

Special Report to the Western Governors

December 2012



Inventory of State and Local Governments' Conservation Initiatives for Sage-Grouse

2012 Update



WESTERN
GOVERNORS'
ASSOCIATION

**Special Report to the Western Governors:
Inventory of State and Local Governments' Conservation Initiatives for Sage-Grouse**

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Executive Summary

The greater sage-grouse, a bird species listed as “warranted but precluded” on the Federal Endangered Species List, is found throughout the interior West. Eleven of the Western Governors’ Association’s (WGA) 19 member states provide habitat to the sage-grouse – habitat that often intersects with lands ideal for energy development and rangeland agriculture. If the sage-grouse is fully listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the economic impacts to states and communities that have sage-grouse habitat could be severe.

Western states have been coordinating on sage-grouse conservation for decades. In WGA policy resolution 11-9, the Western Governors directed WGA staff and the Western Governors’ Wildlife Council (WGWC) to inventory state and local actions that conserve sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat. WGA and the WGWC partnered with the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) to develop this report for the Governors in December, 2011.

Since that time, the Western Governors and Secretary Salazar have formed a State-Federal Sage-Grouse Task Force (SGTF) to identify and implement high priority conservation actions, and to integrate ongoing actions necessary to preclude the need for the sage-grouse to be listed under ESA in 2015. The SGTF has requested that WGA staff update this report on an annual basis as a resource for the public, as well as for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) as they conduct their annual review of the species.

In order to maximize awareness of possible conservation mechanisms, this inventory includes information pertinent to the Gunnison sage-grouse, as well as the Bi-State and Washington State populations of greater sage-grouse. The report shows that state and local governments are engaged in a range of activities to conserve sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat. The states have set forth a variety of protections for the sage-grouse, including local working groups, conservation plans, executive orders and agency guidance. County governments have also pursued conservation mechanisms, most often working in partnership with state and federal governments through Local Working Groups.

This inventory report provides a catalogue of management approaches implemented by state and local authorities, as well as by local partnerships committed to on-the-ground action to conserve sage-grouse and their habitat. The WGWC recommends that state and local governments and their partners review the elements included in this inventory, and give strong consideration to the initiatives recorded here when strengthening their own sage-grouse conservation efforts.

The Sage-Grouse and the Western States

Introduction

The sage-grouse is known as a “landscape-scale bird” because it needs large expanses of land to provide habitat components for the stages of its lifecycle. Sagebrush, key habitat for the species, is found throughout the interior West in 11 of WGA’s 19 member states. But today, evidence shows sage-grouse now occupy just 56% of their historic range.ⁱ In order to increase awareness of possible conservation measures, this inventory includes information pertinent to the Gunnison sage-grouse, as well as the Bi-State and Washington State populations of greater sage-grouse.

In 2010, the FWS listed the greater sage-grouse as “warranted but precluded” under the Endangered Species Act, meaning that the species deserves federal protections but that the FWS does not currently have the resources to support those measures. The regional economic impacts of placing sage-grouse on the endangered species list could be severe, since much of the West’s grazing rangeland and energy resources overlap with sage-grouse habitat.

Western states, through the WGA and WAFWA, have worked for decades to collaboratively address challenges to sage-grouse and their habitat. Partnerships established through local working

groups have been successful because of a shared commitment to maintaining adequate population numbers in the face of significant pressures on the species and its habitat. Local working groups are broad partnerships between state, local, and federal governments along with private landowners and other stakeholders. These groups identify local issues and concerns for sage-grouse, prioritize local practices and projects, and implement action items in a manner that will help ensure success.

With the passage of policy resolution 11-09, the Western Governors demonstrated support for all reasonable management efforts necessary to avoid a threatened or endangered listing of the species. This report inventories state and local conservation actions underway that strive to make a threatened or endangered listing of the sage-grouse unnecessary.

Background

The sage-grouse is an important member of the sagebrush ecosystem found throughout the West, home to multiple species of concern. Sage-grouse habitat covers more than 57 million acres in 11 states. Federal agencies manage nearly two-thirds of the sagebrush habitat, private landholders own approximately 31% of the habitat, and state agencies manage 5% of the overall sage-grouse habitat. The efforts to conserve sage-grouse at a state, regional and federal level date back several decades.

The western states have a long history of working together on sage-grouse conservation. Local working groups (LWGs) are one of the most enduring mechanisms in place; these partnerships engage stakeholders to actively pursue conservation measures to support the sage-grouse. WAFWA reported in their Comprehensive Conservation Strategyⁱⁱ that conservation actions planned or being implemented by LWGs number in



the hundreds, however, conservation actions are dynamic and precise tallies are difficult to obtain.

The greater sage-grouse was first petitioned for ESA listing in 1999. In 2000, western state wildlife agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the FWS, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U. S. Forest Service (USFS) to work on conservation efforts relative to the sagebrush ecosystem for a wide variety of species. Through WGA, Western Governors created two reports in 2004 demonstrating the state and local actions that protect the species.ⁱⁱⁱ The FWS determined that the greater sage-grouse did not warrant listing in 2005, but that decision was challenged in court, and a federal judge's ruling in 2007 remanded it to the agency for reconsideration. To inform this new finding, Western Governors and their respective state fish and wildlife agencies submitted to the FWS significant data and success stories on sage-grouse recovery efforts. In addition, the Western states through WAFWA, along with the FWS, BLM, the USFS and U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), published a conservation template for sage-grouse in 2006. This document was adopted by WAFWA directors and endorsed by the FWS.^{iv}

In March 2010, the FWS found that the greater sage-grouse warranted protection under the provisions of ESA, but the species was precluded because of higher listing priorities. The primary threats driving this decision were listed as habitat loss, habitat fragmentation caused by energy development, invasive species and wildfire, agricultural use, and inadequate regulatory mechanisms. The FWS will revisit the listing decision in 2015 as announced through a 2011 settlement in federal district court. Since the 2010 decision, state agencies have continued to focus significant efforts and resources on sage-grouse and sagebrush management.

Federal agencies – which manage the vast majority of sage-grouse habitat – have also made progress in sage-grouse conservation efforts since the

“warranted, but precluded” listing decision. BLM first published a “National Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy” in 2004 and revised that with supplemental guidance in 2010. Significantly, BLM announced in 2011 that they are working to revise all of their relevant Resource Management Plans (RMPs) to address sage-grouse conservation on BLM lands in advance of a 2015 listing decision.

In 2012, the USFS joined the BLM on preparing five Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) with the purpose to amend as many as 20 Forest Plans to include measures to conserve sage-grouse habitat. The Forest Service has also published interim guidance to conserve sage-grouse on those forests with significant sage-grouse habitat. States are actively working to engage in these regulatory processes.

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of the Interior signed an agreement to work together to conserve sage-grouse habitat. The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Sage-Grouse Initiative helps private landowners apply conservation measures on their own property, helping protect sage-grouse on lands outside the management of state or federal agencies. NRCS committed over \$110 million in FY 2010-11 for sage-grouse conservation.^v

In August of 2012, the FWS released a draft report designed to help guide the efforts of the states and other partners to conserve the greater sage-grouse. The strategy outlined in the report is to identify priority areas for conservation of the species across its range, and general threats that should be addressed within each area. The draft report is a collaborative state and federal effort to identify range-wide species conservation objectives before FWS makes their listing determination in 2015.

The Sage-Grouse Task Force: New Developments in 2012

Governors Matt Mead (WY) and John Hickenlooper (CO) are co-leading a State-Federal Sage-Grouse Task Force (SGTF) with BLM Acting Director Mike Pool to identify and implement high priority conservation actions, and to integrate ongoing actions necessary to preclude the need for the sage-grouse to be listed under the Endangered Species Act in 2015. The group includes designees from the 11 western states with sage-grouse habitat, as well as representatives from BLM, USFWS, NRCS and USFS.

The Sage-Grouse Task Force was formed shortly after a December 2011 meeting co-hosted by Governor Mead and Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar to discuss range-wide sage-grouse conservation efforts among the eleven sage-grouse states and four federal agencies.

The Task Force has met four times in 2012. On June 29, 2012, the group transmitted a brief report to Secretary Salazar and the Western Governors that outlines a consensus process for delivering range-wide conservation measures. These actions were deemed necessary by the Task Force to ensure the sage-grouse does not warrant listing under the ESA in 2015.

The Inventory

Methods

WGA staff distributed a one-page survey to states, cities and counties via e-mail. This survey asked respondents to list any policies or conservation measures that the entity uses to conserve sage-grouse and sagebrush habitat. The survey asked for the name of the policy or conservation measure, the type of action, the phase of implementation, and a description of the action. Additional questions were asked for reference, validation and duplication. The survey requested the conservation measure or action be categorized as a policy, executive order, rule, regulation, statute, conservation plan, initiative or a local working group.

