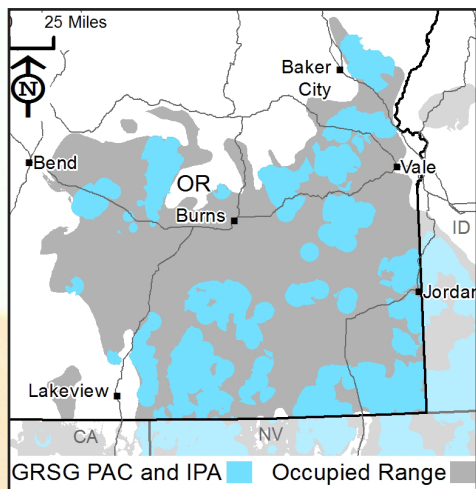




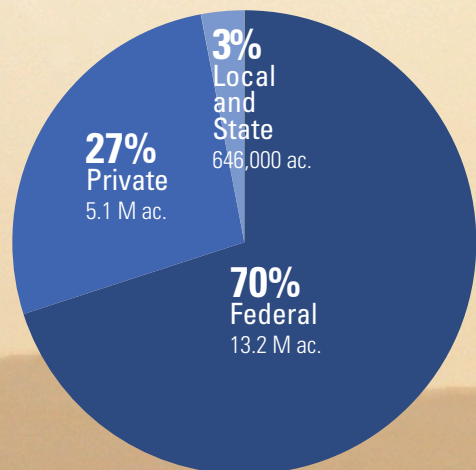
# Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation in Oregon



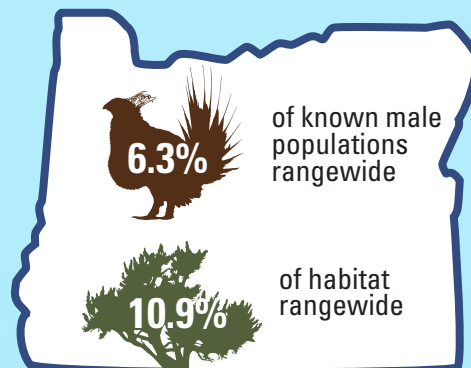
## Important Conservation Areas and Occupied Range for Greater Sage-Grouse in Oregon

### Land Ownership

Total Occupied Range: 19 million acres



Oregon has been an active partner in the collaborative, science-based conservation campaign to protect the greater sage-grouse and the sagebrush ecosystem. Due to the collective efforts of federal, state and private partners across the range, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has found that the greater sage-grouse does not warrant protection under the Endangered Species Act. Greater sage-grouse will continue to be managed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.



### Greater Sage-Grouse in Oregon

With 13 percent of the Priority Areas for Conservation, southeastern Oregon is the western anchor of the greater sage-grouse range. Oregon has adopted a regulatory-based state plan with an all-lands approach to address the primary threats of invasive species and rangeland fire. In September 2015, Oregon's Governor signed an Executive Order adopting the state's 2015 conservation plan, which increases wildfire suppression, regulates, mitigates, and tracks all development in sage-grouse habitat, and directs all state agencies to ensure the plan's programs are implemented.

The Oregon plan builds on the core area strategy utilized by Wyoming and Montana to address all sage-grouse habitats on approximately 15 million acres of all landownership types.

### Primary Threats

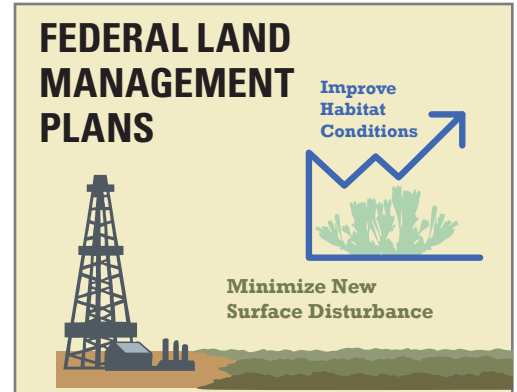
Loss and fragmentation of sagebrush primarily from wildfires, invasive plants, and juniper/conifer encroachment.

# Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy in OR

## STATE AND PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION

### Overview of State Actions

- Oregon is one of three states to adopt state-wide greater sage-grouse conservation plans that incorporate regulatory mechanisms.
- The Oregon Sage-Grouse Action Plan, adopted by Executive Order, directs the Oregon State Lands Division, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and other state agencies to carry out the conservation actions in the plan to protect the bird and its habitat. It prioritizes avoidance with standards for mitigation if necessary and includes mechanisms, such as disturbance caps and adaptive management triggers, to reduce impacts to greater sage-grouse.
- The Oregon plan also addresses wildfire, a primary threat in the Great Basin. Fire and the fire/invasives cycle can impact large areas of sage-grouse habitat in very short periods of time, making prevention of wildfire important for minimizing habitat loss. The plan increases funding and logistical support for Rangeland Fire Protection Areas, to improve the effectiveness of suppression efforts and reduce the potential negative effects to sage-grouse habitat.
- More than 245,000 acres of conifer removal projects have been completed since 2010 on private and public land in some of the state's most important sage-grouse habitats.
- Through a broad network of CCA and CCAAs, more than 150 landowners have committed over 2 million acres of sage-grouse habitat to conservation plans.
- The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board has committed at least \$10 million dollars in state lottery funding over the next 10 years to implement state and local efforts for sage grouse habitat conservation and restoration.
- Oregon Soil and Water Conservation Districts and ranchers are receiving \$9 million from the NRCS to implement our CCAAs with the counties.



### NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative

The Natural Resources Conservation Service's Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI) has been a catalyst for sagebrush conservation across the West. With more than 1,120 participating ranches in 11 western states, SGI and its partners have invested \$424.5 million in greater sage-grouse conservation on 4.4 million acres of private rangeland.

In Oregon, SGI reclaimed 200,000 acres of sage-grouse habitat by removing conifer that was invading priority habitat. Removal to date has alleviated two-thirds of the conifer threat on private lands. In places where invading juniper trees were removed to benefit greater sage-grouse, sagebrush-dependent songbird numbers increased by 55-81 percent.

Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAA) in Oregon

Name	Location	Covered Area Size	Acres Enrolled	Acres Committed	Land Uses	Date of Completion
Programmatic CCAA for Private Rangelands	Baker and Malheur Counties	7,290 acres	7,290		Ranch mngmt*	11/13/2014
Programmatic CCAA for Private Rangelands	Harney County	1,170,000 acres	216,992	403,702	Ranch mngmt*	5/21/2014
Programmatic CCAA for Private Rangelands	Baker and Union Counties	485,000 acres	3,316	54,454	Ranch mngmt*	3/18/2015
Programmatic CCAA for Private Rangelands	Crook & Deschutes Counties	486,000 acres		256,600	Ranch mngmt*	3/18/2015
Programmatic CCAA for Private Rangelands	Lakeview County	400,000 acres		63,623	Rangeland trtmnts., livestock mngmt., rec., farm ops., ranch dev.	3/18/2015
Programmatic CCAA for Private Rangelands	Malheur County	887,000 acres	22,284	390,508	Rangeland trtmnts., livestock mngmt., rec., farm ops., ranch dev.	3/18/2015
Programmatic CCAA for Private Rangelands	Grant County	57,000 acres		4,715	Ranch mngmt*	3/18/2015
CCAA Between OR Dept. of State Lands and FWS	DSL lands with sage-grouse habitat	616,000 acres		616,000	Rangeland mngmt	TBD
Oregon Totals			249,882	1,789,602	2,039,484	

