From: Sitz, Angela
To: Holm, Jason
Cc: Anna Harris; Paul Henson; Elizabeth Materna; Jeff Everett; Rollie White
Subject: Re: Post call notes
Date: Thursday, March 19, 2015 10:43:35 AM
Attachments: EVENT MEMO Draft 3.18.2015 post DOI planning call asitz.docx

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Hi all,

Attached are my edits to the Event Memo, not too many, my main concern is the talking points are nearly identical to what Richard Hannan said yesterday, since there will likely be a lot of the same attendees at the Celebration and they are only a little more than a week apart, I strongly suggest we re-work the talking points.

Thanks, Angela

On Wed, Mar 18, 2015 at 2:38 PM, Holm, Jason <jason_holm@fws.gov> wrote:

> I've tried to capture what we heard. Some changes, but not many that make it harder to pull off.
>
> First, they currently land in REDMOND at 12:26. We asked them to look into Bend, but there appears to be some requirements (I'm not aware of) for airports.
>
> They are planning on attending the last 30 minutes of a SageCon council meeting. They asked if the meeting could be at the Forest Service building (20-25 people). They are working with the state to plan the meeting, so it might already be in the works for some other location, but DOI did ask...
>
> So now the ceremony would start at 2. I've updated the agenda. They'd like Secretary to introduce Governor..... (or Merkley if he's there).
>
> They didn't really answer the question about congressional involvement, but we can assume they will do the ask, and we'll plug in any principle who shows up into the speaking role.
>
> They are doing the formal (Email) invites based off of our list and input from Oregon.
>
> They wanted to drop the state part of the tour, and spend more time at whiskey ranch (who wouldn't). I made a best guess on times. She'd like to walk around. So anyone (up to 10 people--no more) who need to talk to her (outside the entourage) need to be there.
>
> Lek tour...2, 7 pax vehicles will be necessary. Governor planning on going on tour. BLM district director...(Robyn too, perhaps).
>
> Yes on breakfast. Anna making reservations for 15.
>
> That's all for now....if you get to a place where you can look at these agendas, tell me what you think.

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Oregon CCAA Event

DATE: March 27, 2015

LOCATION: Bend, Oregon

TIME: 1:00 pm

FROM: Robyn Thorson

I. PURPOSE

This purpose of this event is to celebrate the efforts of the State of Oregon, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and private landowners in conserving greater sage-grouse in Oregon.

The event includes three parts: 1) a visit with the SageCon Policy Team during their monthly meeting to provide an opportunity for the Secretary to hear feedback about the process from team members, 2) the celebratory event with the signing of a commemorative declaration to conserve sage-grouse with Governor Kate Brown, U.S. Department of Agriculture Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment Ann Mills, and Oregon Cattlemen's Association President Elect John O'Keefe, and 3) field tour with U.S. Department of Agriculture, State of Oregon, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to private ranches where landowners are voluntarily conserving sage grouse.

II. PARTICIPANTS

CCAA Event

- Governor Brown
- Senior Executives from USDA
- State Directors BLM, NRCS, OR Dept. Fish and Wildlife, and
- OR Dept. of State Lands
- Oregon Cattlemen's Association President-Elect
- Oregon Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Oregon Ranchers

Field Tour

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Oregon State Officials
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Private landowners

III. AGENDA

12:27 pm Secretary of the Interior's arrives Redmond Airport (we still recommend Bend Municipal, if possible)
12:30 pm Depart Redmond Airport
1:00 pm Arrival at Deschutes National Forest Office

1:05 pm SageCon Policy team meeting (DOI + Governor)

1:45 pm break from meeting/prep for ceremony

2:00 pm pm Signing Ceremony begins
Regional Director, Robyn Thorson will act as master of ceremonies
2:05 pm Secretary Jewell speaks
You will give talking points and introduce Senator Merkley or Governor Brown
2:15 pm Senator Jeff Merkley speaks - UNCONFIRMED
2:25 pm Oregon Governor Brown speaks
2:35 pm Deputy Under Secretary USDA Ann Mills speaks
2:45 pm Oregon Cattlemen's Association President Elect, John O'Keefe, speaks
2:55 pm Commemorative Signing
You will sign, alongside the Governor, and the Under Secretary Mills a commemorative document
3:05 pm Media gaggle
You will be available for interviews

3:30 pm Depart for Field Tour
You will travel with smaller group to Pringle Flat Road, Brothers, Oregon to visit properties of two private landowners that have been active in sage grouse conservation.
4:15 pm Arrive Brothers, Oregon (Pringle Flat)
You will visit with private property owners Jeff and Runinda McCormack and Taylor and Becky Hyde of Hatfield Ranches ~~- UNCONFIRMED~~. Discuss steps they are taking to address threats to sage grouse and how it effects ranching operations. NRCS will provide before and after photos of a site that was treated for juniper. (Driving tour/some walking/standing discussion with landowners)

4:45 pm Continue on driving tour/discussion on landscape threats, and

5:15 pm Depart Brothers (Pringle Flat) for Bend via Alfalfa Market Road

6:00 pm Arrive Bend

Comment [AS1]: FYI, Becky confirmed they will be attending, she has worked on the Klamath issue for a number of years and has met with the Secretary in the past, she was very excited about the opportunity and had very positive things to say about the Secretary.