Staff used contacts at the state Governors' offices to disseminate the survey to the appropriate state agencies. Municipal and county contacts were made with the assistance of the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties, respectively. At the initial deadline, WGA tallied five responses from 163 counties (2% response

rate) with sage-grouse resources. To increase response rates, 20 counties were randomly selected for direct follow up from the 158 non-respondents. WGA also questioned two counties that staff believed to have current sage-grouse or sagebrush conservation measures or initiatives.

The low response rate from counties could be the result of poor distribution of the survey, a lack of clarity for how to respond, or no activities underway in that particular county. No cities or municipalities responded to the questionnaire, and no further solicitation of comments was made.

For the 2012 update, states reviewed the information submitted for the 2011 survey and added new or previously overlooked initiatives to the document. At the direction of the SGTF, two new survey questions were added regarding "Achieved and/or Expected Outcomes" and "Status of Implementation."

Data Analysis

WGA and WAFWA distributed the survey used for this inventory to 11 states and 163 counties that have occupied sage-grouse habitat. All 11 states responded to our survey. A total of 17 counties were successfully contacted, but only eight reported that they had county-level sage-grouse regulations, initiatives or conservation measures in place. A summary of responses can be found in the appendix.

The inventory includes the following categories of conservation measures:

Local Working Groups

Working groups are a popular and prevalent means of conservation that utilizes teamwork between government and stakeholders for conservation action. Eight of the reporting states identified local working groups (LWGs) in their respective states. All LWGs reported having conservation plans in place and conducting conservation efforts

Initiatives

Eight states and two counties responded that they had initiatives to protect or enhance sage-grouse populations or sagebrush habitat. Gunnison County in Colorado has a 1% sales tax that funds the purchase of conservation easements, while San Miguel County in Colorado has a conservation easement initiative that appeals directly to landowners to participate in conservation easements.

Through the Montana Sagebrush Initiative, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks holds approximately 200,000 acres of 30-year leases to protect sagebrush grassland habitats from conversion or fragmentation. Initiatives in Wyoming include a landscape conservation initiative, a statewide sage-grouse seasonal habitat map, and a statewide sagebrush map.

Governors in Idaho, Nevada and Utah convened state task forces to recommend actions necessary to conserve sage-grouse. These recommendations are being implemented through various initiatives, conservation plans, executive orders and regulations.

Conservation Plans

All states reported having conservation plans for sage-grouse. Most plans have been in existence for a number of years and several states reported that they were in various phases of plan revisions.

Six of the 17 reporting counties cited local level sage-grouse conservation plans. Five of the plans were from Utah as part of the local working group process. Gunnison County in Colorado also has a conservation plan designed specifically for the Gunnison sage-grouse. The plan, “Gunnison County Strategic Plan: 2008, 2009, 2011,” provides for an inventory of areas for habitat protection, agricultural production, and industrial, commercial and residential developments. The inventory was completed in 2012 and will be appropriated in 2013.

Executive Orders

Wyoming’s Governor Mead issued an Executive Order (EO) in 2011 which reiterated and clarified the intent of Wyoming’s Core Area Strategy, originally developed under former Governor Dave Freudenthal. Applications to the state for energy, water rights, and public utility permits must be determined to be in compliance with the EO if the new permit could affect sage-grouse habitat. Additionally, an online Density Disturbance Calculation Tool is now available to assess project compliance with the EO.

In 2012, Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter issued Executive Order #2012:02 establishing the Governor’s Sage-Grouse Task Force. A 15-member citizen task force provided the Governor with recommendations on policies and actions as the foundation for developing a state-wide regulatory mechanism to preclude the need to list the greater sage-grouse.



Resolutions

In 2011, the Nevada General Assembly passed Concurrent Resolution No. 3. The resolution urges state agencies and local governments involved in conservation activities for the greater sage-grouse to work proactively for the protection and restoration of the species' population and habitat, and to mitigate any future damage to that habitat and population in Nevada. Further, the members of the Nevada legislature recognized the need for acquiring and maintaining sources of funding to assist in the efforts to protect and restore habitat and population.

Additionally, the Wyoming General Assembly passed a resolution in 2009 in support of the Governor's EO on Wyoming's Core Area Strategy.

Statutes

All states cited statutes that protect, manage or conserve sage-grouse within their wildlife agencies. Washington cited provisions of their threatened and endangered statutes that are unique because of the candidate status of Washington's sage-grouse population. The Wyoming legislature has appropriated funds for sage-grouse conservation activities; \$1.5 million in 2005-2007; \$2.83 million in 2008; and \$1.8 million in 2010.

Regulations

Four states and three counties reported having regulations in effect for sage-grouse. The states – California, South Dakota, Idaho and Montana – cited special hunting season rules or recommendations. All states have regulations that govern hunting or take of the species. Wyoming's Public Service Commission regulations ensure consistency of proposed public utility projects with the Governor's EO.

Counties can employ land use provisions and annual road closures as sage-grouse conservation measures. Gunnison and San Miguel Counties in Colorado and Harney County, Oregon reported they have land use restrictions codified that limit development or make provisions for sage-grouse. Gunnison County reports they have annual road closures to protect breeding sage-grouse.

Policies

Montana provided a position statement that could be classified as an agency policy to protect sage-grouse. This policy is embedded in the Fish Wildlife & Parks Department "Agency Position – Sage-Grouse Conservation and Energy Development" paper, May 2007.

Three of the 17 reporting counties indicated they have policies to protect sage-grouse. Gunnison and San Miguel counties in the range of Gunnison sage-grouse reported policies to protect sage-grouse and their habitat. These policies originate with the county government by either adopting strategic

plans or providing regulations in the county codes. Hot Springs County, Wyoming adopted its “Natural Resources Plan for State and Federal Lands” in 2005. This plan forms the basis for their policy.

Results

Responses from state and local governments followed a pattern of statutory responsibility. States hold the primary responsibilities for the protection and management of sage-grouse and as such reported at a high percentage and more comprehensively than county governments.

County governments, with the exception of those in the range of Gunnison sage-grouse, reported at a very low rate of <3%. Follow-up inquiries conducted of a random sample of non-responding counties found that a majority of these counties do not have any county-based conservation measures in place. More than 50 percent of the counties contacted did not remember initially receiving the questionnaire. This may indicate that the recipients (1) may not have known who to direct the inquiry to, (2) did not have any policies or initiatives that would benefit sage-grouse, or (3) believed they received the questionnaire in error.

Those counties that did respond indicated a good working relationship with – and reliance upon – state fish and wildlife agencies to handle sage-grouse issues. The survey’s objective of developing a range-wide summary of local policies and initiatives, however, was likely not met due to the low response rate from local governments.

States provided a comprehensive list of policies and initiatives underway within their respective jurisdictions. All responding states cited their fish and wildlife agencies for the protection of the species through hunting or take. Washington reported that sage-grouse are protected under their Threatened and Endangered Species statutes. No other state government agencies provided information on sage-grouse conservation efforts.

Additionally, individual interpretations of “initiatives” were very broad. This indicates that scores of initiatives were unreported as part of conservation plans, normal operations or initiatives that have been implemented for a number of years. For example, Nevada and Utah’s “Partners for Conservation and Development” programs fit in the “initiative” category, even though the scope of these programs goes beyond sage-grouse conservation. This suggests that many other states are conducting additional conservation “initiatives” which were not reported.

This inventory demonstrates that sage-grouse habitat protection is active at state, regional and – in some cases – county levels. The data analysis indicates that state fish and wildlife agencies are rightly viewed as the primary authority for sage-grouse conservation, yet significant efforts are also being implemented under local government land use planning authorities. Partnerships through LWGs appear to enhance awareness of activities across the range of authority – from local, state and federal governments to private landowners. These partnerships are excellent examples which demonstrate the opportunities both state and local governments have for sage-grouse conservation given their management authority.

Conclusion

This inventory report provides a catalogue of management approaches implemented by state and local authorities, as well as by local partnerships committed to on-the-ground action to conserve sage-grouse and their habitat. The State-Federal Sage-Grouse Task Force recommends that state and local governments and their partners review the elements included in this inventory, and give strong consideration to the initiatives recorded here when strengthening their own sage-grouse conservation efforts.

References

ⁱ US Fish and Wildlife Service: Greater Sage-Grouse. <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/birds/sagegrouse/>

ⁱⁱ “Greater Sage-Grouse Comprehensive Conservation Strategy,” Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, 2006.

ⁱⁱⁱ “Conserving the Greater Sage Grouse: Examples of Partnerships and Strategies at Work Across the West” and “Conserving the Greater Sage Grouse: A Compilation of Efforts Underway on State, Tribal, Provincial, and Private Lands,” Western Governors’ Association, 2004.

