From: Dan Ashe
To: Noreen Walsh
Subject: Re: For Awareness: Idaho Statesman Interior Secretary Sally Jewell will return to Idaho to deal with sage grouse
Date: Monday, May 18, 2015 9:42:48 AM

Please do!

Sent from my iPhone

On May 18, 2015, at 11:35 AM, Noreen Walsh <noreen_walsh@fws.gov> wrote:

> Dan, unless you indicate I should NOT, I plan to use your powerful wording below about how the sage effort is intimately related to other priorities we hold in a variety of contexts. Of course we would not use it in the context of your exchange with the Secretary but just to illustrate this effort is not a single species effort, instead an effort to save an entire system and connect our youth to the past and the future.
>
> Noreen
>
> *Noreen Walsh*
> *Regional Director*
> *Mountain-Prairie Region*
> *U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service*
> *303 236 7920*
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Dan Ashe [mailto:d_m_ashe@fws.gov]
> **Sent:** Saturday, May 16, 2015 6:37 AM
> **To:** Sally Jewell
> **Cc:** Kershaw, Jessica; Janice Schneider; James Lyons; Neil Kornze; Michael Bean; Kate Kelly; Blake Androff; Sarah Greenberger; Kristen (Kris) Sarri
> **Subject:** Re: For Awareness: Idaho Statesman Interior Secretary Sally Jewell will return to Idaho to deal with sage grouse
>
> Great article. Well said, and this is "remarkable." But as you do your 1:1, you should correct the
> implication that this is a distraction from your priorities on climate change and youth. As a result of our
> hard work and this epic partnership, this dominant western landscape -- this sagebrush sea -- will
> be more resilient. Resilience being the key to climate adaptation. And so, the western culture,
> economy, and way-of-life will also be more resilient. This effort will pave the way for more thoughtful,
> collaborative and effective climate adaptation. Yes, it's about the sage grouse, but so much more!
>
> For instance, for at least three generations, land managers have known about, but

found the issue
of cheatgrass and fire "hopeless." Aldo Leopold wrote about it, in 1949, in his classic, "A Sand
County Almanac.

*"I listened carefully for clues whether the West has accepted cheat as a necessary evil, to be lived with
until kingdom come, or whether it regards cheat as a challenge to rectify its past errors in land-use. I
found the hopeless attitude almost universal".*

We are ending this era of hopelessness.

And in doing so, we are creating the potential for next generations of young people to know the
Western U.S., it's expanse, it's beauty, it's bounty. In the future, young people will be inspired
by it, as was a young Aldo Leopold, and as we are. They likely won't know of Sally Jewell, and
certainly not any of us lesser bureaucratic-beings, but they will be inspired by it, and that is what
we are trying to do. Yes, it's about the sage grouse. But, oh, so much more.

And, P.S. -- none of this would be happening if there wasn't a thing called the Endangered Species
Act!

Dan.

Dan Ashe
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

On May 15, 2015, at 7:37 PM, Sally Jewell <srj2@ios.doi.gov> wrote:

> Got it - thanks! I really appreciate the team's work on making this happen! Have a good weekend. SJ
>
> Sent from my iPhone
>
> On May 15, 2015, at 7:10 PM, Kershaw, Jessica <jessica_kershaw@ios.doi.gov> wrote:
>
>> Sally -
>>
>> Rocky Barker, of the ID Statesman - who you are scheduled to do a short hike with in ID after the press conference next week - put together this curtain raiser on your trip to Boise, related to the immense challenge that

sage grouse conservation planning is, juxtaposed to fire and your other priorities. It's a decent take on a balancing act - worth a read before the 1:1 w/him.

See you in Boise,
Jessica

Idaho Statesman Interior Secretary Sally

Jewell will return to Idaho to deal with

sage grouse

BY ROCKY BARKER

rbarker

<image001.jpg>

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell discussed sage grouse and fire with BLM Twin Falls District Manager Mike Courtney in an October 2014 hike near Kimberly.

ROCKY BARKER — rbarker@idahostatesman.com

Interior Secretary Sally Jewell is returning to Idaho for the fourth time since President Barack Obama picked her to be the nation's public landlord in March 2013.

Jewell, Gov. Butch Otter and others will hold a press conference Tuesday in the Boise Foothills. The former REI CEO will talk about wildfires, the same issue she came to talk about the last three times. That's not surprising since Boise is the home of the National Interagency Fire Center, the nerve center for fighting fires.

But Jewell's last trip and this trip will focus on fire and sage grouse. The 2-foot-tall bird has become a major chore for the former oil and gas drilling engineer, who had been an active member of the environmental community before she went to Washington, D.C.

Adapting to and helping to combat climate change was a major initiative of President Obama's, which she has pushed as well.

She hoped to user her national soapbox to continue her personal campaign to get kids outside, and to improve American Indian schools that come under her responsibility.

But the potential listing of the grouse as a threatened species — the symbol of the health of the West's sagebrush ecosystem — has forced Jewell to spend a lot more time on the issue than she expected when she was appointed.

The sagebrush sea, once 290 million acres, has been cut in half over the past century, and in the Great Basin that includes Idaho, Oregon, Nevada and Utah, fire has been the final destroyer of much of that desert land. Jewell heard it from her biologists, ecologists and range managers, and from governors such as Idaho's Butch Otter.

In Idaho last October, she saw the effects of giant fires, standing on China Mountain southwest of Twin Falls and meeting with ranchers, conservation groups and others. Tens of thousands of acres of previously rich sagebrush steppe had been converted, largely by fire, to alien cheatgrass.

In November, Jewell's assistant secretary for land and mineral management, Janice Schnieder, led resource agency heads and scientists from across the West in a sage grouse conference that laid the groundwork for Jewell to order a comprehensive strategy to reduce the size, severity and cost of rangeland fires.

Getting an entire bureaucracy of firefighting agencies, land managers and wildlife biologists all moving the same direction is not easy. Climate change has increased fire intensity and spread for at least the past 20 years. But only now is the fire threat to the sagebrush sea rising to a place of prominence in the national discussion. It had been largely ignored, as were the birds by some of these same agencies only a decade ago.

Interior issued its initial report in March that talked about slowing the spread of cheatgrass and other invasive species, and positioning fire trucks and other equipment for quicker response to sagebrush fires. The follow-up long-term report will be released next week.

John Freemuth, the Boise State University political science professor who has advised Interior officials working on the fire and sage grouse report, observed the inaction of the past decade

and called the changes Jewell has made “remarkable.”

“She deserves credit for putting her foot on the gas and getting it done,” Freemuth said.

But he’s waiting to see whether the firefighters and their agencies realize that the traditional way they’ve operated is changing now to protect the sagebrush habitat.

“This is not political smoke, its serious,” Freemuth said. “Everybody’s got to remember it’s not just this summer, but also the summers after.”

http://www.idahostatesman.com/2015/05/15/3802044_interior-secretary-returning-to.html?rh=1

Read more here:
http://www.idahostatesman.com/2015/05/15/3802044_interior-secretary-returning-to.html?rh=1#storylink=cpy

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