Candidate Conservation Agreements (CCA) in Oregon

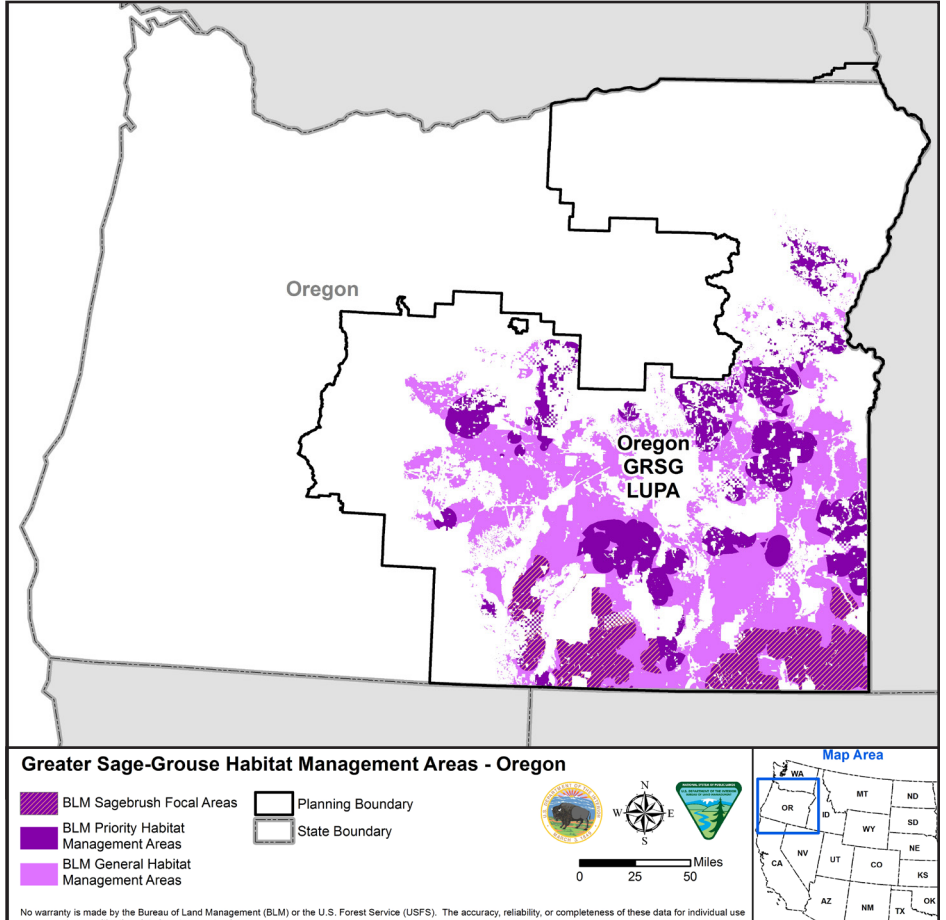
CCA for Rangeland Management Practices	BLM lands sage-grouse range	10,210,000 acres	22,499	2.1 M	BLM grazing allotment management	5/30/2013
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\*ranch operations and development, rangeland treatments, recreation

# BLM Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plans in OR

- The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) amended the land-use plan in Oregon to address threats to the greater sage-grouse. The BLM plan provides a layered management approach that focus protections on the areas of highest importance to the species:

- ▶ The highest levels of protections are applied to Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFA), which are landscapes with high breeding population densities of sage-grouse, high-quality sagebrush habitat, and a preponderance of federal ownership or protected areas that serve to anchor the conservation value of the landscape. These areas are prioritized for habitat improvement and vegetation management efforts and proposed for locatable mineral withdrawal.
  - ▶ Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMA), equivalent to Core Areas, are managed to avoid and minimize further disturbance. Surface energy and mineral development is limited in these areas. Development is capped with limits on the amount and density of disturbance allowed.
  - ▶ General Habitat Management Areas (GHMA) provide greater flexibility for land use activities. Mitigation and required design features ensure that impacts from development are avoided, minimized and mitigated in GHMA.



SFA Acres	PHMA Acres	GHMA Acres
1.9 million acres	4.5 million acres	5.6 million acres

There is no high and medium oil and gas potential in Oregon.

- The plans respect valid, existing rights, including those for oil and gas development, renewable energy, rights-of-way, locatable minerals and other permitted projects.
- During grazing permit renewals and modifications on lands within greater sage-grouse habitat, the BLM will incorporate locally developed management objectives for greater sage-grouse habitat and rangeland health standards, consistent with ecological potential. The BLM and USFS will prioritize monitoring for compliance, review and processing of grazing permits in the areas most important for sage-grouse first, SFA, followed by PHMA, with a focus on lands containing riparian areas and wet meadows.

