From: Davis, Dawn
To: Matt Kales
Subject: Re: GRSG: action, please read: content for next GrSG Update
Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 10:32:55 AM
Attachments: GRSGupdate_F&I_20150310.docx

Matt,

An update on FIAT and the SO is attached - please let me know if you have any questions or need additional info.

On Tue, Mar 10, 2015 at 9:16 AM, Matt Kales <matt_kales@fws.gov> wrote:

> Folks,
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> Noreen has asked we produce the next Greater Sage-Grouse Update for leadership. (This is the ~ one-page highlights reel that goes to Dan and his HQ leadership team and conveys top-line, current information from around the range.)
>
> Below I've indicated topics and associated content providers, plus any notes where relevant. Please review, let me know if you have any immediate questions, and please get back with me by **1200 MDT this Thursday** (3/12) with your respective content. Feel free to repurpose existing content from current BPs or other information products. Again, this is short document so we need to be concise as well as precise. Thanks in advance.
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> Matt
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> - Fire and invasives: FIAT and SO 3336 status and implementation and FWS role (Dawn), Battalion Pro status and next steps (Mike G.)
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> - Private lands: CCAAs delivered and in the pipeline, status of collaboration bio hiring/deployment (Angela, Nicole); recent NRCS meeting outcomes (Matt); current PFW efforts in GrSG range (Heather)
>
> - Mitigation: Sweetwater R. Conservancy and Barrick Gold banking events; other current/pending rangewide mitigation issues (Shauna, Drue, Mary)
>
> Matt Kales, Senior Advisor for Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation

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Current State of the Fire and Invasive Assessment Tool (FIAT)

- FIAT Teams completed approximately 28 in person workshops with local experts.
  - Workshops were conducted to refine broad regional findings (FIAT Step 1) into locally-relevant project/treatment opportunities through integration with more refined local data.
  - Partner participation in workshops has included national forests, FWS, NRCS, State Game and Fish Agencies, and other cooperators.
- An internal memo providing guidance to Service staff participating in the FIAT step-down assessments was issued on January 6, 2015. The memo provided eight guiding principles to help ensure the step-down assessments were completed in a consistent manner that will benefit sage-grouse.
- The BLM requested to extend the due date for the completion of the FIAT step-down assessments from the January 30, 2016 deadline (as was originally stated in BLM's Instructional Memorandum 2014-134) to February 27, 2015. The extension allowed for a two week review period, as well as time for re-analysis and corrections in the FIAT reports.
- On January 20, 2015 the Service received the draft FIAT assessments and we provided our comments to the BLM in 3 general categories:

  1. Actions essential for ameliorating the threat of fire and invasives;
  2. Actions that we felt would improve the FIAT assessments;
  3. Additional considerations related to future implementation stages (e.g., project level planning, NEPA).

- In light of the comments that were received from the FWS, BLM WO, NIFC and the FIAT Tech Team and the development of a new resistance and resilience (R&R) matrix layer that shifted many acres from the Low R&R and High R&R rows into the Medium R&R row (see Table 2 in Chambers et al. 2014), the BLM has pushed back their deadline to complete FIAT step-down assessments to the March 27, 2015. This adds 30 days to the extended February 27, 2015 deadline but, also includes a significant re-work of the first drafts of the reports that were submitted for Service review in January.

Secretarial Order 3336, Rangeland Fire Prevention, Management, and Restoration

On January 5, 2015, the Secretary signed Secretarial Order 3336, Rangeland Fire Prevention, Management and Restoration; an outcome from "The Next Steppe: Sage-grouse and Rangeland Fire in the Great Basin" conference. This Order establishes a Task Force led by the Interior Deputy Secretary to identify actions to prevent and manage rangeland fire and restore sagebrush landscapes. Actions will include those which can be accomplished by the onset of the 2015 Western fire season and those that will require a longer period for implementation.

The Implementation Plan, completed on January 31, 2015, established a roadmap to accomplish the objectives of the Order. The Task Force delivered SO 3336 - The Initial Report: A Strategic Plan for Addressing Rangeland Fire Prevention, Management, and Restoration in 2015 to the Secretary on March 1, detailing activities that can be undertaken in advance of the 2015 Western fire season. The Final Plan, due May 1, 2015, will outline the actions and activities that the Department, in collaboration with partners, interested stakeholders, and Tribes can implement in conjunction with the 2015 fire season and beyond. The Task Force will consider a wide variety of possible actions for conserving habitat for the greater sage-grouse as well as other wildlife species and economic activity, such as ranching and recreation, associated with the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem in the Great Basin region. This effort will build upon the experience and success of addressing rangeland fire and broader wildland fire prevention, suppression, and restoration efforts to date, including the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy.

Deliverables:

- Implementation Plan - provided to the Secretary February 1
    - Organizing document simply describes how we will proceed with implementation
- Initial Plan – provided to the Secretary March 1
    - Details actions for the 2015 fire season
    - February 23 - Public Comments due
    - Posted on Rangeland Management webpage March 10.
- Final Plan - Due May 1
    - Details actions for the 2016 fire season and beyond
    - April 3 - Draft of Final Report will be posted to the Rangeland Management webpage
    - April 7 - Tribal Consultation, Reno, NV - see website for more info
    - April 21 - Public Comments due
    - May 1 - Due to Secretary. Will be posted on Rangeland Management webpage shortly thereafter.

For additional information please refer to the updated Rangeland Fire Prevention, Management, and Restoration webpage and its subpages (Reports, Tribal Consultations, and FAQs).