

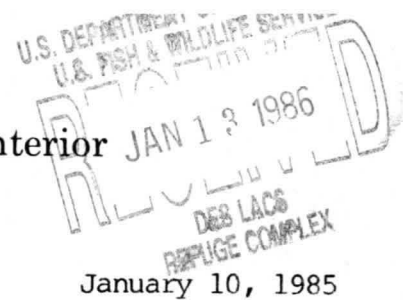


United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1811 WEST SECOND STREET

GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA 68801



January 10, 1985

MEMORANDUM

To: Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Washington, D.C. 20240

From: Senior Staff Specialist, Endangered Species  
Grand Island Office Complex, Nebraska

Subject: Cooperative Whooping Crane Tracking Project

Des Lacs Complex	Action
Project Leader	
Asst. Proj. Leader	
Des Lacs Refuge	
Lostwood Refuge	
Crosby District	
Lostwood District	
Refuge Asst.	
Shop	
Files	Destroy

Attached is a resume of whooping crane sightings reported to our office during the 1985 fall migration. Thank you for your cooperation in monitoring the migration of the whooping crane.

*David Bowman*

Attachment

WGJ:jh

Distribution

ARD/SE(FA), Region 6 MAIL STOP 60150  
FWS/SE, Salt Lake City, UT (65411)  
FWS/SE, Helena, MT (61130)  
Jim Nelson, Bismarck, ND  
James Lewis, Whooping Crane Coordinator, Albuquerque, NM  
Law Enforcement District #2, Albuquerque, NM  
Law Enforcement District #6, Denver, CO  
Cleveland Vaughn, SRA, Omaha, NE (69460)  
John Cooper, SRA, Pierre, SD (69450)  
David Kraft, SRA, Bismarck, ND (69430)  
Cornelis Vendel, SRA, Lenexa, KS  
Director, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, MD  
Rod Drewien, Soda Springs, ID  
Central Flyway Representative, Golden, CO  
Refuge Manager, Aransas NWR, Austwell, TX  
Refuge Manager, Medicine Lake NWR, Medicine Lake, MT (61530)  
Bird Banding Laboratory, Laurel, MD  
State Supervisor, ADC, Lincoln, NE (64710)  
Bureau of Reclamation, Bismarck, ND  
Manager, Field Stations (35), SD, ND, KS, NE

COOPERATIVE WHOOPING CRANE TRACKING PROJECT  
(September - December 1985)

Whooping crane spring and fall migrations are monitored each year. Sighting reports are forwarded to the Endangered Species Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Grand Island, Nebraska, by private individuals, Audubon Society, other private organizations, State and Federal conservation agencies, and Canadian Wildlife Service and their cooperators in Saskatchewan and adjacent provinces.

Cooperation throughout the whooping crane flyway continues to be excellent. Special thanks go out to each participant and for the excellent site evaluations.

Identification of color-marked birds is providing new information each migration. Since 1977, 76 birds have been color-marked and details about the color-marked birds can be found in the fall 1985 migration notice. In 1985, 16 young were color-marked and all 16 arrived at Aransas. We can't overemphasize the importance of observers looking closely for the colored leg bands.

All 3 surviving radioed birds arrived at Aransas. A normal signal was received from the 1982 radioed bird, but only weak signals at close range were received from the 1981 and 1983 birds. Radioed birds were not tracked during this migration.

Whooping crane arrivals at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, a sighting report summary, and a map of degree-block sighting locations are included with this narrative summary. Repeat sightings of the same birds at the same location during a stopover period are not included when known to be repeats. Only sightings classified as confirmed, based on whooping crane recovery plan criteria, are shown in the report. Probable and unconfirmed sightings are not shown. All U.S. reports received are on record in the Grand Island Endangered Species Field Office and are available upon request.

Arrivals at Aransas occurred from October 2 through November 18. The first bird probably arrived on October 2, making it the earliest known arrival on record. A total of 94 whoopers (78 adults/subadults and 16 young) were reported at Aransas on November 18. Eighty-four whoopers departed for the breeding grounds last spring and 16 young were color-banded during the summer. Under optimum conditions, a total of 100 whoopers were anticipated at Aransas this fall. All 16 young arrived at Aransas, leaving 6 adults/subadults unaccounted for, as could be determined on December 30.

