

Participants:

Jessie Gonzales  
Heather Johnson

Pat Deibert  
Jesse D'Elia

Jeff Dillon  
Jeff Berglund

Rich Szlemp

1. BLM (again)
  - a. Schedule – Rocky Mountain side has most of their plans either ready for release or on the street already. Two in WY and a few in MT are still remaining. Great Basin is working to get the plans out by September
  - b. Our role once draft is released – this is where the hard work really begins. BLM expects us to provide feedback on the efficacy of the alternatives to conserve sage-grouse, and to assist in identifying different combinations of proposed decisions from the range of alternatives
    - i. Table used in NW CO plan to summarize sage-grouse analyses is now on sharepoint – feel free to use, or use as a reference.
  - c. Table of BLM and state planning process developed at Boise is now on sharepoint site – please update
  - d. Travel Management – priorities were provided to BLM, we reviewed a revision from them (which did not change our priorities) but we are unsure of what progress has been made since.
2. State Planning efforts:
  - a. Need to be sensitive to local conditions and atmosphere on how hard we should be “pushing” states to implement a regulatory mechanism in their conservation efforts.
  - b. Issue of “concurrence” of state plans will be discussed with the Task Force on a conference call on May 17
3. Reviewing and cataloging conservation efforts: Phone call on Monday to begin a more in depth discussion on how to capture conservation efforts and evaluate them for our listing determination.
4. Mitigation Team summary is posted on the sharepoint site, under Mitigation.
5. New literature – Knick et al. paper suggests a 3% cap on disturbance before there is a sage-grouse response; new cheatgrass paper suggests that in relatively healthy bunchgrass systems grazing may not be the best tool to control cheatgrass. Papers will be posted on sharepoint.
6. State reports on GSG lek counts and regional subpopulation status
  - a. OR – western edge of range similar to last year, eastern part is 40% decline so average is probably a 30 to 40% statewide; decline of 75% on Hart Mountain
  - b. WY – lowest count ever recorded due to prolonged drought affecting productivity and birds being at the low point of their cycle
  - c. ND – 30% decline from last year; birds likely never recovered from WNV outbreak several years ago.
7. Boise Meeting – will request a session to allow biologists working on BLM revisions a chance to compare notes and discuss lessons learned and how to move forward.
8. Round the lek.
  - MT - Jeff – reviewing the BLM EISs that are out (3); next week the state planning effort is beginning – revised conservation plan hopeful by next January (2014).
  - OR – Jeff – BLM is preparing the effects analyses; Oregon Cattleman’s CCAA signing date tentatively May 30; BLM struggling with monitoring techniques – could be HAF but not confirmed

- WA – Jessie – working with state to update state plan; finished translocation efforts in central WA – 30 birds from OR; BLM draft has been delayed until fall, with public release in 2014.
  - WY -
  - Partners (R6) – Heather - working on new projects – secured funding for SWAT positions in MT, UT and WY – still working on getting some for CO
  - OR SGI is not fully engaging with FWS.
  - Bi-State – Review of SSA and listing rule begins next week, with final determination to be completed in June
9. Hiring of BLM and Energy positions:
- a. R1 is not hiring any new positions but re-allocating internally:
    - i. Jason Pyron for BLM and Energy in ID
    - ii. Oregon – Doug Young energy – Jeff Dillon for BLM, and a handful of other folks
  - b. R8 and R6 hiring new folks for their BLM and Energy positions and that hasn't happened yet.