IV. KEY FACTS/HOT TOPICS

The BLM is in the process of revising their Resource Management Plans in Oregon and the state and some stakeholders are concerned about unknown pending changes.

Comment [AS2]: Particularly cattleman's

The Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership of Oregon (SageCon), is soon to release their draft State Management Plan for Oregon to address "all lands, all threats." The approach will guide management throughout the state's agencies and is intended to conserve sage grouse and support community sustainability in central and eastern Oregon into the future.

Stakeholders may have other concerns related to the other listings of greater prairie chicken and bi-state population of greater sage-grouse and Gunnison sage-grouse where similar conservation efforts have been tried.

The response to the rider on the spending bill may still be on stakeholder's minds.

V. TALKING POINTS/REMARKS

SageCon Policy Team Meeting

Comment [AS3]: I suggest we have a Service rep at this meeting, Jeff Everett and/or Shauna Ginger have both been engaged, ask Paul for guidance of course.

Thank those for arranging your meeting so I can attend.

I'd like to start by saying, we are very impressed by what we see happening in Oregon. The forethought of the state to convene these partners to solve these resource problems by working together is encouraging.

I would like to hear from you on how the SageCon process has helped you work through the tough resource issues and how the state plan is progressing.

I want to hear your feedback on how the group works together effectively with such varied interests and perspectives.

I'd like to touch on lingering concerns of the group. From what I understand the BLM revisions to RMPs have not yet been released and this lack of certainty can be unsettling. Also, treatment of mitigation across private, state and federal boundaries is still being worked out and somewhat uncertain.

What I can assure you today is that your work in Oregon is a model under ESA recovery– these CCAAs signed last week, the 9 million dollars provided through NRCS, the landowners willing to enroll, the Oregon legislature's efforts to fund sage-grouse conservation efforts through proposed taxes on salt feed for cattle and

birdseed. You all are making a tremendous contribution to sage grouse conservation and I guarantee that these efforts will be taken into account for the listing decision.

CCAA Event

Attachment Below

Field Tour

Attachment Below

VI. BACKGROUND

SageCon

With review of the greater sage-grouse listing status imminent, Oregon saw an immediate need to broaden their discussion on development activities as well as natural and anthropogenic threats across the landscape. Thus, Oregon convened the Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership (SageCon) with NRCS, BLM and USFWS to develop coordination of efforts, both regulatory and voluntary, and to address and support sage grouse conservation. The SageCon Partnership lists three objectives: 1) provide a forum for coordination of federal, state, local and private efforts to conserve sage grouse in Oregon; 2) inventory existing approaches and identify additional strategies to address the full range of threats to sage grouse viability and recovery in Eastern Oregon; and 3) coordinate with the Service on requirements and schedule for the sage grouse ESA listing decision in order to provide input to the USFWS on Oregon's sage grouse and sagebrush habitat conservation strategies/approaches.

SageCon is working to address threats to sage grouse on land under three ownerships, a three-legged stool if you will – federal, state, and private lands. The group has been provided the umbrella of organization and management guidance from which to develop conservation agreements to provide producers a way to continue their economic livelihood while also protecting sage grouse. The agreements are Candidate Conservation Agreements (CCA) and Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAA).

CCAAs

Harney Soil and Water Conservation District was the first to complete their CCAA in spring 2014 and it now has 54~~7~~ landowners and 320,000 acres in various stages of -enroll~~ed.~~ment. Harney served as the model for the other seven Oregon counties (Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Malheur, Lake, Grant, and Union) included in the Multi-County CCAA, which covers more than 2 million acres. On March 18 in Juntura, Oregon, the SWCDs and the USFWS, signed these Multi-County CCAA agreements.

Comment [AS4]: There is no mention of the Moore CCAA

The Department of State Lands CCAA includes 630,000 acres of state lands and is the last leg of this three-legged stool. This agreement is currently out for public review and will be signed in May.

In combination, these greater sage-grouse CCAAs now complete the coverage of all non-federal greater sage-grouse habitat in Oregon – over 4 million acres.

The SWCDs will seek landowners interested in conducting voluntary conservation actions outlined in the CCAAs that will benefit the greater sage-grouse. Each landowner will have a site-specific plan with conservation measures selected from the CCAAs that address the identified threats to greater sage-grouse on their properties and that are compatible with their economic and land management goals.

Landowners

Comment [AS5]: Should we add information about John O'Keefe and Carol Dunten? I currently have them on the list of 10 folks attending the tour, in addition to the entourage.

