

DIVISION 140
GREATER SAGE-GROUSE CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR OREGON

635-140-0000

Purpose

These administrative rules establish the state policy for the protection and enhancement of Greater Sage-Grouse in Oregon. The Commission anticipates that these policies will be implemented by Department staff as described in the [Department's] "Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy for Oregon" plan, **most of** which is not, however, incorporated into this rule. (Copies of the plan are available through the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.) **OAR 635-140-0005 and 635-140-0010 incorporate into rule those portions of the plan which set population and habitat management objectives. OAR 635-140-0015 incorporates those portions of the plan which govern the Department's core area strategy and recommendations concerning conservation and mitigation.**

635-140-0005

Population Management [Objectives]

In accordance with the Wildlife Policy (ORS 496.012), the primary goal is to restore, maintain and enhance populations of greater sage-grouse such that multiple uses of populations and their habitats can continue. Regional and state population objectives shall be identified based on the best information available.

[Population management objectives for statewide and regional populations for sage grouse are as follows:]

[~~(1) Objective 1—Statewide:~~]

(1) Policy: Manage greater sage-grouse statewide to maintain or enhance [sage-grouse numbers] **their abundance** and distribution at the 2003 spring breeding population level, approximately [4] **30,000 birds over the next 50 years.** [~~until 2055.~~]

(2) Objectives: Consistent with the population management policy, achieve the following regional population objectives: [~~(2) Objective 2—~~]

1 (a) Baker Resource Area BLM: maintain or enhance greater sage-grouse [~~numbers~~]
2 abundance and distribution at the 2003 spring breeding population level, approximately
3 [~~3~~] 2,000 birds, [~~until 2055.~~]

4 [~~(3) Objective 3~~] (b) Vale District BLM (~~[not including]~~ excluding Baker Resource
5 Area BLM): maintain or enhance greater sage-grouse [~~numbers~~] abundance and
6 distribution at the 2003 spring breeding population level, approximately 11[~~6~~],000 birds,
7 [~~until 2055.~~]

8 [~~(4) Objective 4~~] (c) Burns District BLM: maintain or enhance greater sage-grouse
9 [~~numbers~~] abundance and distribution at the 2003 spring breeding population level,
10 approximately [~~6,5~~] 4,300 birds, [~~until 2055.~~]

11 [~~(5) Objective 5~~] (d) Lakeview District BLM: maintain or enhance greater sage-grouse
12 [~~numbers~~] abundance and distribution at the 2003 spring breeding population level,
13 approximately [~~12,0~~] 9,400 birds, [~~until 2055.~~]

14 [~~(6) Objective 6~~] (e) Prineville District BLM: restore greater sage-grouse [~~numbers~~]
15 abundance and distribution near the 1980 spring breeding population level,
16 approximately 3,000 birds, [~~until 2055.~~]

17

18 **635-140-0010**

19 **Habitat Management [Objectives]**

20 **(1) The habitat goals are to:**

21 **(a) maintain or enhance the distribution of sagebrush habitats within greater sage-**
22 **grouse range in Oregon; and**

23 **(b) manage those habitats in a variety of structural stages to benefit greater sage-**
24 **grouse.**

25 [~~Statewide and regional habitat objectives for sage-grouse are as follows:~~]

26 [~~(1) Objective 1~~—~~Statewide: retain~~] **(2) Policy: Manage a minimum of** [~~≥~~]70% of
27 **greater** sage-grouse range [~~as~~] **for** sagebrush habitat in advanced structural stages,
28 sagebrush class 3, 4 or 5, with an emphasis on classes 4 and 5. The remaining
29 **approximately** 30% [~~with~~] includes **g** areas of juniper encroachment, non-sagebrush
30 shrubland, and grassland **and should be managed to increase available habitat within**
31 **greater sage-grouse range.** [~~that potentially can be rehabilitated or enhanced.~~]

1 [~~(2) Objective 2— Maintain 100% of~~] **(3) Objective: To maintain and enhance** existing
2 sagebrush habitats and enhance potential habitats that have been disturbed **such that**
3 **there is no net loss of sagebrush habitat** in the following regions [~~Existing conditions~~
4 are]:

5 (a) Baker Resource Area **BLM**: 82% sagebrush and 18% disturbed habitats.

