

A volume in the series *Studies in Avian Biology*

Ecology and Conservation of Lesser Prairie-Chickens

Lesser Prairie-Chickens have experienced substantial declines in terms of population and the extent of area that they occupy. While they are an elusive species, making it difficult at times to monitor them, current evidence indicates that they have been persistently decreasing in number since the Dust Bowl of the 1930s dramatically affected their core range. In May of 2014, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service listed Lesser Prairie-Chickens as a threatened species, granting them federal protection under the Endangered Species Act, which included a special rule recognizing significant conservation planning efforts made by state and federal wildlife agencies within the geographical range of the species. Although the listing was vacated by judicial ruling in September 2015, concern for persistence of the species continues. These actions illustrate the uncertain legal status and future conservation challenges for Lesser Prairie-Chickens.

Ecology and Conservation of Lesser Prairie-Chickens provides a compendium of data, analytical results, and synthesis generated among expert wildlife biologists, conservation biologists, and ornithologists. It thoroughly reviews the life history, genetics, and ecology of the species, and is ultimately directed toward developing and establishing appropriate conservation management strategies. It presents a detailed analysis of the issues and risks relative to conservation as well as an overview of potential conservation tools. It also addresses the challenges that natural resource managers continue to face in their current conservation efforts.

While dealing with immediate and short-term issues in Lesser Prairie-Chicken conservation, this book is also a useful starting point for guiding future research, management, and conservation of the species. It provides a definitive reference for researchers, managers, and policy makers as well as those with interests in environmental science, avian biology, game bird management, or Great Plains ecology,



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