

Sage Grouse Pod, December 17, 2009

Attending the meeting were Wendy Fuell, BLM; Donna Jewell, BLM, Ken Wilkinson, BLM; Chris Jasmine, USFWS; Derrick Holdstock, BLM; Kent McAdoo, Coopt. Extension; Leta Collord, NNSG

The purpose of the meeting was stated. NNSG is applying for a final Question 1 Habitat Conservation Plan grant and was requesting the Pod's help in making a "best" selection. The members of the Pod had been sent the matrix information from the Strategy developed in 2004. Changes have taken place in many of the PMU's since that time - mainly related to extreme fire - but the matrix information gave some basic info to study.

There were four PMU's that the group sensed would make best candidates for discussion: South Fork, Ruby Valley, O'Neil and Gollaher.

Points of discussion were:

- The Stewardship Group would like to select a PMU that has an active Conservation District to work with
- Consideration of fire activity since 2006 was of significance and could change the R Values (R Values relate to vegetation condition)
- Risks to the bird are different than changes in the R Values. (risks would be man-made structures, fragmentation, etc.)
- Gollaher PMU is involved in several planning processes that could make it difficult to be successful in
- South Fork would offer the potential for some PJ ecology; has F.S. and BLM, and has an active Conservation District; has a great deal of private land
- Ruby Valley PMU has F.S. and BLM; an active Conservation District, with new members in the mix; no clear information on the bird
- O'Neil PMU has an active Conservation District; has a history of having higher bird counts; has several newer energy related projects going through it
- All in all, it is difficult to make a clear "best" selection. Unfortunately, we can't do all of them.

Following much discussion the group decided on the O'Neil PMU for the next Q-1 grant. BLM will provide some basic information with which the initial proposal will be submitted. A fuller detailed proposal is due later in the spring of 2010. (I have attached the Project Scope that NNSG used to select the contractor for the North Fork PMU assessment)

Submitted: Leta Collord