^{iv} “Greater Sage-Grouse Comprehensive Conservation Strategy,” Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, 2006.

^v NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detailfull/national/programs/farmland/initiatives/?&cid=steldevb1027671>.

Appendix: Inventory of State and Local Governments' Conservation Initiatives for Sage-Grouse

Type of Measure	Responding Entity	Name	Synopsis	Jurisdiction for Action	Citation	Stage in Implementation	Achieved and/or Expected Outcomes
States							
Statute	All States	Wildlife protection, conservation and hunting statutes. Wildlife Titles.		Westwide		Implemented	Long-term managed protection/conservation of sage grouse populations.
Program	California	Annual monitoring	Annually, the Department, with the help of other agencies, conducts sage-grouse lek counts of all known leks in California to determine population trends and estimate size. Additionally, intensive aerial surveys are conducted periodically to find new leks.	Statewide		Implemented- Ongoing	Protection of lek sites and priority habitat areas
Regulation	California	Annual recommendations for sage-grouse hunting in CA	Annually, the Department of Fish and Game makes recommendations to the Fish and Game Commission for sage-grouse hunting, including areas open to hunting and the number of hunting permits for each area. These recommendations are based on annual lek counts in a highly conservative population and allowable harvest models. Several areas with smaller populations are closed to hunting in California. Emergency action was taken by the California Fish and Game Commission in 2012 to reduce permits to 0 in both Lassen Zones following large-scale wildfire.	Statewide	www.fgc.ca.gov, www.dfg.ca.gov	Implemented	Assurance that hunting does not impact sage grouse population
Local Working Group and Conservation Plan	California	Devil's Garden/Clear Lake Sage-grouse Conservation Plan and Local Working Group	The Devil's Garden/Clear Lake Sage-grouse Conservation Plan was released in 2010. The plan focuses on the recovery of sage-grouse in the Devil's Garden which has only 1 known remaining lek, located on the Clear Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Grouse have been translocated from Oregon and Nevada since 2005 to prevent extirpation of the population. Significant reduction of juniper has already been undertaken in the area with additional plans for habitat restoration. The Local Working Group meets regularly to implement the plan.	Western Modoc County, CA	www.dfg.ca.gov	Ongoing implementation	Expansion of sage grouse population into historic range and habitat improvements to facilitate sage grouse expansion
Local Working Group and Conservation Plan	California	Buffalo-Skedaddle Sage-grouse and Sagebrush Conservation Plan and Local Working Group	The first Buffalo-Skedaddle Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush Conservation plan was released in 2008 covering Lassen and southern Modoc counties, CA, and a portion of western Washoe County, NV. The Buffalo-Skedaddle Working Group meets monthly to implement actions from the conservation plan.	Lassen and Modoc counties, CA, and a portion of western Washoe County, NV	www.ndow.org; www.dfg.ca.gov	Ongoing implementation	Enhanced conservation of sage grouse and habitat improvement acreage in NE CA.
Local Working Group and Conservation Plan	California	Bi-State Sage-grouse Executive Oversight Committee, Local Working Group, and Conservation Action Plan	The Bi-State Local Working Group covers the Bi-State Distinct Population Segment and includes CA and NV. In 2012, a new Executive Oversight Committee was developed by Directors of state and federal agencies in both states to provide support at the highest levels for sage-grouse conservation. A new Action Plan was completed in 2012 and these groups meet monthly in an aggressive attempt to implement conservation actions in the plan.	Bi-State Distinct Population Segment including Mono and portions of Alpine and Inyo counties, CA, and portions of western Nevada	www.ndow.org; www.dfg.ca.gov		Ensure collection of inventory and monitoring data on sage grouse distribution in bi-state; increased knowledge of the population; improved conservation and enhancement of habitat
State-Federal Partnership	California	CA/NV Subregional Land Use Planning and Priority Areas for Conservation	California is working with the CA/NV Subregion in revising Land Use Plans and identification of Priority Areas for Conservation (PAC). Both agencies developed a Preliminary Priority Habitat Map in 2012, which is being used under the current BLM Interim Guidance to provide regulatory mechanisms to conserve sage-grouse habitats. Final PACs and specific conservation measures for the CA/NV subregion are being developed in associated Environmental Impact Statements towards new Land Use Plans.	Statewide	www.dfg.ca.gov; www.blm.gov		New BLM Resource Management Plans in 2015. Improved capability for protection from wildfire on BLM lands.

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Type of Measure	Responding Entity	Name	Synopsis	Jurisdiction for Action	Citation	Stage in Implementation	Achieved and/or Expected Outcomes
Conservation Plans	Colorado	Colorado greater sage-grouse conservation plan	Rangewide, state conservation plans and local conservation plans have been implemented. The intent for the rangewide and state conservation plans is to review every 5 years.	GUNNISON SAGE GROUSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o 2005. Gunnison sage-grouse rangewide conservation plan. o San Miguel Basin Gunnison Sage-grouse Conservation Plan. o Gunnison County Sage-grouse Conservation Action Plan. o Crawford Area Gunnison Sage-grouse Conservation Plan. o Gunnison Sage-grouse Conservation Plan, Dove Creek Colorado. o Gunnison Sage-grouse Conservation Plan, Piñon Mesa Colorado. o The Poncha Pass Gunnison Sage-grouse Conservation Plan. GREATER SAGE-GROUSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Colorado greater sage-grouse conservation plan. o Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan. o North Park Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan. o Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan. o Middle Park Sage-grouse Conservation Plan. o Parachute-Piceance-Roan (PPR) Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan. 			Analysis underway
Local Working Group	Colorado	Local Working Groups (See jurisdiction)	All rangewide, state and local conservation plans were developed in collaborative effort. The goal for conservation planning for Greater and Gunnison Sage-grouse in Colorado is to protect and improve sufficient habitat and implement other measures across their range to ensure that the species has minimal (<1%) modeled risk of extinction over a 50-year time frame. Population strategies include: (1) Habitat Protection; (2) Habitat Improvement; and (3) Population Management.	GUNNISON SAGE GROUSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Gunnison Sage-grouse Rangewide Steering Committee. o San Miguel Basin Local Working Group. o Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee. o Crawford Area Local Working Group. o Dove Creek Local Working Group. o Piñon Mesa Gunnison Sage-grouse Partnership. o Poncha Pass Gunnison Sage-grouse Working Group. GREATER SAGE-GROUSE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Colorado Greater Sage-grouse Steering Committee o Northwest Colorado Greater Sage-grouse Working Group. o North Park Sage-grouse Working Group. o Northern Eagle/Southern Routt Work Group. o Middle Park Sage-grouse Working Group. o Parachute-Piceance-Roan (PPR) Greater Sage-Grouse Work Group. 	http://wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies/SpeciesOfConcern/Birds/Pages/GunnisonConsPlan.aspx http://wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies/SpeciesOfConcern/Birds/Pages/GreaterSagegrouseConservationPlan.aspx http://wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies/SpeciesOfConcern/Birds/Pages/SageGrouseLocalPlans.aspx http://wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies/SagebrushConservation/Pages/ColoradoSagebrush.aspx		Analysis underway

Appendix: Inventory of State and Local Governments' Conservation Initiatives for Sage-Grouse

