From: Lyons, James
To: Noreen Walsh
Subject: Re: draft
Date: Thursday, January 15, 2015 3:36:19 PM

I would sent it to Ed and Steve Ellis with these minor changes:

I wanted to check in with you all about the stronghold maps as I hear there are some discussions about BLM modifications of the maps. We fully support efforts to reconcile minor technical issues with our stronghold maps and are actively working to address those issues and make appropriate changes, if any, in our product.

However, we do not support changes to the our original stronghold polygon boundaries because those boundaries identify the landscapes the current scientific literature indicates are important for long-term persistence of the species (i.e., strongholds). Also, the polygons are landscape scale, and we fully anticipated**,** in capturing the **specific areas we identified,** to **ensure that the polygons be protected -- through NSO no exceptions and withdrawals -- in their entirety. Where t**he polygons also capture minor areas of general habitat or non-habitat **within them, we anticipated that these would be treated in the same way as the rest of the stronghold**.

To go beyond correcting minor technical map boundary errors, or to eliminate those minor "inholdings" of technical habitat" will compromise the strongholds' purpose and value. To significantly change the original stronghold boundaries would fragment or compromise the ecological integrity of those landscapes and would negate the intent of the stronghold concept and its value to range-wide sage-grouse conservation efforts. **If BLM proposes to change these polygons, we would like to see the maps before they are deemed final and direction is given to modify them in the final plans.**

Thank you.

On Thu, Jan 15, 2015 at 2:32 PM, Noreen Walsh <noreen_walsh@fws.gov> wrote:

Draft, for your thoughts. Who all needs to get this from me?

I wanted to check in with you all about the stronghold maps as I hear there are some discussions about BLM modifications of the maps. We fully support efforts to reconcile minor technical issues with our stronghold maps and are actively working to address those issues and make appropriate changes, if any, in our product.

However, we do not support changes to the our original stronghold polygon boundaries because those boundaries identify the landscapes the current scientific literature indicates are important for long-term persistence of the species (i.e., strongholds). Also, the polygons are landscape scale, and we fully anticipated in capturing the necessary landscape to sustain populations, the polygons would also capture minor areas of general habitat or non-habitat.

To go beyond correcting minor technical map boundary errors, or to eliminate those minor "inholdings" of technical habitat" will compromise the strongholds' purpose and value. To significantly change the original stronghold boundaries would fragment or compromise the ecological integrity of those landscapes and would negate the intent of the stronghold concept and its value to range-wide sage-grouse conservation efforts.

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