

2011 Small Game Walk-In Atlas



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Printed for free distribution by

COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE (CPW)

6060 Broadway, Denver CO 80216 (303) 297-1192

www.wildlife.state.co.us www.parks.state.co.us

Editor: Amy Nickelson

Cover photo of mourning dove © Ken Morgan, CPW Printed 2011 by American Web, Denver. 20,000 copies. Printing paid for with hunting and fishing license fees.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Director: Rick D. Cables

The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission set waterfowl regulations in July and August. The Parks and Wildlife Commission (as of Aug. 2011): Tim Glenn, chair • Gary Butterworth, vice chair • Mark Smith, secretary • Robert Streeter, member • David R. Brougham, member • Dorothea Farris, member • Allan Jones, member • Gaspar Perricone, member • John Singletary, member • Dean Wingfield, member • Chris Castilian, member • Bill Kane, member • James C. Pribyl, member • Lenna Watson, member • Mike King, ex officio member • John Salazar, ex officio member

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NOTE: Laws and regulations in this brochure are paraphrased for easier understanding and are intended only as a guide. Colorado wildlife statutes and regulations are available for viewing at CPW offices and online at www.wildlife.state.co.us/RulesRegs.





2011 WHAT'S NEW

» NEW LOOK, SAME GREAT INFO. The Walk-In Atlas has a new look this year, but small-game hunters can still find all of the same information and maps needed for a successful hunt on

w HUNTING TIPS. In addition to the new brochure design, hunters will also find new pages inside full of tips to create successful dove, pheasant and quail hunts. These pages hold information from CPW wildlife biologists and hunters, giving you the inside scoop on how these birds behave. Tips start on page 6.

WIA lands.

» HABITAT STAMPS ARE \$10

and only one is required per person per year. Stamps are valid April 1-March 31.

 Anyone 18-64 must purchase a stamp before buying or applying for a preference point or a hunting or fishing license.

- A lifetime stamp is \$300.25.
- Anyone buying a one-day or additional-day license for fishing and/or small game is exempt from purchasing the Habitat Stamp with the first two of these licenses.
 The habitat fee will be assessed when a third one-day or additional-day license is purchased for fishing or small
- Anyone who holds a free Lifetime Fishing License, a
 Veteran's Lifetime Combination Small-Game Hunting/
 Fishing License, or are approved for the Big Game Mobility
 Impaired Hunting Program is exempt from the Habitat
 Stamp requirement. See www.wildlife.state.co.us/Hunting/DisabledAccessibility for details.

MORE MAPS AVAILABLE IN THE LATE CROPLAND ATLAS

To offer as much access as possible and efficiently use

funding, Colorado Parks and Wildlife will not reprint the entire Walk-In Atlas in the Late Cropland Atlas, instead only printing the maps that have properties added for the beginning of pheasant season, including extended waterfowl properties, in a smaller supplemental atlas.

Updated maps and the entire supplemental Late Cropland Atlas will be available at license agents in late October, and for download from the website at www.wildlife.state.co.us/Hunting/SmallGame/WalkInAccess.



LICENSE FEES

» Small Game		NONRESIDENT
» Small Game (one-day)		
» Small Game (additional day)	\$5	\$5
» Youth Small Game (Under 18)	\$1.75	\$1.75
» Small Game & Fishing Combo	o\$ 41	n/a
» Habitat Stamp (required)	\$10	\$10
» Colorado Waterfowl Stamp	\$5	\$5
» Federal Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp (<i>Duck Stamp</i>)	\$15	\$15
» Military disability (60 percent more disability, see details bel		n/a

Prices include 25-cent search-and-rescue fee and 75-cent surcharge for the Wildlife Management Public Education Fund.

SAVE TIME: BUY ONLINE OR BY PHONE

Buy your license through the CPW's website or by calling 1-800-244-5613. Credit cards are accepted for phone and Internet purchases. CPW offices and license agents also sell licenses.



LICENSE INFORMATION

WHAT YOU NEED TO HUNT

In order to hunt small game, waterfowl or furbearers on Walk-In Access properties, all hunters must first purchase, sign and have in their possession a valid small-game license and comply with Habitat Stamp regulations. In addition, hunters age 16 and older must possess state and federal migratory bird stamps prior to hunting waterfowl.

HUNTER EDUCATION (SAFETY) REQUIREMENTS

Hunters born on or after Jan. 1, 1949, must have completed an approved hunter education course sanctioned by a state or province before purchasing a license. Colorado honors hunter education courses from other states and provinces. You must present an original hunter safety card when buying a license (unless previously verified) or enter the required information when applying by mail or online. You must carry your hunter education card while hunting unless a "V" is printed on the license, which indicates hunter education has been verified at a Wildlife Service Center office.

Hunter education courses can be found online at www.wildlife.state.co.us/Hunting/HunterEducation/CourseCalendar.

Details on seminars/clinics: www.wildlife.state.co.us/Hunting/HunterOutreach/ClinicsAndSeminars.

ATTENTION LANDOWNERS

Interested in enrolling land in the small-game Walk-In Access program? The CPW wants to enroll quality small-game hunting lands across the state. To offer land for the 2011-12 season, please contact your local Wildlife Service Center office for details. See office listings at top of inside cover.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

TIPS FOR BEING A RESPONSIBLE HUNTER

The WIA program depends on private landowners enrolling property for walk-in hunting, and maintaining good relations with those landowners and their neighbors. Here are some additional guidelines that, if followed, will improve the opportunities for all hunters and contribute to future WIA enrollments.

» WHERE DESIGNATED PARKING AREAS ARE ESTABLISHED, USE THEM.

Do not block gates or roads for the landowner or his agents that may need to work on the property. Do not park along highways. Do not park in tall grassy or weedy areas where your vehicle's catalytic converter can cause a fire.

- » IF YOU SMOKE, make sure to completely extinguish cigarettes. Do not smoke or extinguish cigarettes in grassy or weedy areas where you could cause a fire.
- "DON'T LITTER OR CLEAN
 HARVESTED BIRDS ON WIA
 PROPERTIES OR ALONG
 ROADSIDES. If trash is present, please pick it up.
- » DON'T SHOOT NEAR OR TOWARDS HOUSES, farm buildings, livestock or equipment.
- » DON'T HUNT IF CATTLE ARE IN, or adjacent to, enrolled parcels.

WALK-IN PROPERTY REGULATIONS

- 1. Public access is prohibited from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise, except when hunting waterfowl, then public access is prohibited from two hours after sunset to two hours before sunrise.
- **2.** Species of take will be restricted as follows:
- a. Lands enrolled and posted as Regular, Late Cropland or Extended Season properties are open for the take of all small game, furbearers, migratory game birds and Eurasian collared-doves, except Gambel's quail, Gunnison's sage-grouse and greater sage-grouse.
- **3.** Public access is allowed:
 - **a.** From September 1 through the end of February annually for lands enrolled and posted as Regular Season Walk-In Access properties
 - **b.** From the opening day of pheasant season through the end of February annually for lands enrolled and posted as Late Season Cropland Walk-In Access properties
 - c. From the opening day of pheasant season through the end of March annually for lands enrolled and posted as Extended Walk-In Access properties
- **4.** Access shall be by foot only. Entry by horseback, motorized vehicle, or other means is prohibited.
- Access is allowed for hunting only; all other activities are prohibited.
- **6.** Access is prohibited as posted when the landowner is actively harvesting crops.

SPECIES IDENTIFICATION

A fully feathered wing or head must be attached to all birds, except turkeys, doves and band-tailed pigeons, in transit to hunter's home or commercial processor.

FOR PHEASANTS, a foot with visible spur can be substituted.

NOTE: While in the field or during transport, all dressed (not fully feathered) doves count against the daily bag and possession limit for mourning and whitewinged doves during the Sept. 1-Nov. 9 dove season. Eurasian collared-doves must be fully feathered while in the field or during transport.

HARVEST INFORMATION PROGRAM (HIP) 1-866-265-6447 (1-866-COLOHIP)

If you hunt small game, furbearers, or migratory birds in Colorado, including by falconry, you must sign up with HIP before your license is valid.

Hunters must write their HIP number in the space provided on the license. Hunters will be asked basic questions about their hunting, including how many birds they harvested the previous season and what species they plan to hunt this year.

Both the phone line and website run 24 hours a day, every day, and the process takes about 5 minutes. To sign up for HIP, hunters need to call 1-866-265-6447 (1-866-COLOHIP) or go online to www.colohip.com.

SMALL-GAME HARVEST SURVEYS

Colorado Parks and Wildlife conducts several smallgame harvest surveys each year which are designed to estimate harvest, hunter numbers and recreation days.

Harvest surveys are critical to monitor changing wildlife populations and are extremely valuable to hunters wanting to learn more about hunting small game in Colorado.

Harvest survey reports are available on the CPW website at www.wildlife.state.co.us.

Hunters are randomly selected to participate in specific small-game surveys. All small-game surveys are conducted by telephone, however, some also employ notification by e-mail.

If contacted, your participation is not required in any way, but responding to the survey, even if you did not hunt or harvest those specific species, is encouraged to help CPW better manage the state's small-game resources.

BIG-GAME HUNTING ON WIA PROPERTIES

WIA offers access for small-game hunting only.

Big-game hunting remains completely at the discretion of the landowner.

Some properties in southeast Colorado are enrolled both in small-game WIA and the Big Game Access Program (BGAP). These properties are posted with both small-game and big-game access signs. During big-game seasons, big-game hunting will be occurring on these properties.

Small-game hunters are encouraged to wear hunter orange during big-game seasons on these properties.

CRP MANAGEMENT

Some Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) fields enrolled in the WIA program may be undergoing dramatic habitat enhancement treatments. This is part of their re-enrollment process or due to a CRP practice known as mid-contract management.

These management techniques, ranging from managed grazing to disking and inter-seeding forbs, are designed to improve wildlife habitat and vegetation composition in the future.

Depending on the treatment and post-treatment precipitation, cover in some fields may be dramatically enhanced this fall, however, it is more likely that cover quality will be reduced until the treatments take effect.

DISABLED VETERANS

Colorado residents who are disabled veterans or Purple Heart recipients can get free lifetime combination smallgame-hunting and fishing licenses.

They must have served on active duty and have been honorably discharged. Proof is required of a service-related disability rated by the Veterans Administration of at least 60 percent through disability retirement benefits or a pension administered by the Department. of Veteran Affairs or respective service department.



DOVE BANDING

Mourning doves are banded in Colorado and other states as part of a program to monitor their status.

Hunters should report banded mourning doves to the USGS Bird Banding Lab, www.reportband.gov or call 1-800-327-BAND.

FIELD INFORMATION



BAGLIMITS

Select small-game season dates are included within this atlas for your convenience, however, all season dates are not listed.

A complete synopsis of hunting season dates can be found in the 2011 Small Game and 2011 Waterfowl brochures. These brochures are available at license agents, Wildlife Service Center offices and online in both downloadable PDF and interactive, searchable formats at www.wildlife.state.co.us/RulesRegs/RegulationsBrochures.

DOVES: MOURNING, WHITE-WINGED

SEASON: Sept. 1-Nov. 9 **AREAS:** Statewide

DAILY BAG LIMIT: 15 singly or in aggregate for

either species

POSSESSION LIMIT: 30 of either species

NOTE: See "Species Identification" on page 2 for transit requirements. See Eurasian note below for influence on bag limits.

DOVES: EURASIAN COLLARED

SEASON: Year-round **AREAS:** Statewide

DAILY BAG, POSSESSION LIMITS: Unlimited **NOTE:** If taken Sept. 1-Nov. 9, fully feathered Eurasians will not be counted toward mourning and white-wing bag and possession limits. If

Eurasians taken at this time are not fully feathered, they count toward all dove bag and possession limits. Eurasians must be fully feathered if taken at times other than Sept. 1-Nov. 9.

See "Species Identification" on page 2 for transit requirements.

