

Bi-State Sage-grouse  
Executive Oversight Committee Meeting  
April 17, 2012

**Introductions**

Reno: Amy Lueders – BLM NV  
Steve Siegel – NDOW  
Randy Sharp – USFS  
Bruce Petersen – NRCS  
Selena Werdon – FWS  
Ted Koch – USFWS  
Todd Hopkins – GBLCC  
Jeanne Higgins – USFS  
Ken Mayer – NDOW  
Mary Grim- USFWS  
Skip Canfield- State Lands  
Phone: Chris McAlear – BLM NV  
Lily Douglas – BLM CA  
Eric Loft - CDFG

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**1. Review of Agenda, Minutes from March 19 meeting and Introductions - Jeanne**

- If there any additions to the meeting minutes from the last meeting please let Steve Siegel know of any corrections/additions to get them finalized.
- Minutes were sent out in draft form but if there are any corrections or updates – if anything is missing and we can get those finalized.

**2. USFWS listing process and issues to be addressed – Mary Grim**

- Mary Grim – Listing Program Coordinator for the Pacific Southwest Region
  - Going through the listing process.
  - Powerpoint will be emailed to share with phone participants
  - Please refer to her Powerpoint presentation handouts. A transcript of her presentation can be made available if necessary.

**3. Action Plan – (Please bring or send signed signature page to Steve Siegel)**

- **Next Steps – EOC role**
  - Amy volunteered to take the signature page to Jim Sedinger
  - Outstanding – Ren, FWS, Ed Armenta, Inyo Jim Kenna, Lincoln Burton, NRCS California, Carl Bonham, CDFG, Steven Schwartzbach from USGS
  - Jim Kenna was probably going to sign yesterday or today – may already be in mail if not – Lily can get it up to Ren
    - Steve to get Amy Lueders the signature and get as many as you can on one page

- Lincoln Burton has been sent a disc with the actual plan on it.
- If signatures not received by Friday, April 20, 2012, Steve Siegel to send a note out to remind people who are delinquent.
- Steve Siegel has had requests from outside our group for copies of the report – been reluctant to post until there are signatures
  - EOC Group - Post as is and when signatures are received we will add that page to it.

#### 4. MOU

- NRCS in California has not signed the MOU
  - There was a clause regarding FOIA and release of documents and what would be exempted. CDFG said they were not under FOIA are under state statute so there should be a language for comparable state statute. Revised language submitted for review.
  - Lincoln Burton last signature needed for the MOU.
  - Bruce Petersen will help work on obtaining signatures from NRCS on both MOU and the Action Plan.
    - Thomas Moore is engaged as well.
- **Joint Technical and Strategy Group meeting to discuss prioritizing actions: April 25, 2012, 9:30 a.m. at the Carson City BLM Office**
  - Produce a ranking – criteria applied to projects within the Action Plan
  - Joint meeting of both Strategy and Technical Teams with a couple members from the public – Doug Busselman and Gil Yanuck
    - Has roughed out a process but will get buy in on a process that we will use for ranking the priority projects
      - High – Medium – Low type rankings
    - Outcome that we will provide to EOC for ultimate approval of ranking system

#### 5. IM and ID for the BLM and USFS – Sandra and Randy

- Sandra Brewer put together the IM
  - Technical Working Group – EOC – BLM State Directors
    - Ultimate decision on BLM State Directors
  - Steve Siegel has the BLM version and can speak
    - Mirrors the Greater Sage-grouse IM with the exception – although we have a 3 tier process for reviewing projects that are going on for approval within priority habitat
      - First step to send back to the Technical Working Group
      - If not decision there comes to the EOC
      - Final decision made by the BLM State Director, rather than the Director of the agency
    - Why doesn't it reflect the Bishop BLM RMP
      - IM not a planning decision

