

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Regions 1, 6 and 8
Memorandum of Understanding
Between the Regional Directors
And the Sagebrush Leadership Team
To Promote a Rangewide, Cross-Programmatic
Approach to Sagebrush Ecosystem Conservation

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into by the Regional Directors (RDs) for The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Regions 1, 6 and 8, herein after referred to as the RDs, and the Service's Sagebrush Leadership Team, herein after referred to as the SLT, and collectively referred to as the Parties.

Purpose and Scope: The purpose of this MOU is to outline the organizational and operational approach the Parties will employ to promote a rangewide, cross-programmatic approach to sagebrush ecosystem conservation. Specifically, this MOU (and supporting materials) is the Parties' primary internal coordination mechanism underpinning all Service operations in the sagebrush and sets forth the basic sideboards and expectations for those operations.

Statement of Mutual Benefits and Interests: The Parties agree that achieving the Service's vision of a *healthy sagebrush landscape working for people and for wildlife* will require close coordination among and between all affected units, including the RDs and their respective regional office resources and the SLT and their respective field resources. The Parties acknowledge that sagebrush ecosystem conservation is a top priority for the Service and that they are fully committed to the success of this effort.

It follows that an existing, agreed-upon approach that guides the Service's overall effort in the sagebrush will benefit the Parties (and our external partners) in terms of efficiency and effectiveness; and, is in the best interest of the Parties in terms of clear communication and execution of strategic goals in pursuit of sagebrush ecosystem conservation.

It is Mutually Understood and Agreed That:

- Sagebrush ecosystem conservation delivery is led by the field, specifically the SLT and their respective field resources in concert with and support of our external partners. This field level commitment acknowledges the variable local ecological conditions across the landscape and the value of building local partnerships to address local challenges.
- The RDs set the overall leadership context for strategic goals in pursuit of sagebrush ecosystem conservation consistent with national Service priorities and it is the responsibility of the SLT to ensure strong alignment between those goals and delivery.

- The Service's daily sagebrush ecosystem conservation operations will be governed by the final *Integrated Operations Plan for the Conservation of the Sagebrush Ecosystem and Greater Sage-Grouse* (Ops plan; 08/01/2016). The Parties acknowledge this is a "living document" and team rosters and charters may change periodically as experience, resources, and new information dictate.
 - The 3 suites of teams (Field, Resource and Leadership) are the organizational "heart" of the Service's sagebrush operations and their functionality is vital to the success of our overall effort. The Parties are fully committed to this structure and will work across administrative boundaries and over time to integrate and refine this model and achieve a true rangewide, cross-programmatic approach to the Service's sagebrush ecosystem conservation work.
 - Project leaders (PLs) who supervise any members of the above teams acknowledge the national Service commitment and agree to prioritize the work of their staff in furthering sagebrush ecosystem conservation consistent with the Ops plan and the purposes of this MOU. All PLs and supervisors within the sagebrush ecosystem agree to dedicate the necessary resources to successful implementation of sagebrush conservation activities consistent with the operations plan and this MOU.
 - All teams associated with this effort acknowledge that additional resources, to include staffing and funding, may be necessary at times to ensure successful conservation. To the extent possible, all signatories and associated staff agree to provide such resources when requesting additional work products.
 - All PLs and supervisors of staff associated with any of the above mentioned teams will consider including the associated responsibilities as a critical element in the staff performance plan, with the associated time commitment commensurate with the effort required for success.
 - The SLT will be responsible for ensuring effective internal communication and coordination for Service conservation efforts. The SLT will develop dedicated communications protocols to ensure timely and full exchange and circulation of information among and between all Service sagebrush personnel.
 - The SLT will be responsible for resolving any internal operating issues, including commitments of staff time to the conservation efforts. Resolution will be via consensus and with involvement of all affected project leaders, supervisors, and staff. In the event the SLT is unable to resolve an internal operating issue, the SLT will elevate that issue to the RDs for resolution.
 - Ongoing conservation of the greater sage-grouse such that the protections of the Endangered Species Act are not warranted is a priority objective that is "nested" within the Service's larger strategic goals and vision for the sagebrush ecosystem. As such, we will continue to invest heavily in sage-grouse conservation while at the same time expanding the Service's role in the sagebrush to a landscape-level approach that

transcends a single species and our regulatory authorities and considers the entire ecosystem and its long-term viability (ecological, economic and social).

Duration: This MOU will be effective August 1, 2016 and will continue indefinitely. The Parties commit to revisit the MOU on at least an annual basis to identify opportunities for enhancement and adaptation based on performance, changing conditions or other new information.

Execution:

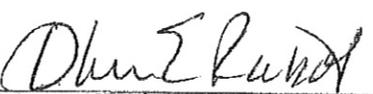
In witness thereof, the parties hereto have executed this Memorandum of Understanding as of the last written date below.

Approved 
Title Regional Director
Agency USFWS R6

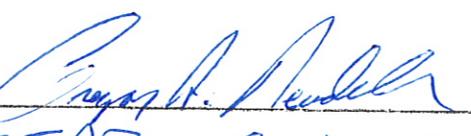
Date 9/12/2016

Approved 
Title Regional Director
Agency USFWS R8

Date 9-26-16

Approved 
Title Deputy Regional Director
Agency USFWS R1

Date 10/2/16

Approved 
Title ATT PFW Coordinator
Agency USFWS R6

Date 10/3/16

Approved [Signature]

Date 0/9/2016

Title Acting Field Supervisor

Agency Reno Fish and Wildlife Office

Approved Paul Benson

Date 11/9/2016

Title State Supervisor

Agency Oregon Fish and Wildlife

Office