6 (b) Vale District **BLM** (~~not including~~) **excluding** Baker **Resource Area**): 7[3]0%
7 sagebrush and [27] **30**% disturbed habitats.

8 (c) Burns District **BLM**: 68% sagebrush and 32% disturbed habitats.

9 (d) Lakeview District **BLM**: 72% sagebrush and 28% disturbed habitats.

10 (e) Prineville District **BLM**: 47% sagebrush and 53% disturbed habitats.

11
12 **635-140-0015**

13 **Core Area Approach to Conservation**

14 **Technical terms used in this section are defined in the Glossary of the Greater Sage-**
15 **Grouse Conservation Assessment and Strategy for Oregon adopted by the**
16 **Commission on April 22, 2011 (copies of the plan are available through the Oregon**
17 **Department of Fish and Wildlife).**

18 **(1) The goal of establishing core areas is to address greater sage-grouse management**
19 **from a conservation biology perspective that identifies the most productive**
20 **populations and habitats that meets all life history needs.**

21 **(a) Policy 1. The Department shall develop and maintain maps that identify core**
22 **area habitats necessary to conserve 90% of Oregon’s greater sage-grouse population**
23 **with emphasis on highest density and important use areas which provide for**
24 **breeding, wintering and connectivity corridors.**

25 **Objective 1. Consistent with Policy 1, the Department shall use the following**
26 **criteria to define core area habitat. All sagebrush types or other habitats that**
27 **support greater sage-grouse that are encompassed by areas:**

28 **(A) of very high, high and moderate lek density strata;**

29 **(B) where low lek density strata overlap local connectivity corridors; or**

30 **(C) where winter habitat-use polygons overlap with either low lek density strata,**
31 **connectivity corridors, or occupied habitat.**

1 **(b) Policy 2. The Department shall develop and maintain maps that identify low**
2 **density habitat which provide breeding, summer, and migratory habitats of the**
3 **Oregon statewide greater sage-grouse population.**

4 **Objective 2. Consistent with Policy 2, the Department shall use the following criteria**
5 **to define low density habitat. All sagebrush types or other habitats that support**
6 **greater sage-grouse that are encompassed by areas where:**

7 **(A) low lek density overlapped with seasonal connectivity corridors;**

8 **(B) local corridors occurred outside of all lek density strata;**

9 **(C) low lek density strata occur outside of connectivity corridors; or**

10 **(D) seasonal connectivity corridors occur outside of all lek density strata.**

11 **(c) When developing and maintaining the maps referred to in paragraphs (a) and**
12 **(b) the Department will use:**

13 **(A) Local Sage-Grouse Implementation Teams to evaluate the maps and refine**
14 **exterior boundaries by use of aerial imagery and local knowledge of sage-grouse and**
15 **sage-grouse habitat; and**

16 **(B) best available science to further understanding of greater sage-grouse life**
17 **history and conservation needs.**

18 **(2) Application of Sage Grouse Core Area and Low Density Habitat Categorizations**
19 **and Conservation Recommendations.**

20 **(a) Policy 1. The Department shall follow the Fish and Wildlife Habitat Mitigation**
21 **Policy (OAR 635-415-000) when defining habitat categories and providing**
22 **recommendations to address potential site-level impacts to greater sage-grouse and**
23 **their habitats.**

24 **(b) Policy 2. The Department recommends the following conservation guidelines,**
25 **incorporated here by reference are the “Action,” “Issue” and “Conservation**
26 **Guidelines” text from Chapter V of the Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation**
27 **Assessment and Strategy for Oregon adopted by the Commission on April 22, 2011**
28 **(copies available from the Department):**

29 **(A) wildfire;**

30 **(B) prescribed fire;**

31 **(C) livestock grazing;**

- 1 **(D) juniper expansion;**
- 2 **(E) invasive vegetation;**
- 3 **(F) vegetation treatment;**
- 4 **(G) realty;**
- 5 **(H) energy development;**
- 6 **(I) climate change;**
- 7 **(J) recreation;**
- 8 **(K) predation;**
- 9 **(L) West Nile virus; and**
- 10 **(M) regulatory.**
- 11
- 12 [~~635-140-0025~~
- 13 ~~Five-Year Review~~
- 14 ~~The Department will review the Plan every five years.]~~