- Attorneys have gone through the Greater Sage Grouse IM and made sure there was no pre-decisional language and no decision being made there.
- BLM has started the Carson City Resource Management Plan revision – October 2015 completion.
- Inyo – they are what is called an early adopter of the New Forest Planning Rule
  - Starting revision of their plan later this summer – revision process takes 2-3 years
- Humboldt-Toiyabe have started revising several different times – due to planning rules – not in a revision process at this point nor on the schedule to be revised
  - Focus would be on an amendment.
    - Could be done in a shorter time frame
- FWS – Current position is that IM and ID's are not adequate regulatory mechanisms
  - Wants to be able to point to the success of the Bishop District and say why FWS expect that similar level of success elsewhere in the Bi-State.
- IM/ID is important to have both
  - Defines clearly for users of the public lands what our expectations of operating in those areas is going to be.
    - That is why we (FWS) has taken the position that we have to have completed RMP's
    - It has to be an existing regulatory mechanism – a draft can be changed.
    - Whether listed or not we want to see you do what can do to help conserve and we think amending your plans makes a lot of sense – there are experienced work plans that are working.
      - Love to see amend plans to prioritize sage-grouse conservation – may have opportunity to influence whether we list or if we list how quickly we can delist.
  - Part of what the IM's & ID's do for the agencies – gives you the opportunity to demonstrate a track record of how these actions will be addressed under the RMP's if you incorporate the same language.
    - The IM and the Draft ID puts in place the review of actions that are going to adversely affect. Informally it may be in place in the agencies but not formally. Does it involve the Federal and State agencies review on a 2 or 3 level?
      - Adds value to the Fish & Wildlife Service – to the extent that we can point to that as a surrogate for our consultation process post listing – we can point to that process as having outcomes that would have been achieved had the species been listed.
        - Another opportunity for FWS to say listing is not warranted because we are already working with our partners

- The teeth of the matter – it can't be there without going through the NEPA process
  - It may not be enough by themselves to preclude the need to list but it gets us that much further down the road
    - Three decisions – Oil & Gas Leases, China Mountain and Aurora Geothermal – that decisions have been made that are meaningful for sage-grouse.

## **6. Funding for Science Advisor – USGS - All**

- Forest Service does not have a mechanism to move money
  - Randy to visit with Joe Tague
  - Possible transfer through a line item
  - Question of whether the Forest Service should set up an agreement between USGS or use an existing agreement
- Bishop transferred money to Carson already

## **7. Requests for information – Response Process**

- There is a usual amount of time of 10 days to respond to initial request
  - Not necessarily producing what was requested just notify the requestor that their request is being handled
    - If analysis needs to be done don't send anything
    - If the request is something that you have on your desk send off
  - Let all Partners of EOC know about requests for information
    - Be consistent and communicate
    - Try to eliminate multiple requests of different agencies by same person
- Meeting notes to be on web

## **8. Mapping**

- Habitat categories as priority 1, 2, 3 with no general habitat
  - Not enough telemetry to separate
    - Need ground truthing of what map is showing
      - If the Map indicates priority we need to go on the ground and verify
    - Fix map on Bi-state – Provide to Chris McAlear
    - CA side – 15<sup>th</sup> of this month provide designations for CA side – Scott Gardner- USGS is assisting in the mapping effort
      - Final Map both sides – California and Nevada
  - Not enough telemetry for general
    - Dependent upon Pete Coates (USGS) for delineation

- Plan to operate on Map as is – revisit in 3-5 years – habitat is fragmented and in poor shape so much encroachment by PJ – birds are limited on where they can go

## 9. Other

- **Update on lek surveys**
  - New leks found
    - Mount Grant
- **Meeting with TNC to talk about their decision support tool**
- **Bruce Petersen received a request for opportunities from Milsac and Salazar to attend events in Nevada.**
  - Sage-grouse came to mind because we are tied together. If we can think of an event or schedule an event maybe we could get them here.
  - Governor just met with Salazar about his task force and how it fits in.
    - Maybe when the Task Force has their first meeting – maybe that is a good time
    - If we can think of events we can get them to show up-it would be a political event
      - Maybe have someone in one of the counties do a BBQ
  - If anybody has any ideas let Bruce know.

## 10. Next meeting date

- May 23, 2012 – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – NRCS building
  - 9:00-10:30 – discuss Bi-State
  - 10:30-12:00 – discuss Greater
    - Corey Hunt to attend next meeting – Task Force Interface
- Proposed next agenda topics
  - Greater Community
  - Critical Habitat - Mapping
  - Action Plan