The McCormacks own a large ranch east of Bend and have been working to protect greater sage-grouse since the 1980s. They are original members of the Country Natural Beef Cooperative which provides high quality pasture raised beef to consumers throughout the western US. The McCormacks will be enrolling in the Deschutes Soil and Water Conservation District CCAA.

Doc and Connie Hatfield moved from Montana to eastern Oregon and started Country Natural Beef in the 1980s which was founded to find a way to deliver the naturally raised beef products that consumers wanted while allowing ranchers to remain economically and environmentally sustainable. Doc passed away in March of 2012, and now his daughter and son-in-law, Becky and Taylor Hyde, manage the ranch.

VII. DRAFT TALKING POINTS (Ceremony)

Draft Talking Points
Secretary Jewell
March 27, 2015

Suggested length: 8-10 minutes

Acknowledgements:

Oregon Governor Kate Brown

Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and the Environment Ann Mills and NRCS State Director Ron Alvarado

Deputy Director of BLM Steve Ellis and Oregon Director Jerome Perez

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Robyn Thorson, Paul Henson, Jeff Everett, Angela Sitz, Marisa Meyer and many others

Six Soil and Water Conservation Districts covering all greater sage-grouse habitat and the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts Director Jerry Nicolescu

Oregon Cattlemen's Association, John O'keefe

Local Elected Officials

Recommended Talking Points

Thank the U.S. Forest Service and Forest Supervisor John Allen and his staff for hosting the event.

Thank those who travelled to be here today.

Today we celebrate the culmination of many, many people's time and effort. This achievement could not have been accomplished without all of you here today, and lots of others. The US Government greatly appreciates your willingness to come along with us on this bumpy ride.

Today, we celebrate these conservation agreements and the giant step Oregon is taking in the direction to prevent the greater sage-grouse from being listed.

SageCon is a model of what coordination should strive for and we applaud Governor Brown and her Natural Resource Team, Richard Whitman and Brett Brownscombe, for having this vision of partnership.

Sage Grouse and CCAAs

Comment [AS6]: These talking points might need to be re-worked, they appear to be very duplicative to the talking points Rich Hannan spoke from at yesterday's signing, there will be a great deal of attendee overlap from these events. I would be happy to help as needed.

Today we celebrate a monumental achievement for Greater sage grouse conservation.

As we look at the map of Oregon, with all the layers of conservation agreements across the greater sage-grouse habitat, virtually all the bird habitat is covered.

With the BLM CCA, the Harney SWCD CCAA, the Multi-Counties CCAAs signed last week, and the near-final state DSL CCAA – we have completed the patchwork quilt of sage grouse conservation for the entire state – both public and private. These agreements provide an opportunity for private landowners to enroll not only their private lands but also their BLM allotments. With the completion of the DSL CCAA all state rangelands will implement voluntary measures to protect sage-grouse.

In total, the contribution of all CCAAs in Oregon has the potential to conserve almost 4 million acres of sage grouse habitat.

Harney Soil and Water Conservation district paved the way with the first CCAA in Oregon. It's not always easy to be at the front of the line, so I applaud those in

Harney County for trusting in us. Within months of Harney SWCD completing their agreement, these 5 other SWCDs sat down at the table to do the same thing.

We believe these cooperative, voluntary partnerships are the best way to get on-the-ground conservation for candidate species.

Conservation of the sage-grouse has been likened to a three-legged stool. The legs of the stool can be described in a number of ways –

Comment [AS7]: This was a quote from Rich yesterday, might be best to just ask Rich for his talking points from yesterday ;)

For sage-grouse – we can describe the stool this way:

1) We need strong federal land management plans – 73% of sage-grouse habitat in Oregon is on federal land with the majority managed by BLM.

2) We need strong state plans – states manage wildlife within their borders – and two successive Oregon administrations have made it a priority to help meet the conservation challenge for this species.

3) But we also need on-the-ground conservation on privately owned lands.

Oregon is serving as a model for states across the sage-grouse range, and that is something to be very proud of.

This is an excellent example of how wildlife conservation can – and should - function – partners working together to recover species and the ecosystems upon which they, and we, depend.

Some people may celebrate if the sage-grouse ends up on the Endangered Species List, seeing it as a victory for conservation.

I think that the biggest victory we can achieve is to secure the future of the sage-grouse without resorting to the safety net of the ESA.

For many of you, sagebrush country is not just a place, but it's a home.

And it's a home for over 350 species that depend on a healthy ecosystem. It's so important to conserve this treasured landscape.

And we understand that your way of life is part of what has molded you and your values. We cannot conserve sage-grouse without also preserving your way of life.

Oregon

Oregon is a leader in conservation. By embarking on the SageCon effort, they are the leaders in conservation partnerships.

Introduce next speaker, either Senator Jeff Merkley or Governor Brown