

**From:** [Amy Defreese](#)  
**To:** Doug Young  
**Subject:** RE: greater sage-grouse HEA and distance to transmission line  
**Date:** Monday, January 05, 2015 2:05:37 PM

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Hi Doug!

Happy 2015 to you as well! I am pretty open right now for the week of January 12. My only conflict currently is a 2 pm meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

Amy

*Amy Defreese, Ecologist*  
Utah Field Office, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
2369 W. Orton Circle, Suite 50  
West Valley City, Utah 84119  
(801) 975-3330 x 128  
[amy\\_defreese@fws.gov](mailto:amy_defreese@fws.gov)

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**From:** Doug Young [mailto:[doug\\_young@fws.gov](mailto:doug_young@fws.gov)]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 05, 2015 10:09 AM  
**To:** Amy Defreese  
**Subject:** RE: greater sage-grouse HEA and distance to transmission line

Hi Amy – happy New Year!

What's your schedule looking like next week, to have an initial discussion with you, Colorado, and Tyler on how to address the EGS HEA report?

thanks, Doug

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**From:** Doug Young [mailto:[doug\\_young@fws.gov](mailto:doug_young@fws.gov)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 18, 2014 8:53 AM  
**To:** Amy Defreese  
**Subject:** RE: greater sage-grouse HEA and distance to transmission line

Thanks Amy – I am new on TWE and EGS, so trying to insert myself without tipping everyone over! Most of my time and effort recently has been on GWW (and Tyler has only been focusing on that project – with what little time he has available in his busy schedule)...I see need for a FWS strategy call regarding the EGS HEA report, before we get into efforts to develop specific comments on EGS (and TWE) HEA.

BTW - Lots happening with GWW right now, especially in how FWS is messaging to RMP and IPC (and BLM and States) the need for an indirect effects analysis and mitigation – and possibly including a new analysis for indirect effects into GWW HEA. That conversation (scheduled as an initial conversation with RMP and IPC - in 45 minutes) may influence FWS strategy on how FWS responds to HEA and NEPA for the EGS project – and TWE too.

Also - I have a call today with FWS' HQ economist, to continue dialog re: HEA and sage-grouse. He has a copies of the HEA reports for EGS and GWW. So that line of FWS technical assistance will be helpful to us in crafting strategy and developing work products as we go forward.

Doug

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**From:** Amy Defreese [mailto:[amy\\_defreese@fws.gov](mailto:amy_defreese@fws.gov)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 18, 2014 8:28 AM  
**To:** Doug Young  
**Subject:** RE: greater sage-grouse HEA and distance to transmission line

Okay, that sounds good. Do you envision a call to talk about strategy, or a call to talk about our specific comments? Both? Just wanting to know how I can best prepare.

*Amy Defreese, Ecologist*  
Utah Field Office, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
2369 W. Orton Circle, Suite 50  
West Valley City, Utah 84119  
(801) 975-3330 x 128  
[amy\\_defreese@fws.gov](mailto:amy_defreese@fws.gov)

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**From:** Doug Young [mailto:[doug\\_young@fws.gov](mailto:doug_young@fws.gov)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 18, 2014 9:25 AM  
**To:** Amy Defreese  
**Subject:** RE: greater sage-grouse HEA and distance to transmission line

Amy – I think it would be good to get you, Tyler, and myself on a call in early January to further discuss the “FWS next steps” re: additional FWS HEA comments for EGS and TWE.

Thanks, Doug

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**From:** Amy Defreese [mailto:[amy\\_defreese@fws.gov](mailto:amy_defreese@fws.gov)]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 08, 2014 9:48 AM  
**To:** Doug Young  
**Subject:** FW: greater sage-grouse HEA and distance to transmission line

FYI

*Amy Defreese, Ecologist*  
Utah Field Office, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
2369 W. Orton Circle, Suite 50  
West Valley City, Utah 84119  
(801) 975-3330 x 128  
[amy\\_defreese@fws.gov](mailto:amy_defreese@fws.gov)

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**From:** Abbott, Tyler [mailto:[tyler\\_abbott@fws.gov](mailto:tyler_abbott@fws.gov)]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 08, 2013 5:04 PM  
**To:** Amy Defreese  
**Cc:** Julie Proell Reeves  
**Subject:** Re: greater sage-grouse HEA and distance to transmission line

Hi Amy

I guess the important thing to me is to what extent the variable is actually meaningful to the HEA if it cannot be quantified with actual data. That really has been the fundamental criterion used in developing variables that are in there now. At some point if the basis for value of a variable became more assumption than anything empirical that could be validated or supported by data collect by someone at some point, then-- from a scientific standpoint-- it was considered inappropriate. The idea was that a predictive model is only as good as the data/information used to populate the variables in that model: if there are no data, then the variable is not viable. Or, more simplistically, "assumption in" = "assumption out", and is really not useful.

