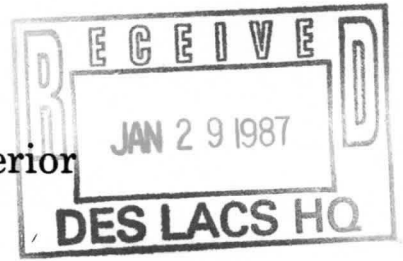




United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
2604 ST. PATRICK, SUITE 7
GRAND ISLAND, NEBRASKA 68803



January 27, 1987

MEMORANDUM

TO: ARD(FWE), Region 6 MAIL STOP 60153
Denver, CO

FROM: Field Supervisor
Grand Island Field Office

SUBJECT: Cooperative Whooping Crane Tracking Project

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

Attached is a resume of whooping crane sightings reported to our office during the 1986 fall migration. Thank you for your cooperation in monitoring the migration of the whooping crane.

Dennis Buechler

Attachment

WGJ:DDB:DGB:jh

- cc: OES, Washington, D.C.
- FWF/SF, Salt Lake City, UT (65411)
- FWF/SF, 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
- Bureau of Reclamation, Bismarck, ND
- Manager, Field Stations (35), SD, ND, KS, NE
- AWF(ES), Region 6 MAIL STOP 60123

COOPERATIVE WHOOPING CRANE TRACKING PROJECT
(September - December 1986)

Whooping crane spring and fall migrations are monitored each year. Sighting reports are forwarded to the Fish and Wildlife Enhancement 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.

Identification of color-marked birds is providing new information each migration. Since 1977, 94 birds have been color-marked and details about the color-marked birds can be found in the fall 1985 migration notice. In 1986, 18 young were color-marked and 17 arrived at Aransas. We cannot over-emphasize the importance of observers looking closely for the colored leg bands.

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 Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Office and are available upon request.

Arrivals at Aransas occurred from October 27 through December 31. A total of 109 whoopers (89 adults/subadults and 20 young) were reported at Aransas on December 31, 1986. An additional subadult was confirmed with sandhill cranes in southwestern Oklahoma between December 27, 1986, and January 1, 1987. This crane brings the number of Aransas/Wood Buffalo birds surviving to 110. As of January 20, 1987, this bird had not arrived at Aransas. Ninety-six whoopers departed for the breeding grounds last spring and 21 young were produced during the summer. Under optimum conditions, a total of 117 whoopers were anticipated at Aransas this fall. One adult was found dead on a nest at the breeding grounds last spring. One pair, known to have produced a chick, arrived on their territory at Aransas without the chick. This chick is presumed dead. Twenty young arrived at Aransas, leaving 2 adults and 3 subadults unaccounted for, as could be determined on January 5, 1987.

Recorded confirmed observations of migrant whooping cranes started August 25 in Canada and September 21 in the United States. The last sighting report was on December 27. Sightings were reported from Alberta, Canada (1), Saskatchewan, Canada (4); North Dakota (2); South Dakota (4); Nebraska (6); Kansas (12); Oklahoma (10); and Texas (2). A total of 41 confirmed sightings were recorded.

The fall migration was 1-2 weeks later than normal. The birds moved quickly through Saskatchewan and the Dakotas, resulting in more than 50

percent of the confirmed sightings being reported in Kansas and Oklahoma. Cheyenne Bottoms State Wildlife Area in central Kansas was a popular stopover site, with 26 whoopers confirmed between November 3 and 8.

The Grays Lake whooper which stopped near Hudson, Colorado, (northeast of Denver) during the 1985 fall and 1986 spring migration, was observed in the same area this fall (October 17-26, 1986).

