

NCA April Roundup

By: Martin Paris

Happy Spring everyone! I hope everyone is getting through calving season without too much difficulty. I know I've been thankful for the winter we've had compared to last year. There seems to be plenty of moisture throughout the state without the bone chilling temperatures and 15-foot snowbanks in the valley bottoms.

It's been a busy spring at the Nevada Cattlemen's Association. I'll start with some Congressional Appropriations that are important to the livestock industry. Recently, Congress was able to defeat the grasp of these short-term funding measures and pass a full fiscal year 2024 budget for several departments and agencies. Of note, the ever-important rider prohibiting an Endangered Species Act listing for any Greater Sage Grouse population was included in the funding package. There was an attempt to also include a rider to prohibit the Bureau of Land Man-

agement from implementing their proposed Conservation & Landscape Health Rule, also known as the conservation leasing rule, however this rider was not ultimately included.

The funding package also included \$15 million for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service at USDA to purchase electronic ear tags and related infrastructure needed for stakeholders to comply with the proposed animal disease traceability rule, should it be published. USDA estimates that it will take \$26.1 million to transition from the currently required and approved metal tags to electronic tags. It's important to note that under USDA's 2013 traceability rule, sexually intact cattle 18 months or older that are moving interstate are required

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Rosen Stands Up For Nevada Ranchers & Cattlemen, Pushes to Block Harmful Biden Administration Effort

The Biden Administration's Attempt to Allow Beef Imports From Paraguay Would Hurt Nevada's Ranchers and Cattlemen

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senator Jacky Rosen (D-NV) is joining a bipartisan effort to stand up to the Biden Administration and block an effort to allow beef imports from Paraguay over concerns it would hurt Nevada's ranchers and cattlemen. In November 2023, the U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a rule allowing the importation of beef from Paraguay. Nevada ranchers and cattlemen oppose this effort over concerns that Paraguay has a history of foot and mouth disease, which infects cattle and is highly contagious. The bipartisan group of Senators have filed a Congressional Review Act resolution to block this rule and protect domestic producers.

"Nevadans sent me to the U.S. Senate to be an independent voice for them and to always put our state first," said Senator Rosen. "The Biden Administration's ill-advised attempt to allow beef imports from Paraguay will hurt Nevada's ranchers and cattlemen, and that's why I'm proud to be part of a bipartisan effort to block this misguided effort."

"The importation of Paraguayan beef into the U.S. comes with numerous red flags including the potential risk of introducing Foot and Mouth Disease," said Martin Paris, Executive Director of Nevada Cattlemen's Association. "The Nevada Cattlemen's Association greatly appreciates Senator Rosen's efforts to uphold the highest of food safety standards and ensure the continued health of our domestic cattle herd."

"Nevada's cattle sector is extremely important for our state, representing roughly 2/3rds of the total agricultural sales," said Doug Busselman, Executive Vice President of the Nevada Farm Bureau. "It is extremely important to protect cattle health by preventing imports of very risky foreign sources."

Senator Rosen has been a strong advocate for Nevada's ranchers and cattlemen. Last month, Rosen sent a bipartisan letter calling on the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry to address long-term drought in the upcoming Farm Bill out of concern for its negative effects on farmers and ranchers in Nevada. Last year, she broke with the Biden Administration to block proposed regulations of U.S. waterways that would have hurt Nevada's farmers and ranchers. Senator Rosen was also named a "Friend of the Farm Bureau" for being a consistent supporter of Nevada's farming and ranching communities.

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Hanes Homan, President, Nevada Cattlemen's Association

"God took away for us, but God will give it back to us. We will do better the second time and in a few years, we will be worth a million pesos."

— Pedro Altube

As I sit down to write my monthly article it seems that winter is losing its grip. Days are getting longer and warmer. Spring is on the horizon. Traveling around the state and talking to other ranchers I think that this has been so far a perfect "tailor made" winter for Nevada. Plenty of snow up high, plenty of mud down low, not too warm, not too cold and the cattle market is strong. There are a lot of ranchers, me included, that will never forget the winter we put in last year.

