

Fall 2024 Whooping Crane Monitoring



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Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, April 29, 2025

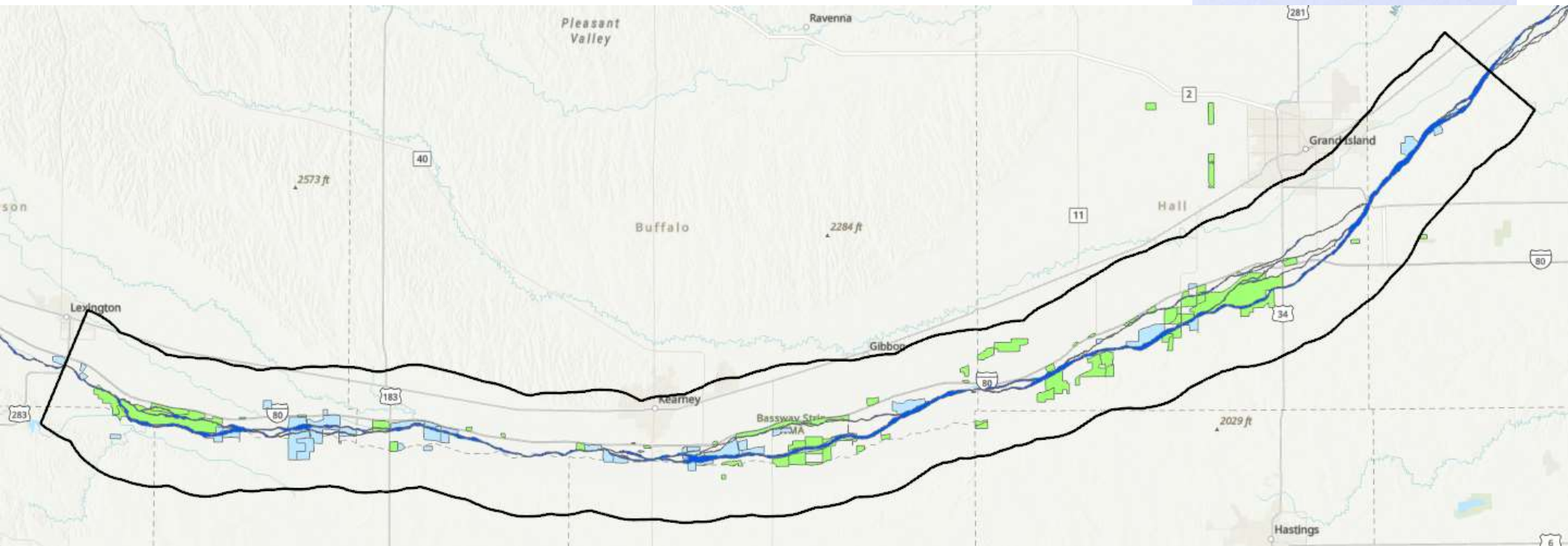
PRRIP Whooping Crane Monitoring

- Assess success of PRRIP management objective
- Collect systematic data
- Evaluate stopover & habitat metrics
- Address Extension Big Questions