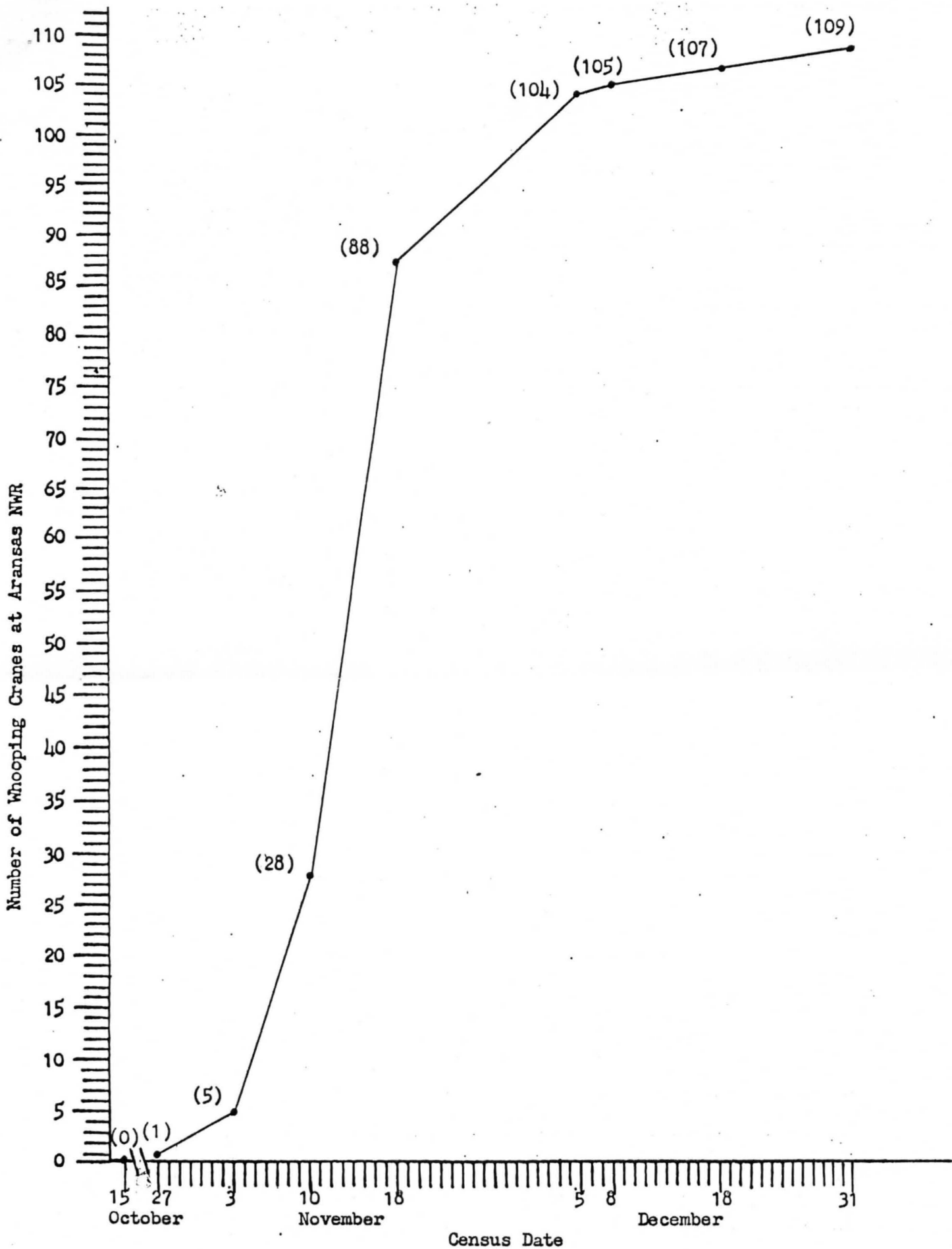
Details of Fall 1986 reported color-marked whoopers are as follows:

Color Combinations*	Observation Date	Location
1985; Y-R; 629-01832	August 25 - October 5, 1986	Saskatchewan, Canada. Crawford Lake near Blucher. 19-27-31-35-2-W3, 25-35-36- 35-3-W3.
1983; W-R; 599-09820	September 6-19 and September 24- October 27, 1986	Saskatchewan, Canada. Near Kutawagan Lake. 19-20-31- 18-W2, 29-19-W2, 29-20-W2, 14-15-30-20-W2, 28-29-21-W2, 30-21-W2.
	Sept. 19-24, 1986	Saskatchewan, Canada. Last Mountain Lake WMA. 15-26-33- 28-23-W2, 6-29-23-W2.
1986; O-WbW; 619-01846	October 14-21, 1986	Saskatchewan, Canada. 3 mi. north of Radisson. 5-6-7- 41-10-W3, 1-12-41-11-W3.
1986; Y-O; 629-01852 and 1981; G(radio)-R 629-01809	November 3-4, 1986	Lyman Co., South Dakota. 8 1/2 mi. south of Presho on Hwy 183. T104N, R77W, Sec. 28, 30.
	November 5, 1986	Stafford Co., Kansas. 2 mi. west and 3 north of Stafford. T23S, R12W, Sec. 21, 28.
O band reported on 3 birds. Incomplete	November 3, 1986	Brule Co., South Dakota 10 mi. south and 4 west of Kimball. T102N, R68W, Sec. 31, NW 1/4.