It amazes me how Nevada and the Great Basin can be so harsh but then be so perfect within the span of two years. This brings me to Pedro Altube!

If you don't know who Pedro is, shame on you. He was full Basque, born in Spain in 1831, then migrated to the United States as a young man. Look up his history, it's worth the read. He is one of my personal heroes. His positive attitude, sense of resiliency, and thirst for adventure truly defines and embodies our culture and spirit in the Great Basin.

Pedro made the quote above after the devastating winter of 1889 -1890 (much like last year's winter in my mind). After that winter he was all but wiped out, but he borrowed money, bought cattle in Idaho to stock the ranch and kept building his operation into what is known as the massive Spanish Ranch today. The pure grit and heart that it took to build what Pedro achieved is still alive 140 years later in our industry. As we build back after three years of terrible drought, bad cattle markets, and one incredibly harsh winter the future looks bright to me! At times in life I think it is necessary to have our faith, grit, and resolve tested to build our character, but as Pedro said, "God will give back." So enjoy the now because I feel that this is one of those times of "God giving back to us".

This brings me to my second favorite Pedro quote - "hey my friend, have a drink with me" :). I think that's enough typing for me, I'm off to mix up a Picon!

Salut'e - to my resilient friends!

NCA MEMBERSHIP

We would like to thank the following people for joining or renewing their membership with Nevada Cattlemen's Association between February 26 and March 25, 2024.

(New members are in bold.)

- Barnes Ranches Inc.
- Barnes Ranches Inc., Tom & Kelly Barnes
- **Matt & Hayley Barnes**
- **Rick & Casey Barnes**
- Ira & Kim Brackett
- Broken Circle Cattle Co., Travis Myers
- Cannon Ranch LLC, Michael Cannon
- D Bar M Western Store, Jack Bassett
- John Ellison
- **Dawn Fisler Insurance Agency, Dawn Fisler**
- Gallagher Ford, Casey Gallagher

- **Gansberg Ranch, Todd Gansberg**
- Jennifer Garrett
- **Grass Valley Ranch L.L.C., Luke Lancaster**
- Hodges Transportation, Inc.
- Kamtec, Inc., Matt Torley
- King Ranch, Jeanne King
- Dr. Bill Kvasnicka
- Nevada Mining Association, Nikki Bailey-Lundahl
- Quinn River Crossing Ranch, Wallace Slough

- Smiley Ranch, James & Edward Smiley, Tracie Smiley Fitzgerald
- Synergy Resource Solutions, Inc., Jack Alexander
- Jake Tibbitts
- Twin Falls Livestock Commission Co., Bruce Billington
- Travis & Jennifer Whiteley
- U. C. Cattle Co., Hank & Judy Kershner
- U. C. Ranch, Jacob Kershner
- Washoe Ranch, Brett Reed
- Royce Patrick Wilber

UPCOMING EVENTS

NCBA/PLC Legislative Conference

— April 17-19, 2024 —
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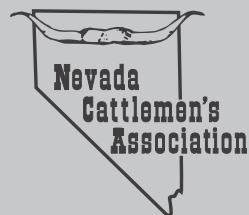
— May 1, 2024 —
NCA Office / Elko, Nevada
www.nevadacattlemen.org

NCBA Cattle Industry Summer Business Meeting

— July 8-10, 2024 —
San Diego, California
Hilton San Diego Bayfront

Nevada Cattlemen's Association Annual Convention

— November 20-22, 2024 —
Fallon, Nevada
Rafter 3C Arena



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Hanes Holman, President | Dave Baker, Pres.-Elect
Marlow Dahl, 1st Vice Pres. | Wade Small, 2nd Vice Pres.

Nevada Cattlewomen Plan Beef & Wine Pairing Workshops

By Keri Pommerening, NVCW President

Nevada Cattlewomen have been busy on several projects to promote the beef industry. One of those projects is our first Beef & Wine Pairing to be held in Minden, Nevada at the Park Home Ranch Venue, on June 2, 2024.