TEAL

SEASON: Sept. 10-18

AREAS: In Lake and Chaffee counties and east

of I-25

DAILY BAG LIMIT: 4 singly or in aggregate **POSSESSION LIMIT:** 8 singly or in aggregate

COTTONTAIL, SNOWSHOE HARE, WHITE-TAILED & BLACK-TAILED JACKRABBIT

SEASON: Oct. 1-end of Feb. 2012

AREAS: Statewide

DAILY BAG LIMIT: 10 cottontails, 10 snowshoe

hares, 10 jackrabbits

POSSESSION LIMIT: 20 cottontails, 20 snow-shoe hares, 20 jackrabbits

FOX SQUIRREL & PINE SQUIRREL

SEASON: Oct. 1-end of Feb. 2012

AREAS: Statewide

DAILY BAG LIMIT: 5 of each species **POSSESSION LIMIT:** 10 of each species

NO HUNTING THESE BIRDS ON WIA LANDS

Regulation prohibits the take of Gambel's quail and sage-grouse from all WIA properties.

GAMBEL'S QUAIL

REGION FOUND:
Western Colorado,
primarily in the
Grand and Uncompaghre valleys.
They may inhabit
some WIA properties in this area.
IDENTIFICA-

TION: A distinctive



plume feather on the head. Males have a black face and copper feathers on top of the head. Females have mostly gray plumage with a tannish gray face and beige plumage

underneath.

SAGE-GROUSE

REGION FOUND: Western Colorado, they may inhabit some WIA properties.

IDENTIFICA-TION: Large, grayish bird with a slow wing beat in flight. They have distinctly pointed tail feathers

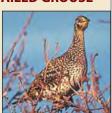


Sage-grouse © Kathleen Tadvick, CPW

and black breast feathers, both of which are visible when flushed. Sage-grouse tend to be silent when flushed.

PLAINS SHARP-TAILED GROUSE

REGION FOUND: Weld, western Logan and northern Morgan counties. Plains sharp-tailed grouse are not a legal game bird in Colorado but have been transplanted into some areas to re-establish popula-



Sharp-tailed grouse
© Rick Hoffman, CPW

tions. When hunting in these counties, please take special care to clearly identify the target before shooting.

IDENTIFICATION: Much lighter in color than cock pheasants and have a short, distinctly pointed tail, which shows white when in flight. They often emit a low-pitched series of clucks when flushed.

DOVE IDENTIFICATION

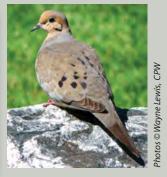


Eurasian collared-doves are relatively new for most hunters in Colorado. They are found sporadically across Colorado and it is not uncommon to see them using the same habitats as mourning doves.

Regulation allows the take of collared doves year-round. See above.

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE

- » 15 inches from tip of beak to end of tail
- » Larger, heavier than mourning dove
- » Dark grayish-brown
- » Long, squared tail
- » Thin black band on neck with white upper border
- » Gray belly and undertail coverts with black visible on tail
- » Coarse, rapid, three-part cooing, "coo-coo-coo," middle coo is longest



MOURNING DOVE

- » 12 inches long from tip of beak to end of tail
- » Grayish-brown color
- » Long, pointed tail
- » Rapid wing beat, erratic flight path
- » Soft call, "cooAHoo," followed by several coos

WIA PROPERTY SIGNS

There are a variety of Walk-In Access program boundary signs. Knowing what to look for in the field will help during your hunt.

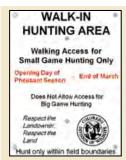


In the field you will see signs that have an access date of Sept. 1 through the end of February.



Some signs have an access date of "The opening day of pheasant season" through the end of February.

Properties that are posted to open on the opening day of pheasant season cannot be accessed prior to Nov. 12, 2011.



Extended Access properties are posted to close at the end of March, annually.

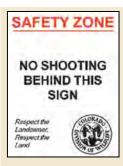
These signs have an access date of "The opening day of pheasant season" through the end of March.

These properties cannot be accessed prior to Nov. 12, 2011.



Parking signs designate where hunters should park at some walk-in areas.

The majority of WIA properties do not have established parking areas. Instead, hunters should park along the road, taking care to stay out of the traveled portion of the road but also not park in tall weeds and grass where a fire hazard exists.



Safety Zone signs are also common on or near WIA properties. These signs are used to delineate safety zones around buildings, homesteads, livestock corrals or neighboring landowners homes and properties. Please respect safety zone signs wherever you find them posted.



DO NOT HUNT IF FIELDS ARE POSTED WITH YELLOW "WARNING!" SIGNS. Rarely it becomes

Rarely, it becomes necessary to remove a property from the WIA program after this brochure is printed.

When that happens, WIA boundary signs are removed and replaced with yellow warning signs to notify hunters that the property is no longer available for walk-in hunting.

And remember, if you find a WIA property depicted in the brochure but boundary signs are not present at the field corners, please do not hunt that field!



You may also see Pheasant Habitat Project signs when hunting in eastern Colorado. These signs DO NOT open the land or habitat project to public WIA hunting, unless the orange HABITAT PROJECT signs are also accompanied by a WIA boundary sign.

SAFE HANDLING OF GAME MEAT

Concern has grown about diseases affecting wild animals that could potentially make humans sick.

Most of the time, properly handled and prepared game meat poses no greater risk than domestic meat of causing disease in humans.

Hunters are encouraged to contact their local public health department or area Wildlife Service Center for information on wildlife diseases that may be present where they plan to hunt.

Public health officials recommend the following precautions when handling and preparing game meat:

1. Do not handle animals that are obviously sick or found dead. Report sick or dead animals you find to a CPW office.

- 2. Keep game cool, clean and dry.
- **3.** Do not eat, drink or smoke while dressing game.
- **4.** Use disposable gloves when cleaning game.
- **5.** Wash your hands with soap and water or use alcohol wipes after dressing game.
- **6.** Clean all tools and surfaces immediately afterward. Use hot soapy water, then disinfect with a 10 percent chlorine bleach solution.
- **7.** Cook game meat to an internal temperature of at least 165° F to kill disease organisms and parasites. Juices from adequately cooked game meat should be clear.
- 8. Do not eat any raw portions of wild game.
- 9. Do not feed raw wild game to domestic pets.



Photo © Jim Bulger, CPW

LEGAL HUNTING HOURS

Legal times to hunt small game are one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. An exception is made for furbearers, which can be hunted from one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

The sunrise/sunset chart below lists time in Denver. Subtract 1 minute from opening and closing time for each 12.5 miles east of Denver. Add 1 minute to opening and closing time for each 12.5 miles west of Denver. (These changes assume that each degree of longitude equals 50 miles and a change of 1 degree of longitude equals a 4-minute change in sunrise and sunset times.)

2011 SUNRISE/SUNSET TABLE (DENVER)						
DAY	SEPT. RISE SET A.M. P.M. (DST)	OCT. RISE SET A.M. P.M. (DST)	NOV. RISE SET A.M. P.M.	DEC. RISE SET A.M. P.M.	JAN. 2012 RISE SET A.M. P.M.	
1	6:28 7:31	6:56 6:43	7:28 5:58	7:02 4:36	7:21 4:46	
2	6:29 7:30	6:57 6:41	7:29 5:57	7:03 4:36	7:21 4:47	
3	6:30 7:28	6:58 6:39	7:31 5:56	7:04 4:36	7:21 4:48	
4	6:31 7:27	6:59 6:38	7:32 5:55	7:04 4:36	7:21 4:49	
5	6:32 7:25	7:00 6:36	7:33 5:54	7:05 4:35	7:21 4:49	
6	6:32 7:23	7:01 6:35	6:34 4:53 DST ends	7:06 4:35	7:21 4:50	
7	6:33 7:22	7:02 6:33	6:35 4:52	7:07 4:35	7:21 4:51	
8	6:34 7:20	7:03 6:32	6:36 4:51	7:08 4:35	7:21 4:52	
9	6:35 7:19	7:04 6:30	6:37 4:50	7:09 4:35	7:21 4:53	
10	6:36 7:17	7:05 6:28	6:39 4:49	7:10 4:35	7:21 4:54	
11	6:37 7:15	7:06 6:27	6:40 4:48	7:11 4:36	7:20 4:55	
12	6:38 7:14	7:07 6:25	6:41 4:47	7:11 4:36	7:20 4:56	
<u>13</u>	6:39 7:12	7:08 6:24	6:42 4:46	7:12 4:36	7:20 4:57	
14	6:40 7:10	7:09 6:22	6:43 4:45	7:13 4:36	7:20 4:58	
15	6:41 7:09	7:10 6:21	6:44 4:44	7:14 4:36	7:19 4:59	
<u>16</u>	6:42 7:07	7:11 6:19	6:45 4:44	7:14 4:37	7:19 5:01	
<u>17</u>	6:43 7:06	7:12 6:18	6:46 4:43	7:15 4:37	7:18 5:02	
<u>18</u>	6:44 7:04	7:13 6:17	6:48 4:42	7:16 4:37	7:18 5:03	
<u>19</u>	6:45 7:02	7:14 6:15	6:49 4:42	7:16 4:38	7:18 5:04	
20	6:45 7:01	7:15 6:14	6:50 4:41	7:17 4:38	7:17 5:05	
21	6:46 6:59	7:16 6:12	6:51 4:40	7:17 4:39	7:16 5:06	
22	6:47 6:57	7:17 6:11	6:52 4:40	7:18 4:39	7:16 5:07	
23	6:48 6:56	7:18 6:10	6:53 4:39	7:18 4:40	7:15 5:09	
24	6:49 6:54	7:19 6:08	6:54 4:39	7:19 4:40	7:15 5:10	
25	6:50 6:52	7:21 6:07	6:55 4:38	7:19 4:41	7:14 5:11	
26	6:51 6:51	7:22 6:06	6:56 4:38	7:19 4:42	7:13 5:12	
27	6:52 6:49	7:23 6:04	6:57 4:37	7:20 4:42	7:12 5:13	
28	6:53 6:48	7:24 6:03	6:59 4:37	7:20 4:43	7:12 5:14	
29	6:54 6:46	7:25 6:02	7:00 4:37	7:20 4:44	7:11 5:16	
30	6:55 6:44	7:26 6:01	7:01 4:36	7:21 4:44	7:10 5:17	
31		7:27 5:59		7:21 4:45	7:09 5:18	

Source: www.usno.navy.mil

TIME ADJUSTMENT FOR OTHER COLORADO CITIES

This table reflects the minutes to add to the chart above for select towns. These are approximate, use only as a general reference. Consult a state map for more details.

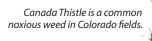
Alamosa	+3	Gr. Junction	+13
Buena Vista	+5	Gunnison	+7
Burlington	-10	La Junta	-6
Craig	+9	Lamar	-9
Durango	+11	Sterling	-6
Fort Morgan	-4	Walden	+5

BEWARE OF HITCHHIKING SEEDS

Many "nox-ious" weeds reproduce primarily by seed. These seeds are often transported by wind, and occasionally by birds, rodents and other animals, but they could be carried in the shoelaces or pant cuffs of humans.

Please help control their spread by taking a few minutes, as you leave the field, to clean your shoelaces and pant cuffs of any

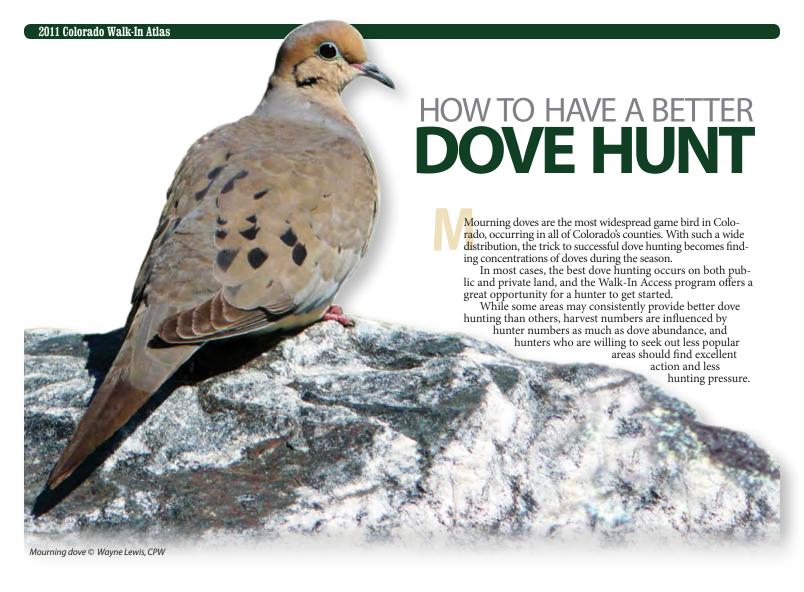
Don't forget to give your hunting dog a quick brush over to remove any hitchhiking seeds before traveling to a new hunting spot!



