From: Lohoefener, Ren
To: Noreen Walsh
Cc: Richard Hannan
Subject: Re: draft to WAFWA EOC: for your review if you choose
Date: Wednesday, December 10, 2014 9:02:15 AM

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fine by me thanks

On Wed, Dec 10, 2014 at 7:55 AM, Noreen Walsh <noreen_walsh@fws.gov> wrote:

> Ren,
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> Richard and I had a good conversation with Virgil yesterday to put in place the plan we discussed at WAFWA. I propose to send this today. If you have a chance to look and have any strong feelings, holler at me. If you don't have time, no worries.
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> NW
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> Good morning Virgil,
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> Thank you for your ongoing interest in and support for the collective greater sage-grouse conservation efforts and our desire to complete a thorough and objective status review. Even with the likely pause in timing of any decision, we will still want to benefit from the information you and all the EOC members can provide about conservation efforts and status of the species. As part of our commitment to making any future determination comprehensive and defensible, we have been thinking about how to structure our review and analysis. As we discussed with the EOC in July, we intend to employ modeling as one of the tools for evaluating potential future trends given the status of the species, the status of known threats, and partners' completed and ongoing conservation actions. While we plan to provide another overview at the January EOC meeting, I wanted to provide some information now about the specific models the Service is considering using in the status review.

There are seven abundance, trend, and distribution models that we hope to review as part of our process, as well as several models that evaluate risk from major known threats. These models are currently under development by professionals from various agencies, states, and non-governmental organizations including: U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Resiliency and Resistance Team, and Michigan Technological University. The Service is complimenting this existing work with one distribution model that we have updated from an earlier publication with input from our partners. We are also updating one of risk models (dealing with oil and gas development) from an earlier published report.

I have attached a list of all the models under consideration for our review. These are the models the Service identified following the expert workshop on modeling that we convened this past September. We brought state biologists together with other sage-grouse and modeling experts to discuss the options for analysis at a workshop in September, 2014. While there may be other models that could be relevant, this list includes models that we anticipated would be completed on a timeline compatible with our status review schedule.

The Service is committed to working with our partners throughout this process. For the modeling effort, we are working with states to gain best available scientific information through the Rangewide Interagency Sage-grouse Conservation (RISC) Team and WAFWA sage-grouse technical team biologists for each state. Initially, during the workshop, we requested information about projects occurring rangewide or at management zone levels. We will continue to coordinate with state biologists to assess the completed models and also potential scenarios.

Thank you again for your ongoing commitment to greater sage-grouse conservation. Please feel free to share this information with the WAFWA Sage-Grouse EOC and we will look forward to talking more with you all more in January. Don’t hesitate to call prior to that if we can answer any

questions.

Noreen

Noreen Walsh

Regional Director

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