Jodie Delavan/OSO/R1/FWS/DOI
07/27/2012 09:24 AM

To pat_deibert@fws.gov
cc
bcc
Subject powder river basin

History: This message has been replied to.

Pat, Here is a template start of WY narrative for the Powder River Basin (includes paragraph given to us by Rick re: montana). If needed, I could probably do the same for Jackson and wy basin (plenty of info on those) but not as easily for Laramie. So if you haven't started your write ups, if you could start with Laramie that might be best... because I can at least draft something remotely reasonable for the other pops... Jodie

---

Powder River Basin

The Powder River Basin occurs mostly in Northeast Wyoming, but Montana includes the extreme northern tip of this population. A recent sagebrush cover assessment estimated average cover of sagebrush in the Powder River Basin to be 35 percent, with an average sagebrush patch size less than 300 acres (Rowland et al. 2005) *****pulled this sentence from 2006 NE WY state plan, not rowland so I did not verify***** . Sagebrush patch size in the Powder River Basin has decreased by more than 63 percent in forty years, down from 820 acre patches and an overall coverage of 41 percent in 1964. Most of the occupied sage-grouse habitat in northeast Wyoming is privately owned. Approximately 70 percent of known leks, or strutting grounds used during the breeding season, are found on private land; the remaining 30 percent are found on U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and State lands (cite the ne wy state plan 2006).

Garton et al. (2011) reported a minimum male count for this population at 3,042 and projected a high probability (86.2 percent) probability of falling below 200 males by 2107. A recent viability study done for BLM (Taylor et al. 2012) indicates that sage-grouse viability in the Powder River Basin is being impacted by multiple stressors including West Nile virus and energy development. Their results suggest that if development continues, future viability of the already small sage-grouse populations in northeast Wyoming will be compromised. The Powder River Basin holds vast energy resources including oil, natural gas, and CBNG (2006 ne wy state plan, Figure 12). To balance the priorities of retaining healthy sage-grouse population on the landscape and energy development, the state developed a core area conservation strategy that…*describe how it addresses threat a bit*

Although this makes up a relatively small portion of the population, it may provide genetic connectivity with other Montana populations. Land use in Montana's portion of this population includes a mix of livestock grazing, coal mining, and shallow coal bed natural gas production. Montana identified relatively small but intact habitats that have limited energy development and may serve as remnant habitat for supporting small numbers of sage-grouse into the future. The expanding threat of energy development across this population and corresponding downward population index trends make this an at risk (C2) population.

~~*~

Jodie Delavan
Oregon Shrubsteppe Coordinator
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office
2600 SE 98th Avenue, Suite 100
Portland, OR 97266
Phone: (503)231-6179; Fax: (503)231-6195
~~*~