HUNTER ORANGE IS ADVISED



Wearing hunter orange is not required by law to hunt small game in Colorado. However, its use is highly recommended to increase your safety and visibility in the field.



WHERE IS A GOOD HUNTING SPOT?

Doves were harvested in 53 Colorado counties during the last harvest survey period.

So what makes a good dove hunting location? There are some general things hunters should pay attention to when looking for a place to hunt.

For a lone hunter, 50 doves in a specific area might be enough to enjoy a good hunt, while a

small group of hunters will require more doves. But find a concentration of several hundred or a thousand doves, and a great hunt should ensue.

Generally, doves concentrate around three primary features: roosting areas, a convenient food source and water sources.

Find any of these alone and you should find

some doves – finding two or three together can mean a large number of doves and the potential for some great action.

Studying these three primary features and understanding how doves relate to them is helpful in making a list of potential dove hunting spots.

OTHER FACTORS TO CONSIDER

Preparation plays an important role in a successful dove hunt.

Scouting, watching the weather forecast and knowing how doves react to weather patterns are important concepts to master for a successful hunt. Here are some concepts worth considering before a dove hunt.

HABITAT - LOOK FOR WHAT'S MISSING

Determine which of the three primary habitat requirements is in the least supply in a given area and focus hunting efforts on the few areas that offer it.

These factors change, but figuring out which habitat requirement is most limited across the landscape is paramount to a good hunt.

In an arid climate like eastern Colorado, water

is not very prevalent in a normal year and often provides a good focal point for doves.

Yet, if an area happens to be unusually wet, each individual water source is less attractive to doves because they can find water in multiple locations.

Wise hunters focus on the habitat requirement that is most limited within their hunting area.

WEATHER EFFECTS

Weather is the most significant factor in dove hunting.

COLD FRONTS in

August can impact dove numbers in northern Colorado. But even a mild front can hurry the migration. In southern Colorado, severe cold fronts are less common until October.

EVERYDAY WEATHER EVENTS can significantly effect how doves use the land and in turn, what

hunters find in the field. **EXTREMELY DRY**seasons can reduce dove

seasons can reduce dove numbers in rangeland settings because forage is not as plentiful. In dry years, forage is much more predictable in cultivated crop fields.

Food sources often include broadleaf forb seeds that grow in road ditches, fence rows and abandoned farmsteads.

1 LOOK FOR SHELTER



© Ken Morgan, CPW

HOW TO HUNT HERE

Roost sites can be effectively hunted throughout the day, but the mid-morning period beginning around 10 a.m. can be excellent, as doves come to the roost after the morning feeding period.

ROOST SITE TIPS

Of these three components, roosting areas are generally the easiest to find. Look for sites that offer doves a variety of micro-habitats, including shade and wind protection. By far, the best roost sites for hunting are those close to water or food.

Seemingly, the species of tree isn't terribly important, as doves concentrate in any type that meets their needs.

- » Nearly any farmstead with a windbreak and a few dead snags can provide an acceptable dove roost.
- » Cottonwood, elm, ash, locust and Rocky Mountain junipers may hold large numbers of doves, when they occur in the right place.
- » Old corrals, gravelly areas and dusting sites all add to the attractiveness of a roost site.
- » Isolated tree groves are also valuable as hunting cover in farmland or in rangeland settings. Their value seems to be inversely proportional to their occurrence on the land.

2. LOOK FOR B. LOOK FOR FOOD



© Ed Gorman, CPW

HOW TO HUNT HERE

Morning hunts can be productive at watering areas, but often the best activity occurs in the afternoon and into the early evening.

On days that are unseasonably hot, hunting can be consistent throughout the afternoon, but the last 45 minutes of legal shooting hours can be fantastic at a well-used water site.

WATCH FOR WATER

A variety of water sources are used by doves. Similar to food sources, doves seem to prefer water sources that have little or no cover at water's edge or in the adjacent uplands.

- » Good areas that should catch your eye include cattle watering tanks, stock ponds, gravel pits, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) guzzlers, flooded creek bottoms or small depressions that simply catch rainfall.
- » Even a small puddle of water can pull in large numbers of doves, especially if the water is near a good food source or roosting site.
- » Many eastern Colorado water sources are temporary at best, but once doves start using a watering source, a good number of birds will continue to use an ever-shrinking site, as long as some water is present.



HOW TO HUNT HERE

In sunflower fields that are pulling in a good number of doves, hunters can pass shoot birds coming to and leaving the field, or a hunter can walk the field for opportunities at flushing doves, akin to hunting pheasants or quail.

Hunters are advised to precisely mark downed doves when hunting weedy fields, and pick them up immediately instead of shooting at other doves. Doves blend in amazingly well and can be difficult to find if a hunter waits for even a few minutes before retrieving.

HUNT NEAR THEIR FOOD

Dove foods can be categorized into two types: Cultivated crops and natural food sources.

CULTIVATED CROPS:

- » In most years, these provide a predictable food source for doves. Hunters often find good-sized concentrations of doves around wheat stubble, proso millet stubble and domestic sunflowers fields.
- » In any of these fields, doves shy away from dense cover at ground level, so look for fields that have bare ground associated with the crop stubble, underneath the yet-to-be-harvested crop.

NATURAL FOOD SOURCES:

- » When conditions are right, and eastern Colorado range and croplands are covered with sunflowers, hunters can find some amazing concentrations of local and migrating doves. Sunflower fields don't have to be large, even a small patch a few acres in size can pull in a surprising number of doves.
 - » Look for sunflower patches that have a thin understory, with a good amount of bare ground.
 - » Pay attention to the maturity of the sunflowers. The best fields for dove hunting are those that have a good mixture of actively blooming sunflowers and already matured sunflower seeds that are falling to the ground and available to doves.
- » Over much of the range in Colorado, doves rely on food sources that include croton, beeplant, snowon-the-mountain, kochia, and pig-weed seeds. These can support a good concentration of mourning doves when rainfall patterns and disturbance encourage their growth.

SEASON TIMING - KNOW WHERE TO GO, AND WHEN

September 1 is the earliest date the Migratory Bird Treaty Act allows migratory bird hunting, including

Mourning doves begin migrating to southern wintering areas beginning in August, although this can be early or later depending on the year.

NORTHERN COLORADO:

Usually, good numbers of doves are found here when the season begins in September. But, migration has started by this time.

In northeast Colorado, it is unusual to find large numbers of doves late into September, with noticeable differences in numbers between the first few days of September and the 15th.

Hunt early here to find lots of doves. By October 1, only a few doves are left in northeast Colorado and hunting opportunity has ended for the year.

SOUTHERN COLORADO:

Dove populations are bolstered by migrating doves throughout September. Many years, good numbers of doves remain into

Hunters may maximize their opportunity by choosing to hunt early in the northeast, and then take a trip to southern parts of the state later in the season, with a good chance of finding large numbers of birds.

PHEASANT AND QUAIL HUNTS

TIPS AND TACTICS FOR A SUCCESSFUL HUNT

First, make sure you are hunting where there are pheasants and quail! The maps below show shaded regions of Colorado where there are populations of pheasants and quail. See the following pages for more advice on hunting each species.

PHEASANT:



See page 9-10 for tips on pheasant habitats and hunting techniques.

SCALED QUAIL:



See page 11 for tips on scaled quail habitats and hunting techniques.

BOBWHITE QUAIL:



See page 11 for tips on bobwhite quail habitats and hunting techniques.



ZERO IN ON GOOD AREAS AND PREPARE YOUR PARTY FOR PHEASANT HUNTING SUCCESS WITH THESE TIPS:

LAND

SCOUT BEFORE THE SEASON

Preseason scouting, especially in mid- to late October after dispersal of young birds is complete, can shorten the task of finding game birds considerably.

Drive along gravel roads with a good plat map (or this atlas) to mark sightings. Early morning and evening are best because pheasants and quail are most active then. Remember, finding fields with birds is the goal. Once accomplished, there is little to be gained from disturbing the birds before the season.

WATCH HOW BIRDS ACT

When you find birds, look at the nearby fields. Why are they here, where are the birds roosting, where are they feeding, how do they move between fields, should all be questions you should be thinking about.

Shrub plots, tree rows and weed patches are all things that should catch your eye in addition to the basic covers.

FIND FIELDS RIGHT FOR YOU

Focus on fields or cover types where your personal hunting style allows you to be successful, considering your party size, hunting dogs, or simple preferences for hunting.

CRAFT YOUR GAME PLAN

Develop a hunt plan based on your scouting efforts. Think about how pheasants and quail will react to hunters, how they will escape and which fields will swing the odds in your favor.

Both pheasants and scaled quail are as prone to run instead of flying to avoid danger, so finding situations that make running difficult for them is necessary.

MOVE QUICKLY AND QUIETLY

Prepare to execute your hunt plan quickly and quietly. Too often hunters pull up to a field, slam the doors, let the dogs out, then talk about how to hunt the field.

That works with young birds on opening day, but after a few shots have been fired, wary birds will be implementing their own escape strategy as soon as they are aware of your presence.

STRATEGY

Once you have found an area that holds pheasants or quail, the hunting strategy you use will probably be the largest factor in your success. These suggestions come from our observation of hunters in the field.

TIMING MATTERS

Hunt fields at the right time of day.

In the morning and evening birds will be moving from roosting sites towards food.

Put yourself and your hunting party between the birds and their food source, and hunt towards the roosting areas, or vice versa when birds are leaving feeding areas in the afternoon.

Some fields offer birds everything they need, and can be hunted from daylight until dusk, but normally, pheasants and quail use different fields to meet their daily requirements.

DON'T GET PUSHY

Avoid pushing birds to other good quality fields if possible. Rarely will a wise rooster or covey of scaled quail flush when they can run into good escape cover. Pay attention to how they beat you (they will) and devise ways to cover escape routes next time.

A good strategy for hunting running pheasants is to push them towards thin cover, forcing some of them to hold. Scaled quail, however, can be pushed towards cover that is too dense for easy running.

TRY DIFFERENT TACTICS

Birds become conditioned to hunter activity when every party uses similar tactics, so try some off-the-wall tactics.

Most fields are hunted the same way and in the same direction by all the groups that hunt the field, due to the access point or prevailing wind direction. Changing tactics and hiking around the cover to hunt it "backwards," regardless of wind direction, can confuse the birds into sitting tight.

USE A BLOCKER

Blockers are a welcome addition early in the

year, but an absolute necessity for late-season pheasants, providing that they can approach and remain at their stand quietly. Wearing orange for safety and visual communication is recommended.

Blockers are less commonly used for quail, although they can be very effective when quail refuse to hold.

WATCH THE WEATHER

Use weather to your advantage.

Mild weather allows upland game birds to use any moderate quality field in the area, while serious winter weather restricts them to a few good areas. If the weather is mild, expect to find birds in some places they don't normally visit.

As weather deteriorates, more and more concentrate in the best cover available. Don't forget wind, which will influence location as well.

Snow can be a boon for hunters, if snowfall is deep enough to discourage wary roosters and quail from running.