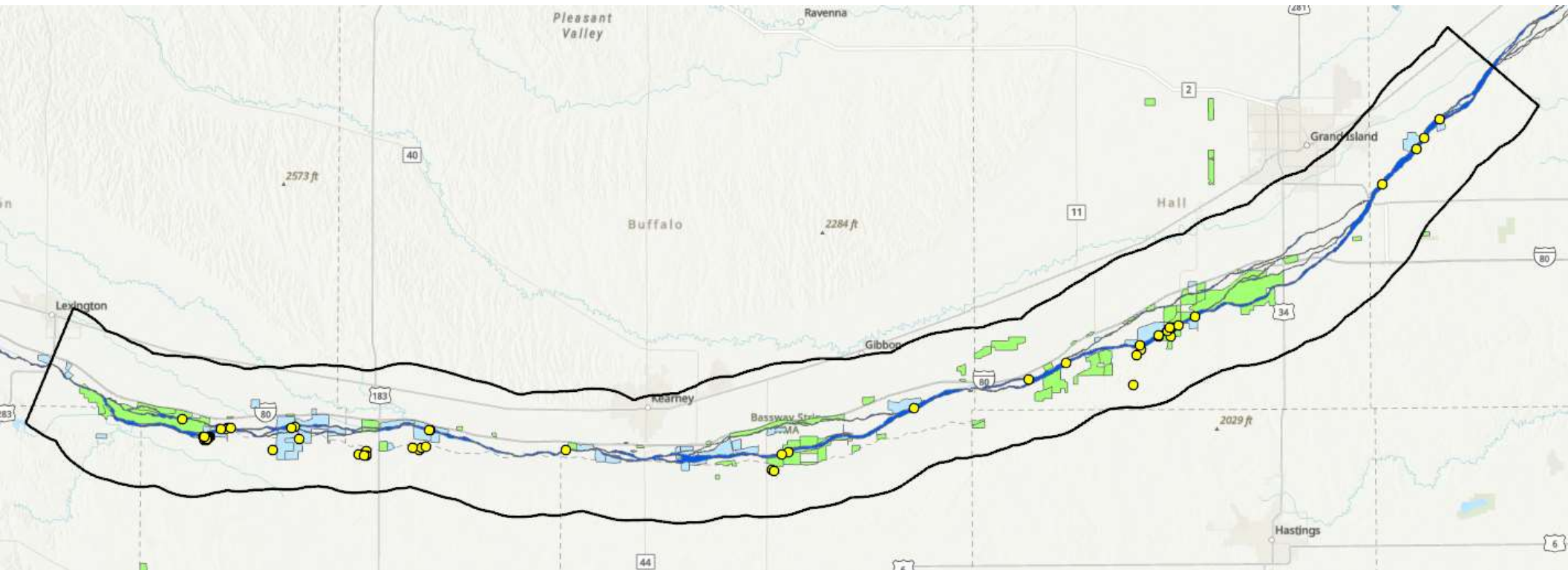
PRRIP Monitoring Methods

- Systematic aerial surveys and ground monitoring
- October 15 – November 18
 - Extended to December 3
- West and east transects flown daily



PRRIP Fall 2024 Monitoring

- 65 individual whooping cranes
- 19 unique groups
- October 26 – November 30
- 67 group locations

