

The 2015 Greater sage-grouse Listing Decision



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Purpose of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*)

"The purposes of this Act are to provide a means whereby the ecosystems upon which endangered species and threatened species depend may be conserved,..."

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT OF 1973

AN ACT To provide for the conservation of endangered and threatened species of fish, wildlife, and plants, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Endangered Species Act of 1973".



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Listing Process:

- For a typical process we first examine adequacy and reliability of information presented in a petition
- Status review evaluates all available scientific and commercial data
- Includes examination of the 5 listing factors identified in the Endangered Species Act

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Listing Factors

- A. Present or threatened destruction, modification, or curtailment of habitat or range
- B. Overuse for commercial, recreational, scientific or educational purposes
- C. Disease or predation
- D. Inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms
- E. Other natural or manmade factors affecting the species continued existence



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Listing Factors

(continued)

A species need only meet one of the listing criteria to be considered for listing



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Status Review Outcomes

- Warranted - Listing proposal will be drafted; species a candidate
- Warranted, but precluded - Listing is warranted, but precluded by higher priority actions; species a candidate
- Not warranted - Review does not support a listing action; species not a candidate

CURRENT STATUS



In 2010 the Service determined the Greater Sage grouse was warranted for listing (but precluded) due to:

- habitat loss and fragmentation
- inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms that govern habitat loss and fragmentation

It is currently a candidate species under the ESA

We will be conducting a new analysis of its status, biological threats and conservation management starting in 2014.

A decision on whether to proceed with a proposed listing or to determine listing is unwarranted will be completed in 2015

Species Overview

Currently, Greater sage-grouse found in:

- WA, OR, ID, MT, ND, CA, NV, UT, W CO, SD and WY and the CAN PROV- ALB and SAS
- Occupy approximately 56 percent of their historical range.

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Biological Background -Species

- Sagebrush obligate
 - food, cover, reproduction
- Long-lived, low reproductive rates
- Can be migratory
- High fidelity to seasonal habitats



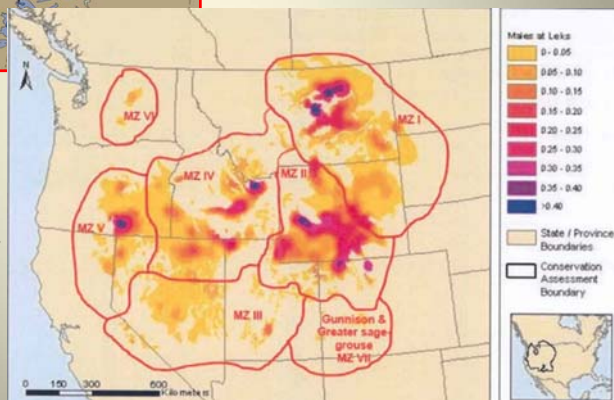
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Landscape scale species



Historic and
current range

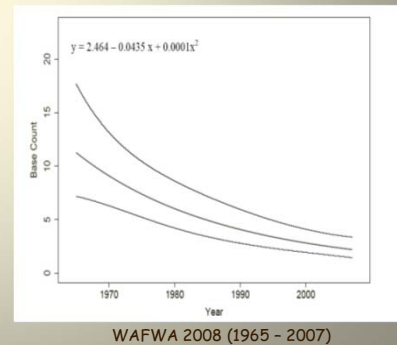
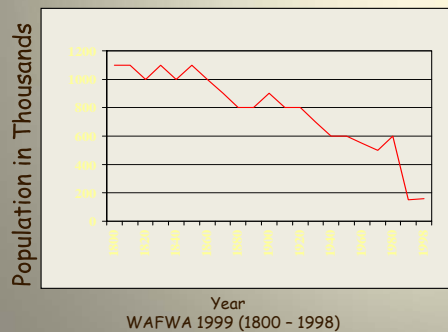
Sage-grouse
distribution



Population Trends

Estimated decline of 80 to 90 % from pre-settlement numbers?

