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Subject: [Followup] Briefing on Science-Based Mitigation Techniques for Sage-Grouse
Date: Thursday, March 05, 2015 9:53:50 AM

Good morning.

Thanks to all who were able to participate in Tuesday's sage-grouse briefing.

During the discussion, the question was raised about why the authors selected a 5 square kilometer buffer-study area and not a larger area, for instance, similar to buffers identified in the recent [USGS buffer study](#). Here is the response:

The authors limited the spatial scales used in their analysis to those that were both relevant to natural gas development mitigation efforts and previously demonstrated to be biologically meaningful for nesting female sage-grouse. Limiting the largest buffer used to 5 sq km reduced variability in the explanatory variables used in the nest survival models. Also, enhanced mitigation was done on a limited number of wells in the project area and a larger buffer area around nests in regions of enhanced mitigation would have included a larger number of surrounding wells that received base mitigation measures. This would have reduced the capability of the authors to compare sage-grouse nest success in areas receiving enhanced mitigation measures with those receiving base mitigation measures.

Please let me know if you have further questions. Thank you.



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