

From: [Wiechman, Lief](#)
To: [Ortiz, Elaine - NRCS, Fort Worth, TX](#)
Cc: Jennifer.Sweet@ftw.usda.gov
Subject: Re: GRSG: NCED data
Date: Wednesday, February 25, 2015 7:53:33 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

No worries, Elaine. Thanks for getting back to me. I'll try you sometime this morning. Since I emailed you I think I have it figured out, but would like to get your 2 cents and confirm.

LW

Lief Wiechman

Sage-grouse Ecologist
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Mountain-Prairie Region
Cell: 307.214.8426
Office: 307.772.2374 x236
lief_wiechman@fws.gov

On Wed, Feb 25, 2015 at 7:48 AM, Ortiz, Elaine - NRCS, Fort Worth, TX
<elaine.ortiz@ftw.usda.gov> wrote:

Morning Lief

Sorry it has taken me a long time to reply but our office was closed for 2 days since we have had icy weather.

Please give me a call and I will try to answer your questions. I will be in the office until 3:45 today but I do have

a meeting at 1.

Elaine Ortiz

Cartographer

National Geospatial Center of Excellence

Geospatial Data Management Branch

Fort Worth, Texas

(817) 509-3368

Email: elaine.ortiz@ftw.usda.gov



How am I doing? Tell my Team Leader. Jennifer.Sweet@ftw.usda.gov

From: Wiechman, Lief [mailto:lief_wiechman@fws.gov]

Sent: Monday, February 23, 2015 9:16 AM

To: Ortiz, Elaine - NRCS, Fort Worth, TX

Subject: GRSG: NCED data

Hello Elaine,

My name is Lief Wiechman, and I work for the USFWS, primarily on the greater sage-grouse status review. As part of our analysis and modeling efforts, we are attempting to quantify how much land has protections from agriculture conversion (please see the email chain below for a little more background).

However, I'm contacting you to discuss some of the attributes associated with the NCED data. I believe you spoke with our Wyoming-office GIS specialist (Jim Lindstrom) a few weeks back, and I'm hoping to circle back with you and get a little more clarity on some of the program descriptions including in the NCED data and how it might inform the spatial data for our analysis purposes.

Pasted here are the questions I posed to NRCS, and they directed me to speak with someone linked to NCED (so I'm reaching out to you).

NCED Data:

In the attached excel file, the 2nd tab has the information exported from the attribute table of all polygons within sage-grouse management zones (downloaded from the NCED). I've highlighted the 'Purpose' column. Given that these data don't share the attributes and program description the NRCS data does, we're left wondering how we should group and analyze that data. Any information you could steer us to, in order to determine whether or not agriculture conversion is allowed would be greatly appreciated.

There appear to be 6 different purposes: Environmental System, Historic Preservation, Open Space - Farm, Open Space - Forest, Open Space - Other, Recreation or Education, and we'd like to know if any one or combination of them would provide the same protections as

those programs identified in the NRCS data.

We've also noticed that some of the agreement duration's identified as 'temporary' and/or 'unknown' don't contain information about length, and may be omitted from our analysis.

Thanks for your help in advance. I'm working remotely and my cell (307.214.8426) is the best way to contact me.

LW

Lief Wiechman

Sage-grouse Ecologist

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On Fri, Feb 20, 2015 at 1:31 PM, Glover, John - NRCS, Washington, DC <John.Glover@wdc.usda.gov> wrote:

Lief,

Attached is a PDF file of the 2014 farm bill.

Responses to your inquiries are populated in red font below. Our regulation and program policies are expected to be published soon and will provide more in depth information. As you will note, the statute is somewhat vague.

FRPP, GRP and the new ACEP ALE provide "protection against agricultural conversion."

Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information or have additional questions.

Thank you,

John Glover

Land Stewardship Leader

Easement Programs Division

Natural Resources Conservation Service

1400 Independence Ave. S.W., Rm 5245-S (NEW)

Washington, D.C. 20250

Off: (202) 260-8106 (NEW)

CL: (202) 834-2404

Email: john.glover@wdc.usda.gov

From: Wiechman, Lief [mailto:lief_wiechman@fws.gov]

Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2015 4:00 PM

To: Glover, John - NRCS, Washington, DC

Cc: Jim Lindstrom; Matt Kales

Subject: Re: GRS: FWS GIS POC for SGI data

Hi John,

Thanks again for your time today. We're attempting to determine which agreements downloaded from both the NRCS and NCED protect against agriculture conversion.

NRCS Data:

After speaking with you today, sounds like we've addressed those from the NRCS, with FRPP, WRP, and GRP all protecting against agriculture conversion. (To clarify, I recommend that you reference the program purposes as identified in the 2014 farm bill (H.R. 2642), Title II, Subsection D, Sec. 2301, Subtitle H, Sec. 1265, (b) (page 210). Exceptions may exist in the form of modifications and exchanges. Is there a document or guidance you could point us to, that describes the potential modifications so we may incorporate the necessary language in our status review? (Please see Sec. 1265D (c) (Page 239) of the 2014 farm bill (H.R. 2642). In addition, the only category we did not discuss was "Emergency Watershed Protection Program for Floodplain Easements" and whether they carry the same protections as GRP, etc. (Please see the following link for information regarding EWPP-FPE: http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/financial/ewpp/?cid=nrcs143_008225. The protection EWPP-FPE is stated on the page in the link above. EWPP-FPE is also part of the 2014 farm bill; see page 267.)

NCED Data: (I am not able to attest to or make assumption about the NCED data. You will need to contact the data owner for explanation and analysis regarding the information)

In the attached excel file, the 2nd tab has the information exported from the attribute table of all polygons within sage-grouse management zones (downloaded from the NCED). I've highlighted the 'Purpose' column. Given that these data don't share the attributes and program description the NRCS data does, we're left wondering how we should group and analyze that data. Any information you could steer us to, in order to determine whether or not agriculture conversion is allowed would be greatly appreciated.

There appear to be 6 different purposes: Environmental System, Historic Preservation, Open Space - Farm, Open Space - Forest, Open Space - Other, Recreation or Education, and we'd like to know if any one or combination of them would provide the same protections as those programs identified in the NRCS data.

We've also noticed that some of the agreement duration's identified as 'temporary' and/or 'unknown' don't contain information about length, and may be omitted from our analysis.

Let me know if I can provide any clarification to our question(s), and thanks for you help.

Take care,

LW

Lief Wiechman

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

Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2015 10:07 AM
To: Griffiths, Tim - NRCS, Bozeman, MT
Cc: James Lindstrom; Mark Sattelberg; Lief Wiechman; Pat Deibert
Subject: GRSG: FWS GIS POC for SGI data

Morning, Tim. Thanks again for your time on the phone yesterday. As discussed, copied here is Jim Lindstrom, our GIS lead for the Service's WY Ecological Services Field Office in Cheyenne. Jim is available to serve as our GIS POC and interface with your folks to share and assimilate spatial data for SGI conservation easements. Jim's full contact information follows.

Thanks in advance to you/r folks and Jim for their efforts to move us forward on this front and please let me know how else we can support those efforts.

Regards,

Matt

email: james_lindstrom@[fws.gov](mailto:james_lindstrom@fws.gov)

phone: 307.772.2374 (x240)

Matt Kales, Senior Advisor for Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation

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United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service