



The Greater Sage-Grouse

Facts, figures and discussion

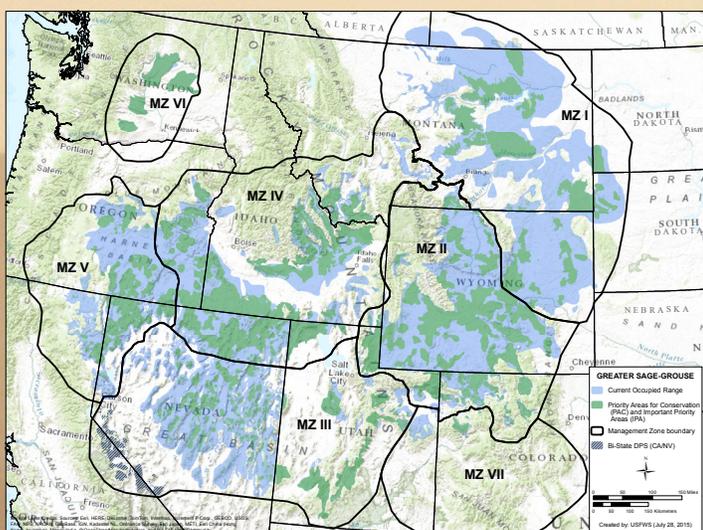
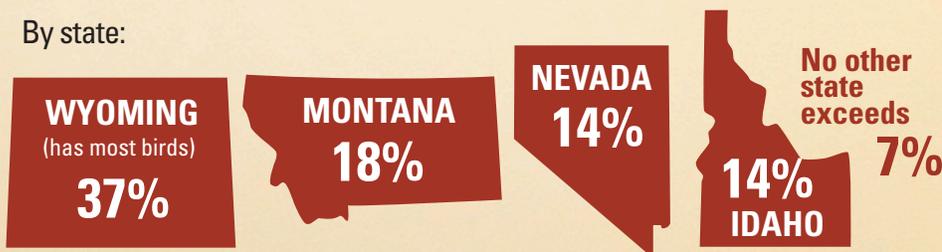
General Facts About Greater Sage-Grouse

- Largest native grouse species in North America;
- Long-lived, ground-nesting resident game bird managed by state agencies;
- Currently occurs across 11 states and two Canadian provinces;
- Range: 173 million acres, 270,000 square miles;
- Uses communal mating grounds called leks;
- Sagebrush obligate;
- Annual home range can cover 230 square miles or more; and
- In 2015, the Service determined the species did not warrant Endangered Species Act protection.

Population & Distribution

- No single, consistently measured, range-wide survey methodology;
- Current estimates range from 200,000 – 500,000 individuals;
- Monitored by state agencies primarily by counting males at leks; and
- Some states use brood counts and collect hunter-harvested wings to help estimate productivity.

By state:

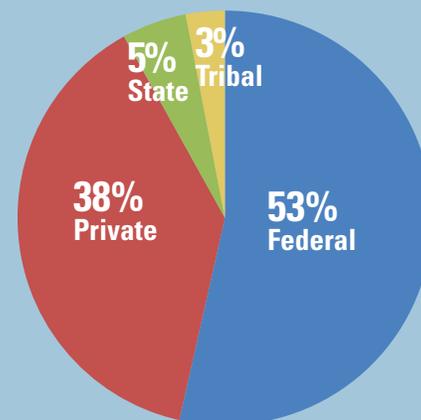


Greater Sage-grouse Priority Areas of Conservation (PAC), Important Priority Areas and Occupied Range

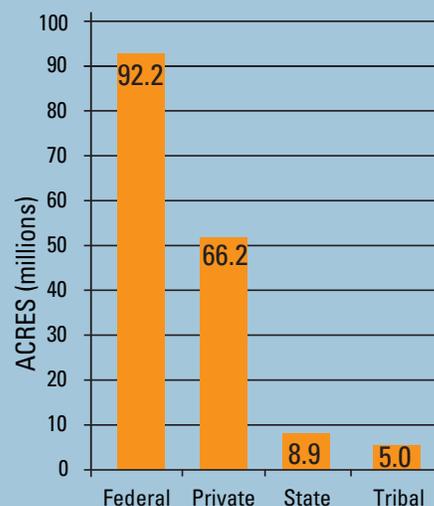


Land Ownership

Occupied Range (%)



Range-wide (acres)



Primary Stressors

- Energy development:
 - oil and gas, wind farms
- Infrastructure:
 - pipelines, transmission towers, fences, roads, impoundments
- Invasive plants:
 - cheatgrass and conifers
- Frequent, more intense wildfires
- Agricultural conversion
- Mining

Other Impacts

Greater sage-grouse are prey animals. Predation is only a threat when habitat is lacking or fragmented. In these situations nest predation can have significant local impacts.

Hunting

Hunting is not a threat to persistence of the species and states manage conservatively.

Grazing

Improper grazing can degrade quality of sagebrush habitat. Grazing that is managed to maintain or promote sagebrush with a healthy understory of grasses and forbs benefits greater sage-grouse.

Climate Change

Direct, long-term impact undetermined. It may amplify cheatgrass impact and affect sagebrush persistence and distribution.



For more info visit:
www.fws.gov/greatersagegrouse

All other photos: © Tatiana Gettelman

Priority Areas for Conservation:

Key habitats essential for long-term viability of greater sage-grouse; should be the focus of conservation resource investment.

- 67 million total PAC acres, 39% of current range
- 60% federally owned, 40 million acres

WY
15.3 million acres
54% federal

NV
11.5 million acres
84% federal

ID
9.8 million acres
77% federal

General Facts About Sagebrush

- Most widespread vegetation in western North America;
- Dominant land cover on more than 270,000 square miles within greater sage-grouse range;
- Includes 18 woody plant species of various shapes and sizes;
- Co-occurs with native grasses and forbs, which are also critical components of sage-grouse habitat;
- Essential habitat for 350 species, including greater sage-grouse;
- At risk due to altered fire regimes, invasions of nonnative plants, encroachment of trees, anthropogenic land uses and climate change; and
- More than half of sagebrush habitats used by greater sage-grouse are on public lands managed by federal or state agencies.

Future Efforts

- The scope, scale and complexity of the greater sage-grouse conservation effort is unequalled in the history of wildlife conservation in the United States.
- The Service's September 30, 2015 Endangered Species Act deadline galvanized hundreds of partners to reduce or eliminate threats to greater sage-grouse across 90 percent of the species' breeding habitat.
- Federal greater sage-grouse plans will be in place for 20 to 30 years, ensuring these conservation efforts will continue into the future.
- The Service expects state plans and related efforts to continue to contribute to conservation.
- Private landowners have demonstrated their commitment by enrolling millions of acres of important seasonal habitat in greater sage-grouse conservation programs.
- Going forward, we need all of the partners who contributed to this historic achievement to continue working to restore the health of this uniquely American landscape and the hundreds of species that call it home.
- Our collective conservation actions must improve and maintain productive sagebrush ecosystems for people and wildlife for generations to come.