Decline of 30% since 1985

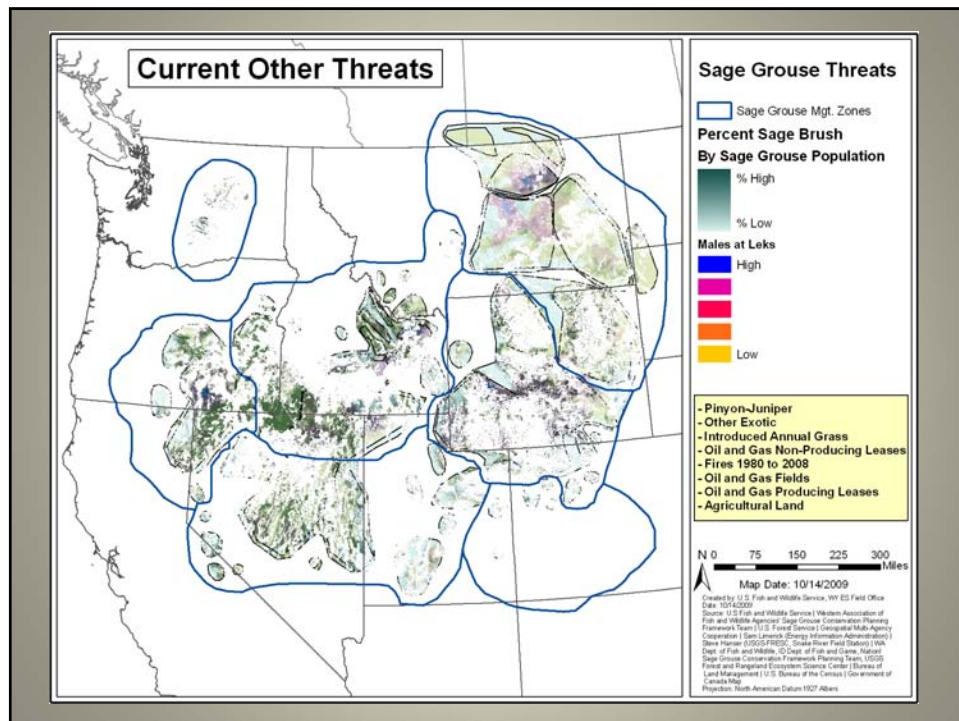
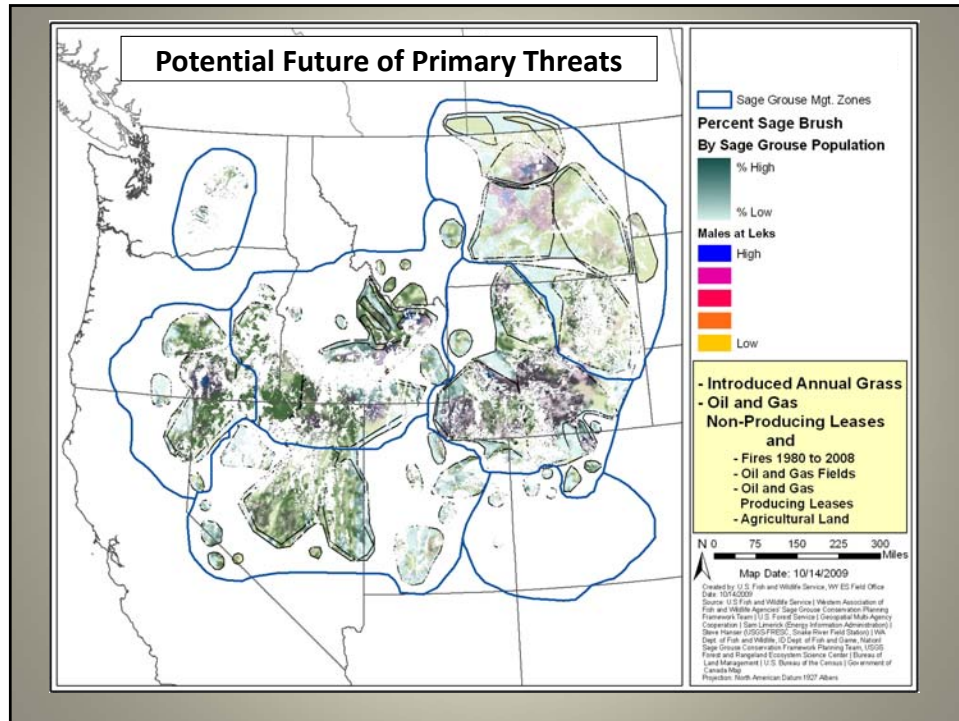


Biological Background -Habitat



- Sagebrush is essential
 - Not all are provide equal habitat for grouse
 - Also need the healthy understory
- Long restoration times: 20 to > 100 years depending on species and conditions
- Fire kills sagebrush
- Seed banks do not persist
- We don't know how to restore or "fix" it





Listing Process



- Consider population status and trends in PACs
- Determine have threats been alleviated?
 - To what degree for each population (PAC)?
- How do regulatory mechanisms address these threats? State strategies, BLM and FS RMP/LRMPs
 - Do they have the ability to regulate/manage threats?
 - Is this information supported by data?
 - Do we have sage grouse population response?

Listing Process



Based on this evaluation of information and in consideration of state and federal conservation strategies

the Service is required to make a determination whether sage grouse meets the definition of **endangered** or **threatened** throughout its range

...Should sage grouse be listed under the ESA or not....



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Questions?