A Report on National Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Measures

Tom Rinkes
BLM Idaho State Office
Sage-grouse National Technical Team (NTT)

- Team was identified as part of BLM’s National Sage-grouse Planning Strategy
NTT Charge & Purpose

• Understand current scientific knowledge
• Provide specialized sources of expertise
• Provide innovative scientific perspectives concerning management approaches
• Provide assurance that relevant science is considered, reasonably interpreted, and accurately presented; and that uncertainties and risks are acknowledged and documented.
NTT Charge & Purpose (cont.)

• Provide science and technical assistance to the Regional Management Team (RMT) and Regional Interdisciplinary Team (RIDT).
• Articulate conservation objectives for the greater sage-grouse in measurable terms to guide overall planning.
Goal

• Maintain and/or increase sage-grouse abundance and distribution by conserving, enhancing or restoring the sagebrush ecosystem upon which populations depend in cooperation with other conservation partners.
  – sagebrush communities and landscapes (50-70% SB landscape cover for long-term persistence)
  – collaborative conservation efforts
Objective

• The overall objective is to protect priority sage-grouse habitats from anthropogenic disturbances that will reduce distribution or abundance of sage-grouse.
Priority Habitats (Areas)

• Priority sage-grouse habitats are areas that have the highest conservation value to maintaining or increasing sage-grouse populations.
  - Breeding, late brood-rearing, winter concentration areas, and where known, migration or connectivity corridors
  - Identified by state fish and wildlife agencies
  - Ensure activities immediately outside priority areas do not impact priority habitat
Sub-Objectives

- Designate priority sage-grouse habitats
- Maintain or increase current populations
  - manage or restore priority areas, 70% SB cover
- Quantifiable habitat and population objectives with WAFWA
- Manage priority areas for discrete disturbances so they are less than 3% of the area, regardless of ownership
Disturbances

• Discrete - having a distinct measurable impact in space and time
  – Ex: roads, power lines, oil/gas wells, tall structures

• Diffuse - pressure is exerted over broad spatial or temporal scales
  – Ex: livestock grazing
  Fire can be either discrete or diffuse – scale related
Two spatial extents for measuring anthropogenic disturbance

• Large-scale disturbances that impact sage-grouse distribution and abundance at any level will not be permitted within priority areas

• Smaller scale proposed anthropogenic disturbances will not disturb more than a total of 3% of the acreage within each priority area
  – Concentrating or clustering disturbances
Conservation Measures

• Designed to achieve population and habitat objectives

• Organized by resource programs
Conservation Measures

- Travel and Transportation
- Recreation
  Special Recreation Permits (SRP)
- Lands/Realty
  Rights of Way
  Land Tenure Adjustment
  Proposed Land Withdrawals
Conservation Measures

Range Management

• Implementing Management Actions after Land Health and Habitat Evaluations
• Riparian Areas and Wet Meadows
• Treatments to Increase Forage for Livestock/Wild Ungulates
• Structural Range Improvements and Livestock Management Tools
• Retirement of Grazing Privileges
Conservation Measures

- Wild Horse and Burro Management
Conservation Measures

- Minerals
  - Fluid Minerals
    - Unleased Federal Fluid Mineral Estate
    - Leased Federal Fluid Mineral Estate
  - Solid Minerals
    - Coal
    - Locatable Minerals
  - Non-energy Leasable Minerals
    (e.g., sodium, potash)
  - Saleable Mineral Materials
  - Mineral Split Estate
Conservation Measures

• Wildfire Suppression, Fuels Management and Fire Rehabilitation
  – Fuels Management
  – Fire operations
  – Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ES&R)
Conservation Measures

• Habitat Restoration

• Monitoring of Sage-grouse and Sagebrush Habitats
Appendices

- Life History Requirements
- Scientific Inference
- BMPs WNv
- BMPs for Fluid Mineral Development
- BMPs for Locatable Mineral Development
- BMPs for Fire & Fuels (WO IM 2011-138)
- NTT Members
Questions?