Type of Measure Initiative	Responding Entity	Name	Synopsis	Jurisdiction for Action	Citation	Stage in Implementation	Achieved and/or Expected Outcomes
	Colorado	Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances	Starting in 2006, CPW finalized an umbrella CCAA with the US Fish and Wildlife Service for the Gunnison Sage Grouse. Baseline data was developed for 41 properties at a cost of \$350,000. 9 Certificate of Inclusions (CI's) have been completed and 11 CI's are awaiting review by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. 12 additional CI's are under development. Completion of the CI's and monitoring for the 9 completed CI's have cost an additional \$70,000 plus one full time biologists time. An additional \$900,000 in Species Conservation Trust Funds have been authorized by the Colorado Legislature for development of CCAA's.	All Gunnison Sage-grouse Populations in Colorado.			Analysis underway
Initiative	Colorado	Private Lands Biologist Program.	Colorado Park and Wildlife, working in partnership with the NRCS and Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, has hired 3 private lands biologists. These biologists provide technical assistance to private landowners for sage grouse habitat restoration and enhancement as well as rangeland management assistance for projects to restore or enhance sage steppe habitat as part of implementing NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative programs for both Greater and Gunnison sage-grouse in Colorado.	All Greater and Gunnison Sage-grouse populations in Colorado.			Analysis underway
Initiative	Colorado	Habitat Protection	Beginning in 2003, Colorado Parks and Wildlife started a habitat protection initiative for both Greater and Gunnison sage-grouse. Since 2003, over 40,000 acres of Greater sage-grouse habitat and 31,000 acres of Gunnison sage-grouse habitat has been protected either through fee title purchase or conservation easment at a cost of approximately \$65 million dollars.	All Greater and Gunnison Sage-grouse populations in Colorado.			Analysis underway
Executive Order	Idaho	Executive Order #2012:02 establishing the Governor's Sage-grouse Task Force	A 15 member citizen task force was formed to provide the Governor recommendations on policies and actions as a backdrop for developing a state-wide regulatory mechanism to preclude the need to list greater sage-grouse.		http://gov.idaho.gov/mediacenter/execorders/eo12/eo_12_02.pdf		
Resolution	Idaho		Idaho's Legislature endorsed and encouraged Governor Otter in his efforts with the Sage-grouse Task Force including the Governor's coordinated involvement of state agencies.				
Task Force	Idaho	Governor's Sage-grouse Task Force	Idaho Sage-grouse Task Force developed and submitted recommendations to Idaho's Governor for regulatory mechanism conserving greater sage-grouse.		http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/wildlife/SGtaskForce/finalRecommendations.pdf		
State Alternative	Idaho		Governor's office developed and submitted a state plan of regulatory mechanism as an alternative in BLM's Environmental Impact Statement analyzing alternatives for revising land-use plans (LUPs) for lands that include sage-grouse habitat to incorporate consistent objectives and conservation measures by September 2014 in an effort to preclude the need to list the greater sage-grouse under the ESA.				
Initiative	Idaho	Farm Bill biologists for sage-grouse conservation	Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Pheasants Forever, Intermountain West Joint Venture, and Natural Resources Conservation Service fund three full-time Farm Bill biologists in strategic area for sage-grouse conservation in Idaho. The biologists provide technical and financial assistance to private and public landowners interested in implementing sage-grouse conservation measures.				
Initiative	Idaho	Mule Deer Initiative habitat program	Idaho Department of Fish and Game's Mule Deer Initiative habitat program focuses on several large scale projects including juniper removal and planting thousands of sagebrush plants in mule deer range, some of which will improve sage-grouse habitat.				

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Type of Measure Initiative	Responding Entity	Name	Synopsis	Jurisdiction for Action	Citation	Stage in Implementation	Achieved and/or Expected Outcomes
	Idaho	Fence markers collaborative program	Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service partnership fund Future Farmers of America (FFA) local chapters to manufacture fence markers. Members of FFA chapters and sage-grouse local working groups will install the fence markers on fences near sage-grouse leks to reduce sage-grouse collisions with fences.				
Strategic Plan	Idaho	Idaho Invasive Species Strategic Plan 2012-2016	This Invasive Species Strategic Plan includes all taxa (plants and animals). The plan includes multiple objectives that strengthen Idaho's resolve to combat noxious and undesirable weeds (that impact sage-grouse habitat) by; assessing invasive species pathways, developing education and outreach tools, calling for effective monitoring and surveillance, habitat rehabilitation, and adequate regulatory tools.		http://www.agri.idaho.gov/Categories/PlantsInsects/NoxiousWeeds/Documents/Idaho%20Invasive%20Species%20Strategy%202012-2016.pdf		
Conservation Plan & Local Working Groups	Idaho	Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho	Conservation plan has 149 conservation measures for sage-grouse habitat and populations in Idaho. This is an ongoing plan with state, federal partners and 11 working groups and 9 of those have completed plans. Long list of conservation measures addressing threats to greater sage-grouse in local planning areas. Each local working group plan has various conservation measures addressing local threats.	Statewide	http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/wildlife/sageGrouse/		
Regulation	Idaho	Annual recommendations for sage-grouse hunting	Annually Idaho Fish and Game Commission proclaim rules governing sage-grouse hunting seasons, and bag and possession limits in Idaho.				
Conservation Plan	Montana	Management Plan and Conservation Strategies For Greater Sage-Grouse In Montana	Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP) helped develop a conservation plan with affected agencies and stakeholders. The plan identifies key issues in the state and provides a framework and direction for conservation, as well as partner commitments.	Statewide	http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/management/		
State-Federal Partnership	Montana	Priority areas for conservation	MFWP worked with BLM to identify areas of highest conservation priority for sage-grouse, coined "Core Areas." MFWP and partners have used this strategic habitat conservation approach to target conservation investment and apply protective measures.	Statewide			
Conservation Planning/ Research	Montana	Priority areas for conservation	Montana is working with other states to collect feathers on leks for genetic analysis, to determine gene-flow between leks. This will result in a better understanding of landscape features that support or inhibit connectivity to more effectively target conservation—within and between core areas.	Statewide			
Program	Montana	Annual monitoring	Annually, MFWP conducts male counts on leks to determine population trends across their range in Montana.	Statewide			
Regulation	Montana	Annual recommendations for sage-grouse hunting in MT.	Annually, MFWP sets hunting regulations based in part on results from lek monitoring.	Statewide			
Initiative	Montana	Land Projects – Conservation Easements	MFWP is working with partners to establish habitat conservation projects on strategic, privately-held sage-grouse habitats.	Statewide			
Program	Montana	Lease Projects - Leases	MFWP holds approximately 200,000 acres of 30-year leases to protect sagebrush grassland habitats from conversion or fragmentation. MFWP is committed to administering and monitoring these leases over their duration.	Statewide			
Local Working Groups	Montana	Local Working Groups	Montana has 3 active sage-grouse local working groups. These groups have assisted in local planning, provided recommendations to agencies and industry on conservation issues, sponsored field tours for local producers, provided an effective forum for information exchange, and accomplished a variety of local habitat projects.	10-county area in NE, SE, and SW MT.			
Local Working Group	Montana	Local Working Groups	In Central Montana, some key Conservation Districts and NRCS Local Working Groups have taken up sage-grouse conservation efforts. Their involvement has included hosting workshops, information outlet, and conservation program marketing.	5-county area in central MT.			

Appendix: Inventory of State and Local Governments' Conservation Initiatives for Sage-Grouse

Type of Measure Initiative	Responding Entity	Name	Synopsis	Jurisdiction for Action	Citation	Stage in Implementation	Achieved and/or Expected Outcomes
	Montana	Habitat Conservation	MFWP is contributing toward a farm bill biologist position in Petroleum County to help advance the NRCS Sage-Grouse Initiative in that part of the state. Three similar positions are being supported by a variety of partners in northcentral, southeast, and southwest Montana.	Statewide			
State-Federal Partnership	Montana	Habitat Conservation	MFWP is providing technical support to BLM and NRCS on strategies for advancing sage-grouse conservation across the state through technical committees, resource planning sessions, technical workshops, and project site visits.	Statewide			
Research	Montana	Grazing Evaluation	MFWP has teamed with other partners, including NRCS, BLM and Universities to initiate an 8-10 year evaluation of grazing techniques and sage-grouse performance, to test the effectiveness of different grazing treatments and rotations.	Central Montana			
Program	Montana	Translocations of greater sage-grouse	MFWP translocated Greater Sage-grouse to augment local populations in Alberta, Canada. MFWP will be translocating additional sage-grouse to North Dakota, pending Commission approval. Success of translocations will be monitored by Canadian partners and North Dakota Game and Fish Department, respectively.				
Conservation Plan & Local Working Groups	Nevada	Greater Sage-Grouse Plans and Local Working Groups	In 2004, under former Governor Guinn, a series of local working groups developed plans to provide a comprehensive strategy for conservation measures to provide protection and minimize habitat loss of sage grouse in Nevada. The Bi-State local working group produced a conservation plan in 2004 which identified strategies to be employed to restore degraded habitat and provide protection to the remaining population. Since production of the plan, many projects have been implemented and efforts continue to update a data base that adequately captures the nature and extent of those projects. Efforts continue to re-energize the local working groups that were formed in 2004.	Statewide	http://ndow.org	Being implemented	Identification of projects that could provide significant benefit to Sage-grouse throughout Nevada and the B-State area.
State-Federal Partnership	Nevada	Bi-State Population Executive Oversight Committee (EOC)	An outcome of interagency planning was the identification of a lack of coordination among State and federal agencies in Nevada and California providing conservation for the Bi-State Population of Sage Grouse. The EOC along with interagency technical and strategy working groups were formed to provide coordination among the agencies, set goals, direction and regulatory controls and to pool resources where feasible and practical on projects and research efforts. Agency efforts are coupled with valuable input from local working groups composed of representatives from private landholders, agencies and organizations.	The Bi-State population boundaries in Nevada and California		Being implemented	Improved communication and cooperation among the agencies that are actively involved in managing Sage-grouse and Sage - grouse habitat in the Bi-State area.
State-Federal Partnership	Nevada	Implementation of the Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI)	Working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to promote the SGI through Nevada Department of Wildlife biologists and shared positions with NRCS. Utilizing cooperative conservation efforts and staff to benefit Sage-grouse, while protecting and restoring habitat.	Statewide		Being implemented	Increased Sage-grouse conservation work through cooperative efforts utilizing Farm Bill Funding
Conservation Plan	Nevada	Nevada NRCS Sage-grouse Initiative Implementation Plan and Conservation Measures For Greater Sage-Grouse In Nevada	Nevada Department of Wildlife was involved in the development of the NV NRCS Sage-grouse Initiative Implementation Plan and Conservation Measures For Greater Sage-Grouse in Nevada . The plan identifies key conservation issues in Nevada that NRCS can address through the Sage-grouse Initiative and provides a framework along with direction for	Statewide		Implemented	Increased Sage-grouse conservation work through cooperative efforts utilizing Farm Bill Funding
Initiative	Nevada	Land Projects – Conservation Easements	Nevada Department of Wildlife is working with partners such as NRCS to establish habitat conservation easements on strategic, privately-held sage-grouse habitats. The NRCS easements are being funded through the Sage-grouse Initiative.	Statewide		Multiple easements in progress and being completed. Ongoing cooperative effort.	Increased Sage-grouse conservation through cooperative efforts utilizing Farm Bill and other Funding to protect critical habitat