What is a Beef & Wine Pairing? The intent is for the attendee to learn about a few different cuts of meat, how to best prepare those cuts, do a taste test and sample the appropriate wine that pairs best with each cut. Park Ranch Meats will be present to answer questions and sell the same cuts of beef. Bottles of the sampled wines will also be for sale. A recipe card for each sampling will be given out with the beef cuts. The attendee will leave prepared to cook the meal that night. Bringing producers and consumers together to enjoy the tasty benefits of beef in a fun and interactive workshop, beef and wine, what else do you need? The time of the event will be determined as we get closer to the date. Save the date and watch for flyers in the next issue, or you can email us at cwnv.inc@gmail.com for further information. We also plan to host pairings in Elko in the summer and Southern Nevada in the late fall or winter.

As I mentioned in my last article, I will share a monthly highlight on one of our members so you can get to know some of the hard-working crew behind the scenes of Nevada Cattlewomen. This month's spotlight is on Lacey Tom, our secretary. Here is what Lacey had to share:

Lacey Tom isn't your average teacher. By day, she inspires young minds in a bustling high school agriculture classroom. But when the final bell rings, she trades textbooks for wranglers, transforming into a small-scale cattle rancher alongside her husband and their four young children on their small hobby farm in Moapa Valley. Lacey is married to Lukas "Shorty" Tom and have four beautiful children: Rylan (14), Grayson (9), Aspyn (5) and Sutton (1 1/2). This dual life isn't a split personality; it's a beautiful synergy. Lacey infuses her classroom with the lessons learned on the ranch, teaching responsibility, resilience, and the profound connection between humans and the natural world. As the FFA Advisor for over 190 members, her students erupt in excitement when she shares stories of newborn calves or the intricate dance of nature that sustains their food. Weekends and summers are a full immersion into farm life. Lacey tackles cattle management with expertise, her days filled with the rhythmic clanging of gates, the dusty joy of herding, and the quiet satisfaction of a job well done. Lacey's children are active in raising show cattle and rodeoing. Her children are active members of



Lacey Tom Family

Submitted Photo

the Wrangler Junior Rodeo Association and the Moapa Valley High School Rodeo Club, which means Lacey and Shorty are always busy! These hands-on experiences aren't just about raising healthy animals; it also shapes her teaching philosophy. She believes in experiential learning, and the school farm becomes a living classroom for her students. Field trips to the school farm offer a firsthand look at agriculture, fostering a deeper understanding of where food comes from and the vital role farmers play in our society. Lacey's dedication extends beyond the classroom walls. She spearheads initiatives that connect local farms with urban dwellers seeking farm fresh food, ensuring families have access to fresh, locally-sourced food. Her passion inspires not only her students but also the wider community. She leads workshops for aspiring young agriculturists while providing students college credits at the high school level, proving that agriculture is a field ripe with opportunity for anyone with grit and a love for the land.

Lacey Tom is a testament to the power of a multifaceted life. She's a teacher who cultivates curiosity, a rancher who respects the land, and a role model who demonstrates that nurturing minds and herds can be equally rewarding pursuits.

Thank you, Lacey, for your commitment to Nevada Cattlewomen and the beef industry. If you are interested in joining the Nevada Cattlewomen, we'd love to have you help us inspire devotion and dedication in the beef industry. You can fill out a membership form online at

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd49vUQnh37DGdGdqIHZ-V0dZREJ9GVnTVne9NsDSiYi8-81hA/viewform?usp=sharing>

Until next month, whether you are feeding cows, calving, or enjoying the sunshine, stay safe and warm.

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Nevada Cattlemen's Association Offers Quality Workers' Compensation Program to Nevada's Ranch and Farm Owners



The Nevada Agricultural Self Insured Group sponsored by The Nevada Cattlemen's Association offers an affordable workers' compensation option to the standard insurance market for Ag related businesses with employees in Nevada.

