

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS22778

Sage grouse were historically abundant across the West. However, because of diminishing sagebrush habitat due to invasive weeds, fire, development, agricultural expansion, and other factors, the species has been deemed warranted for listing under the Endangered Species Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is currently reviewing two "co-preferred" alternatives for sage grouse management. This bill includes \$50,000 in General Fund appropriation to the Office of Species Conservation to contract with the Department of Fish and Game to monitor additional leks (courtship areas) this spring. The additional funding will focus on the 78 lek routes identified in the Governor's sage grouse conservation alternative and the survey of over 400 of the 1,000 leks that haven't been surveyed in the last five years.

FISCAL NOTE

The bill appropriates \$50,000 from the General Fund to the Office of Species Conservation, one-time. The bill then appropriates the spending authority for that same \$50,000 to the Department of Fish and Game to do the lek monitoring. Funding is included for temporary employees, travel costs, volunteer travel reimbursement, aerial surveys, ATV rental, and global positioning system (GPS) unit costs.

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