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Initiative	Nevada	Intermountain West Joint Venture/Pheasants Forever/Natural Resources Conservation Service/Nevada Department of Wildlife-partnership to establish 2 shared biologist positions	Nevada Department of Wildlife has partnered with the Intermountain West Joint Venture, Pheasants Forever and the NRCS to establish 2 shared biologist positions to help advance the NRCS Sage-Grouse Initiative (one in North East Nevada and a 2nd position in Eastern and Central Nevada) with emphasis on sage grouse conservation, habitat restoration, and Farm Bill implementation	One position focusing on Northeast Nevada along with a 2nd position focusing on Eastern and Central Nevada		Implemented	Increased Sage-grouse conservation work through cooperative efforts utilizing Farm Bill Funding
Initiative	Nevada	Natural Resources Conservation Service/US FWS-partnership to establish 1 shared field biologist position	Nevada Department of Wildlife actively supported USFWS partnering with the NRCS to establish 1 shared field biologist position to help advance the NRCS Sage-Grouse Initiative with emphasis on sage grouse conservation, and habitat restoration, and Farm Bill implementation with a special emphasis on the Bi-state Sage-grouse population area in Western Nevada.	Bi-state Sage-grouse area along CA/NV Border		Implemented	Increased Sage-grouse conservation work through cooperative efforts utilizing Farm Bill Funding
Initiative	Nevada	Natural Resources Conservation Service/Nevada Department of Wildlife-partnership to establish 1 shared Farm Bill Coordinator position	Nevada Department of Wildlife has partnered with the NRCS to establish 1 shared Farm Bill Coordinator position to help advance the NRCS Sage-Grouse Initiative with emphasis on sage grouse conservation and habitat restoration, coordinating public and landowner outreach, and increasing Farm Bill implementation in Nevada.	Statewide		Implemented	Increased Sage-grouse conservation work through cooperative efforts utilizing Farm Bill Funding. Increase public awareness and knowledge of Sage-grouse issues, while facilitating increased private landowners involvement in Sage-grouse conservation.
Initiative	Nevada	Natural Resources Conservation Service/Nevada Department of Wildlife-partnership to establish 1 shared biologist position	Nevada Department of Wildlife has partnered with the NRCS to establish 1 shared biologist position to help advance the NRCS Sage-Grouse Initiative with emphasis on sage grouse conservation and habitat restoration, coordinating public and landowner outreach, and Farm Bill implementation in Western Nevada with a special emphasis on the Bi-state Sage-grouse population area.	Western Nevada and Bi-state Sage-grouse area along CA/NV Border		Implemented	Increased Sage-grouse conservation work through cooperative efforts utilizing Farm Bill Funding. Increase public awareness and knowledge of Sage-grouse issues, while facilitating increased private landowners involvement in Sage-grouse conservation.
Initiative	Nevada	Natural Resources Conservation Service/Nevada Department of Wildlife-partnership to fund 1 shared position Nevada Partners for Conservation and Development (PCD)	Nevada Department of Wildlife has partnered with the NRCS to fund 1 shared position to help advance the NRCS Sage-Grouse Initiative with emphasis on sage grouse conservation and habitat restoration, coordinating public and landowner outreach, developing the Nevada Partners for Conservation and Development (PCD), and increasing Farm Bill implementation in Nevada.	Statewide		Implemented	Increased Sage-grouse conservation work through cooperative efforts utilizing Farm Bill Funding
Initiative	Nevada	Nevada Partners for Conservation and Development	Modeled after the UtahPCD, the NevadaPCD is a unique partnership of several natural resource agencies and organizations committed to providing solutions to conservation issues including sage grouse conservation. From Federal agency representation and State leadership, to local coordinators on the ground, the NevadaPCD members work together to leverage resources and increase effectiveness. Core values of the NevadaPCD are to protect Nevada's biological diversity, to restore productive rangeland ecosystems to support wildlife and agriculture, and to provide high quality outdoor recreation opportunities.	Statewide	http://www.ndow.org/nev_pcd	Ongoing implementation	Increased Sage-grouse conservation work through cooperative efforts of various partners.

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Type of Measure	Responding Entity	Name	Synopsis	Jurisdiction for Action	Citation	Stage in Implementation	Achieved and/or Expected Outcomes
Resolution	Nevada	Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 3-Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining	In the resolution, the Nevada Legislature urges each state and local governmental group involved in activities to improve the population of greater sage-grouse and to prevent the greater-sage grouse from being listed as an endangered or threatened species, to engage in those activities in a positive and proactive manner to ensure the protection and restoration of the population and habitat of the greater sage-grouse, and to mitigate any future damage to that habitat and population in Nevada. Further, the members of the 76th Session of the Nevada Legislature recognized the need for acquiring and maintaining sources of money and other funding to assist in the efforts to protect and restore the habitat and population of the greater sage-grouse.	Statewide	http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/76th2011/Bills/ACR/ACR3_EN.pdf	Issued to all parties who may have involvement with management of Sage grouse and Sage grouse habitat	Provides direction regarding management plans.
Habitat Project Implementation, Research, Land Acquisition	Nevada	Ruby Pipeline Habitat Enhancement Fund	The State of Nevada and Nevada Office of the BLM jointly received \$8.8 million to spend over the next 5 years for the benefit of Sage grouse and Pygmy rabbits in sagebrush habitat to offset impacts incurred by construction of a natural gas pipeline. Projects have included: noxious/invasive weed control, fencing, land acquisition, satellite collaring and telemetry, habitat enhancement through seeding and planting and support for siting Single Engine Air Tankers to provide for habitat protection from wildfires. To date more than \$3 million dollars have been spent for the benefit of these species.	Northern Washoe, Humboldt and Elko Counties in Nevada		Ongoing implementation	Habitat protection and improvement. Research to identify seasonal movements of Sage grouse.
Habitat Project Implementation	Nevada	Nevada Partners for Conservation and Development	Addresses specific sage-grouse habitat projects that are currently being implemented or have recently been completed. Project work includes Pinyon-Juniper thinning and removal, sagebrush-grassland restoration and post-fire reseeding work. Project work is being implemented across all sage-grouse habitat in Nevada. Current project work is occurring on approximately 255,000 acres. Projects are designed to have positive habitat impacts beyond the footprint of the treatment. As such approximately 750,000 acres are being impacted by the treatments. Approximately 90% of the acreage is public lands with the remainder being private.	Statewide		Ongoing implementation	Provides for recovery, protection and enhancement of Sage-grouse habitats located in various parts of Nevada.
Conservation Plan	Nevada and California	Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan for Nevada and Eastern California. June 2004	Addresses Local Area Working Groups (LAWG) that meet on a regular basis to achieve sage-grouse conservation projects within the State of Nevada and California into the following Population Management Units (PMU's): North Central;Elko Stewardship;Washoe Modoc; Bi-State; South Central; and Lincoln county	Statewide	http://www.ndow.org/wild/conservation/sg/plan/index.shtml	Ongoing implementation	Provides another tool that can be used when developing land management plans.
Management Guidelines		Nevada Energy and Infrastructure Development Standards to Conserve Greater Sage Grouse Populations and Their Habitat	In 2010 The Nevada Governor's Sage grouse Conservation Team produced energy development standards for Nevada to provide direction to developers who may develop facilities in the State of Nevada within Sage grouse habitat. The standards include a description of the anticipated effects on sage grouse and their habitat from development along with suggested mitigation to decrease the anticipated impacts.	Statewide	http://ndow.org/wild/conservation/sg/resources/nevada_energy_standards_for_sage-grouse_2010.pdf	Implemented	Provides another tool that can be used when developing land management plans.
Management Tools	Nevada	Restoration Value mapping and Habitat Categorization mapping	In 2011-2012 The Nevada Department of Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management and other federal and State agencies developed habitat mapping tools to aid in the management of Greater Sage-grouse. These tools include a restoration value (R-Value) map identifying the needs to restore sage grouse habitat and a Habitat Categorization Map that identifies the relative value of Sage grouse habitat based upon its integrity, seasonal use by sage grouse and current use by agencies and the public.	Statewide	http://ndow.org/wild/conservation/sg/index.shtml	Implemented	Provides another tool that can be used when developing land management plans.

