

Bi-State Sage-grouse
Executive Oversight Committee Meeting
May 23, 2012
BLM office

Introductions

Reno: Steve Siegel – NDOW
Randy Sharp – USFS
Bruce Petersen – NRCS
Selena Werdon – USFWS
Ted Koch – USFWS
Jeanne Higgins – USFS
Ken Mayer – NDOW
Bernadette Lovato – BLM Bishop
Steve Nelson – BLM Bishop
Stephanie Phillips – Humboldt-Toiyabe NF
Sandra Brewer – BLM NSO
Steve Abele – USFWS
Bruce Petersen – NRCS
Linda Kelly – Great Basin LLC
Raul Morales – BLM NSO
Cory Hunt – NV Office of Governor

Phone: Lily Douglas – BLM CA
Eric Loft – CDFG
Leanne Murphy – Inyo NF
Steve Schwarzbach – USGS CA
Scott Gardner CDFG

Bi- State Sage-Grouse

Introduction and Agenda Review – Randy Sharp

Added Agenda Item

- Observation on Nevada Partners for Conservation Development (NPCD) – Ted Koch

Approval of last meeting minutes – Steve Siegel

- Comments not received on any of the minutes.
- Once minutes are approved they will be posted to the NDOW website.
- April minutes not approved pending further review.

Results of NDOW lek survey – Ken Mayer

- Hired Craig Mortimore for lek surveys.
 - Developed a 3 volume report.

- Combination of CDFG, NDOW and private sector money.

Agency Updates – What are agencies doing (considering) for conservation of Bi-State Sage-Grouse

- Inyo NF – Leanne Murphy – participated in lek surveys, able to get the \$5,000 to USGS.
- BLM CA – Bernadette Lovato - Surveys with Partners, annual lek census in Long Valley and Bodie with strong numbers, assisted with helicopter over flights, when new locations were found got out on foot to check sites, found as a result of that effort a few new leks in California in places that were suspected and some confirmation of old sites, designated the Bi-State DPS as a separate sensitive species entity – separate from rangewide, working with Shawn to get radios on birds in Grant PMU, Central CA District RAC meeting – overview of sage-grouse conservation in the Bodie Hills with the 12 citizen group, asking them to form a subcommittee to help with the Bodie Restoration Habitat project – getting the public outreach, completed fire refreshers and additional targeted sage-grouse presentations for fire staff.
- CDFG – Scott Gardner – High numbers of birds counted this year – pulling data together, working to complete State map for priority habitat by July 1.
- USGS – Steve Schwarzbach – Working on telemetry study in Pine Nut Mtns, Pete's maps good job of identifying sage-grouse habitat in the Pine Nut Mtns., successful in getting additional resources dedicated for Pete's participating as a conservation planning tool, coordinating with BLM & NDOW on Mt. Grant telemetry study, analyzing existing telemetry data sets from both agencies, working on additional proposals for sage-grouse related studies and the conservation planning tool.
- NDOW – Ken Mayer – Shawn Espinosa serving on COT Team, map based-Idaho, Utah & California are not complete-asked for additional time, deadline August 1 or 30 days post receipt of outstanding maps, Asked to redo the Doherty map, Gave Doherty all data up to 2007-didn't have 2008-2011-applying Doherty model to complete data set, overlay Doherty at 65%, 75% and 85% overlay onto habitat categorization map so the committee can look at the categorization and see how much habitat it does take up,
- NDOW- Steve Siegel- Action Plan not signed by two agencies – Ed Burton CaNRCS & Steve Schwarzbach – USGS not signing, agency doesn't sign management plans, NEPA or etc., provide technical advice only not policy maker.
- NRCS – Met with BLM in Carson City talking about ongoing work to get clearances to work on PJ removal-in contact with the permit allotment holders, received email about sage-grouse stewardship with Heller's staff.
- BLM NV – Raul Morales – No updates on Carson.
- Humboldt – Toiyabe – Jeanne Higgins – Process for securing funding for Forest Plan Amendment process for Bi-State sage grouse is beginning. Discussions with Inyo NF. They could do an amendment as a first phase in the revision to incorporate sage-grouse.
- FWS – Ted Koch – Money to NDOW for USGS, talking with Nevada Mining Association and they brought up the idea of conservation banking, try to keep discussions going in hope that we get the support to work on these kinds of

products, talked to Elko County Advisory Board and Resource Management Committee.

- Short description of Conservation Objective Team (COT)-what it is and how it dovetails into what we are doing
 - The Secretary (of Interior) has asked to put together a group to answer the question of How much is enough to not have to list – we have said listing is warranted what does it take to make it not warranted. If they end up listed what does it take to recover and delist them? There are 10 representatives for states across the west and a handful of Service people.

Old Business – Randy Sharp and Steve Siegel

IM/ID- ALL

- IM may not be considered a regulatory mechanism (by USFWS) so that made CA BLM think that maybe they didn't need to sign it and so the document is sitting on hold until we learn whether or not CA BLM wants to be on it or not. Waiting for clarification on what CA BLM wants to do.
 - If CA BLM in then IM should come out of the State office.
 - If CA BLM out, take what we have in the IM and ship to Carson and they can write their own District IM.
 - CA BLM RMP – Adequate, so an IM would not be necessary
 - Wyoming & Oregon (slightly different) FWS wrote a letter concurring with the Plan stating plan is good – From California perspective would like to have that type of letter stating the RMP is good.
- BLM to tradesend letter to with FWS asking if Plan is adequate and then outline what has been done and what will be done.
- There may be some thought that Region will be developing own ID for Forest Service rather than waiting for a National ID.

