

# SANDHILL CRANE (GREATER)

*Grus canadensis tabida*



## State Species Status

[State Endangered](#)

## Conservation

Species of Greatest Conservation Need under the [State Wildlife Action Plan](#)

Priority Species under WDFW's [Priority Habitat and Species Program](#)

*Photo: Adult sandhill crane with rust-stained feathers from preening with a muddy beak. (Jim Cummins)*

## Closure Rationale

The sandhill crane is a State Endangered species and these are the only known pair of nesting sandhill cranes ever documented in the Methow Valley. Nesting sandhill cranes are in jeopardy of extinction in Washington because of their limited distribution, low numbers, poor breeding success and colt survival, and loss of shallow marshes or wet meadows for feeding and nesting. Sandhill cranes are extremely wary and repeated disturbance often results in nest desertion and increases the likelihood of predation on unattended nests.

## Habitat Requirements

- Sandhill cranes use large and small tracts of open habitat where visibility is good from all vantage points.
- Wet meadows, marshes, shallow ponds, pastures, hayfields, and grainfields are all used for nesting, feeding, and/or roosting.
- Dense, emergent wetland vegetation is a key component of nesting territories. Nests are typically placed on piles of emergent vegetation, grass, and mud.
- Ideal nesting locations have good visibility, are near feeding areas, and are free from human disturbance.
- Migrating sandhill cranes use roost sites with shallow water (<20.0 cm [8.0 in]) deep) that are close to feeding sites and are free from human disturbance
- Sandhill cranes are highly omnivorous, feeding on grains, plant material, invertebrates, amphibians, and small mammals.

For additional information, visit: [Sandhill crane \(greater\) | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)



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