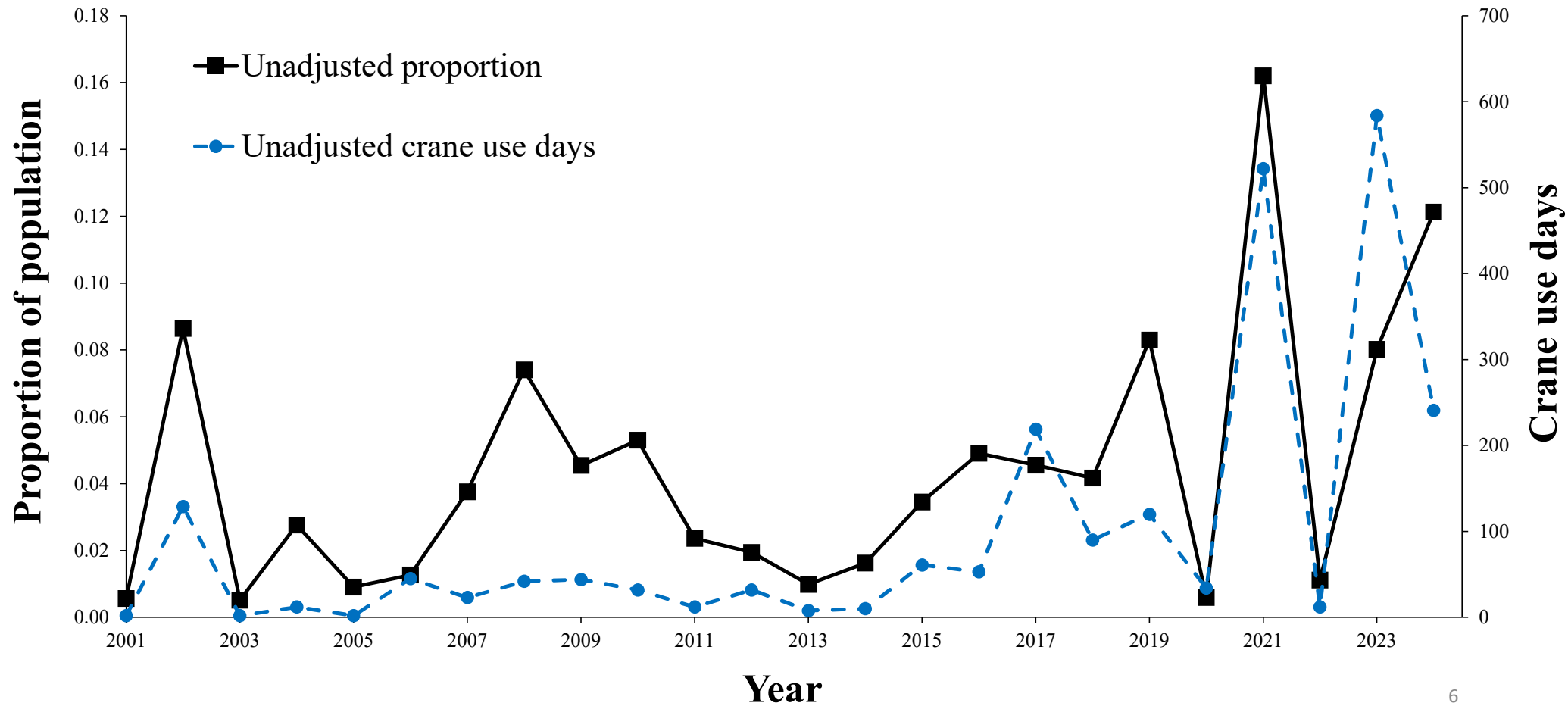


PRRIP Fall 2024 Monitoring Effort

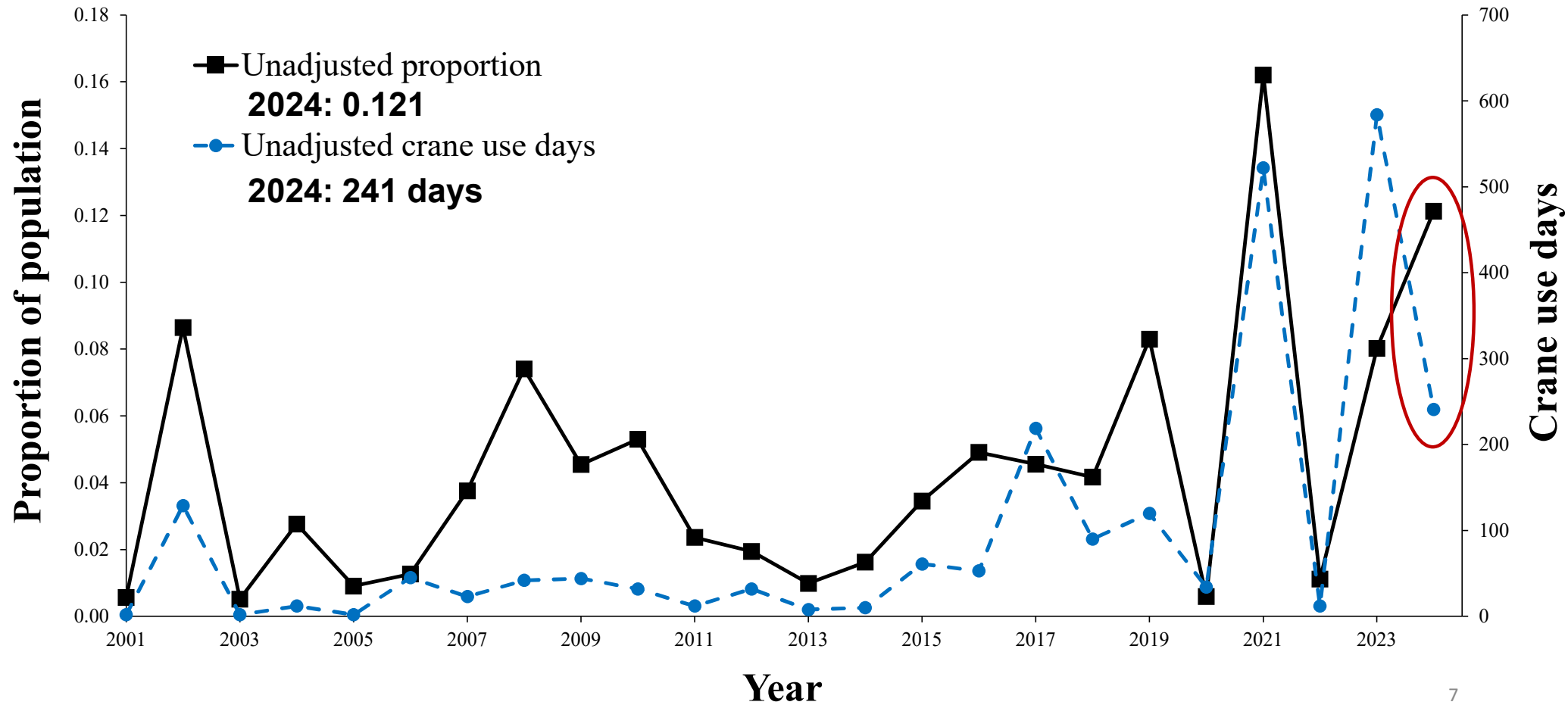
- Systematic aerial surveys
 - 67 of 88 flights completed
 - 19 unique groups
 - 43 group locations
- Opportunistic aerial surveys & ground monitoring
 - 24 group locations
 - 465 miles
 - 22.5 hours