So, it is really a question to you about the availability of data to provide an empirical basis for the variable. I would be willing to support development and use of such a variable if there is a means to quantify it, otherwise-- based on my understanding of the HEA-- it would not be appropriate for use in the HEA.

I am willing to have this discussion with Jon and Ann of SWCA to get their perspective from a scientific standpoint (separate from any discussion with RMP, who may have another (non-scientific) perspective that it not necessarily relevant or helpful). If you wanted to set up that discussion I would be glad to participate and explore this idea.

Thanks

On Mon, Apr 8, 2013 at 4:17 PM, Amy Defreese <[amy\\_defreese@fws.gov](mailto:amy_defreese@fws.gov)> wrote:

Hi Tyler,

I wanted to check in with you about the next Energy Gateway South greater sage-grouse HEA meeting scheduled for April 24. I believe that either then, or at some point prior, SWCA and Rocky Mountain Power will present a final habitat services metric. I would like to get your input on one item in particular that hasn't been easily resolved in past meetings.

I have provided a lot of input on the metric, but I have specifically provided SWCA methodology (in the form of a variable) to incorporate impacts from the presence of the transmission line. So, my proposed variable looked like this:

**VARI2<sup>[asd1]</sup> : Distance to a transmission line<sup>[asd2]</sup>**

Score 3: >0.75 mile

Score 2: 0.5 – 0.75 mile

Score 1: 0.25 mile' – 0.5 mile

Score 0: 0 – 0.25 mile'

Primary Citations: Ellis, 1985 and Hagen, C.A. et al (2011) and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (2009). <sup>[asd3]</sup>

Up until now, the response has been that, because the effect cannot be quantified, SWCA and RMP don't want to include it in the HEA. In speaking with Laura Romin in our office, we would prefer to see this habitat characteristic included in the HEA instead of waiting to address it in the over-arching Mitigation Plan eventually developed by Rocky Mountain Power.

To that end, I'm wondering if the Wyoming FWS office, as lead on the project, would support our position as this conversation continues. Would you let me know your thoughts when you get a chance? Thanks!

Best regards,  
Amy

*Amy Defrese, Ecologist  
Utah Field Office  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
2369 W. Orton Circle, Suite 50  
West Valley City, Utah 84119*

*Email: [amy\\_defrese@fws.gov](mailto:amy_defrese@fws.gov)  
Phone: 801-975-3330 x 128*

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<sup>[asd1]</sup>The idea is that habitat is fragmented by large linear features across the landscape. This would be one way to get at several folks' concerns (including mine), that the effects of transmission lines (fragmentation of habitat, avoidance of tall structures) are not being considered in this metric.

<sup>[asd2]</sup>Based on info I found here, [http://www.rockymountainpower.net/content/dam/rocky\\_mountain\\_power/doc/Contractors\\_Suppliers/Contractor\\_Resources/Right\\_of\\_way\\_information\\_and\\_application\\_for\\_proposed\\_use.pdf](http://www.rockymountainpower.net/content/dam/rocky_mountain_power/doc/Contractors_Suppliers/Contractor_Resources/Right_of_way_information_and_application_for_proposed_use.pdf), transmission lines are defined as any line that transmits between 46 kv and 500 kv.

<sup>[asd3]</sup>Support for this variable includes these citations as well as the following statements from previously in this document: "When literature did not allow for direct assignment of value ranges for HEA scores, professional judgments, which were based on peer-reviewed literature, were used. Professional judgments were associated with specific literature references when possible and/or confirmed with academic and agency biologists."

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Tyler Abbott, Deputy Field Supervisor  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Wyoming Ecological Services Field Office  
5353 Yellowstone Road, Suite 308A  
Cheyenne, WY 82009  
Office: (307) 772-2374 x 231  
Cell: (307) 286-7242  
[tyler\\_abbott@fws.gov](mailto:tyler_abbott@fws.gov)  