If snowfall is significant (more than 4 inches) behavior changes immediately. Upland birds pile into plum thickets, tree groves around farmsteads, brushy creek bottoms, abandoned farmsteads and thick CRP, especially if a food source is nearby.

Don't expect this behavior to last long though, as birds tend to revert to their normal behavior and habitat shortly after conditions moderate. Depending on the severity of the storm, a well-timed hunt in snow can be the best of the season.

TRACK THEIR TRACKS

Tracking pheasants and quail in light snow will teach observant hunters how birds avoid them.

Watch for tracks that stop in weed patches or suddenly change directions, which normally means a running bird has found some hiding cover and is holding.

If you know a field holds birds but there are no tracks, don't be discouraged. Early morning hunts after a snow can find the birds still roosting. The proper tactic in this situation is to slow down, hunt hard and cover likely areas more than once.

DOG OR NO DOG?

If you have a dog, use it to your advantage.

There is no question a good bird dog will locate more birds, and generally make hunting more fun.

A good pointer or flushing dog will also give you more confidence when hunting large fields of CRP, sandsage rangeland or weedy wheat stubble.

Even an inexperienced dog, as long as it will hunt within shotgun range, is an extremely valuable asset.

Dogless hunters can be very successful, but strategy becomes much more important, as well as having confidence in the fields you are hunting.

Use weather condition to your advantage, change direction frequently, and when you feel that a rooster is close and waiting for you to walk past, stop walking.

Often, when you stop walking and stand quietly for a minute or so, a nearby rooster will panic and flush, usually right after you start walking again.



© Tyler Baskfield, CPW

PHEASANTS

Throughout their range, pheasants are associated with cropland habitats.

Three types of cropland are very important to pheasants: CRP, non-irrigated cropland and irrigated cropland

FOCUS ON

While pheasants are common in all three types of the following croplands, each has unique characteristics to look for:

» CRP FIELDS are the most predictable habitat, as they provide areas for nesting, brooding and wintering pheasants.

Cover quality in CRP fields can be extremely variable, depending on the age of the field, the grass mix planted and impacts of recent droughts and/or management prescriptions.

THERE ARE 5 KEYS TO PHEAS-ANT ABUNDANCE IN CRP:

1. New CRP fields that are planted to a sorghum cover crop, or young stands of CRP still dominated by annual weeds,

short grasses or cool season grasses, can be productive for hunting, as some pheasants prefer to night-roost in thin cover. If the only CRP in the area happens to be of low quality cover, it might be worth a hunt, especially early in the morning or late in the day.

5. The habitat surrounding CRP fields can dictate pheasant abundance, because pheasants rely on a variety of habitat types to meet their daily requirements. Pay attention to adjacent crop field for food sources and alternative roosting cover, in addition to woody cover, weedy areas and spring nesting cover. If the surrounding habitats are incapable of supporting pheasants, even the best tall grass CRP will not support great numbers of pheasants.

tor of pheasant abundance. Fifteen to 30-inch stubble is optimal for pheasants and hunting.

- 2. Weed growth in the stubble is equally important to stubble height. Look for fields that offer sunflowers or kochia.
- 3. The height and density of cover in the field. Generally, the more cover, the better pheasant potential for the field. Rarely will a field be too tall or dense for pheasants in Colorado.

» IRRIGATED AREAS can be either good or bad. When considering the impacts of the recent drought on pheasant populations, one would think intensively irrigated areas would be the mainstays of pheasant populations in Colorado.

This is often true with sprinkler irrigation. However, the reverse is true in intensively irrigated areas along the Front Range or in river valleys like the South Platte or

1. Don't expect many pheasants where irrigated alfalfa dominates the landscape. Irrigated alfalfa is a death trap for nesting hens because it greens up early, inducing nesting, and is often cut prior to hatching, resulting in low nest success and high mortality.

2. Transition areas where centerpivot corn irrigation mixes with dryland wheat production often produce our highest pheasant populations. Pheasants nest in the wheat fields, raise chicks in standing corn and, once the corn is harvested, the birds go back into nearby wheat stubble or CRP to roost, returning daily to forage in corn fields. If pivot corners are enhanced with tall CRP grass or food plots, pheasant densities can be amazing.

are normally the most productive fields for hunting pheasants. They concentrate in these fields because of the abundance of winter cover.

- 2. As grass begins to take over a field, pheasant abundance generally declines, but can be very good if weeds and alfalfa are present in the field. Expect pheasants to leave these fields to feed in adjacent fields, but to return at night to roost and to loaf during the day.
- 3. Mature grass stands can be great for pheasants, but birds usually rely on adjacent lands to provide brood habitat and food sources. The key is to find mature fields with switchgrass and yellow indian grass (look for orange and red colored grasses), next to crop stubble, which provides a good food source to compliment the excellent cover in the grass.
- 4. Poor quality CRP, either due to

» NON-IRRIGATED

CROPLAND is often the wild card in Colorado pheasant hunting. When conditions are right, dryland crop fields can support excellent numbers of pheasants. When conditions are poor, populations quickly decline.

For fall pheasant concentrations, wheat stubble and milo stubble (in southeast Colorado) are most important. Some things to look for include:

1. Stubble height is a good indica-





SCALED QUAIL

Scaled quail depend on natural habitats significantly more than pheasants. In Colorado, three types of habitat provide significant habitat for scaled quail, including sandsage rangeland, cholla grasslands, and greasewood or yucca grasslands.

Colorado's most productive scaled quail habitat is sandsage rangeland, followed by cholla cactus grasslands, and finally greasewood and yucca pastures. On occasion, scaled quail also are found in cropland and CRP.

FOCUS ON

When hunting scaled quail, some things to pay attention to are:

- » LOOK FOR BARE LAND. Regardless of habitat, a good percentage of bare ground is integral to high densities of scaled quail. Whereas pheasants thrive in dense cover, scaled quail are most numerous in areas that are relatively open at ground level.
- » LOOK FOR AREAS THAT HAVE A GOOD FORB COMPONENT. Being rangeland associated birds, scaled quail depend on winter food sources such as sunflowers, western ragweed and buffalo bur. Crop fields like milo, lying adjacent to quail habitat, are a magnet to quail and may concentrate several coveys into a small area.
- » STEER CLEAR OF HEAVY GRASS COVER. While a strong broadleaf forb component is beneficial to scaled quail, a heavy grass

component is generally not good for quail.

Frequently, grasses choke out forb species that quail depend on for food, and

grasses tend to be too thick at ground level.

In most cases, CRP is too dense for scaled quail, although they may use disturbed, weedy areas or thin stands of bunchgrass

» FIND STRUCTURE. In any scaled quail area, hunters must recognize that scaled quail are frequently linked to some structural component. Examples include thick stands of cholla cactus, weedy or brushy ravines, shrub thickets, post and junk piles, abandoned farm machinery, wildlife water guzzlers and old farmsteads.

In scaled quail range, any natural or artificial structural component deserves an exploratory hunt.

BOBWHITE QUAIL

Bobwhite quail often use an intermediate habitat between pheasant habitat and scaled quail habitat. In may situations, bobwhites can be found in the same field as pheasants and scaled quail.

Bobwhite quail range in Colorado is also significantly smaller than either pheasants or scaled quail, and is primarily limited to riparian areas in northeastern and east-central Colorado, while in southeast Colorado riparian areas, sandsage rangeland, and occasionally CRP lands, support bobwhite populations.

Isolated populations of bobwhites do occur in sandsage communities in the northeast counties of Phillips and Yuma, although their numbers are highly variable from year to year.

FOCUS ON

In Colorado, habitats to focus on for finding bobwhite quail include:

» SHRUBLAND HABITAT, including sandsage rangeland, drainages lined with skunkbush sumac, native plums or chokecherries, willow and snowberry riparian zones and warm season grass CRP fields that have a good shrub component intermixed with the grasses or developed as a shrub thicket.

In fields, bobwhites are normally found near a significant shrub development.

» CRP GRASS FIELDS that provide tall overhead cover with a fairly high percentage of bare ground. Easy movement and forb production are favored by bobwhites.

In most cases this means grass fields composed of little bluestem, big bluestem and sand bluestem, switchgrass, yellow indiangrass, with a good amount of annual forbs.

Sunflowers, western and giant ragweed and kochia plants should catch your attention.

In extreme southeast Colorado, it is not unusual to find bobwhites around large CRP fields that are adjacent to other habitats like sandsage.

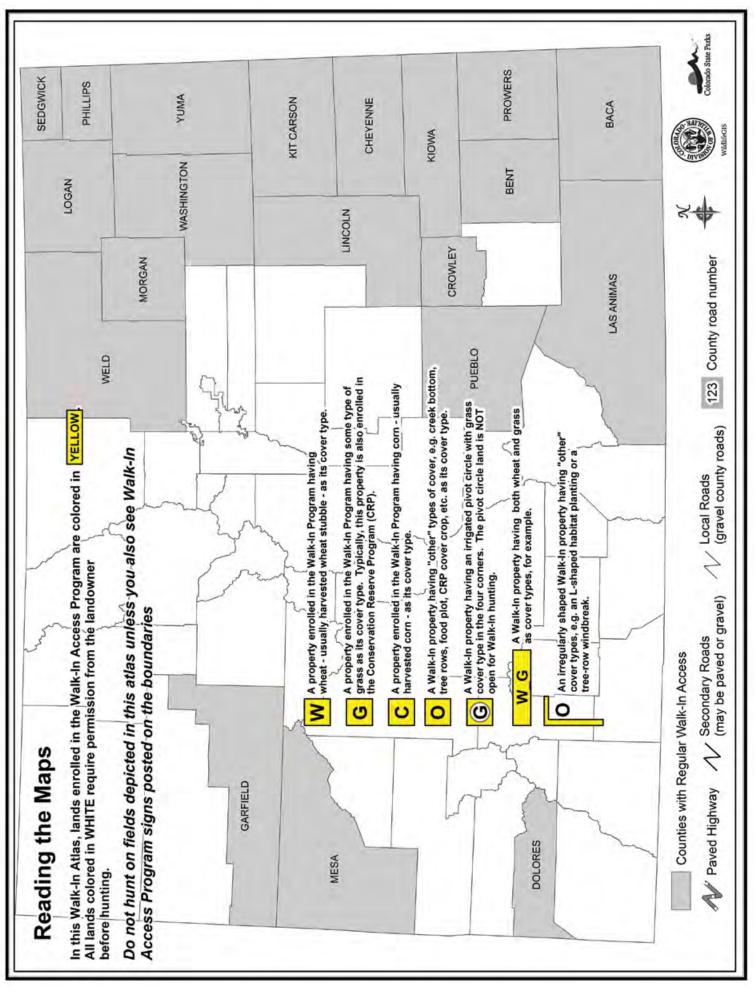
In the northeast, because quail habitat is much more restricted, bobwhites are rarely found in large CRP fields. Instead, look for them in CRP sprinkler corners adjacent to irrigated corn fields, in CRP plantings along creekbottoms or field edges and grass fields along the sandsage-cropland transition zone.