Recorded confirmed observations of migrant whooping cranes started September 28 in Canada and September 26 in the United States. The last sighting report was on November 16. Sightings were reported from Saskatchewan, Canada (4); North Dakota (6); South Dakota (4); Nebraska (5); Kansas (3); Oklahoma (2); and Texas (1). A total of 25 confirmed sightings were recorded.

Two confirmed sightings of Grays Lake whoopers were reported to the Grand Island office. A 1984 bird was observed near Hudson, Colorado, (northeast of Denver) from September 12 to October 28, 1985. A 1982 bird was first seen near Severance, Colorado, (east of Ft. Collins) on September 25 and departed on October 29. Both birds were subsequently observed in New Mexico.

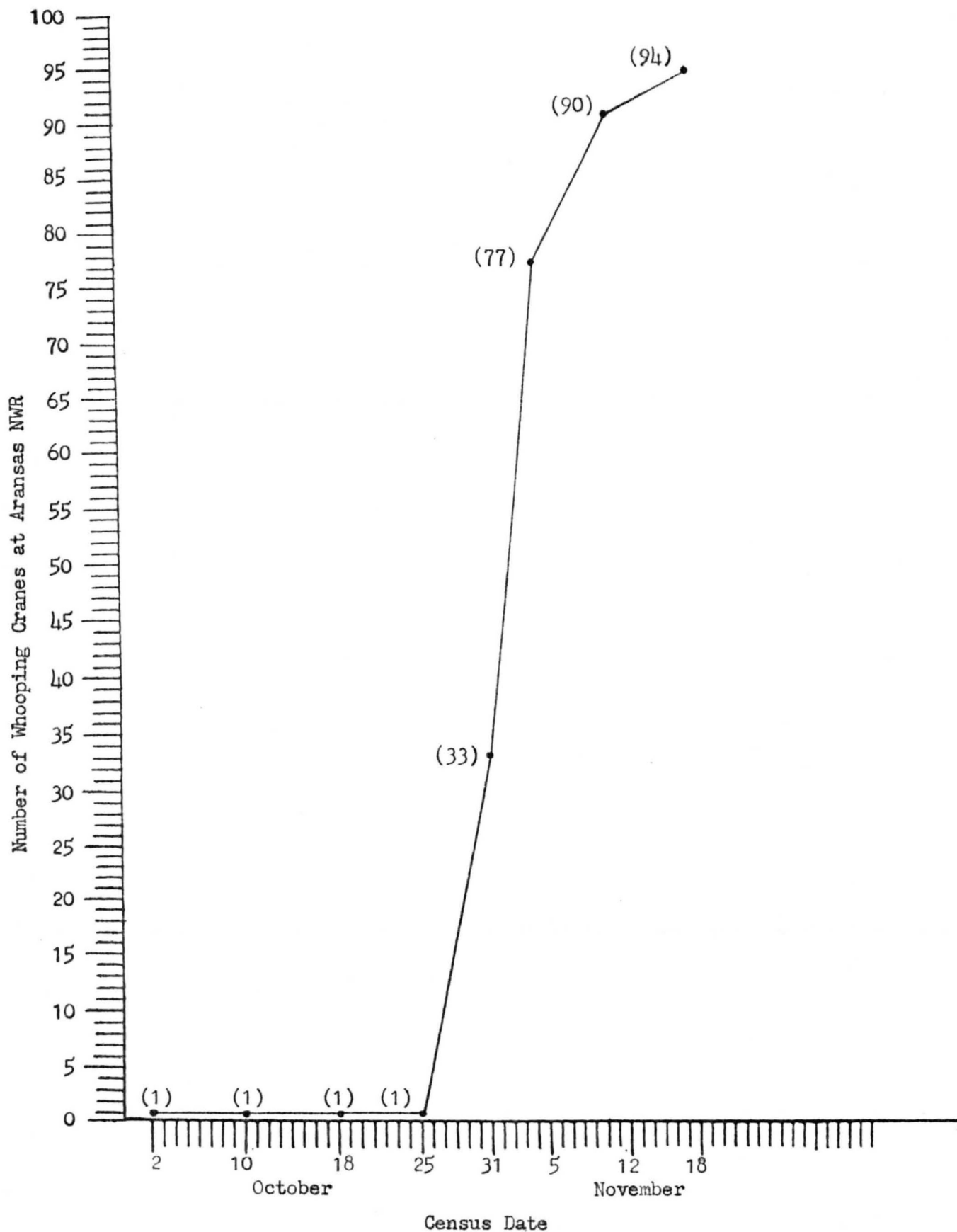
Details of Fall 1985 reported color-marked whoopers are as follows:

