From: Bernie Petersen
To: Matt Kales
Subject: Re: GrSG conservation on NWRS lands
Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2014 3:23:32 PM

Matt,

Please add me to the email list for this information. Thanks

Sent from my iPad

On Mar 11, 2014, at 4:14 PM, Barbara Boyle <barbara_boyle@fws.gov> wrote:

Barbara Boyle
Refuge Supervisor - CO, KS, NE
Mountain-Prairie Region
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Work: 303-236-4308
Cell: 720-315-9395

Begin forwarded message:

From: Matt Kales <matt_kales@fws.gov>
Date: March 11, 2014 at 4:11:37 PM CDT
To: Elizabeth Berkley <elizabeth_berkley@fws.gov>, Nick Kaczor <nick_kaczor@fws.gov>, Tom Koerner <tom_koerner@fws.gov>, Bridget Nielsen <bridget_nielsen@fws.gov>, Brendan Moynahan <brendan_moynahan@fws.gov>, Lindy Garner <lindy_garner@fws.gov>
Cc: Ann Timberman <ann_timberman@fws.gov>, David Lucas <david_d_lucas@fws.gov>, Richard Potts <richard_potts@fws.gov>, Jeff King <jeff_king@fws.gov>, Will Meeks <will_meeks@fws.gov>, Paul Santavy <paul_santavy@fws.gov>, Heather Johnson <heather_johnson@fws.gov>, Wayne King <wayne_j_king@fws.gov>, Barbara Boyle <barbara_boyle@fws.gov>, Carl Millegan <carl_millegan@fws.gov>, Pat Deibert <pat_deibert@fws.gov>, Nicole Alt <nicole_alt@fws.gov>, Michael Thabault <michael_thabault@fws.gov>
Subject: RE: GrSG conservation on NWRS lands

Folks,

Thanks again for your participation on the call today. I think it was time

well spent and hope you all feel similarly. By way of follow up, I've included below (a) the initial considerations we used to frame the conversation and (b) input from Noah Matson, who runs Defenders of Wildlife's federal lands program, on other/related considerations for our efforts going forward.

As discussed, Paul and I will work to line out the specific action(s) re: refreshing our inventory of SG conservation/management activities on NWRS lands in R6 and get associated tasking/timetables out to you all soon.

I'll continue to copy this group on next steps; if anyone in the larger group wants to opt out on all e-mail traffic likely to come, please let me know and I'll limit distribution to the core team members. Thanks.

Matt

Initial considerations: SG Conservation on NWRS lands

- Background/context (SG a bureau/Dept. priority; big push; opportunity to pursue landscape conservation and elevate profile of sage-steppe ecosystems)
- FWS is pushing FLMAs hard to adopt strong measures to conserve birds on federal estate (~60% of range)
- We are also actively supporting partners working on private ground (states, SGI)
- Need to ensure, at a minimum, our management activities on NWRS lands are consistent with what we are recommending to others
- Ideally, we can identify opportunities to enhance above activities, both on and adjacent to NWRS lands, especially in key areas (e.g., PACs, connectivity corridors)
- NWRS as living laboratories for important SG research, e.g., ACK-55
- Today's conversation a starting point; want to expand to include R1 and 8, and HQ.
- Potential issues to consider:
    - Fire (Rx and suppression)
    - Weed control
    - Hunting
    - Strategic acquisition
    - Research
- Need feedback from the team on all the above, and on best approaches to further explore/address these issues, e.g., small teams, white papers, recommendations to management, etc.

Additional considerations from Defenders:
The National Wildlife Refuge System can actively contribute to sage-grouse conservation. These contributions should be comprehensively catalogued by the agency so they are taken into account by those deciding whether or not to list the species under the Endangered Species Act.

Additionally, we recommend that the USFWS take the following additional steps to enhance contributions by the National Wildlife Refuge System to sage-grouse conservation.

- Identify sage-grouse production as an explicit goal of refuge management where habitat is available or can be restored/improved through active and passive management.
- identify measurable habitat objectives and sage-grouse population targets for refuge units. These targets should be incorporated into CCPs along with a description of management activities that will promote the meeting of those targets.
- Have refuges and Partners program work with the USDA NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative, state agencies and other partners to leverage public and private funding to support sage-grouse conservation on and surrounding refuge lands.
- Direct those refuges currently without a CCP, where sage-grouse are present, to develop an interim species and habitat management plan
- identify what steps will be taken to defend sage-grouse habitat against invasive species and catastrophic wildfire.

