands and privately owned lands, including lands owned by the State of Colorado and State of Wyoming, and by local governments. All non-Federal lands designated as critical habitat meet the definition of critical habitat under section 3 of the Act in that they are within the geographical area occupied by the species, are essential to the conservation of the species, and may require special management considerations or protection.

Critical Habitat Designation

The designated critical habitat contained within units discussed below constitutes our best evaluation of areas necessary to conserve the Preble's. Critical habitat may be revised through rule-making (including notice and public comment) if new information becomes available after the final rule. Table 1 provides a summary of the area of critical habitat in each unit that has been designated as critical habitat. Critical habitat for the Preble's includes approximately 201.3 km (125.1 mi) of rivers and streams and 4,264 ha (10,542 ac) of lands in Wyoming and approximately 376.8 km (234.1 mi) of rivers and streams and 8,386 ha (20,680 ac) of lands in Colorado. Lands designated as critical habitat are under Federal, State, local government, and private ownership. No lands designated as critical habitat are under Tribal ownership. Estimates reflect the total river or stream length, or area of lands within critical habitat unit boundaries,

without regard to the presence of primary constituent elements. Therefore, given exclusions for developed areas and other areas not supporting primary constituent elements, the area designated is actually less than indicated in Table 1.

TABLE 1.—CRITICAL HABITAT FOR THE PREBLE'S MEADOW JUMPING MOUSE BY UNIT IN WYOMING AND COLORADO

Linear River Kilometers and Hectares by State	
	Total
Wyoming	201.3 km (125.1 mi) 4,264 ha (10,542 ac)
NP1	43.3 km (26.9 mi) 924 ha (2,284 ac)
NP3	137.2 km (85.3 mi) 2,912 ha (7,194 ac)
SP1	20.8 km (13.0 mi) 265 ha (654 ac)
Colorado	376.8 km (234.1 mi) 8,368 ha (20,680 ac)
SP 4	141.8 km (88.1 mi) 3,321 ha (8,206 ac)
SP 5	82.4 km (51.2 mi) 1,912 ha (4,725 ac)
SP 6	69.2 km (43.0 mi) 1,537 ha (3,798 ac)
SP 10	12.9 km (8.0 mi) 277 ha (686 ac)
SP 13	70.5 km (43.8 mi) 1,321 ha (3,265 ac)

Lands designated as critical habitat are divided into 8 critical habitat units containing all of those primary constituent elements necessary to meet the primary biological needs of the Preble's. We exempted the proposed Warren Air Force Base unit (SP2 in the proposed rule) from critical habitat designation. In addition we have excluded the Horseshoe Creek unit (NP2), the Friend Creek and Murphy Canyon unit (NP4), and the Horse Creek unit (NP5), the Lone Tree Creek unit (SP3), the Cedar Creek unit (SP7), and the Cherry Creek unit (SP11). In order to avoid confusion from changing numbering critical habitat units, we have retained the original unit numbers of units that have been designated critical habitat.

In designating critical habitat, we did not include all areas currently occupied by the Preble's. A brief description of each Preble's critical habitat unit and the reasons why they are essential for the conservation of the Preble's are provided below. The units are generally based on geographically distinct river drainages and subdrainages. These units have been subject to, or are threatened by, varying degrees of degradation from human use and development. For these

reasons, all of the areas in which we are designating critical habitat may require special management considerations or protection. Unless otherwise noted, references to "morphological examination" refer to Connor and Shenk (in prep.), references to genetic examination" refer to Riggs *et al.* (1997), and references to "captures presumed to be the Preble's" refer to field surveys where jumping mice identified in the field as the Preble's were released alive and not subject to morphological or genetic examination.

The following critical habitat units are located in the North Platte River drainage:

Unit NP1: Cottonwood Creek, Albany, Platte, and Converse Counties, Wyoming

Unit NP1 encompasses approximately 924 ha (2,284 ac) on 43.3 km (26.9 mi) of streams within the Cottonwood Creek watershed. It includes Cottonwood Creek from Harris Park Road upstream to the 2,100-m (7,000-ft) elevation. Tributaries include North Cottonwood Creek and Preacher Creek. The unit includes both public and private lands, including a small portion on the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest.

This unit is located in the Glendo HUC and is designated to address the large recovery population for the North Platte River drainage in our conservation strategy. The Preble's habitat on this unit appears generally excellent, particularly on the National Forest System lands. This population is essential not only to maintain distribution near the northernmost extreme of known Preble's range, but because the large size of the population (as predicted by amount and quality of habitat) should help ensure viability into the future. Private lands within the unit are used extensively for grazing, which could be beneficial to the Preble's and its habitat if managed appropriately.

A specimen examined by Krutzsch (1954) in describing the subspecies is from Springhill in this HUC. Five recent specimens from this subdrainage have been identified as the Preble's through morphological examination (tooth fold presence) (Jones, in litt., 2002). Captures of jumping mice identified in the field as the Preble's have occurred at several other locations in this subdrainage.

Unit NP3: Chugwater Creek, Albany, Laramie, and Platte Counties, Wyoming

Unit NP3 encompasses approximately 2,912 ha (7,194 ac) on 137.2 km (85.3 mi) of streams within the Chugwater Creek watershed. It extends from several miles downstream of the town of Chugwater, upstream on Chugwater Creek and its