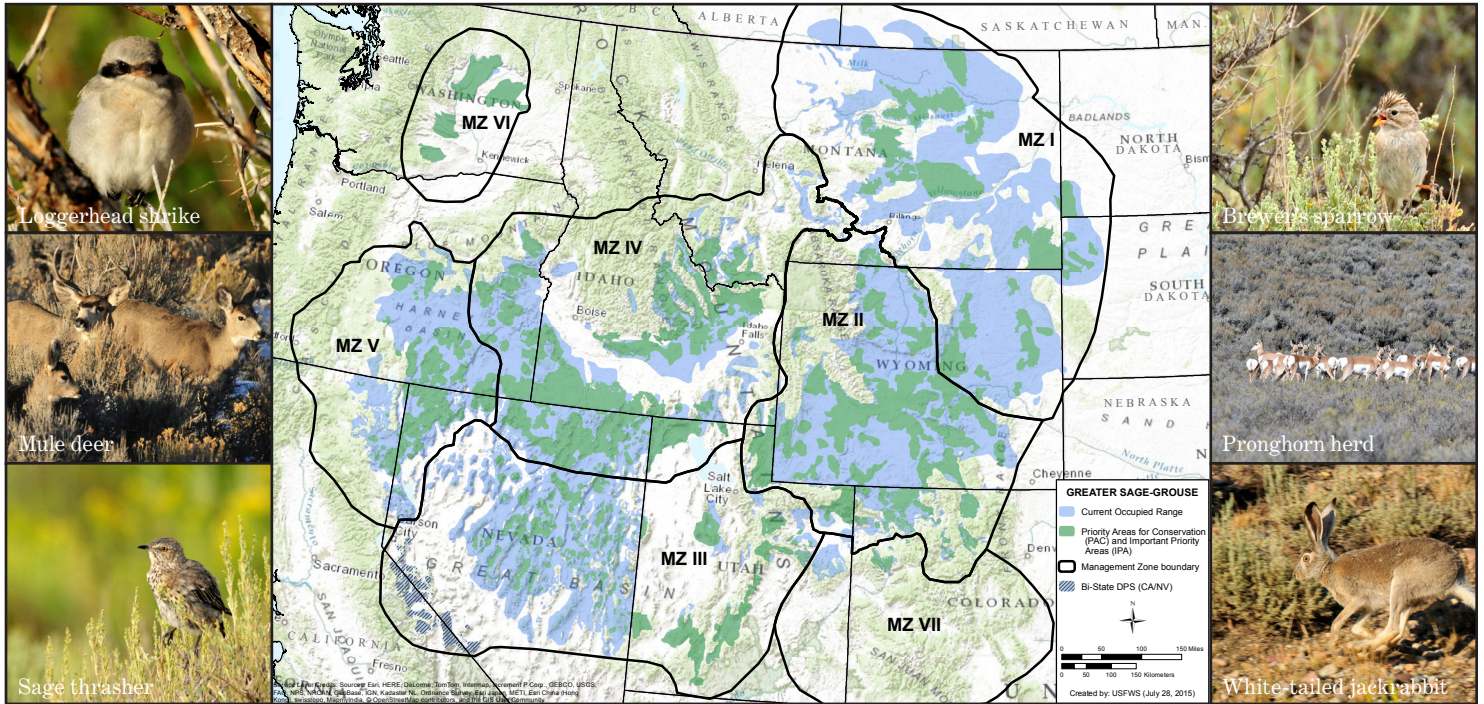
## RANGELAND FIRE STRATEGY

The Oregon plan will help reduce the threat of rangeland fire by placing added priority on the prevention, suppression and restoration of sagebrush landscapes threatened by rangeland fire through improved federal-state-local collaboration and coordination.



Oregon received \$1.03 million in targeted Fire and Invasives Assessment Tool funding for prescribed fire, including work to treat encroaching juniper stands while protecting existing sagebrush habitat. The BLM plans to use additional sagebrush restoration techniques for this project, such as mechanical thinning of juniper and planting native grasses in areas lacking adequate grass understory. In the summer of 2015, the placement and rapid deployment of smokejumpers to remote areas helped limit the fires in sage-grouse habitat.

# The Future for Greater Sage-Grouse in OR



## Redefining the Future of Conservation

FWS is confident that the unparalleled conservation effort by federal, state, and private partners has addressed the major threats to greater sage-grouse by putting the right protections in the most important places. A sustained commitment to sagebrush conservation is needed to ensure effective conservation for greater sage-grouse and the hundreds of other wildlife that depend on sagebrush habitat.

## Implementation

Partners will now begin to implement their commitments whether under state and federal plans, individual conservation agreements, or the Rangeland Fire Strategy. The BLM and USFS plans will be implemented in close coordination with state and local partners, as well as through continued collaboration with the Sage Grouse Task Force and local working groups. FWS will remain an active partner in the sagebrush conservation effort, funding new research, providing on-the-ground support for private landowners, as well as federal, state, industry and conservation partners.

## Enduring Benefits for All

Restoring the greater sage-grouse will benefit hundreds of other native plants and animals and communities across the West. What's more, these conservation efforts are led and strengthened by effective partnerships – ensuring that the gains we make for the greater sage-grouse will endure.



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## Sage Grouse Initiative 2.0

Since 2010, SGI has focused on arresting habitat loss in the highest priority areas for conservation from ex-urban development and conifer encroachment, and on reducing greater sage-grouse collisions with high-risk fences.

NRCS has committed to invest another \$211 million in SGI 2.0, with an expanded mission of addressing the synergistic problems of invasive weeds and wildfires, on slowing the loss of sagebrush to agricultural conversion and on protecting wet meadow habitat critical for brood-rearing. The program's goal is to bring the total amount of private land under conservation to 8 million acres.

Resources secured through the SGI 2.0 investment strategy in Oregon will alleviate the threat of invading conifer and juniper trees on private lands within focal areas by 2018.