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Conservation Plan	Nevada	Bi-State Action Plan. March 2012	In December 2011, the Bi-State Executive Oversight Committee (EOC) directed the Bi-State Technical Advisory Committee to prepare the Bi-State Action Plan to compile and record conservation actions that have been completed and to prioritize additional actions to ensure conservation and mitigate threats.	Bi-State Distinct Population Segment including Carson City, Douglas, Esmeralda, Mineral, Lyon, and Storey counties in Nevada, as well as counties in CA.	http://www.ndow.org/wild/conservation/sg/literature/Bi-State%20Action%20Plan.pdf	Ongoing implementation	Provides another tool that can be used when developing management plans.
Conservation Plan	North Dakota	Management Plan and Conservation Strategies For Greater Sage-Grouse In North Dakota	Management plan currently monitors species and populations in the state. The plan supports habitat improvements through the NRCS sage grouse initiative. This initiative benefits nesting success. Outreach efforts have increased awareness and have resulted in a new working group in SW North Dakota called North Dakota Sage Grouse Local Working Group. Facilitation and group collaboration between all interested parties has created a positive attitude towards conserving sage-grouse will inevitably be the single most important aspect to rebuilding the sage-grouse population in North Dakota. Revision of the current plan is scheduled to be completed by January 2013. Plan revisions will include current scientific research pertaining to energy development, livestock grazing, and demographics of sage-grouse on the fringe of the range. Additionally recommendations for conserving sage-grouse in North Dakota will be updated.	Statewide	http://gf.nd.gov/conservation/docs/sage-gr-entire-plan.pdf	Planned (scheduled to be completed by January 2013).	Conserve a self sustaining Greater Sage-grouse population in North Dakota.
Initiative	North Dakota	Grass plantings and sage brush plantings	285.5 acres of grass plantings, with seed provided by USFWS. After initial grass establishment, have been worked into landowner grazing systems. Over 2000 sage brush plugs and \$6000 since 2004 for sage brush plantings. NDGF biologists have helped hand-plant some; the Department has paid for others.	Local Site Specific		Implemented	Increase sagebrush habitat.
Local Working Group	North Dakota	Sage Grouse Work Group	Local landowner group with NDGFD involvement. The Department put \$1500 toward a holistic management seminar for Work Group members to attend.	Statewide		Ongoing implementation	Collaborative Sage-grouse Conservation between private and government entities.
Initiative	North Dakota	Grazing Systems/Habitat Management	11,886 acres. All grazing systems implemented are developed (or improved upon) to improve residual cover and/or maintain maximum range health within the landowners means and capabilities. Some acres have been utilized for haying with haying dates being deferred until after primary nesting season.	Local Site Specific		Implemented	Improve residual cover and/or maintain maximum range health within the landowners means and capabilities
Initiative	North Dakota	Fencing	Establishment and/or removal. 17,464 feet. Both cross fences and boundary fences.	Local Site Specific		Implemented	Improve range health through grazing.
State-Federal Partnership	North Dakota	Working with NRCS on SGI	Working with NRCS to come up with practices for their EQIP Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI). NDGFD biologists promoting NRCS' SGI practices.	Statewide		Ongoing implementation	Improve sage-grouse habitat
State-Federal Partnership Program	North Dakota	Working with USFS	Working with US Forest Service and allotted grazers to move a fence within a lek.	Local Site Specific		Planned	Reduce sage-grouse fence collisions.
	North Dakota	General department conservation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical service to landowners interested in sage-grouse conservation. • Fence markers and water tank escape ramps. • Training seminars for NDGFD biologists on sage-grouse habitat development and management. • Annual sage-grouse census. 	Statewide		Ongoing implementation	Conserve sage-grouse by monitoring population trends, reduce mortality by anthropogenic features, and engage stakeholders in conservation.
Direct Conservation Payments	North Dakota	Direct landowner payments	Direct landowner payments for sage-grouse conservation practices have totaled more than \$224,000 since 2004.	Statewide		Implemented	Habitat restoration

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Research	North Dakota	Sage grouse habitat research	<p>NDGFD has funded three major research projects in the past several years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study of nesting and brood-rearing habitat selection and hen survival (2005-2006; \$30K/year) • Study of winter habitat use and seasonal movements of sage grouse in ND (2005-2008; \$15K/year) • Study of habitat selection within oil and gas development areas (2010-2011; \$30K/year) 			Implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nesting study found that maintaining taller residual grass within habitat significant to improving nest survival. Significance in conserving and/or restoring native forb and grass communities within sagebrush habitat. • Seasonal movement study found that sage grouse spend about 62% of time within 3.2 km of active leks. • Oil and gas development study found that a portion of the oil field in SW ND does not contain suitable habitat to sustain sage grouse, regardless of energy infrastructure.
Conservation Plan	North Dakota	Priority Habitat Map	NDGF delineated priority sage-grouse habitat using breeding areas (lek locations), radioed bird locations, and expert opinion.	Statewide		Implemented	Delineate priority areas for conservation efforts.
Research	North Dakota	Sage-grouse Translocation	NDGF has proposed a sage-grouse translocation research project in the spring of 2014. Female grouse would be moved from Montana to North Dakota and monitored to determine success.	Statewide		Planned (Pending approval by Montana Wildlife Commission)	Increase the sage-grouse breeding population in North Dakota.
Policy/Rule	Oregon	Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy for Oregon	Update of statewide conservation plan first adopted in 2005. Plan includes current status as well as conservation measures and methods for establishing core areas adopted as administrative rule. The Plan includes statewide management guidelines and regional conservation measures.	Statewide	http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/sagegrouse/docs/20110422_GRSO_April_Final%2052511.pdf		
Policy	Oregon	Core Area Approach to Sage-Grouse Conservation	The 2011 Greater Sage-grouse Conservation and Assessment for Oregon included methods (in administrative rule) for developing Core Areas for sage-grouse conservation. After adoption of the plan, ODFW used these methods to tentatively identify Core Areas and used Local Working Groups to provide suggested revisions/refinements before a final Core Area map was accepted. The ODFW recommendations are used by other state, and to some degree local, entities with a regulatory role in permitting uses of land and water.	Statewide	http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/sagegrouse/docs/Sage_Grouse_Core_Areas_Fact_Sheet.pdf		
Policy	Oregon	Implementing Habitat Mitigation for Greater Sage-grouse under the Core Area Approach	Outlines interim guidance for development of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife habitat mitigation recommendations associated with renewable energy development and associated infrastructure or other landscape scale industrial-commercial developments in greater sage-grouse habitat. Still in early development stages. The plan will include proposed policy changes to address energy facility/wildlife conflicts on a landscape scale.	Statewide	Mitigation Framework_with_attachments_8-23-11.pdf		
Policy/Conservation Plan	Oregon	Oregon's Ten-Year Energy Plan	Still in early development stages. The plan will include proposed policy changes to address energy facility/wildlife conflicts on a landscape scale.	Statewide	http://www.oregon.gov/ENERGY/		
Initiative	South Dakota	Private Lands Habitat Programs.	Several South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks Private Lands Habitat Programs provide technical and financial assistance for upland restoration and enhancement as well as rangeland management which could be used to restore or enhance sage steppe habitat.	Statewide	http://www.gfp.sd.gov/wildlife/private-land/default.aspx		

