

**From:** [Robert V. Taylor](#)  
**To:** [Doherty, Kevin](#)  
**Subject:** RE: a few questions about sage grouse and nesting success  
**Date:** Monday, January 05, 2015 5:01:36 PM

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Thanks Kevin. I found more info on the methods in Connely et al 2003 but am still confused as to “nearest grass”. Nearest grass to what?

Nearest grass -> height average of the vegetative droop height for the nearest grass from the 20 Daubenmire quadrants

**Robert V. Taylor, Ph.D.** | NE OR Regional Ecologist | Certified Senior Ecologist  
*The Nature Conservancy* :: [nature.org](http://nature.org) | 906 S River St., Enterprise, OR 97828 USA | 541-426-3458 ext. 3 | [rtaylor@tnc.org](mailto:rtaylor@tnc.org)

**From:** Doherty, Kevin [[mailto:kevin\\_doherty@fws.gov](mailto:kevin_doherty@fws.gov)]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 05, 2015 3:26 PM  
**To:** Robert V. Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: a few questions about sage grouse and nesting success

Rob,

The description of the variables are found in table 1.

Nearest grass -> height average of the vegetative droop height for the nearest grass from the 20 Daubenmire quadrants

Tallest grass -> height average of the vegetative droop height for the tallest grass from the 20 Daubenmire quadrants

Average grass -> height (nearest grass height tallest grass height)/2

VOR and grass height should be correlated, but the area we worked in had large amounts of bunch grass. When you add that with the shrubs you identified VOR will be correlated with grass height but it should not be identical. VOR was not included in the model because it did not make it past statistical screening.

Not sure on your last two questions. I was working on grassland birds and ducks for the last 4 years, so I don't have the literature on total recall right now.

Thanks  
Kevin

On Mon, Jan 5, 2015 at 3:04 PM, Robert V. Taylor <[rtaylor@tnc.org](mailto:rtaylor@tnc.org)> wrote:  
Hi Kevin –

I just read your paper on grass height and sage grouse nesting success recently published in Wildlife Bio and had a couple of follow up questions:

- Where can I find more information on the habitat variables you measured, especially the various

grass height variables? I looked in Connelly et al 2000 (Wildl. Soc Bull) but didn't see it there.

- Why do you think that visual obstruction (i.e., Robel pole ) was not identified as important in the models? I would think that grass height and VO measures would be highly correlated? Or are they actually very different because of the influence of shrub cover on VO?
- Have other studies found important effects of VO on nest success or other indicators of habitat quality for sage grouse?
- Finally, is grass height something that is commonly measured in habitat studies for sage grouse? Is there a "standard method"?

Thank you kindly, in advance, for your help.

Regards,

Rob

**Robert V. Taylor, Ph.D.** | NE OR Regional Ecologist | Certified Senior Ecologist  
The Nature Conservancy :: [nature.org](http://nature.org) | 906 S River St., Enterprise, OR 97828 USA | 541-426-3458 ext. 3 | [rtaylor@tnc.org](mailto:rtaylor@tnc.org)

**From:** Doherty, Kevin [mailto:[kevin\\_doherty@fws.gov](mailto:kevin_doherty@fws.gov)]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 05, 2015 12:44 PM  
**To:** Robert V. Taylor  
**Subject:** Re: ping

yes

On Mon, Jan 5, 2015 at 1:21 PM, Robert V. Taylor <[rtaylor@tnc.org](mailto:rtaylor@tnc.org)> wrote:  
Is this Kevin Doherty with the US FWS?

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

**Robert V. Taylor, Ph.D.**  
NE Oregon Regional Ecologist  
Certified Senior Ecologist  
  
[rtaylor@tnc.org](mailto:rtaylor@tnc.org)  
(541) 426-3458 ext. 3

**The Nature Conservancy**  
**Oregon Chapter**  
906 S River St  
Enterprise, OR 97828



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Kevin Doherty, PhD  
Spatial Ecologist  
USFWS Region 6 --Science Applications  
134 Union Blvd, Lakewood, CO 80228  
Phone: (303) 921-0524  
Email: [kevin\\_doherty@fws.gov](mailto:kevin_doherty@fws.gov)

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Kevin Doherty, PhD  
Spatial Ecologist  
USFWS Region 6 --Science Applications  
134 Union Blvd, Lakewood, CO 80228  
Phone: (303) 921-0524  
Email: [kevin\\_doherty@fws.gov](mailto:kevin_doherty@fws.gov)

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