Color Combinations*	Observation Date	Location
1986; Y-R; 629-01859 and 1980; R-R/W; 629-01804 and 1977; Nil-silver; 599-09801	October 29 - November 8, 1986	Kearney Co., Nebraska. 7 mi. east of Minden. T6N, R13W, Sec. 17, 20.
Y-Nil; Incomplete	November 3-4, 1986	Barton Co., Kansas. Cheyenne Bottoms SWA, Pool No. 5.
1985; BWB-GWG; 629-01842 and 1985; W-G; 629-01838 and 1985; G-G; 629-01831 and 1984; Y-BWSP; 629-01817 and 1984; Y-Y; 629-01822 and 1984; BWSP-W; 629-01818 and 1985; Y-G; 629-01833 and probably 1985; BYB-BYB; 629-01834	November 6-8, 1986	Barton Co., Kansas. Cheyenne Bottoms SWA.
1984; BWSP-W; 629-01818	November 8-9, 1986	Stafford Co., Kansas. Quivira NWR.
1982; W-R (radio); 629-01810 and 1983; R-Y (radio); 599-09822 and Reported as B-R; Incomplete	November 8-9, 1986	Kingman Co., Kansas. 4 3/4 mi. west and 1/4 south of Kingman. T28S, R8W, Sec. 4.
1985; GWG-GWG; 629-01845	November 5-15, 1986	Beaver Co., Oklahoma. 7 mi. north of Beaver.
1984; WbW-R; 629-01828	December 27, 1986- January 1, 1987	Jackson Co., Oklahoma. 6 mi. west and 1 south of Elmer.

*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 Mr. Wally Jobman, Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Office in Grand Island, Nebraska, if observation details are desired (2604 St. Patrick Avenue, Suite 7, Grand Island, Nebraska 68803; commercial telephone: 308/381-5571; or FTS: 541-6571).



Chronological Arrivals at Aransas NWR, Texas; Fall, 1986

FALL 1986 WHOOPING CRANE TRACKING PLOT REPORTS*
(Confirmed Sightings Only)

Date **	TX	OK	KS	NE	SD	ND	Canada	
							Sask.	Alb.
8-25							<u>1</u> -0	
9-6							<u>1</u> -0	
9-19							<u>1</u> -0	
9-21						1-0		
9-26						1-0		
10-5					5-0			
10-10			4-0					
10-14		1-0;2-0		2-0			2- <u>1</u>	
10-29				<u>2</u> - <u>1</u>				1-0
11-2				2-0				
11-3				2-0	2-1;2- <u>1</u> ;3-0			
11-4			2-0;4-1; <u>10</u> -2					
11-5		5-0;1-0	2-0;2- <u>1</u> ;2-0	3-0				
11-6		2-0	2-1;9-0					
11-7		5-1		3-0				
11-8	2-0		<u>3</u> -0; <u>3</u> -0;3-0					
11-9		4-0						
11-10		2-1;2-1						
11-12	3-1							
12-27		<u>1</u> -0						

TOTAL REPORTED SIGHTINGS

2 10 12 6 4 2 4 1

GRAND TOTAL OBSERVATIONS = 41

*Each report represented by number of whooping cranes reported: adult-young, young reported color-marked are underlined once; birds color-marked during period 1977-1985 are shown as adults and underlined twice.

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

WHOOPING CRANE TRACKING PROJECT, FALL 1986
(USFWS, Grand Island, Nebraska)