MOU

- Signed by all parties.

Agreement with USGS

- Humboldt-Toiyabe NF has sent a draft Service First agreement to BLM for money to USGS
 - Seeing that Inyo has already transferred – internal paperwork necessary – Humboldt – Toiyabe should be coming shortly.

Prioritization and funding of Projects for FY12/13 – Steve Siegel

- Get Agencies and Public together to prioritize actions from Action Plan that we could pool our financial resources/apply money to
 - 15 people in attendance including a couple members from the local working group, strategy working team and the technical working team – followed up with a phone call

- Product was an identification of broad categories of areas (with specific actions listed) where pooled money should be used
- EOC needs to determine which items on the list will be funded and where the funding will come from.
- EOC agreed that the Action Plan is the direction we should be moving – strategies are sound – Long Term Plan
 - Items within the Action Plan that aren't identified:
 - – due to not seen as a mechanism for pooling financial resources (handled by individual agencies)
 - Items of regulatory nature or specific to one agency weren't considered
 - Items were considered that may have been located in a jurisdiction which showed a benefit to the PMU and a benefit to the Bi-state population as a whole.
- Categories – Conservation Easements, Science Advisor, Imagery, Pinyon Juniper Removal, Telemetry Studies
 - Helps tell the story better – do work on the ground to make the most impact for sage-grouse – Conservation Easements, PJ Removal or Fire Potential
 - Categories are not in a prioritized order but items within each category are prioritized.
 - Categories respond directly to the Risks identified in the 2010 evaluation
 - Agencies are doing work in addition to this project list – these are projects for pooled resources – can benefit from cross jurisdictional funding or personnel support
 - Objective – Adequately conserve sage-grouse to preclude the need to list.
 - The FWS has already said listing is warranted –
 - Removing threats on the ground makes it understandable why listing is no longer warranted.
 - Each land management agency has a running list of projects in the Action Plan where they are the lead agency.

Discussion of the importance of Risk Modeling for identification of priority conservation actions. – EOC members

- FWS very interested in modeling tools that TNC and USGS has talked to about
 - It will better help us tell our story.

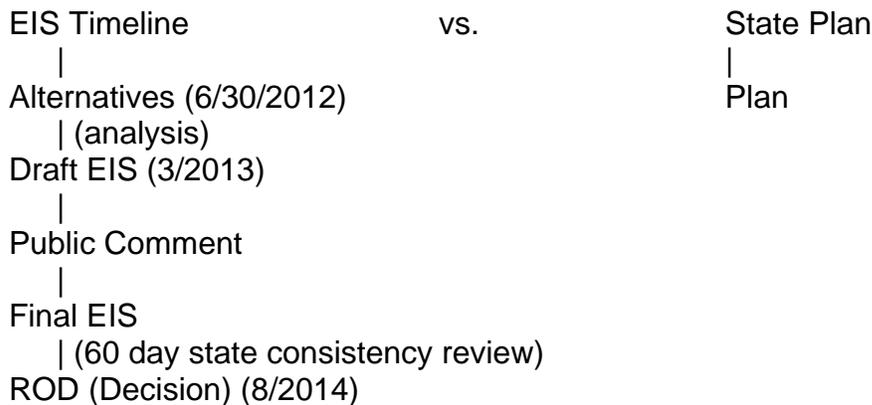
Greater Sage-Grouse

Governor's Strategy – Cory Hunt

- Information found on website (Sagegrouse.nv.gov)
- Greater Sage-grouse advisory committee – first meeting 5/15/12 – comprised of 9 members from local government and general public
 - Produced request to update mapping to overlay the Doherty layer with the most recent information along with habitat categorization maps

- Looking at fire, mineral and energy layers – looking at where habitat is in relation to the various industries in areas of importance
- Focused on policy and recommendations to the Governor that they believe are sufficient to preclude the need to list the bird.
- Bob Budd from Wyoming who led their effort – helping to facilitate each of the meetings – will look something like the Wyoming Plan but recognize it is not going to be exactly the same & the committee is not bound to it.
- Recommendations will be delivered to the Governor by July 31st – state agencies will review those recommendations and propose a full state plan thereafter.

• **Raul Morales & Jeanne Higgins Present Tentative EIS Timeline**



- Idaho and Utah planning to have their State Plans done by the end of June in the Alternative Phase – then published
 - Preferred Alternative usually identified – should be what comes out of COT
- Governor’s Advisory Committee ceases to exist on July 31, 2012.
 - Want them to make a recommendation of what the stakeholders feels is appropriate as far as long term management of sage-grouse efforts in the state.
 - EOC will continue on Bi-State as and discuss Greater

Update on Congressman Amodei’s Request – Ken Mayer

- Lee Turner took the lead on development of white paper
 - Lee is reworking the draft of five questions.
 - Identify issues and key components of concern.
 - Talked to Amodei’s staff regarding deadline.
 - Give to Amodei’s staff for review in almost final draft then send to Partners that had input for review.

Wrap up, Assignments, Next Meeting – Randy Sharp/Steve Siegel

- Next meeting – June 15, 2012 – 9:30-12:00 – NRCS office
- Actions/allocation of resources

- Public involvement
- Agency updates to Randy Sharp to go out with agenda
- Greater Sage-grouse