

**Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group
SAGE GROUSE POD MEETING
Minutes for January 10th, 2006 Wednesday
Elko BLM Field Office, 5:30-7:00 PM**

In Attendance: Dwayne Winslow, Wendy Fuell, Gary Back, Doug Clarke, Ken Wilkinson, Bill Morrill, Kent McAdoo, Ken Gray, Leta Collord, Debra Howes

NOVEMBER MINUTES

Leta briefly reviewed the November minutes. Ken clarified information about fuels management /ESR projects on the Winter's Range. Kent moved to accept the amended minutes. The consensus was to approve the November minutes.

INTRODUCTIONS

Leta introduced Bill Morrill visiting from SRK in Reno.

KEN GRAY-PRESENTATION

Ken updated the group on PMU planning. He has seen a loss of momentum, as the Sage Grouse listing is not eminent. Gary stated that at the St. Louis grazing lands conference an update of the regional plan was presented with a focus on local working groups. There was also discussion of the affect of energy development (ie. Wyoming) and West Nile on the Sage Grouse habitat and populations.

Ken reported that the fires have kept them busy with reseeding etc., but he has also been organizing and updating long term lek lists back to the 1940s. He plans to develop a historic database with accurate information. The group also discussed radio collaring of birds in the Rock Creek drainage, BLM funding for helicopter flights, and land purchases/acquisitions. Ken also stated that NDOW will be hiring a full time wild life vet next year.

The group then discussed how the lack of PMU planning may impact long-term grants. It was suggested to continue with a focus on watershed planning and implementation. Gary reported that a sage grouse funding initiative/conservation initiative with funding from congress for ecosystem management/implementation may be coming in the near future. The group discussed how a lack of time and people was often a problem and the possibility of contracting out the work was suggested. The challenge of coordinating private and public agencies/managing partnerships continues to be a struggle.

Q-1 UPDATE

Leta reported that the funding agreement was close to approval. A search committee would then need to be developed and the position advertised.

GARY BACK-PRESENTATION

Leta introduced Gary Back and thanked him for the report he had compiled for the GLCI project. Gary recently completed a project for the South Central Working Group covering the Battle Mountain and Fish Creek PMUs. He had been contracted to provide

an assessment based on R values, upland/riparian habitat, predation, human activities, and livestock grazing. He reported the current conditions were due to plant community dynamics, livestock induced changes and fire ecology. The key concepts Gary detailed were 1) changes in grazing keyed to changes in vegetation 2) use movement to affect deferment and 3) use vegetation treatment to affect movement. The solution would involve management of vegetation treatments and grazing.

2007 PLANNING

The group discussed the possibility of co-hosting a meeting/tour with the “SAGESTEP” The Sagebrush Steppe Treatment Evaluation Project group possibly during the first half of May. Doug volunteered to coordinate with the “SAGESTEP” group. Doug also reported that Kim Rawlings with the “SAGESTEP” group was looking for a county in Nevada to participate in a proposed project looking at large scale modeling for cost benefit analysis of fuels treatments.

Submitted: Debra Howes, Administrative Assistant