Greater Sage-grouse - Sagebrush Conservation - Overview

The NNSG board in consideration of the implementation of the Governors Sagebrush Ecosystem Management plan presents the following strategy for 2013.

1. Support the values in the Elko County Sagebrush Ecosystem Strategy, and promote and make use of this document
2. Facilitate discussions between all interested stakeholders
3. Specifically foster discussion concerning all aspects of wildfire
4. Conduct educational forums to better inform all public entities
5. Work with Elko County Commission to fund remaining watershed assessments
6. Conduct volunteer projects using the SWEATCo pod
7. Assist the Elko County Conservation Districts with sage-grouse conservation
8. Work to assist the future sage-grouse conservation Coordinator
9. Continue the work of the Tuscarora Weed Containment Team
10. Work with the Nevada Cattlemen’s Association promoting educational forums

Year’s Accomplishments

- Peter Coates, USGS Wildlife Biologist presentation: Overview of the Sage-grouse Bi-State Studies
- Water in the West: A Roundtable Discussion during the Cowboy Poetry Gathering
- National Public Lands Day, Southfork State Park
- George E. Gruell presentation on his recent book: Nevada’s Changing Wildlife Habitat: An Ecological History, With Sherman Swanson
- Rancher’s Forum: What Ranchers Are Doing to Improve Their Production Potential and Sage-grouse Habitat

Hay Contract Agreement

An administrative agreement was initiated in 2009 between Elko BLM, NNSG and two hay contractors in the Mary’s River watershed. The purpose of the agreement was to hold funds generated by the two hay contracts on BLM lands for the use of restoration and conservation activities on lands within the Mary’s River watershed. NNSG receives an administrative fee from the yearly sale of hay, and their involvement in administering the agreement. An example of funds expended by BLM from this account was for the Mary’s River satellite imagery study completed by Greg Simonds and Eric Sant of Open Range Consulting. The imagery evaluated changes that occurred along the streams in Mary’s River watershed from 1972 through 2010.
The siege against fire, fuels and weeds in Tuscarora has been underway for a few years now, and some great work has been implemented in 2012 to address these issues. Unfortunately, the fires keep coming, but that hasn’t deterred any of the partner’s efforts. In 2012, Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) contracted weed spraying on all but five parcels in the town. NDF also had contractors working in the town during the month of October to perform brush removal and seeding on those same parcels. The owner of most of the private lands surrounding the town gave permission to NDF for implementation of spraying and seeding on his properties. BLM used visual surveys on the surrounding landscape to identify vast swaths of hoary cress and sprayed approximately 1,730 acres last spring. BLM has awarded additional contracts to spray 2,214 more acres in the spring of 2013. The Willow fire burned into the fire scar on the west side of Tuscarora, but it is unknown if it overlapped with any hoary cress infestation areas. In 2013 we hope that the hoary cress will be mapped on the surrounding landscape by BLM. NDF will spray the same municipal lots in the spring and expand the same operations onto the surrounding private lands around town. The Tuscarora working group and Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group (NNSG) has made great strides towards getting this weed under control and without their help and assistance our treatments would not be nearly as effective!!

Cottonwood Ranch Wilderness Trail

NNSG served in a cooperating capacity to secure a Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the Forest Service "to clean and repair the south fork Cottonwood, God’s Pocket Peak, top end of Camp Creek and Shotgun Trail". Twenty five miles of trail were completed the 2012 season allowing for horse and foot traffic through the Jarbidge Wilderness. Service of this kind benefits private industry, and the recreating public.

Lamoille-Talbot Trail

NNSG helped initiate the Forest Service trail plan in 2006 and work is in progress on this very important project in the Ruby Mountain trail system. Accomplishments for the 2012 season: 5-Person Nevada Conservation Corp (NCC) crews worked for a total of 14 crew tours during the field season. Crews completed approximately 532 linear feet of rough-cut trail begun in 2011 along with the completion of 230 cubic feet of rock retaining wall also underway in 2011. The crews were able to begin and complete construction of 0.61 miles of new trail tread, including 54 cubic feet of rock retaining structures. The crews were also able to rough-cut 1.65 miles of trail, and begin construction of 83 cubic feet of rock structures to be continued during the 2013 season. NCC has secured funds from the Recreation Trails Program (RTP) to continue work crews for 2013-2014. This work is intensive both physically and logistically. NNSG looks forward to assisting in the project.

Elko County Sage-grouse Experience

The Northeastern Nevada Sage-grouse Local Area Working Group (LAWG) is initiating plans to begin a community education experience by conducting a yearly opportunity for the public to view a strutting ground, and to hear from local biologists on sage-grouse topics of interest. This year the planning will be finalized, and in 2014 the Experience will commence!
Board Members

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Vice President .........................Vacant
Secretary .................................Orson Tingey
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Member at Large .......................Shammy Rodriguez
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Recreation Pod Chair ...................Vacant
Heritage Pod Chair .....................Leta Collord
Science Pod Chair ......................Kent McAdoo
Sage Grouse Pod Chair ...............Sam Sanders
Fire Ecology Chair ....................Ryan Shane
Advisors Representing ...............NDF, BLM, USFS, NDOW, NRCS, Great Basin College, Elko County Commission

- NNSG Annual Meeting 5/2
- Earth Day 4/22
- Arbor Day 4/27
- Elko Clean Up, Green Up & Recycle Day 4/28
- Weed Extravaganza, Elko, 4/30-5/2
- NNSG Targeted and Strategic Grazing Workshop, 5/22
- National Trails Day 6/2

Stay current with NNSG activities and volunteer opportunities at nnsg.org

NNSG Annual Dinner Meeting

Thursday, May 2, 2013
Western Folklife Center
6:00 – 9:00 pm

Dinner – Music by Billy Rose
– Open Bar – Drawings –
Installation of Officers

Presentation by: Ted Koch,
USFWS State Supervisor

Please Plan on Joining Us!

A Note from the President

Larry Hyslop, 2010-2013 President

During this past year, sage-grouse have been a dominant theme. Our sage-grouse pod has morphed into the Northeastern Nevada Sage-grouse Local Area Working Group, part of the Governor’s plan.

Our governing board has grown to eight voting members. Our meetings include advisors from all the local agencies and the Elko County Commissioners.

Non-profits always need more help and additional members. Please consider contributing to our work and joining our group.