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	South Dakota	Intermountain West Joint Venture/Pheasants Forever/Natural Resources Conservation Service/South Dakota Department of Game Fish and Parks partnership to establish Farm Bill biologist position	The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks has partnered with the Intermountain West Joint Venture, Pheasants Forever and the NRCS to establish a Farm Bill biologist position in western South Dakota with emphasis on sage grouse conservation.	Statewide			
Regulation	South Dakota	Annual recommendations for sage-grouse hunting in SD	Annually, the Department of Game, Fish and Parks makes recommendations to the Game, Fish and Parks Commission for sage-grouse hunting. The goal of SD's harvest management is to harvest less than 5% of the conservatively estimated spring population.	Butte and Harding Counties	http://www.gfp.sd.gov/hunting/small-game/sage-grouse.aspx		
Conservation Plan	South Dakota	South Dakota Sage Grouse Management Plan Revision	Escalating range-wide concern for sage grouse conservation has prompted the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks to update their sage grouse conservation plan. The planning process for the revision began during the fall of 2012 with a goal of having a revised plan approved during the spring of 2013. The revised plan will identify additional conservation opportunities beyond what are identified in the current management plan.	Statewide	http://www.gfp.sd.gov/wildlife/docs/sage-grouse-management-plan.pdf		
Strategic Management Plan	Utah	Utah's Greater Sage-grouse Management Plan pub. 09-17	The purpose of the Utah Greater Sage-grouse Management Plan 2009 is to direct greater sage-grouse (<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>) management in Utah consistent with Utah Code Title 23 and the Mission and Goals of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR). Utah Code Title 23 establishes and defines the State's legal wildlife management authority within the UDWR. The UDWR Mission is to serve the people of Utah as trustee and guardian of the state's wildlife. Three identified goals associated with the mission focus upon the Resources, Constituency, and Agency. Specifically, the UDWR resource goal is to expand wildlife populations and conserve sensitive species by protecting and improving wildlife habitat. In fulfilling these mandates, the plan is to function as the over-arching document guiding management of greater sage-grouse within the state of Utah. Collectively, it should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guide UDWR general management and resource recommendations; • serve as a reference document and guide for land managers, biologists, planners, private interest groups, and others to protect, maintain, and improve sage-grouse populations and habitats and balance their management with other resource uses; • guide the direction of the 11 established Utah Local Working Groups (LWG). 	Statewide	http://wildlife.utah.gov/uplandgame/sage-grouse/pdf/management_plan_2009.pdf		
Governor's Guidance	Utah	Utah's Plan for Sage-Grouse and Development	Provides guidance and best management practices for development on or near crucial sage-grouse habitat. In effect since June 6, 2008 with a revised plan currently under development.	Statewide	http://wildlife.utah.gov/uplandgame/sage-grouse/sg-dev.php		
Statute	Washington	Wildlife Title - Threatened and Endangered species		Statewide			

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Recovery Plan	Washington	Publication and adaptation of greater sage-grouse recovery plan	Implemented in 2004, the actions outlined in the recovery plan have provided a foundation for much of the management and research activities on greater sage-grouse in Washington. These activities include the following: (1) translocations to augment populations; (2) translocations to re-establish populations; (3) annual monitoring of populations; (4) support of federal farm programs in greater sage-grouse management zones; (4) establishment and prioritization of management zones; (5) support for research; and (6) support of sage-grouse management activities for agency-specific and area-specific management plans.	Statewide	http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/pub.php?id=00395		
Initiative	Washington	Translocations of greater sage-grouse	With the cooperation of the Nevada Division of Wildlife and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, greater sage-grouse were translocated to the Yakima Training Center in Yakima County in 2004 and 2005 and to the Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area in Lincoln County from 2008 to 2011. Genetic data indicated that the two Washington populations, and the Yakima Training Center population in particular, have undergone a genetic bottleneck, and an infusion of birds from a different population might help restore normal genetic diversity. Initial results suggest that the translocation was unsuccessful in achieving that purpose. The translocation to the Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area was designed to re-establish a population where sage-grouse had been extirpated. Initial results show that sage-grouse have established a lek and they have been successful at reproducing.	Statewide	http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/pub.php?id=01164		
Initiative	Washington	Arid Lands Initiative	The Arid Lands Initiative is a group of governmental and non-governmental organizations that recognize that eastern Washington's shrubsteppe landscape has been greatly reduced and fragmented by agricultural, residential, and urban development. The initiative hopes to use a coordinated effort to engage landowners with the goal of conserving shrubsteppe across multiple jurisdictions.	Statewide	http://waconservation.org/projects/planning		
Working Groups	Washington	Washington Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Working Group; The Washington Greater Sage-Grouse Working Group	WHCWG is addressing connectivity patterns for numerous focal species, including greater sage-grouse. An analysis of statewide connectivity patterns was published in 2010; The Washington Greater Sage-Grouse Working Group began in 1997 and meets annually to provide an avenue for information exchange and conservation and management planning.	Statewide	http://waconnected.org		
Conservation Plans	Washington	Management Plans	Several areas in Washington State provide conservation measures for sage-grouse and sage brush habitat through management plans.	Wenas Wildlife Area Management Plan; Swanson Lakes Wildlife Area Management Plan; Oak Creek Wildlife Area Management Plan; L. T. Murray Wildlife Area Management Plan; Wells Wildlife Area Management Plan; Sagebrush Flat Wildlife Area Management Plan; Sunnyside/Snake River Wildlife Area Management Plan			
Initiative	Washington	Research on Greater Sage-grouse	Research is an essential component of management and recovery actions in Washington. Research provides the foundation for adaptive management.		http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/		
Initiative	Washington	Support of Federal Farm Programs	The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has a general approach of supporting federal farm conservation programs that produce wildlife habitat. Two of these programs are the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) program.	Statewide	http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01285/		

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	Wyoming	Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances	A mechanism to achieve the goals of the statewide sage-grouse conservation effort is development of statewide agreements (Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAA), Candidate Conservation Agreements (CCA), Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) and incentives to insure management actions on private and public lands will continue in a manner that is ecologically, economically, and culturally sustainable. These agreements provide a means for conserving species through proactive conservation measures that reduce the potential for additional regulatory requirements that result if or when species become listed as threatened or endangered. Currently, a CCAA and a CCA are being developed cooperatively by local, state, and federal resource agencies for Wyoming ranch operations.	Statewide			
Executive Order	Wyoming	Greater Sage-grouse Core Area Protection	Governor Matt Mead issued an Executive Order on June 2, 2011 which reiterated and clarified the intent of Wyoming's Core Area Strategy originally developed under former Governor Freudenthal's administration with the assistance of the Governor's Sage-Grouse Implementation Team and the local sage-grouse working groups. An implementation process has been developed, including an online disturbance density and acreage calculation tool and manual to guide users through the process.	Statewide	http://governor.wy.gov/do_cuments/sage_grouse_executive_order.pdf	Ongoing implementation	Office of State Lands and Investments and the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission
Regulation	Wyoming	Procedural Rules and Regulations of the Wyoming Public Service Commission	The PSC regulates and supervises public utilities and authorizes certificates of public convenience and necessity (CPCN). Their Procedural Rules and Special Regulations require CPCN applications to ensure consistency of proposed projects with the Governor's Executive Order.	Statewide		Implementation	The PSC is currently reviewing one application for a project within sage-grouse core area to ensure consistency with the Executive Order.
Resolution	Wyoming	Greater Sage-grouse Core Area Protection - Resolution of Support	Wyoming State Legislature passed a resolution in 2009 supporting the governor's Executive Order on Greater Sage-Grouse Core Area Protection.	Statewide			
Initiative	Wyoming	Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative	Sage-grouse management is an emphasis in other efforts such as the Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative, Pinedale Anticline Project Office and the Jonah Interagency Office. Other agencies, industry, NGOs and private individuals are also engaged in sage-grouse conservation efforts.	Statewide	http://www.wlci.gov/		
Local Working Groups/Plan	Wyoming	Wyoming Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan	LWG planning began in 2004. Eight LWGs have completed local plans and are implementing Conservation Efforts.	Statewide	http://gf.state.wy.us/wildlife/wildlife_management/sagegrouse.asp		
Statute	Wyoming	Appropriations	Wyoming State Legislature appropriated \$6.13 million for sage-grouse conservation since 2005	Statewide		Ongoing implementation	Since 2011 Wyoming Game and Fish has administered \$1.8 million in funding for sage-grouse conservation.
Initiative	Wyoming	Sagebrush mapping	Sagebrush habitat by canopy cover category has been mapped statewide using remote sensing technology and modeling efforts through a partnership with industry, NGOs, academia, and Federal organizations. Statewide sage grouse seasonal range maps for nesting, brood rearing and winter habitats are in the process of development through a similar partnership.	Statewide			
Research/Project	Wyoming	Seasonal Habitat Modeling Project	USGS completed a sage-grouse seasonal habitat mapping project in 2012	Statewide		Planned implementation	- The model will be used to improve habitat mapping. will begin in late 2012.

