From: Ellsworth, Ethan
To: Miller, Brandon
Cc: Jason Pyron; Katie Powell
Subject: Re: GRSG telemetry in BOSH
Date: Thursday, March 05, 2015 6:23:16 AM

Brandon,
The meeting is at 10 a.m. at the IDFG hqrs.
ee

On Wed, Mar 4, 2015 at 4:23 PM, Miller, Brandon <brandon_miller@fws.gov> wrote:

> Ethan,
>
> Our meeting for tomorrow was cancelled so we can still join the BOSH telemetry project meeting if you'd like us to join? If so, could you provide a time and location?
>
> Thanks.
> Brandon
>
> On Tue, Mar 3, 2015 at 9:25 AM, Ellsworth, Ethan <eellsworth@blm.gov> wrote:
>
>> FWS sage-grousers,
>>
>> The SO and Boise District are submitting a funding request for a sage-grouse telemetry project in the BOSH and Tri-State project area. Below, I've included the project description and benefits of the project. This project is valuable because it will provide some critical information about grouse that will guide management and will provide a mechanism to evaluate treatment success. I conducted a similar project in Nevada that refined the juniper treatment area across an enormous landscape.
>>
>> I am having a meeting with IDFG this week (Thursday or Friday) in an attempt to assuage their fears about the project. You all are welcome to join us or we can talk independently.
>>
>> Thanks you guys,
>> ee
>>
>> **Description:**
>> *The Idaho State Office and Boise District are requesting $200,000 to conduct a multi-year sage-grouse telemetry project within the proposed 1.5 million acre Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-grouse Habitat (BOSH) project area. Data gathered from this telemetry project will also be used to examine the effects of the Tri-State Interagency Fuel Break Project on sage-grouse habitat use patterns. In Idaho, The Tri-State project overlaps the BOSH project area, so we anticipate that sage-grouse telemetry data will be used to analyze impacts from both projects.*
>>
>> *The proposed BOSH project (BLM Bruneau and Owyhee Field Offices, Boise District and several partners) is designed to remove early stage encroachment of Western juniper (Juniperus occidentalis) from greater sage-grouse habitat in southwest Idaho. However, juniper encroachment is widespread in the project area and information regarding sage-grouse seasonal use patterns and movements is lacking. Thus, it is not clear which site-specific locations will provide the most benefit to sage-grouse. Moreover, the potential benefits to sage-grouse from juniper removal have not been well-documented throughout*

their geographic range. Sage-grouse GPS telemetry will provide high-resolution data that will help managers identify important sage-grouse movement corridors and seasonal habitats that are threatened with juniper encroachment in the project area. In turn, habitat use patterns will help prioritize juniper removal treatments in order to maximize conservation benefits. Telemetry locations will also be used to determine whether sage-grouse utilize juniper removal areas before and after treatments as a means of evaluating treatment success.

The proposed Tri-State project is designed to create effective fuel breaks along existing roads and other distrubances to protect Core and Important sage-grouse habitat throughout the Bruneau and Owyhee Field Offices. However, it is unknown whether fuel breaks will result in additional habitat loss, therefore reducing the utility of these treated areas for sage-grouse. Sage-grouse GPS telemetry will be used to examine pre- and post-treatment sage-grouse habitat use patterns in order to determine the potential effects of fuel breaks.

Benefits

Sage-grouse GPS telemetry produces high-quality spatial data that can be used to identify the locations of important nesting, brood-rearing, and movement corridors in the BOSH and Tri-State project areas. In turn, sage-grouse GPS telemetry will be used to refine the areas treated for juniper removal within BOSH, providing a cost-effective management tool that will maximize conservation benefits. The project area is large and subject to widespread juniper encroachment. However, the value of juniper removal is not uniform across the landscape; instead sage-grouse will benefit the most from juniper treatments in seasonally important habitats that are heavily used by sage-grouse. In addition, examining sage-grouse habitat use patterns before and after project implementation within both the BOSH and Tri-State treatment areas will provide a strong measure of project success. This aspect of the GPS telemetry project will have broad applicability for future implementation of juniper removal treatments and fuel breaks in sage-grouse habitat.

Ethan Ellsworth

Wildlife Biologist

Bureau of Land Management

Idaho State Office

208-373-4045 (office)

208-874-3154 (personal cell)

eellsworth@blm.gov

--

Ethan Ellsworth

Wildlife Biologist

Bureau of Land Management

Idaho State Office

208-373-4045 (office)

208-874-3154 (personal cell)

eellsworth@blm.gov

--

Brandon Miller
Wildlife Biologist - Conservation Partnerships
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Idaho Fish and Wildlife Office
1387 S. Vinnell Way
Boise, ID 83709
208-378-5347

--

Ethan Ellsworth

Wildlife Biologist

Bureau of Land Management

Idaho State Office

208-373-4045 (office)

208-874-3154 (personal cell)

eellsworth@blm.gov