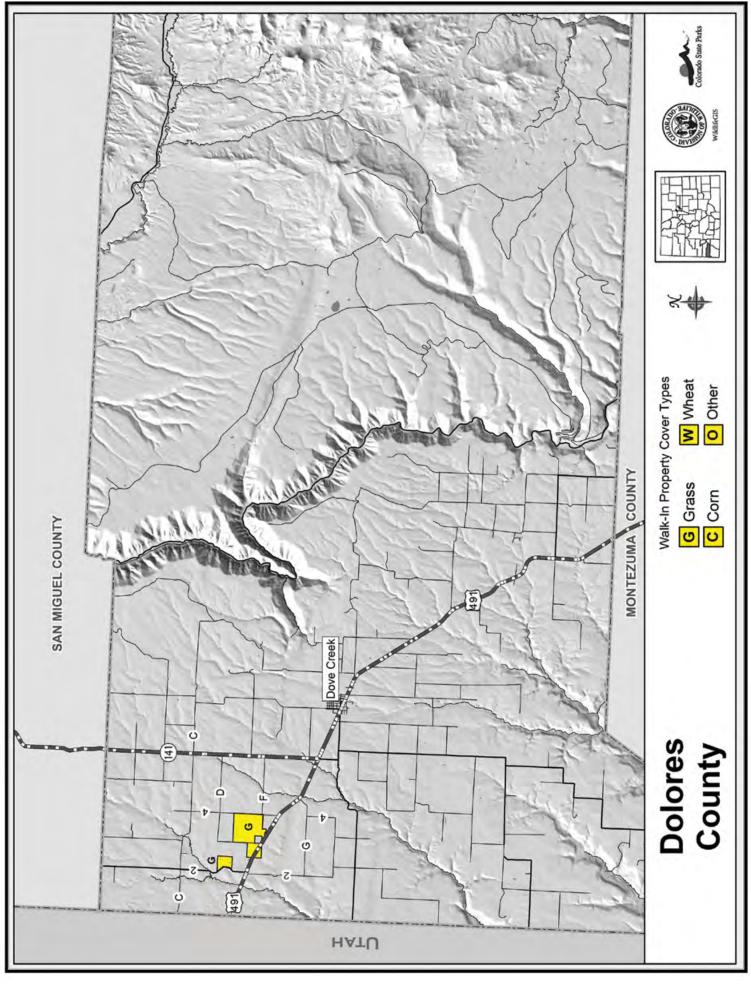
» WEEDY FENCEROWS, ABANDONED FARM-STEADS, OLD LIVESTOCK CORRALS and other areas that provide standing weed cover adjacent to occupied habitat are often heavily used by bobwhites.

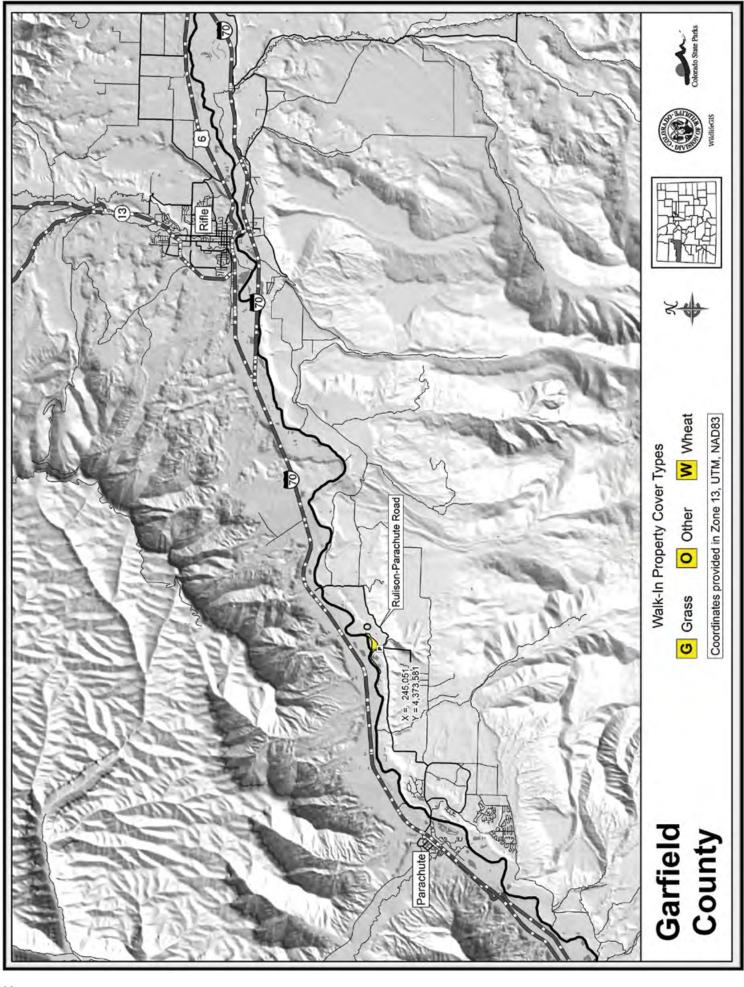
They use standing weeds throughout the day, for foraging, loafing and security cover.

