

Bi-State Sage-grouse Executive Meeting
August 17, 2012

Introductions

Reno: Randy Sharp – USFS
Bruce Petersen – NRCS
Ted Koch – USFWS
Todd Hopkins – GBLCC
Larry Gilbertson – NDOW
Lee Turner – NDOW
Bernadette Lovato – BLM – Bishop
Bruce Petersen – NRCS
Clint Koble – Farm Service Agency
Raul Morales – BLM – Reno
Tara Vogel – NRCS/NDOW

Phone: Lily Douglas – BLM CA
Scott Gardner – CDFG
Leann Murphy – USFS – Inyo National Forest
Ed Armenta – USFS – Inyo National Forest
Steve Schwarzbach - USGS
Jim Kenna – BLM CA
Stephanie Phillips - USFS

1. Introduction and Agenda Review – Randy Sharp

2. Approval of last meeting minutes – Randy Sharp

- Fourth bullet correction: USFWS working on process to identify Bishop Field Office RMP as an adequate regulatory mechanism.
- **Bernadette – Move to accept as amended.**
- **Raul – Second**
- **Motion passes.**

3. Submittal of Data to FWS – Raul Morales/Ted Koch

- BLM has completed the Instructional Memorandum (IM/ID).
 - Waiting for the verbiage from Pete Coates on the map.
 - Once the verbiage is received we will send the Bi-State IM back to Washington for their review. We will also send to Cory Hunt in the Governor's office to review.
 - Once received the local working group (LWG) will be contacted to let them know that the Bi-State Interim IM will be issued shortly after.
 - BLM is required to use the best available science in their NEPA documentation when processing projects.

- Carson City BLM office provided a letter to FWS about what they are doing with their current RMP and how the Interim IM is going to be used from this point forward. The compiled the monitoring data that they have been doing. The letter is ready to be sent – waiting for Amy’s signature.
- Forest Service – Humboldt-Toiyabe
 - Waiting for the National Interim Directive for the Greater Sage-grouse. Once that has gone through the internal review then we will hopefully do one for the Bi-State.
 - Greater sage-grouse Interim Directive is in the Washington office for review. It can either come out as a letter of direction or an Interim Directive. Not sure which way it is going to go.
 - Beginning to develop table of approved projects, how they related to the Forest Plan and how they provided for conservation of sage-grouse. Developing that historical track record of how we implemented the language in the Forest Plan for conservation of sage-grouse.
 - Humboldt-Toiyabe going to initiate their plan amendment for the Bi-State sage-grouse beginning issuing the notice of intent to prepare and EIS for a plan amendment around October 1, 2012. Want to have discussions with the BLM and Carson if they want to participate as a partner. Anticipate having a decision by December 2013.
- Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW)
 - Shawn was at the Conservation Team meeting in Salt Lake. He has a report prepared that tells about all of our projects that he has been working on. He has a couple changes to make on the lek work we did this spring.
- NRCS
 - Received drought money – about \$500,000. NRCS has added a couple hundred thousand of existing funds to that. There is about \$700,000 to put towards drought or fire rehab.
 - Range seedings, water development, some prescribed grazing with deferrals.
 - Land trust entities that are interested in holding easements. Working on getting match, which is required under some of NRCS programs.
 - California and Nevada have an agreement where the Minden office services parts of the Bi-State area (Alpine and Mono counties). Active on both sides of the border.

4. EOC Presentation to Bi-State LWG – Randy Sharp

- Meeting September 24, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. in Bridgeport, CA.
- EOC presentation on the agenda
 - Stephanie Phillips, Deputy Forest Supervisor Humboldt-Toiyabe will be there for presentation of the Humboldt-Toiyabe Plan Amendment process.
 - Ken Mayer and Ted Koch to attend.

- Draft letter to be signed by the EOC to send to the LWG – what the EOC group feels the working relationship is between the LWG and the EOC.
 - Will be completed in a couple of weeks for internal review.
 - Tara has the distribution list for the Bi-state local working group.
 - Need to do updates of projects for table – showing projects
 - If letter is prepared it can be sent out

5. Habitat Mapping – Pete Coates/Scott Gardner/Shawn Espinosa

- Reached agreement on a map – ask to bring to the EOC at the next meeting
- Will provide data, map and white paper on background of how it was developed before next meeting.

6. Information Sharing – All

- Nevada BLM – had a meeting with Nevada Partners (NPCD) and Utah Partners presentation – small group of NGO's, mining industry and others to talk about how to do a better job in Nevada leveraging our funds together collectively to address conservation issues. Utah has been in existence since 2006 and very successful. They do get state funding to help where the Nevada model does not at this point. We wanted people to see what Utah has been able to do through enhancing the partnerships, working locally, leveraging funds and strategically doing land restoration projects across the state. We are trying to outreach to a larger audience from mining to small local conservation groups, anyone who wants to participate in restoration development in Nevada is encouraged to participate. There was a lot of interest in galvanizing volunteer support to collect seed within the next month that we can use back on our landscapes due to the fires.
- California BLM – Last meeting talked about the increased efforts with the fire prevention control and what we were doing. This was put to the test. Had a lightning strike that resulted in a 12,500 acre fire east of Mono Lake. There is a small population both on the Inyo National Forest and on BLM. The fire escalated and went beyond our local Type 3 teams capabilities. We kicked the Fire Management strategies into place and called in a Type 2 team by the next afternoon because it had grown to 5,000 acres. We were in full suppression mode but when the Type 2 team came and transitioned we continued that. We were pleased with the kind of suppress we got out of it and we kept it as small as we could. As we briefed the team sage-grouse was our second priority only after firefighter safety. I think they learned a lot about sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat. The sage-grouse firefighter poster was used extensively as some of our outreach, not only in fire camp with the firefighters but it was posted in the local community. As I continued to meet with some of the local community I received positive feedback.
- Inyo – Pulling information together for the letter. Gone through the budget process for Fiscal Year 13. Have a couples sage-grouse habitat improvement projects. We are on track with projects listed in the Action Plan.

- Humboldt Toiyabe – Implementing projects, compiling data for submission to Fish and Wildlife Service and beginning to initiate the Plan Amendment Process.
- USGS – Map has been accepted as the preliminary priority habitat map for the BLM Instructional Memorandum. Continuing research in the Pine Nut Mountains – 10 GPS transmitters on sage-grouse. We are looking at their seasonal habitat use and trying to come up with demographic rates. Trying to initiate work in the Mt. Grant PMU south of the Pine Nut Mountains in Nevada. It is an area where there is an information gap and we are seeking to get data on movement patterns, habitat use and demographic rates.
- NDOW – Trying to continue to grow the Partner's program and incorporate some NGO's. Working with Pete Anderson from NDF to try to identify sources for sagebrush seed.

7. Wrap-up, Assignments, Next Meeting – Randy Sharp

- Next meeting September 25, 2012