

Agenda Item Summary

BACKGROUND

Members of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies signed an MOU in 1999 and were joined by federal agencies in 2000 to develop a conservation assessment and management strategy for sage grouse. Each state committed to proactively contribute to local needs of sage grouse and sagebrush shrub steppe habitat management thus contributing to an overall national conservation plan.

Oregon formed a Sage Grouse Conservation Planning Team in the Fall of 2001 to coordinate conservation, management, and research on sage grouse. The Team is a cooperative alliance of government and private entities. In August 2005, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife (Commission) adopted Oregon's Sage Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy. Working with the Team, and considering new information gathered since 2005, a revised and updated plan has been drafted. Taking into consideration public comment on the plan, revisions and edits to the draft plan will be presented to the Commission for proposed adoption in December 2010.

Concurrent with the effort to update Oregon's plan the USFWS considered three petitions to give protection to greater sage-grouse under the Federal Endangered Species Act. In March 2010, USFWS recommended that sage-grouse warranted listing under the Federal ESA but were precluded by higher listing priorities. This finding will provide the flexibility necessary for Oregon to continue state-led conservation efforts on the bird's behalf.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Seven public meetings were held (six eastside, one west) and meetings with four County Courts in the planning area were conducted.
- The draft plan is posted on the department website.
- Public comment solicited from July 6 through September 30, 2010.

ISSUE

Information on Oregon Sage Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy planning effort.

ANALYSIS

The department in cooperation with other government agencies (state and federal) and private entities have revised the 2005 Plan for the conservation and management of sage grouse in Oregon. The revised draft includes a refinement of population estimates, implementation accomplishments, and proposed core area approach to habitat mitigation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Informational only. No action requested at this time.

DRAFT MOTION

No Action requested at this time.

EFFECTIVE DATE