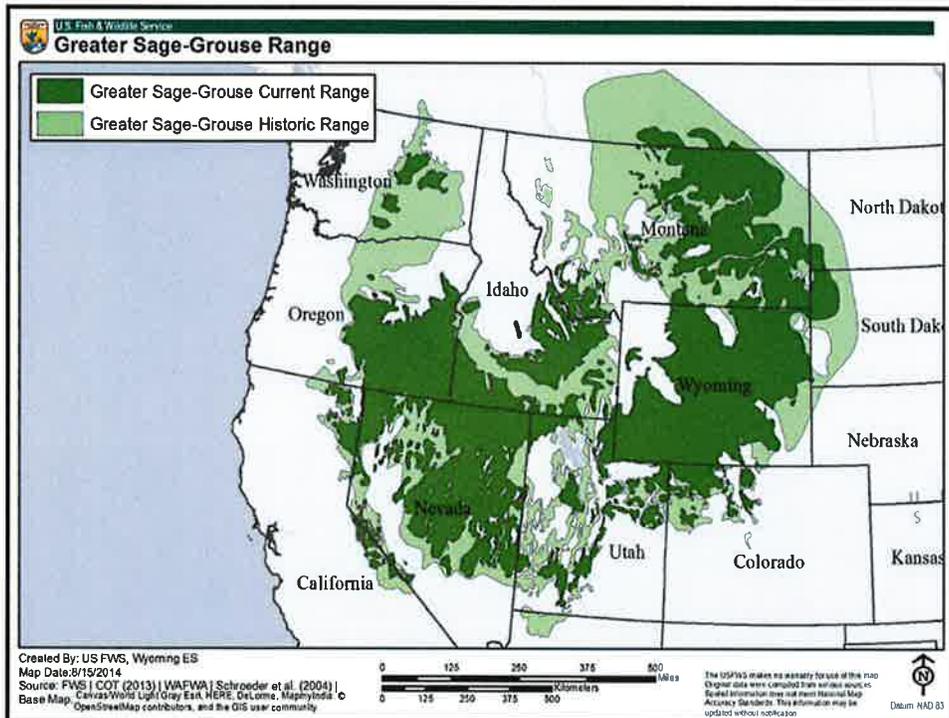


Attachment 1
3/16/15

3/16/2015

Status of Idaho Sage-Grouse Conservation Planning Efforts

Dustin Miller - Idaho Office of Species Conservation
March 16, 2014



History

- Greater sage-grouse has a long history of listing petitions, federal actions, and litigation.
- FWS March 2010- species warranted for listing across its entire range, but precluded because of other higher priorities.
- Added to the federal list of “candidate” species.
- The FWS must reevaluate the status of greater sage-grouse by September 30, 2015.

Rangewide Threats to Greater Sage-Grouse Identified by the FWS

1. Habitat Fragmentation due to:
 - Infrastructure/ energy development
 - Wildfire/ Invasive species (i.e. cheatgrass)
2. Inadequate regulatory mechanisms

Deficiencies with nearly 100 Federal Resource Management Plans.

FWS identified multiple secondary threats- many of them localized.

The Federal Planning Effort

- National Sage-grouse Planning Strategy - 2011
- Secretary of the Interior's invitation to western Governor's to participate in planning effort.
- Update RMPs across 11 states.
- Governor Otter establishes a sage-grouse task force – 2012
- Governor's plan (alternative) for federal lands developed.

Governor's Alternative

- Sage-grouse management area (4 conservation areas) with three distinct habitat zones: core, important and general.
- Management continuum with flexibility increasing as you go from "Core" to "General" habitat.
- Robust adaptive management process.
- Primary threats addressed: wildfire, invasive species, and large-scale infrastructure.
- FWS "concurrence" on foundational elements of Alternative- April 2013
- Designated by BLM as a "Co-preferred" Alternative- October 2013

Wildfire Actions

- Prevention, suppression and restoration efforts within the Governor's Alternative.
- Rangeland Fire Protection Associations .
- Secretarial Order on Wildfire.
- Idaho BLM- juniper removal and fuel breaks projects.

Timeline

- BLM and OSC/ IDFG are working on the proposed final EIS for federal lands in Idaho.
- Currently working through remaining issues with the Department of the Interior
- Final EIS out later spring 2015.
- Record of decision (ROD) signed in summer 2015.
- Listing determination by FWS September 2015.

Complimentary Conservation Efforts

- NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative.
- Plan for conservation on state endowment lands.
- State funding commitments.

Questions?



Attachment 2
3/16/15

Raven Management Update
March 16, 2015

2013 Legislative Intent directed the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) to control ravens and study the impacts on sage-grouse.

IDFG has received a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to remove common ravens at 3 study sites (see map) in southern Idaho.

U. S. Wildlife Services' Environment Assessment (EA) is under litigation. Wildlife Services is not available to conduct raven control under contract with the Department to benefit sage-grouse.

In 2014, the Department removed 69 eggs and shot 12 ravens.

In 2015, three Department employees were certified to use DRC-1339.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance allowing DRC-1339 to be used on federal lands has not been finished. The Department cannot use DRC-1339 on federal lands. Most of Zone 8B is federal lands. The Department will not use DRC-1339 in Zone 8B this spring.

Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) has given the Department permission to use DRC-1339 on IDL lands. The Department must get IDL permittee permission to use DRC-1339 on their IDL permitted lands.

The Department has permission to work on approximately 16,340 private acres in the Curlew area. This is 56% of the Curlew private acres where we propose to conduct raven control this spring.

The Department has permission to work on approximately 42,419 acres in the West Central area. This is 80% of the West Central private acres where we propose to conduct raven control this spring.

Staff is asking other landowners for permission to operate on their lands in the Curlew and West Central.

Department employees are surveying for ravens on the above mentioned lands. We will start the egg baiting process (per pesticide label) on lands where ravens are found.

We will also be removing raven nests and eggs. We will shoot ravens opportunistically while conducting other activities.

The Department is surveying all lands near sage-grouse lek routes for ravens and structures that may support ravens. This information will be used to determine raven densities along sage-grouse lek routes across southern Idaho. The Department will work with landowners to modify or remove structures (e.g. Russian Olives) that are supporting ravens.