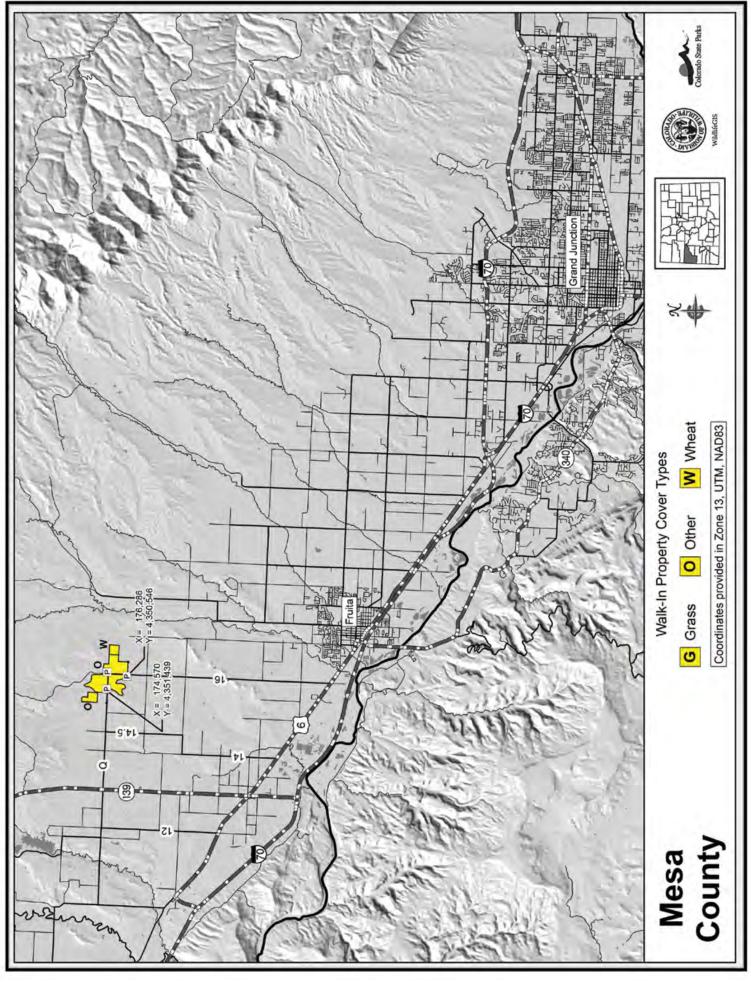
© Lisa Densmore



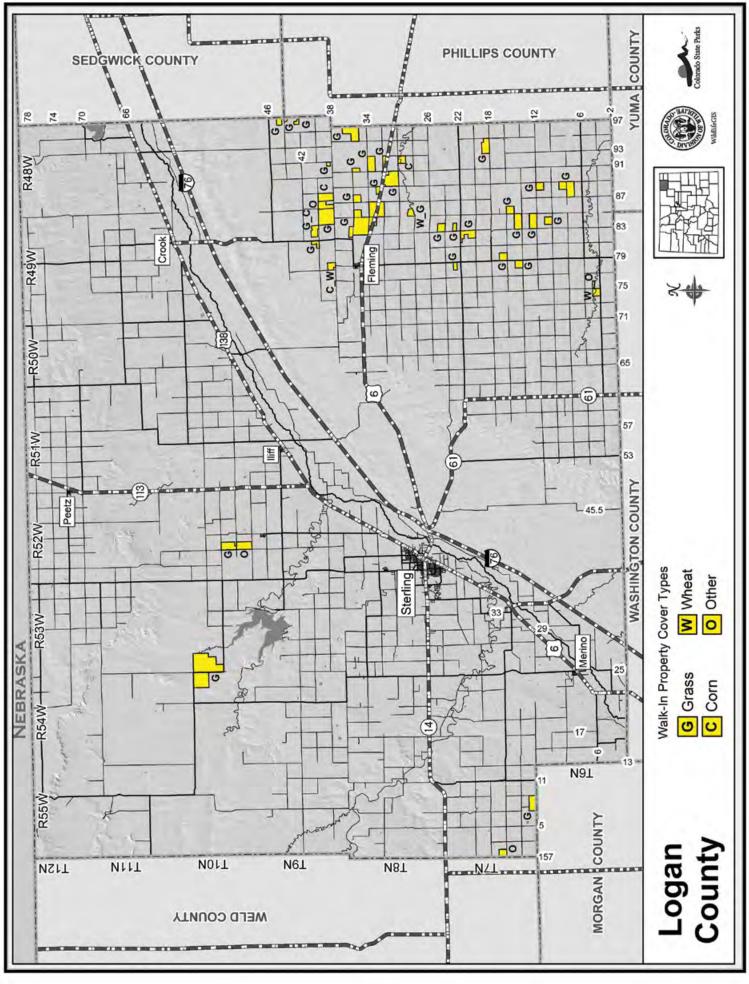


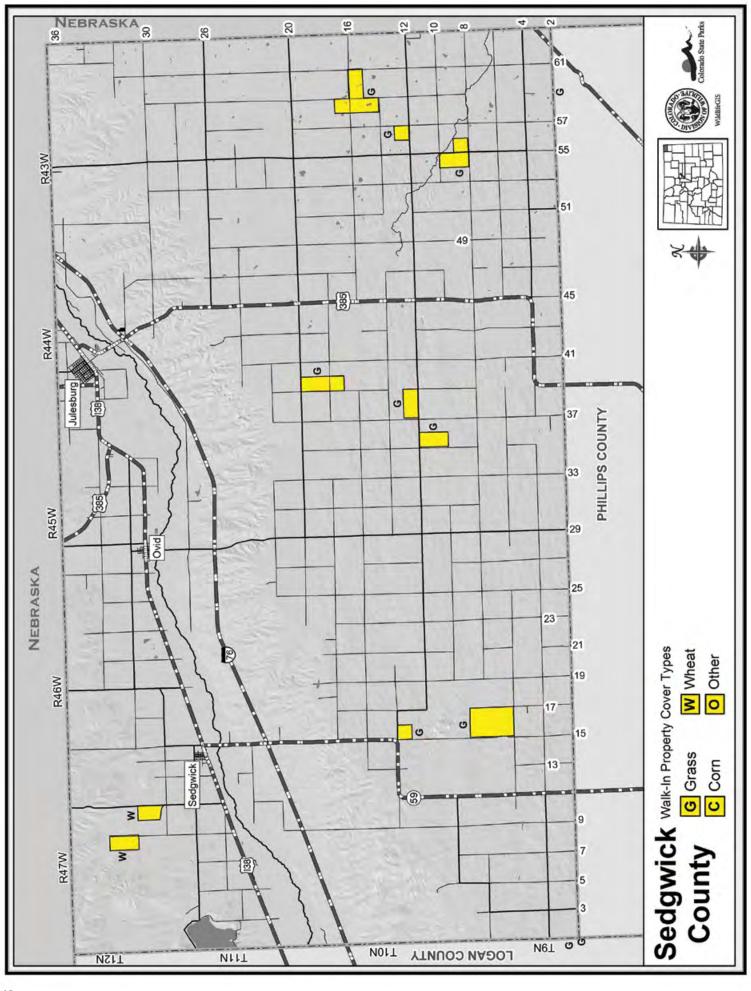


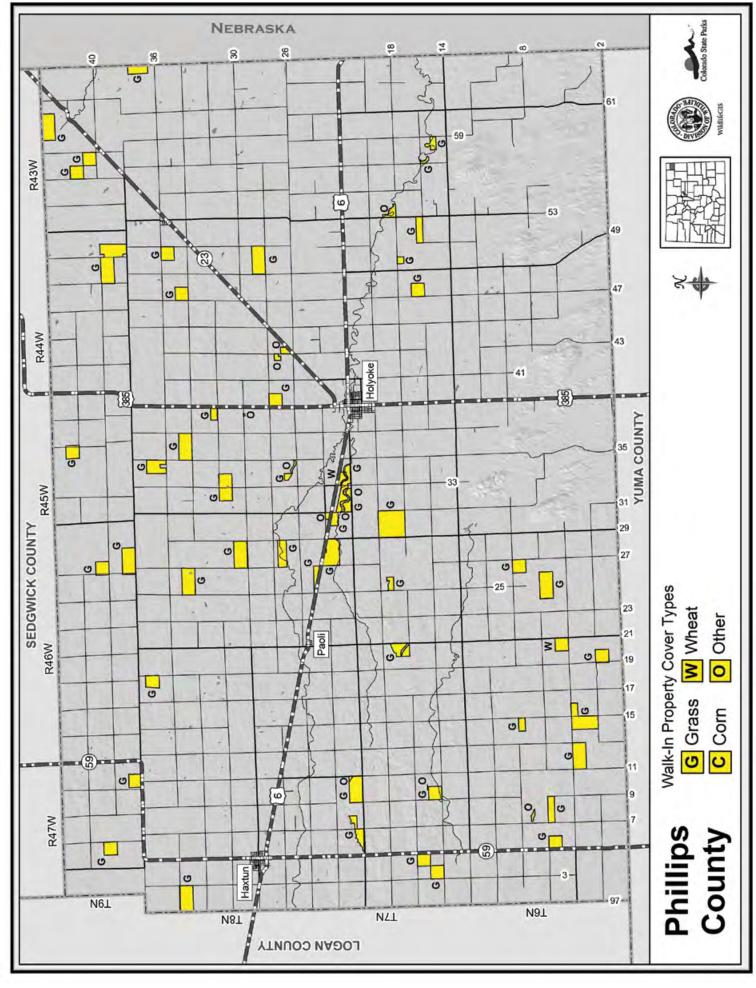


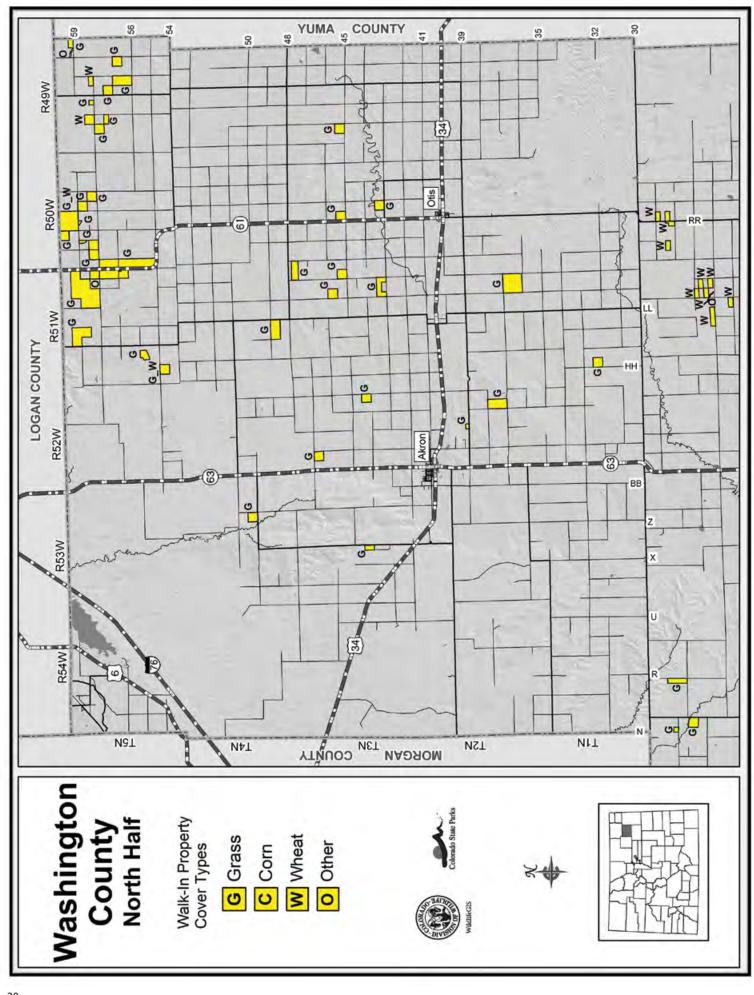


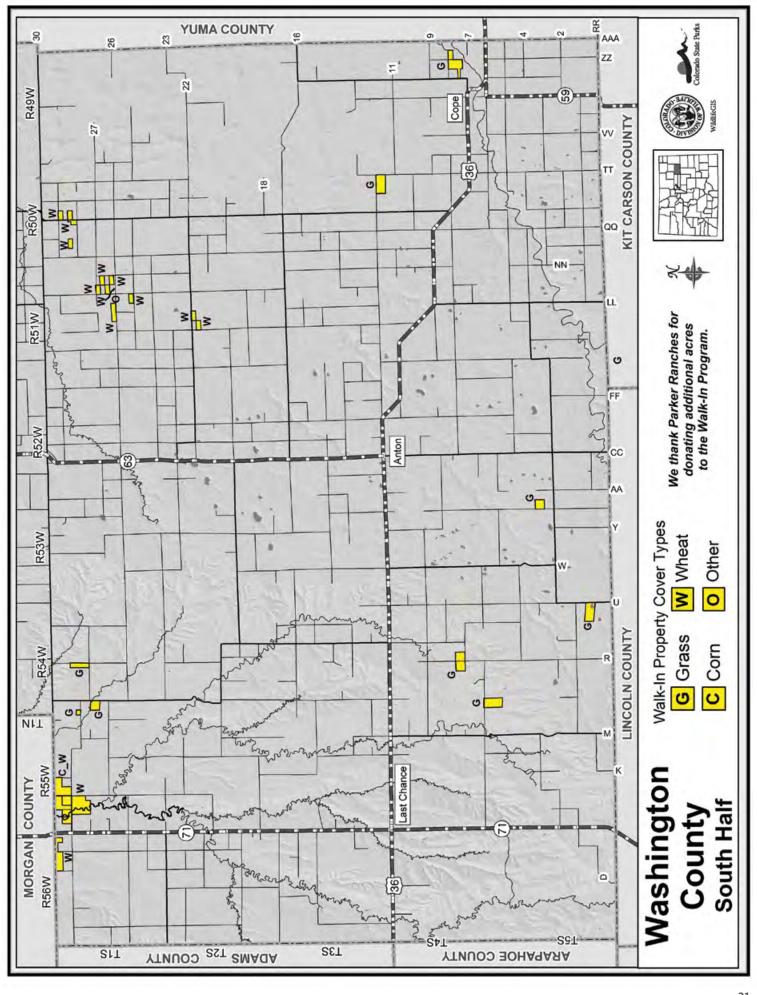
We thank Parker Ranches for donating additional acres to the Walk-In Program. Morgan & Weld Counties Walk in Property Cover Types G Grass C Corn W Wheat Other WASHINGTON LOGAN COUNTY R55W B 28 ၂၁ ၍ ၁ ADAMS COUNTY P G WELD COUNTY R60W NST NIT N91 T2N WELD COUNTY