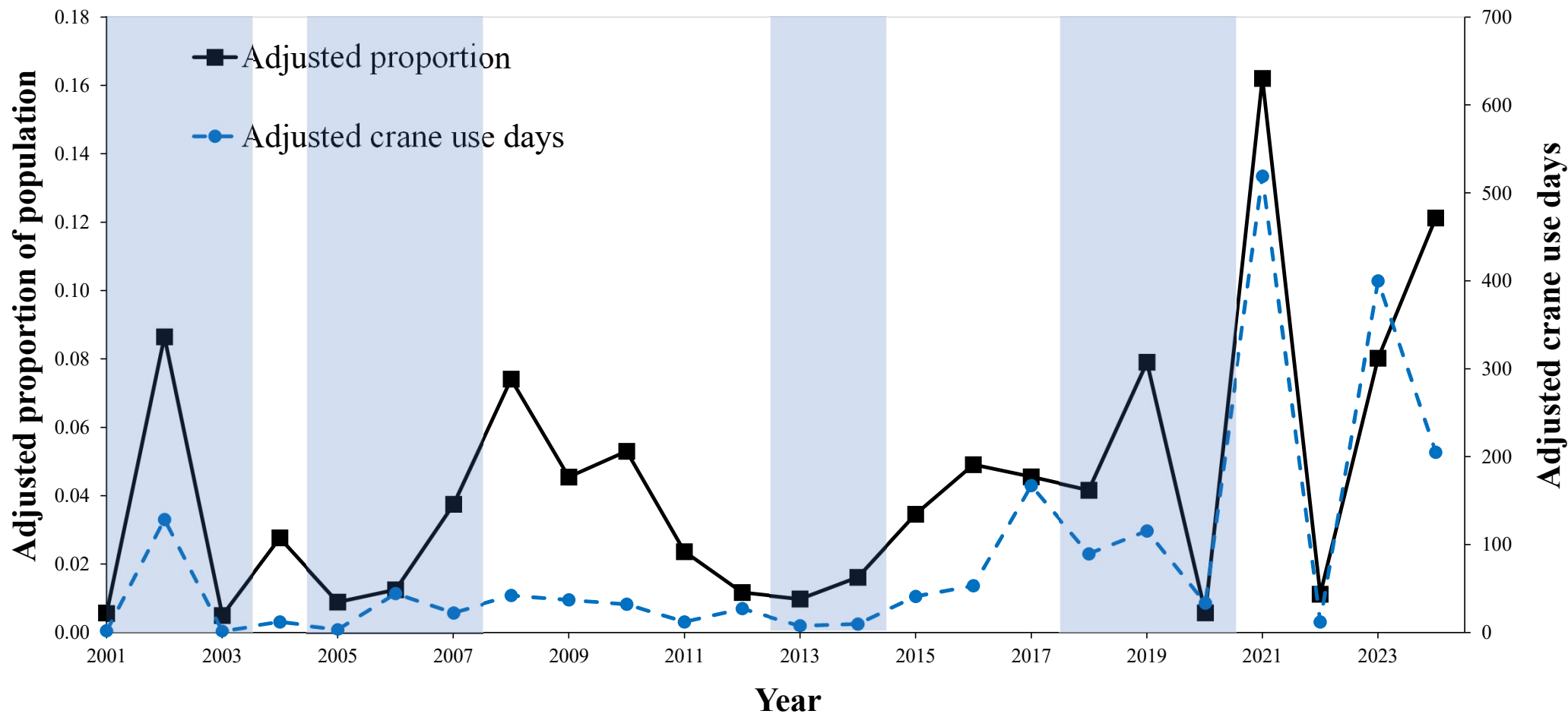
Fall Whooping Crane Metrics



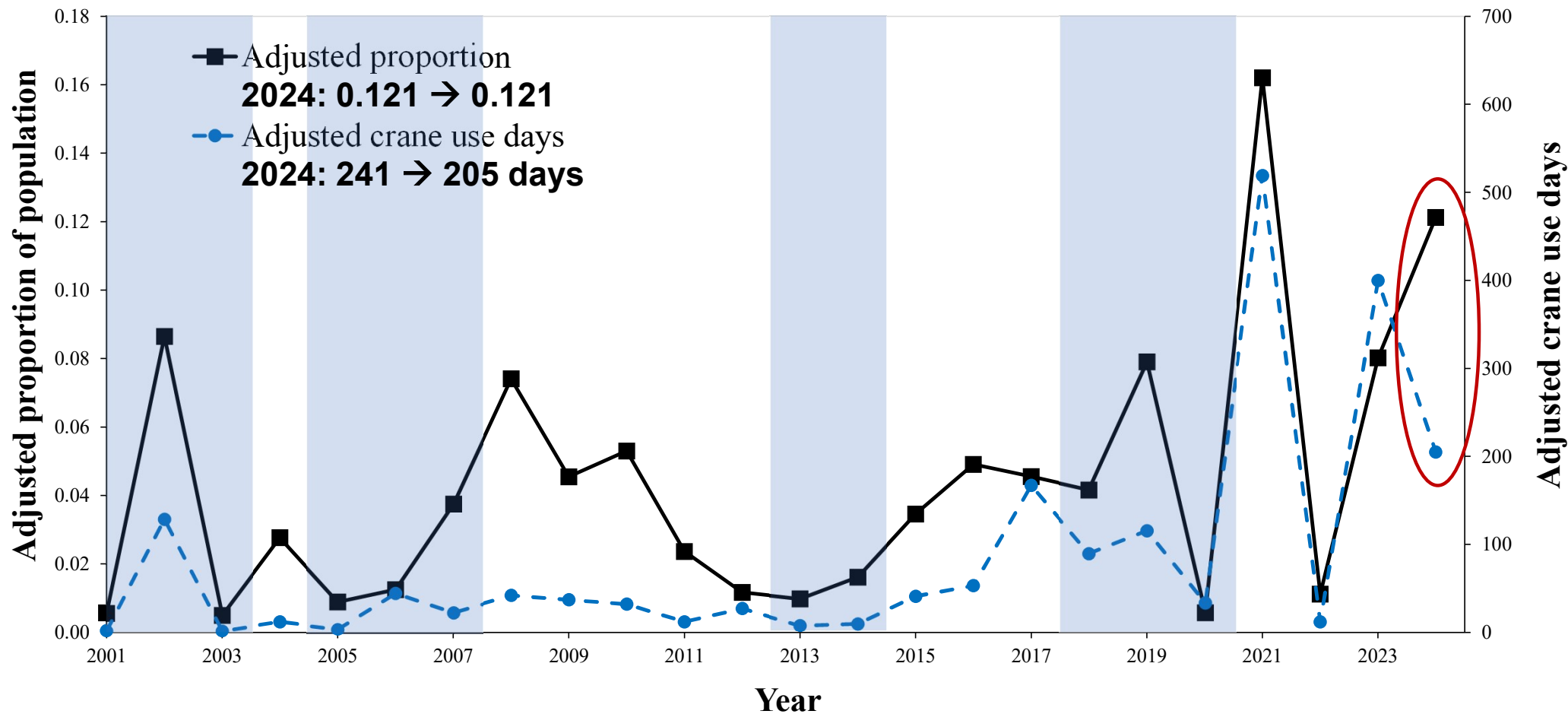
Fall Whooping Crane Metrics



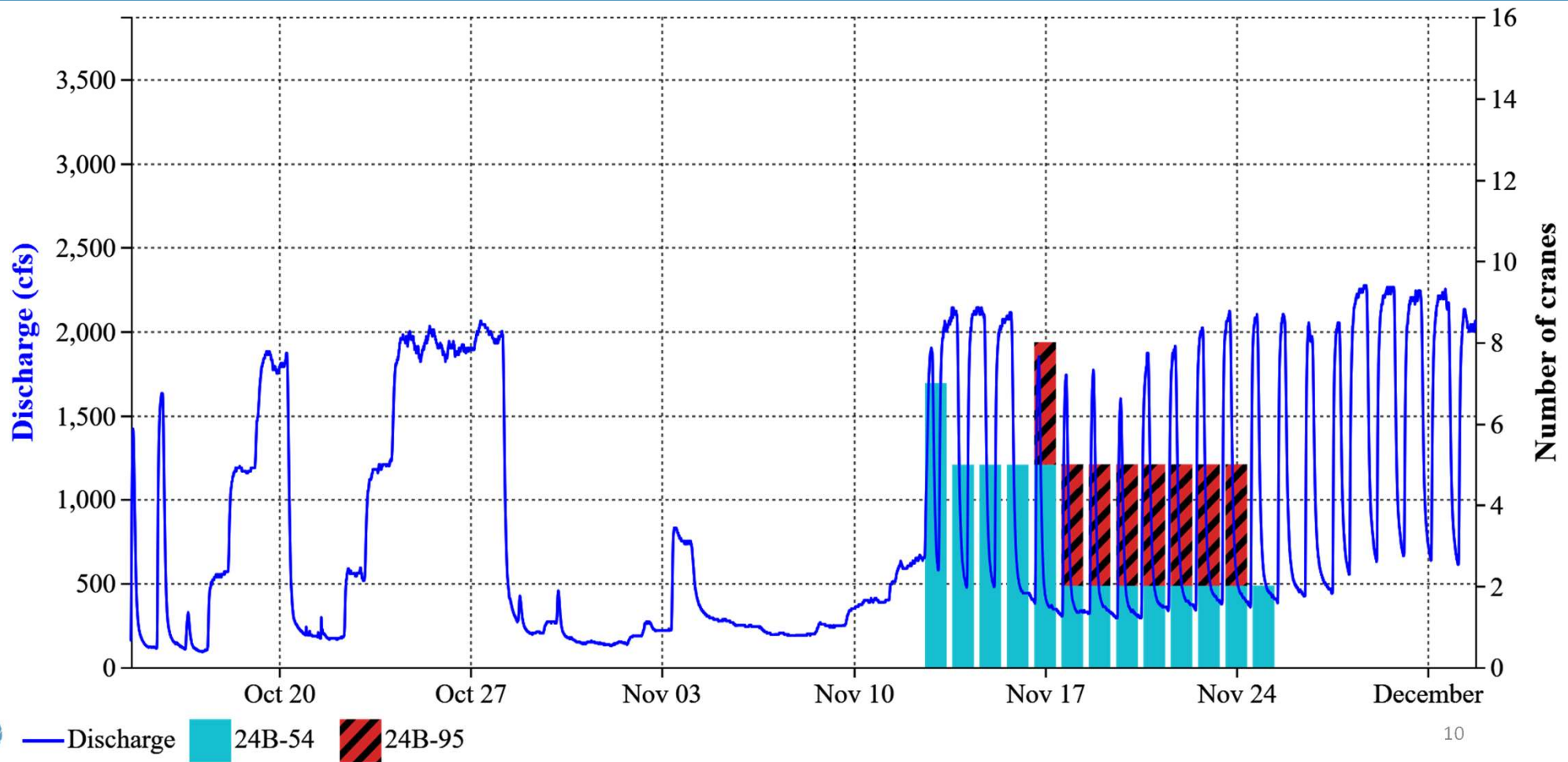
Adjusted Fall Whooping Crane Metrics



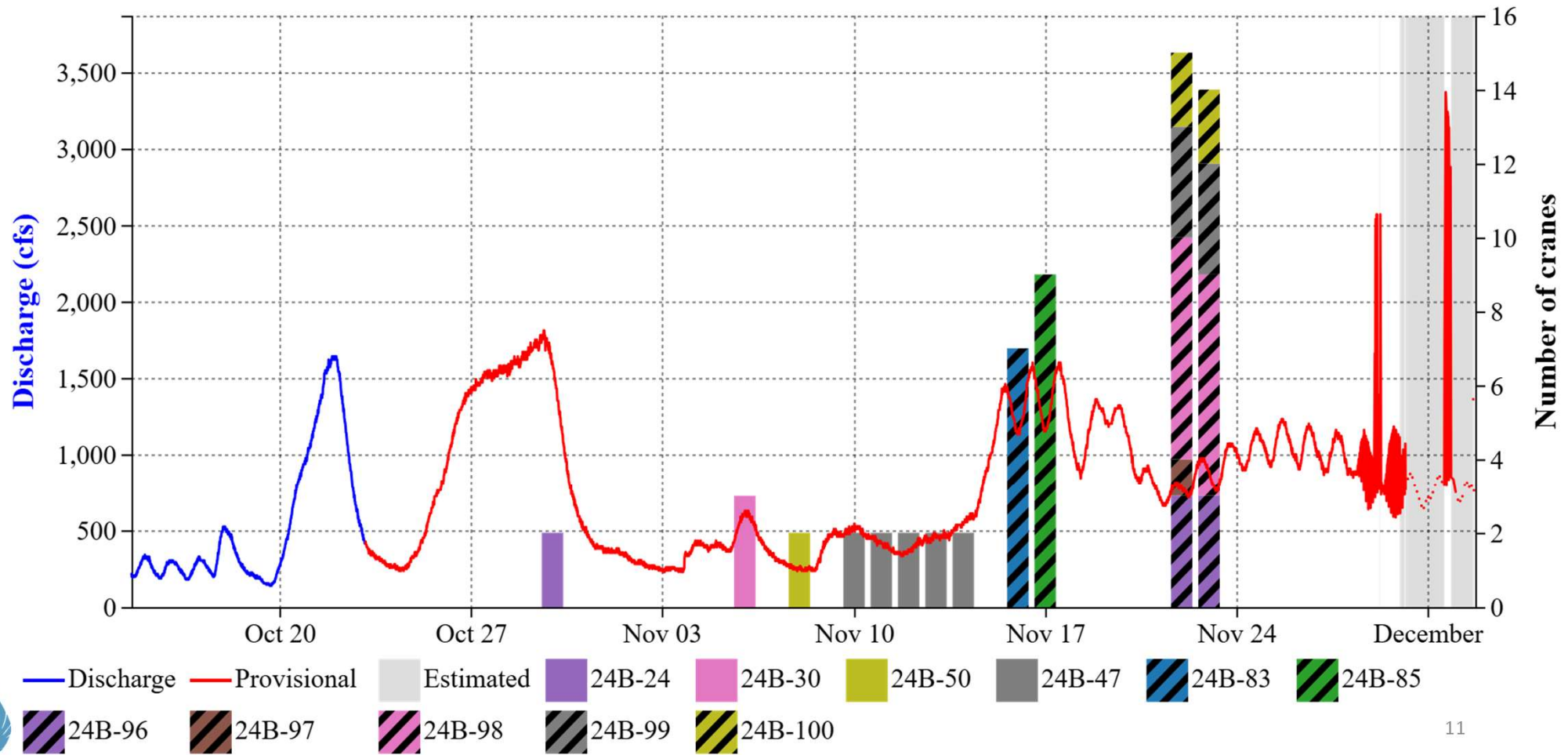