Color Combinations*	Observation Date	Location
1978; RWR-B; 599-09814 and	9/28-10/05/85	Saskatchewan, Canada Radisson Lake, SW6-41-10-W3
1985; G-Y; 629-01830	10/15-17/85	Renville County, ND 14 mi. east of Bowbells. T162N, R87W, Sec. 34
1983; Y-B/B; 599-09819 and Nil-R (incomplete) and Nil-R (incomplete)	10/21/85	Mountrail County, ND 4 mi. south and 2 east of Parshall
1985; G-G; 629-01831	10/26-29/85	Hettinger County, ND. 6 mi. south and 10 west of Mott. T133N, R94W, Sec. 31, NW 1/4
1982; W-R (radio); 629-01810 and 1983; R-Y (radio); 599-09822	10/27-29/85	Edmunds County, SD 5 1/2 mi. east of Hoven T121N, R73W, Sec. 33, E 1/2
1984; BW spiral-BW spiral; 629-01820 and 1984; Y-BW spiral; 629-01817 and 1984; B-W; 629-01829 and 1984; Y-Y; 629-01822 and 1984; WBW-R; 629-01828	10/28-29/85	Corson County, SD Oahe Reservoir, Hunkpapa Creek embayment T22N, R29E, Sec. 1, NW 1/4
1985; B-B (incomplete); BYB-BYB already at Aransas Possibly BWB-GWG	11/04/85	Stafford County, KS Quivira NWR, Big Salt Marsh T21S, R11W, Sec. 29, SE 1/4

\*Year banded; color of left leg band - color of right leg band; FWS band number.

Thanks again to the many cooperators. Use-site evaluations were continued this fall; your continued assistance is essential to the success of the evaluations. Please contact the Endangered Species Field Office in Grand Island, Nebraska, if observation details are desired (1811 W. 2nd Street, Grand Island, Nebraska, 68803; commercial telephone: 308/381-5571; or FTS: 541-6571).

Addendum to Spring 1985 Tracking Report: Change observation date of color-marked whoopers in Saskatchewan from April 22-23, 1985 to April 24-25, 1985.



Chronological Arrivals at Aransas NWR, Texas; Fall, 1985

FALL 1985 WHOOPING CRANE TRACKING PLOT REPORTS\*  
(Confirmed Sightings Only)

Date**	TX	OK	KS	NE	SD	ND	Sask., Canada
9-26						1-0	
9-28							<u>2-1</u>
10-4							1-0
10-12		2-0		4-0			
10-15						<u>2-1</u>	
10-17			6-0		3-0		
10-18							2-0
10-21				3-0		<u>4-0</u>	
10-23			4-0				
10-25							6-1
10-26					2-0	2-1; 4-0	
10-27					<u>2-0</u>		
10-28					<u>7-0</u>	6-1	
10-30				2-1			
10-31				2-1			
11-4			2-1				
11-5		2-1					
11-10				5-0			
11-16	5-0						
TOTAL REPORTED SIGHTINGS							
	1	2	3	5	4	6	4

GRAND TOTAL OBSERVATIONS = 25

\*Each report represented by number of whooping cranes reported: adult-young, young reported color-marked are underlined once; birds color-marked during period 1977-1984 are shown as adults and underlined twice.

\*\*First date of sighting used when bird(s) at location several days.

WHOOPING CRANE TRACKING PROJECT, FALL 1985  
(USFWS, Grand Island, Nebraska)