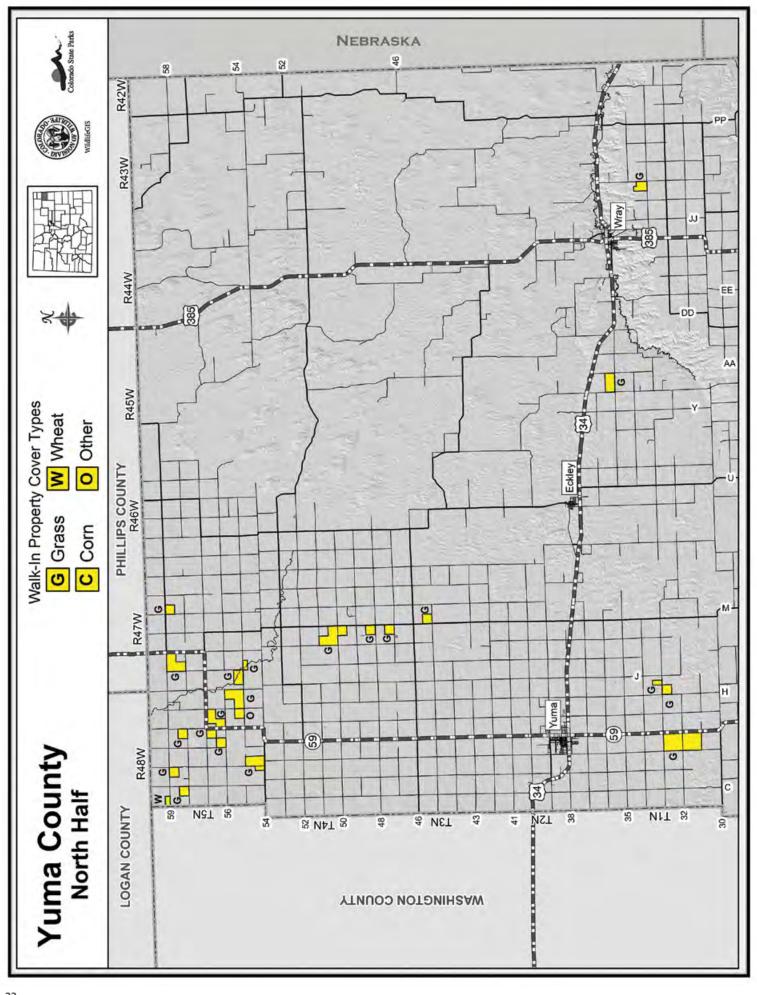


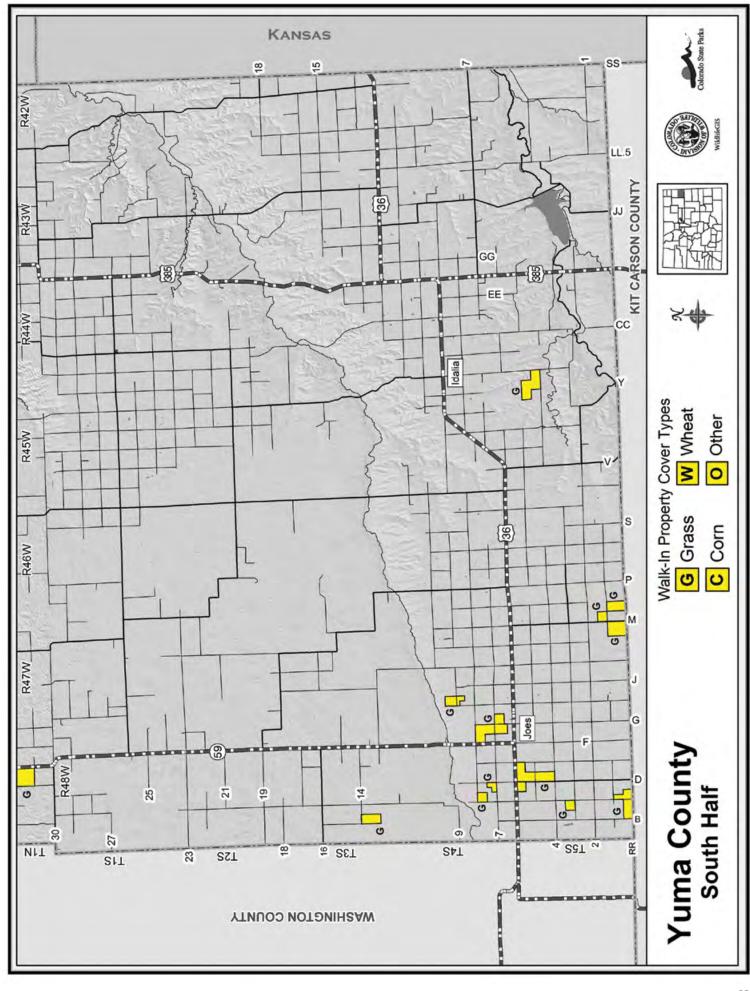


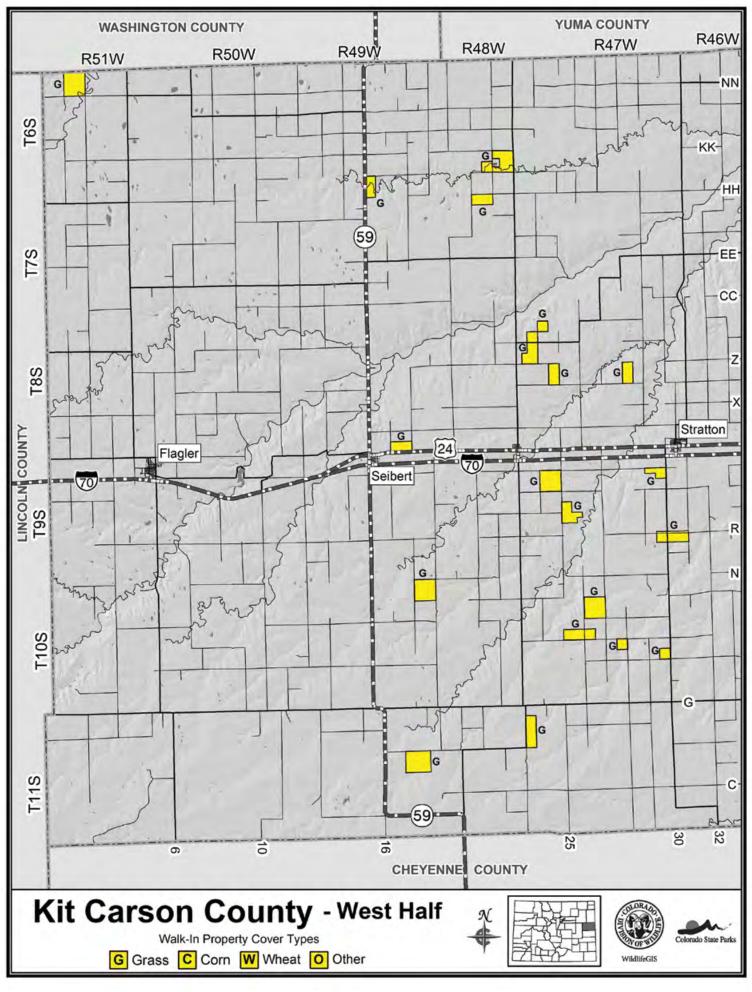


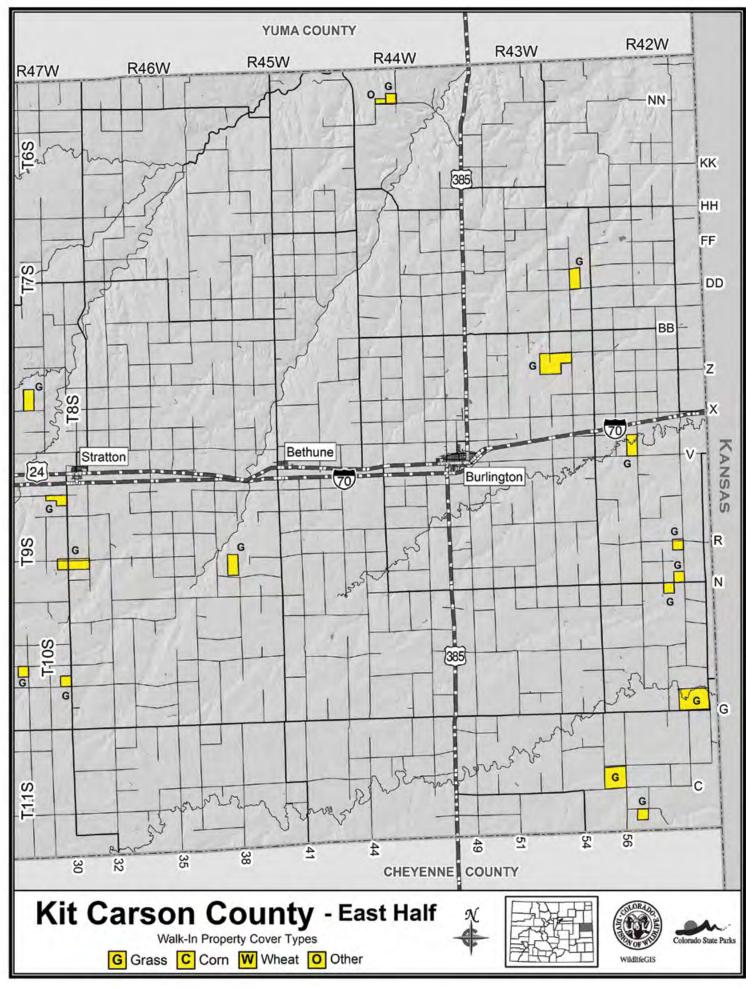


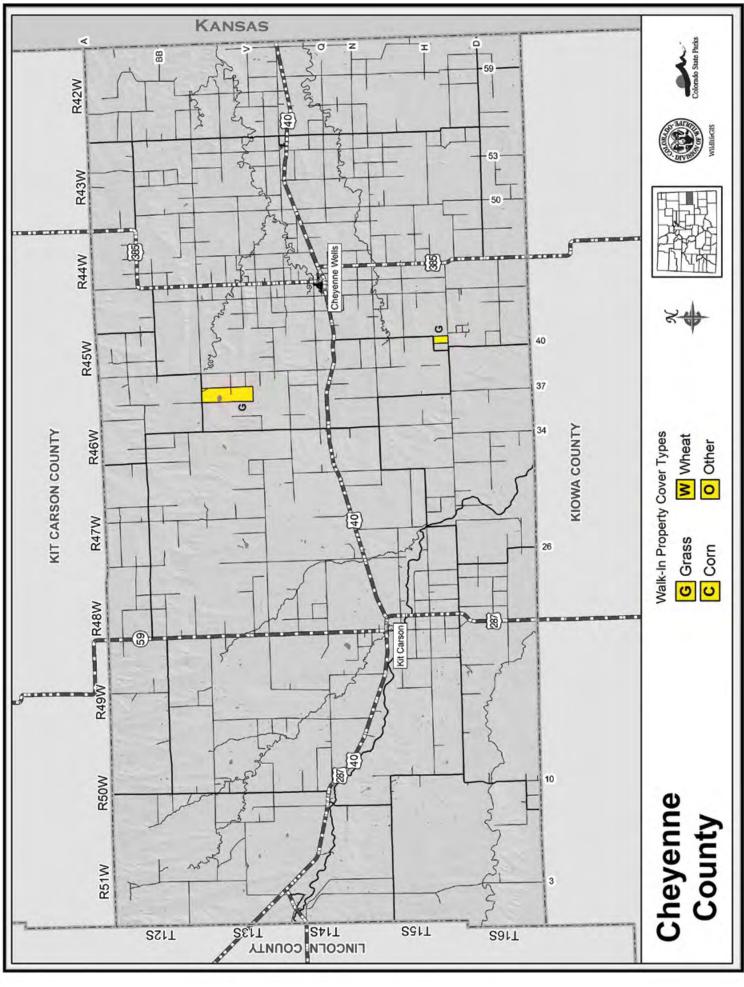


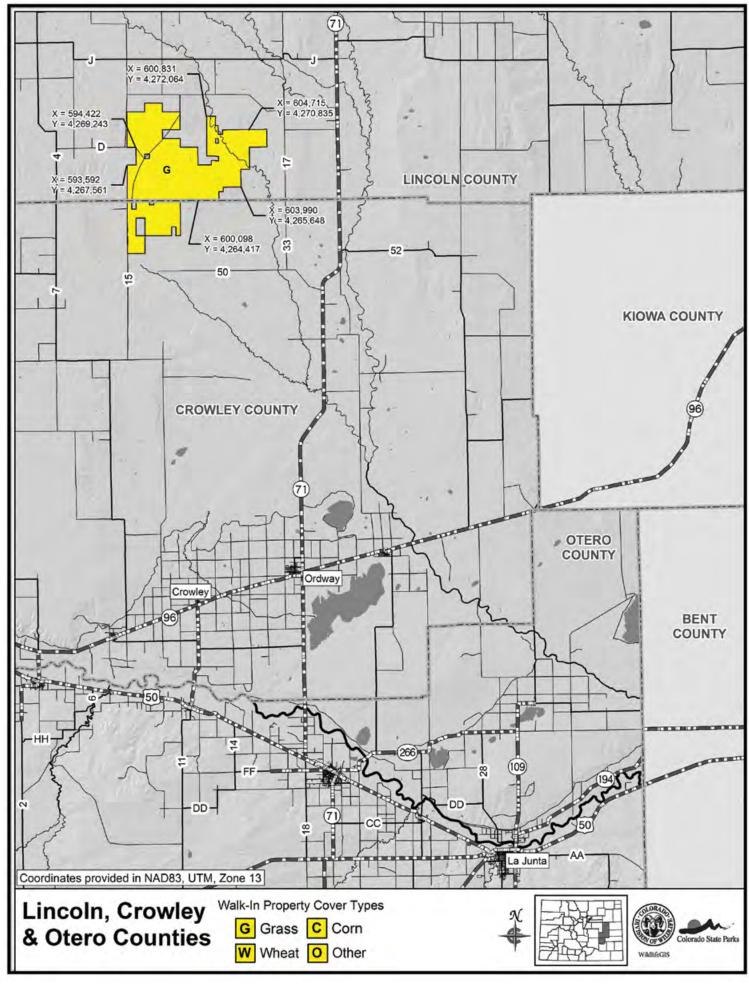