Created for the sole purpose of providing Nevada's Agricultural community with a viable workers' compensation option, the Nevada Agricultural Self Insured Group provides employers with:

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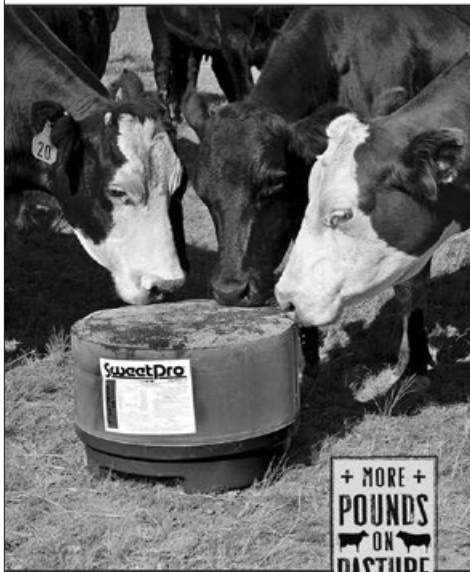
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NCA April Roundup: *Continued from page 1*

to have a readable ID tag. The proposed animal disease traceability rule would transition producers to electronic tags in an effort to better address disease outbreaks, particularly a potential foot and mouth disease outbreak in the U.S. NCA will continue to engage with our Congressional delegation on securing the necessary funding to prevent producers from being saddled with the increased costs associated with the proposed rule should it go into effect.

On a similar note, as part of ongoing trade talks within the Biden Administration, USDA recently put its stamp of approval on the importation of beef from Paraguay. Paraguay has a long and storied history with foot and mouth disease and the importation of beef from there would be very dangerous to the health of our domestic herd and consumers' trust in our product. Recently, members of the Congress have introduced a Congressional Review Act resolution (a resolution of disapproval). If the resolution is passed by the House and Senate and signed by the President, or if Congress

successfully overrides a presidential veto, the Paraguay beef importation rule cannot go into effect. I'd like to thank Senator Rosen and Senator Cortez-Masto for being two of the ten Senators who are sponsoring the effort to protect U.S. livestock.

Finally, NCA will be sending a contingent to Washington D.C. for the NCBA/PLC Annual Legislative Conference in mid-April. We intend to discuss animal disease traceability, wild horses, federal land designations and much more during the trip. This trip serves as a great opportunity for NCA to meet face to face with our Congressional representatives to discuss priority issues and for them to see and hear from real producers who are impacted every day by the decisions they make. The responsibility of carrying your message from the countryside to D.C. is not something that is taken lightly and NCA greatly appreciates the opportunity to represent you on the issues that matter.

Till next time.

Milk And Meat Supplies Remain Safe As States Monitor For Bird Flu In Cows

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza has been found in dairy cows in Texas, Kansas and New Mexico

(SPARKS, Nev.) – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced Monday, March 25, 2024, that Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) had been detected in dairy cows. The commercial milk and meat supplies remain safe for consumption due to federal requirements and pasteurization and pose no risk of transmission of HPAI to the public.

“Dairies are required to send only milk from healthy animals into processing for human consumption; milk from impacted animals is being diverted or destroyed so that it does not enter the food supply,” the USDA wrote in the news release on Monday. “In addition, pasteurization has continually proven to inactivate bacteria and viruses, like influenza, in milk. Pasteurization is required for any milk entering interstate commerce.”

This means all milk entering the state must be pasteurized, which inactivates bacteria and viruses, like influenza, in milk. In addition, raw milk is illegal in Nevada, meaning all commercially available milk has also been pasteurized.

The USDA, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as state veterinary and public health officials, had previously been investigating an illness among dairy cows in Texas, Kansas and New Mexico causing decreased lactation, low appetite and other symptoms. There have been no reported cases in beef cattle, and there are currently no suspected cases in Nevada.

The USDA has confirmed that HPAI does not seem to be passed cow-to-cow, but rather by wild birds carrying the

disease and transmitting it.