From: Matt Kales [mailto:matt_kales@fws.gov]
Sent: Friday, March 07, 2014 3:30 PM
To: Elizabeth Berkley; Nick Kaczor; Tom Koerner; Bridget Nielsen; Brendan Moynahan; Lindy Garner
Cc: Ann Timberman; David Lucas; Richard Potts; Jeff King; Will Meeks; Paul Santavy; Heather Johnson; Wayne King; Barbara Boyle; Carl Millegan; Pat Deibert; Nicole Alt; Michael Thabault
Subject: RE: GrSG conservation on NWRS lands

Folks,

Thanks for the quick response to the scheduling poll. The clear winner is next **Tuesday, March 11, at 1 pm MST**. Please see below call information. We have one hour budgeted for the call and, per my earlier message, we'll review our basic goals and objectives as a team, scope and brainstorm issues, and then line out some next steps. Please come prepared to participate actively in the conversation: we are looking to you as practitioners to help us understand what's happening on the ground, opportunities to enhance sage-grouse/sage-steppe conservation

on our lands and on larger landscapes, and provide other insights and perspective you may have on how we move forward as a Service with this large and complex issue.

Thanks in advance for your time, please let me know if you have any immediate thoughts, and we look forward to speaking with everyone next week.

Have a good weekend, all.

Matt

Call information: Greater sage-grouse conservation on NWRS lands
Dial: 866-663-0869
Passcode: 4006722#

From: Matt Kales [mailto:matt_kales@fws.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, March 04, 2014 3:54 PM
To: Elizabeth Berkley; Nick Kaczor; Tom Koerner; Bridget Nielsen; Brendan Moynahan; Lindy Garner
Cc: Ann Timberman; David Lucas; Richard Potts; Jeff King; Will Meeks; Paul Santavy; Heather Johnson; Wayne King; Barbara Boyle; Carl Millegan; Pat Deibert; Nicole Alt; Michael Thabault
Subject: RE: GrSG conservation on NWRS lands

And the actual link:

http://doodle.com/kytiu77h9f7g53dz

From: Matt Kales [mailto:matt_kales@fws.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, March 04, 2014 3:53 PM
To: Elizabeth Berkley; Nick Kaczor; Tom Koerner; Bridget Nielsen; Brendan Moynahan; Lindy Garner
Cc: Ann Timberman; David Lucas; Richard Potts; Jeff King; Will Meeks; Paul Santavy; Heather Johnson; Wayne King; Barbara Boyle; Carl Millegan; Pat Deibert; Nicole Alt; Michael Thabault
Subject: RE: GrSG conservation on NWRS lands

Folks,

Per my previous message(below), here is the scheduling poll for our call. If we can get a quorum of the recipients in the "To" field here, along with Will and Pat, we'll hold the call; otherwise, I'll send out another poll with alternate dates. Thanks in advance for your reply.

Matt

From: Matt Kales [mailto:matt_kales@fws.gov]

Sent: Friday, February 21, 2014 1:38 PM
To: Elizabeth Berkley; Nick Kaczor; Tom Koerner; Bridget Nielsen; Brendan Moynahan; Lindy Garner
Cc: Ann Timberman; David Lucas; Richard Potts; Jeff King; Will Meeks; Paul Santavy; Heather Johnson; Wayne King; Barbara Boyle; Carl Millegan; Pat Deibert; Nicole Alt; Michael Thabault
Subject: GrSG conservation on NWRS lands

Folks,

I hope this finds everyone well. Will Meeks and I have had some conceptual conversations about developing a fuller understanding about ongoing and emerging conservation efforts for Greater sage-grouse on National Wildlife Refuge System lands, both here in Region 6 and across GrSG range (i.e., in Regions 1 and 8). While our lands represent a small portion of the species' total range, we want to ensure we are maximizing opportunities to conserve the species on lands we control and that our current management activities are consistent with the Service's, and our partners', range-wide conservation goals for sage-grouse.

To advance that conversation, we'd like to pull together a small, informal team of individuals with experience working on GrSG, sagebrush-steppe conservation, and related efforts, to identify and explore some key questions related to the above issues. Will has kindly provided your names as members of that team, so by way of this message I'm asking you all to please start thinking about those key questions and potential approaches to enhance sage-grouse conservation on and adjacent to NWRS lands. Our plan is to convene an initial team call at the regional level with NWRS leadership, Dr. Pat Deibert, our National Sage-Grouse Conservation Coordinator (copied here) and generate a preliminary suite of topics to consider (e.g., fire and invasives management, hunting, research, etc.). We can then determine the best way to proceed with analyzing these topics and - where appropriate/necessary - identifying any recommendations or follow-on actions. From there, we can engage our sister regions to expand the geographic, and potentially topical, scope of the conversation.

I'll send out a scheduling poll shortly for that initial team call, which we'll seek to hold in early March. In the meantime, please let me know if you have any immediate thoughts or questions, and thanks in advance for your time on what I expect will be an interesting and productive process.

Regards,

Matt

Matt Kales

Special Assistant for Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation
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US Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region
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Mobile: (720) 234-0257