Adjusted Fall Whooping Crane Metrics



Platte River Discharge at Overton

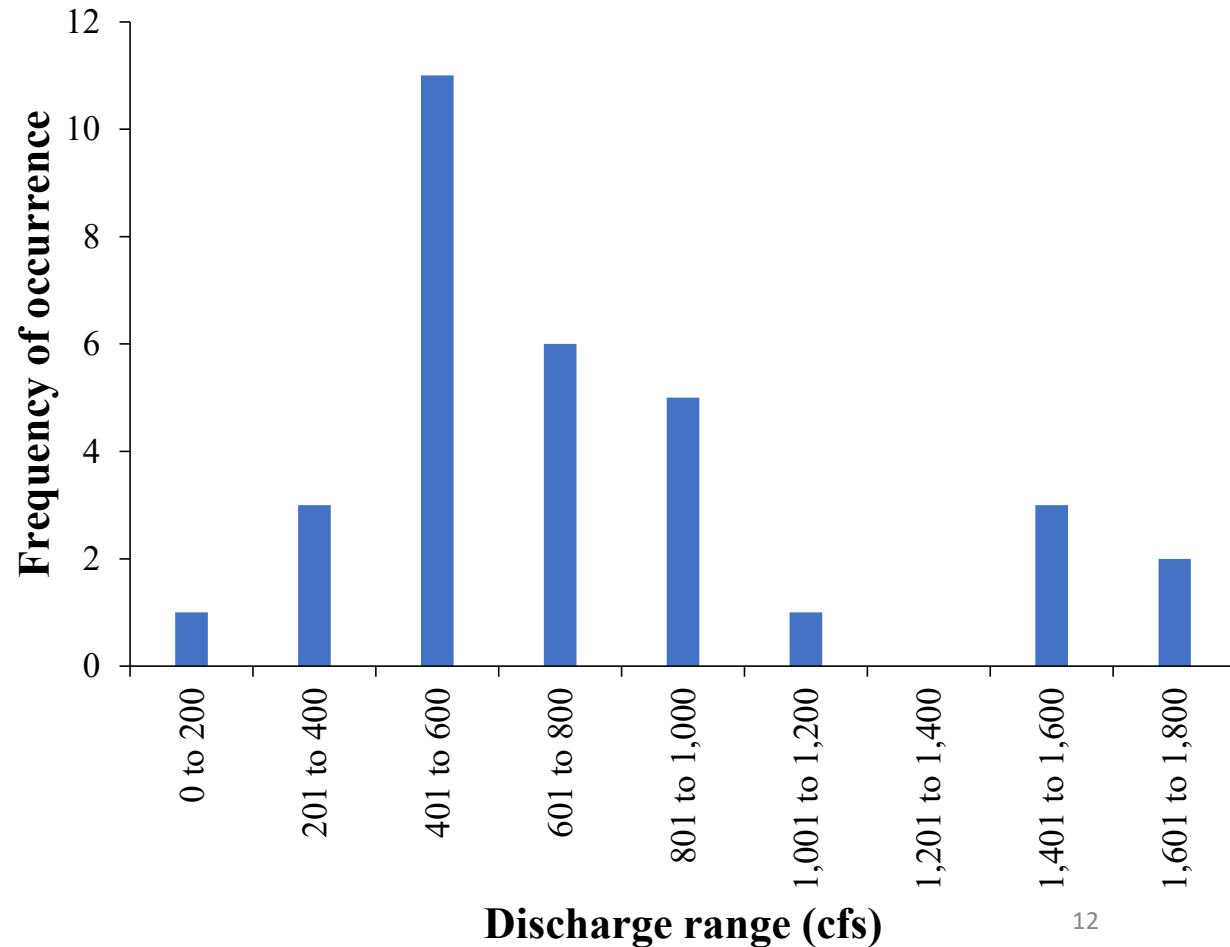


Platte River Discharge at Grand Island



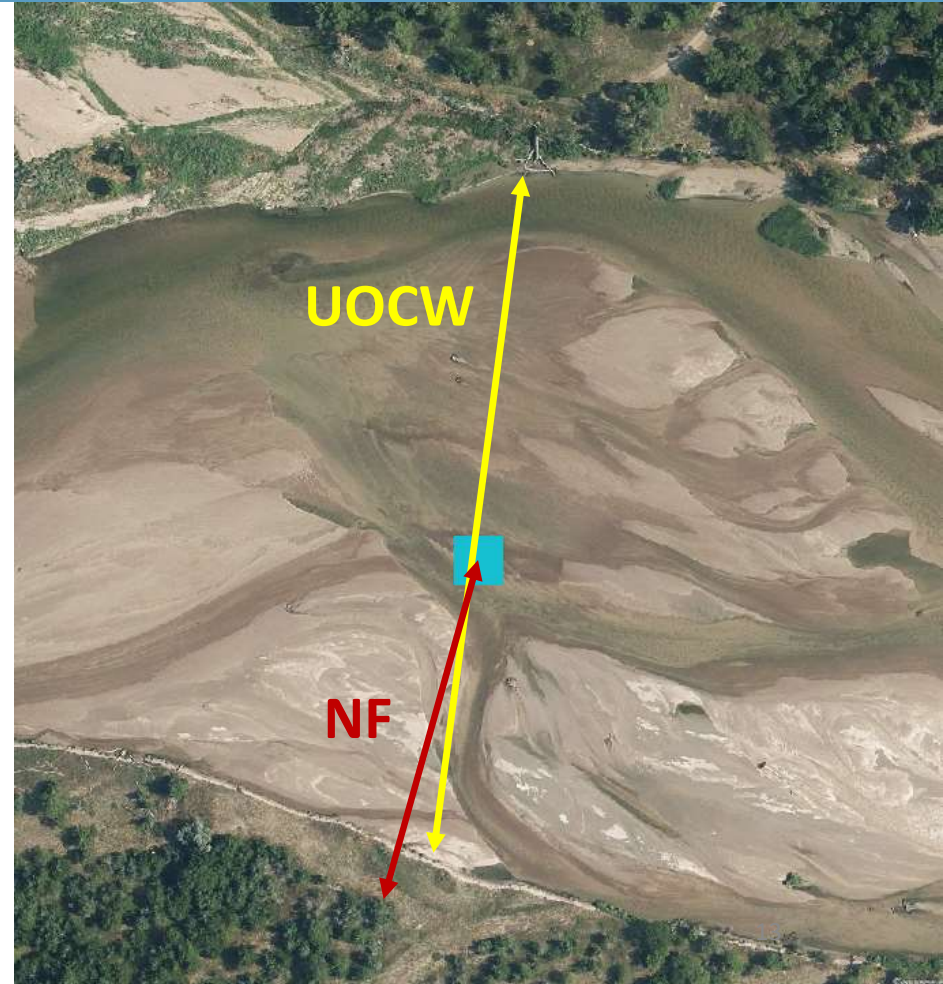
Platte River Discharge – Riverine Locations

- 32 riverine locations
 - 178 cfs to 1,750 cfs
 - Mean = 748 cfs
 - Median = 623 cfs



Habitat Metrics

- Unobstructed channel width
 - 238 ft to 1,609 ft
 - Mean = 799 ft
 - Median = 730 ft
- Nearest forest
 - 119 ft to 1,588 ft
 - Mean = 521 ft
 - Median = 460 ft



Comparison with USFWS Data

- USFWS public sightings database:
 - Two groups not observed by PRRIP
 - Compositional differences in 1 group
 - 73 whooping cranes
- 0.137 of population stopped on AHR
- 358 crane use days



Fall 2024 Summary



- Season extended to December 3
- Annual variability in stopover metrics
- Majority of groups located in the eastern half of AHR
- Whooping cranes generally experienced a range of low to moderate discharge

Questions?