Appendix: Inventory of State and Local Governments' Conservation Initiatives for Sage-Grouse

Type of Measure	Responding Entity	Name	Synopsis	Jurisdiction for Action	Citation	Stage in Implementation	Achieved and/or Expected Outcomes
Program	Wyoming	Office of State Lands and Investments Review Process	OSLI in collaboration with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, has developed a review process for applying appropriate stipulations to land use authorizations to maintain existing sage-grouse habitat and prevent declines of sage-grouse populations within core areas. OSLI also includes protection and enhancement of sage-grouse habitat as high criteria in evaluating projects funded by the State Trust Land Preservation and Enhancement Account. When possible, OSLI prioritizes fire suppression efforts to favor sage-grouse core areas.	Statewide		Implemented	Specific stipulations are applied to permits for oil and gas exploration and development, mining, sagebrush treatments, land reclamation, and transmission rights-of way. Currently, wind energy development is not permitted in sage-grouse core areas.
Program	Wyoming	Department of Environmental Quality Permitting	DEQ administers the process for permitting industrial development. They work with developers in pre-planning, planning and jurisdictional meetings to ensure the SGEO is being implemented. Permit applications for these projects are reviewed by 19 state agencies. In this process, agencies with regulatory authority may assert their jurisdiction, and cite their protocols with sage-grouse protection. Sage-grouse habitat characteristics are considered, where appropriate, in designing reclamation. DEQ has taken fire abatement actions on coal mining sites to protect sage-grouse habitat from potential wildfires.	Statewide		Implemented	
Program	Wyoming	Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust	WWNRT has taken a particularly aggressive approach to sage-grouse habitat enhancement and conservation easements. Projects are evaluated within the context of the most recent science to assure they improve conditions for the species. Sage-grouse projects are given priority by the WWNRT Board.	Statewide		Ongoing implementation	In 2011 and 2012, 27 projects specifically aimed at sage-grouse conservation were funded including 22 conservation easements, three habitat improvement projects, a mapping project and one research project. Allocation of over \$6 million.

Counties

GIS Tool	Gunnison County, CO	Habitat Prioritization Tool	"Habitat Prioritization Tool" (HPT) is used to assess all land use applications (building, ISDS, access (driveways, etc.), subdivision applications, etc.) for impacts to sage-grouse habitat. This tool is GIS based and actually scores all the sage-grouse habitats, individually and collectively. It is precise enough to use for smaller parcels (<35 acres) as well as larger parcels.	Gunnison County, CO		Implemented	More accurately account for sage-grouse when reviewing land use applications.
Conservation Program	Gunnison County, CO	Gunnison County Wildlife Conservation Program	Establishment of a county department that primarily addresses Gunnison sage-grouse conservation. Coordinator was hired in 2005, program is ongoing. Works with all federal and state agencies, as well as public and private landowners.	Gunnison County, CO	http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/sage_grouse.html		
Mitigation Fund	Gunnison County, CO	Gunnison Sage-Grouse Conservation Trust Fund	Since 2000, Gunnison has collected an additional fee for waste deposited in the county landfill to support a mitigation fund. A committee of county commissioners allocated funds from the mitigation fund to projects benefiting Gunnison Sage-grouse, like conservation easements.	Gunnison County, CO	http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/public_works.html		
Policy	Gunnison County, CO	Gunnison County Strategic Plan (rev May 2011)	Requires designation of areas appropriate for habitat protection, agriculture, industrial, commercial and residential development by 2013. Gunnison Sage-grouse is the primary wildlife species being identified.	Gunnison County, CO	http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/commissioners_pdf/BOCC_Strategic_Plan.pdf		

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Regulation	Gunnison County, CO	Gunnison County Land Use Resolution (Sec 11-106)	Land use regulations intended to: 1) sustain and enhance existing populations of Gunnison Sage-grouse; 2) preclude the need to list or minimize the impact of listing. Primary cooperation with the Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife (providing biological and technical expertise for land use reviews).	Gunnison County, CO	http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/planning_regulations_guidelines.html		
Regulation	Gunnison County, CO	County Annual Road Closures	Gunnison County, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service, closes twelve County roads at 16 closures points annually, to all motorized travel, to protect Gunnison Sage-grouse during their lekking (breeding) season.	Gunnison County, CO	http://www.gunnisoncounty.org/commissioners_pdf/resolutions/2006/Resolution%202006-19.PDF		
Tax initiative	Gunnison County, CO	Gunnison County Land Preservation Fund	A 1% county sales tax generates approximately \$300,000 annually to fund open space and conservation easements, including areas within the Gunnison Sage-grouse Occupied Habitat.	Gunnison County, CO	http://gunnisoncounty.org/gis_maps.html		
Regulation	Harney County, Oregon	Harney County Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Harney County Land Use Ordinance.	The subdivision and partition ordinance is particularly designed to protect and conserve agriculture land in our county. Only 24%+ of this county is private lands but this is the county ordinance required by state law that limits development on those lands, thereby providing significant amounts of regulatory control, particularly on development.	Harney County, Oregon	http://www.co.harney.or.us/PDF_Files/Subdivision%20and%20Partitioning%20Ordinance%2020Revised.pdf		
Policy	Hot Springs County, WY	Wildlife-Sage Grouse, Promote improved habitat, predator control, and (if necessary) suspension of hunting season.	Actions and required measures are to encourage habitat improvements, encourage predator control and if absolutely necessary, suspend hunting seasons to promote population growth.	All Public Lands in Hot Springs County	www.hscounty.com		
Policy	San Miguel County, CO	Gunnison Sage-grouse Rangewide Conservation Plan	Land use code states that it is the policy of the county to identify and protect wildlife habitats for the preservation of wildlife, to encourage land use patterns that avoid disruptions to such habitat, and to prohibit dogs in and adjacent to wildlife habitat areas.	San Miguel County, CO	www.sanmiguelgrouse.org		
Initiative	San Miguel County, CO	Land Heritage Program	Provides willing private landowners with financial incentives to maintain ownership of their land and help protect open space, wildlife habitat and agricultural land within our County. Participating landowners will place a conservation easement on their land, held by a qualified tax-exempt, charitable land trust.	San Miguel County, CO	www.sanmiguelgrouse.org		
Regulation	Stillwater County, MT	Consultation with MFWP	The county does not have any sage-grouse specific policies, but their subdivision regulations require consultation with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks for impacts to species of concern.	Stillwater County, MT			
Policy and Conservation Plan	Washington County, ID	Washington County Comprehensive Plan	In numerous areas of the county's recently approved comprehensive plan, Washington County included protections for the Greater sage-grouse. The intention is to protect the sage-grouse -- particularly lek habitat -- from disturbance from various types of land use, primarily exurban residential development.	Washington County, ID	www.co.washington.id.us/Planning and Zoning/Publications/Comprehensive Plan 2010		

Regional Groups

Appendix: Inventory of State and Local Governments' Conservation Initiatives for Sage-Grouse

Type of Measure	Responding Entity	Name	Synopsis	Jurisdiction for Action	Citation	Stage in Implementation	Achieved and/or Expected Outcomes
Local Working Groups	Utah State University Cooperative Extension	Local Working Groups (See Jurisdiction)	<p>The Utah Community-based Conservation Program (CBCP) encompasses the historical range of greater sage-grouse (<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>, hereafter sage-grouse) in Utah as identified in the 2002 Strategic Management Plan for Sage-grouse.</p> <p>The strategies presented in each LWG plan meet the guidelines set forth by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in their Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts (PECE) standards. The conservation strategies and actions address the five USFWS listing factors as they apply to sage-grouse in each LWG area. Plan recommendations and guidance are voluntarily being implemented by all LWGs. The LWGs meet regularly to review actions and encourage adoption of Plan conservation strategies and actions. In 2010-2011, additional emphasis was placed on updating the Plans to incorporate strategies to address the conservation threats identified in the USFWS (2010) decision to designate sage-grouse as a candidate species for protection under the Endangered Species Act of 1973). All 10 Utah LWGs have completed sage-grouse conservation plans. These plans and summaries of LWG activities can be found online at utahcbcp.org.</p>	<p>11 groups in historical sage-grouse habitat, most crossing county lines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •West Box Elder CRM •Carbon - Emery (CaCoARM) Castle Country •Color Country (CCARM) •Morgan - Summit (MSARM) •Parker Mountain (PARM) •Rich County CRM •Monticello / Dove Creek (SWOG) •Southwest Desert (SWARM) •Strawberry Valley (SVARM) •Uintah Basin (UBARM) •West Desert (WDARM) 	www.utahcbcp.org		
Guide	Utah State University Cooperative Extension	Working with Sage-Grouse Local Working Groups: A Practical Guide for NRCS Staff	A guide produced by USU with a grant from NRCS to help NRCS staff better assist LWGs.	All sage-grouse habitat	http://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/pub__6725429.pdf		