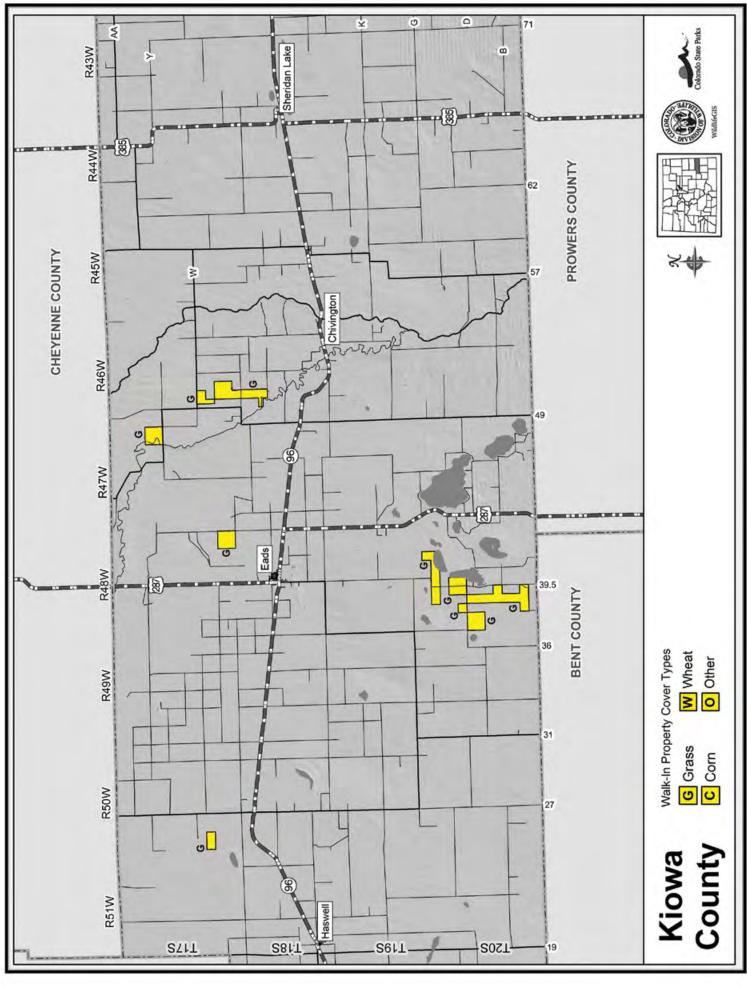


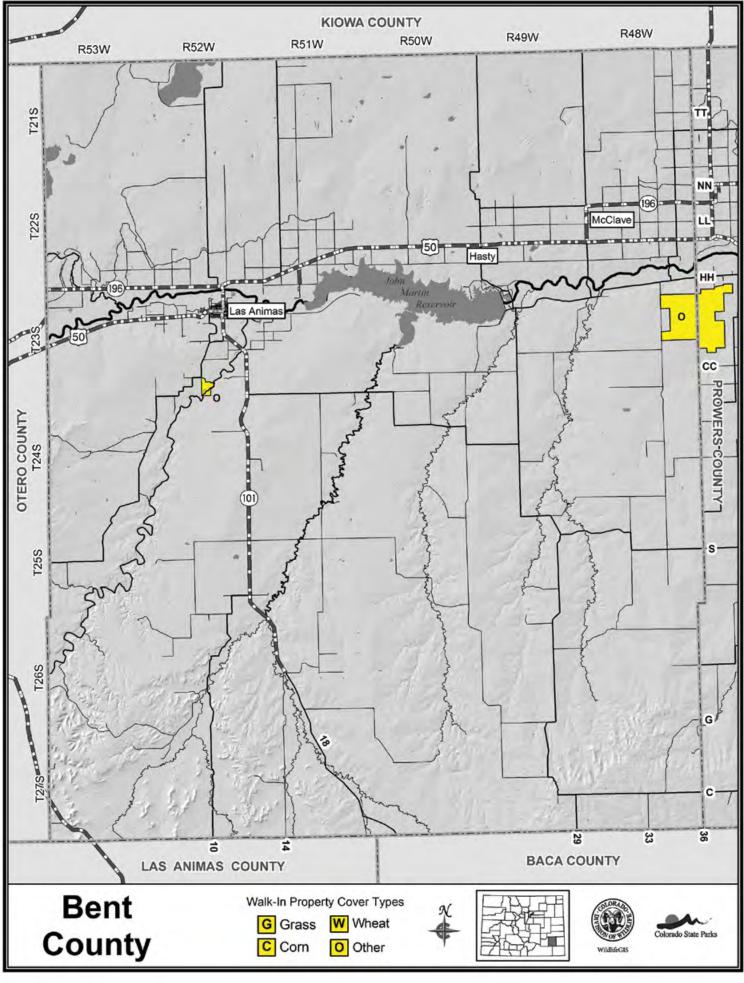


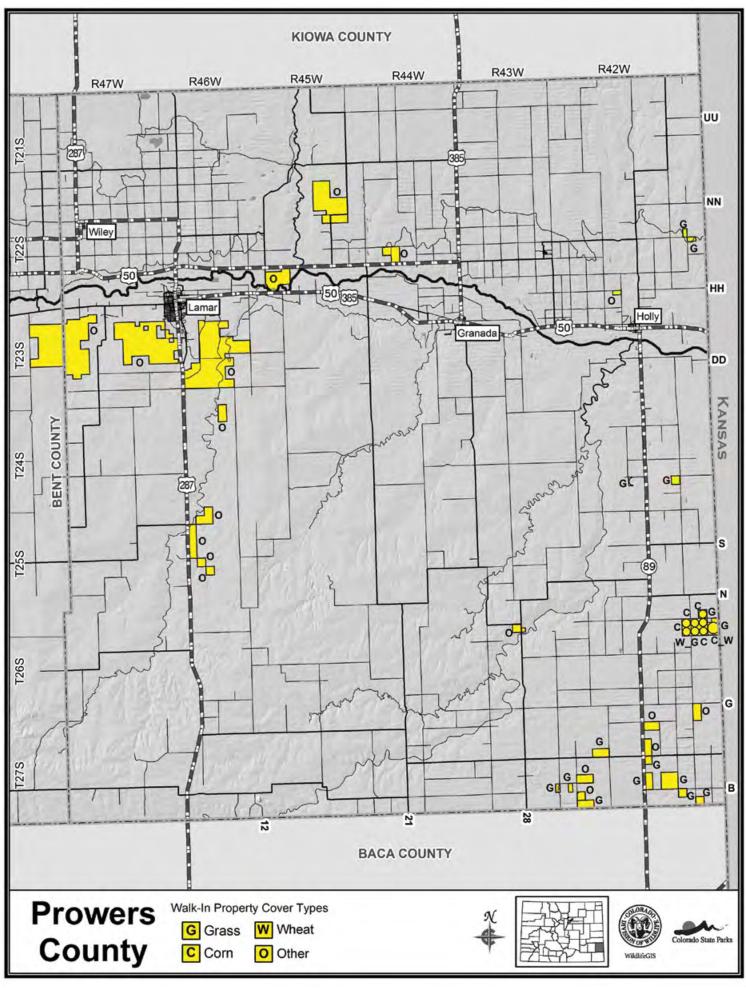


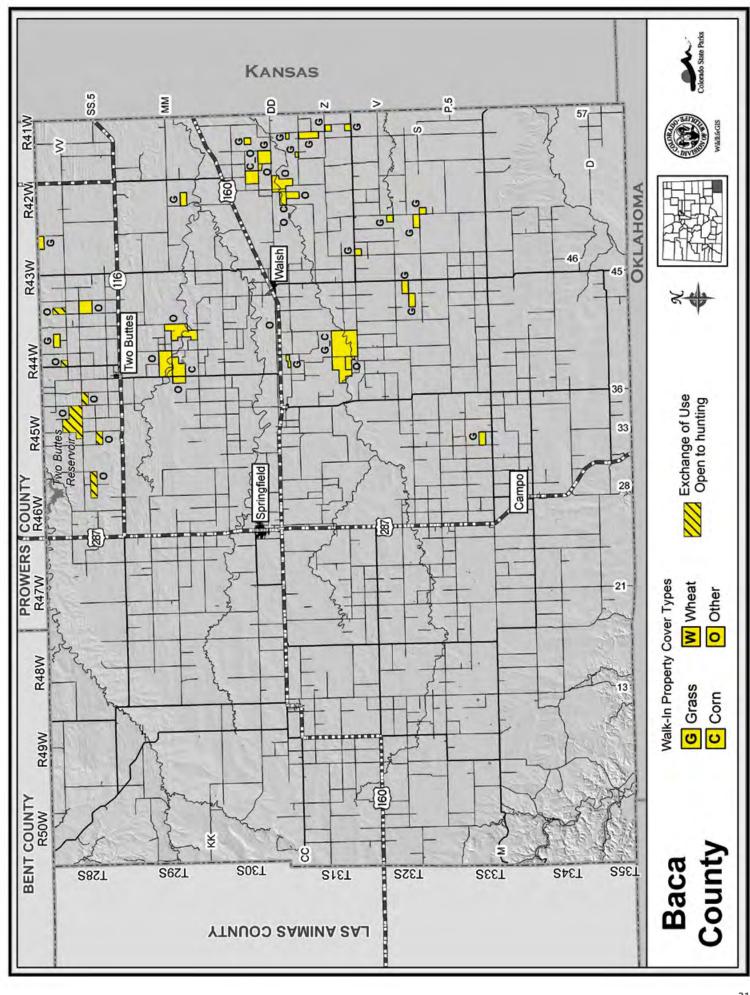


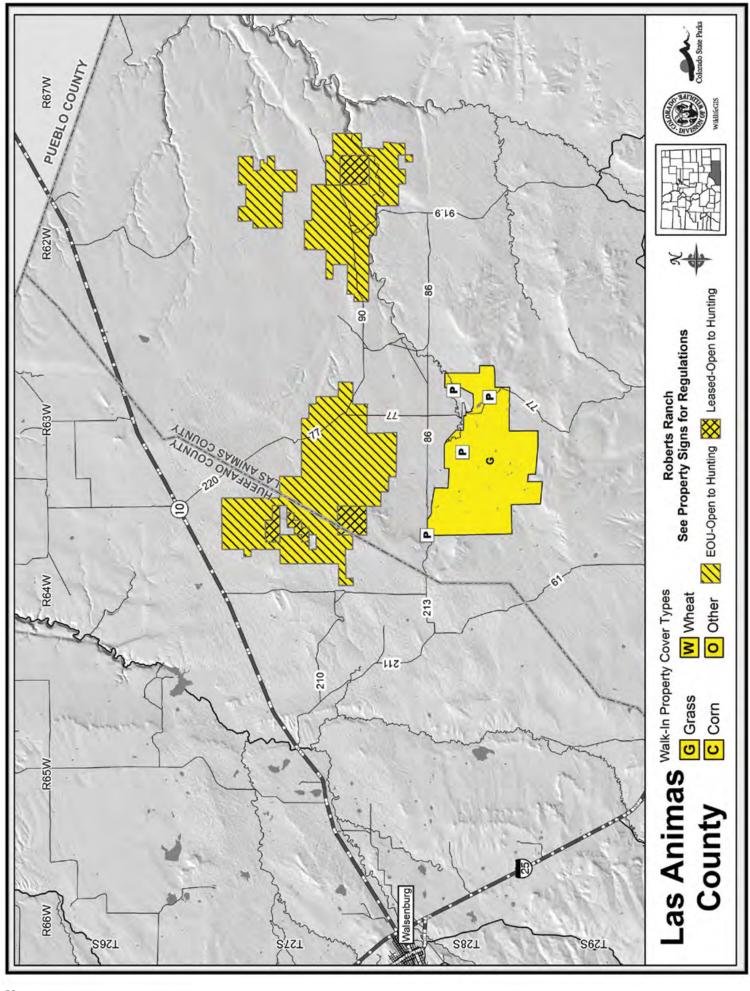


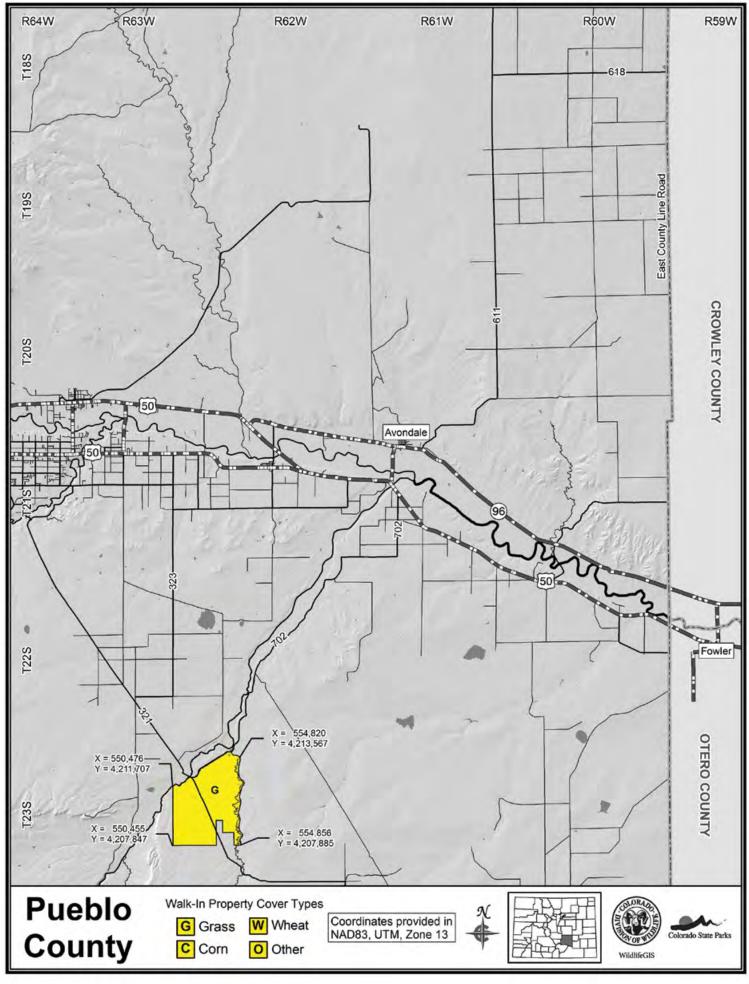














2011 Walk-In Atlas



