

Greater sage-grouse:

Opportunities for Conservation



Photo © James Yule
Used by permission

Michael Thabault
Assistant Regional Director
Ecological Services
Mountain-Prairie Region
Denver, Colorado



State Opportunities

Greater sage-grouse are a candidate under ESA

- The bird remains managed by the States
 - Sagebrush habitats are managed by the landowners
- Approximately 50% of sage-grouse habitats in Federal ownership
 - Remainder is Private, State and Tribal



Photo © James Yule
Used by permission

Key Issues

Habitat fragmentation is the issue, but “fixing”
habitat is difficult



Regulatory mechanisms could be key in the short term



State Opportunities

KEEP WHAT IS GOOD GOOD!

Protect with regulatory mechanisms and voluntary agreements

- Examples include zoning regulations, restrictions on some types of development, etc.
- Wyoming core area strategy



Photo © James Yule
Used by permission

State Opportunities

Support the MOA for sage-grouse and sagebrush conservation between the States and Provinces and Federal agencies

- MOA allows for implementation of projects to further conserve habitats at risk.
- Support projects that come from this collaboration – either through funding or promotion with the people you represent.
- Support working across political boundaries.

Change can happen at the local level

- Support sage-grouse local working groups



State Opportunities

Several things are happening now:

- BLM Core area mapping
 - identifies key areas for sage-grouse conservation
- BLM revisions of resource management plans
- NRCS Sage-grouse initiative
- Individual state strategies (e.g. Oregon)
- CCAA development



Photo © James Yule
Used by permission



Guarantees?

Unfortunately, not

- Uncontrollable circumstances
- Litigation



Photo © James Yule
Used by permission