“The Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) has been monitoring the spread of illness among dairy cattle in these three states,” said NDA Director Goicoechea, DVM. “Now that a cause has been determined, our producers can be better prepared to prevent the spread to their herds. As always, we encourage the practice of good health safety measures.”

Proper health safety measures are outlined on the NDA website and include:

- Wash hands before and after coming in contact with birds.
- Limit the number of people that come in contact with your animals to those necessary for their care.
- Clean and disinfect equipment before and after each use.
- Do not share tools or supplies.
- Minimize exposure to and avoid attracting wild birds and waterfowl by securing feed, not using wild bird feeders on or near the premises and remove pooling or ponding water.
- Quarantine sick birds or bag and seal deceased birds immediately and report to your veterinarian and the NDA Animal Disease Lab at 775-353-3709 or diseasereporting@agri.nv.gov.

“As noted by the USDA, the dairy and meat supplies continue to be safe for consumption and do not pose a human health risk of contracting HPAI,” said NDA Director Goicoechea. “The current risk to public remains low.”

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Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Releases Monitor-Toquima Range Vacant Allotment Project's Draft Decision Notice

Tonopah, Nev., March 11, 2024 – The Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest's Austin-Tonopah Ranger District has released the Monitor-Toquima Range Vacant Allotment Project draft Decision Notice/Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment for a 45-day formal objection period. This decision determined the future of livestock grazing on the McKinney, Meadow Canyon, Monitor Valley East, Monitor Valley West, Silver Creek, and Table Mountain Allotments located in central Nevada.

"Looking at allowing livestock grazing on allotments that have been vacant since the early-mid 1990s is not without challenges and varied perspectives," said District Ranger Lance Brown. "I selected the proposed action, which authorizes livestock grazing on the Table Mountain Allotment while the other five allotments are set aside as forage reserves."

Brown explained that the Table Mountain Allotment will be able to maintain robust ecological conditions across the allotment and provide forage for livestock. The forage reserve allotments have limited resources and would only become available to Forest Service permittees after the loss of forage on their allotments from drought, fire, rangeland restoration activities, etc. These five forage reserve allotments will be the first established on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and will allow for flexible grazing management strategies and healthy rangelands.

The Monitor-Toquima Range Vacant Allotment Project draft Decision Notice/Finding of No Significant Impact and final Environmental Assessment and other project documents are available at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/htnf/?project=59389>.

Objections will be accepted for 45 days following publication of the legal notice in the Reno Gazette-Journal from anyone who previously submitted specific written comments during designated comment periods. Issues raised in objections must be based on previously submitted comments unless based on new information arising after designated opportunities to comment.

Objections must be mailed to Reviewing Officer, Monitor-Toquima Range Vacant Allotment Project, USFS Intermountain Region Office, 324 25th Street, Ogden UT, 84401, or facsimiles can be sent to 801-625-5277. Electronic objections must be submitted in a format such as an email message, pdf, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc) to: <https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=59389>. Please put "Monitor-Toquima Range Vacant Allotment Project" in the subject line.

For more information on this project, please contact Austin-Tonopah District Ranger Lance Brown, at lance.brown@usda.gov.

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The Nevada Department of Wildlife Investigates Possible Wolf Sighting in Northeastern Nevada

Elko County, NV- On Sunday, March 17, a pilot with a helicopter capture crew contracted by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW), spotted three suspected wolves near Merritt Mountain, north of Elko, during a scheduled moose collaring project. After relaying the observation to NDOW biologists, the department immediately coordinated with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service on a plan to thoroughly search the area to confirm the sighting.

During search efforts to confirm the sighting last week, biologists discovered tracks in the area. The freshest tracks appeared to be a set that led in the direction of the Idaho border, where they were lost in broken snow conditions.

In an effort to verify the identity of the animals, NDOW biologists continued ground surveys, and through that effort, they were able to measure track dimensions consistent with a wolf. The biologists then installed trail cameras, collected

scat, and explored locations for opportunities to collect hair samples. The collected samples were sent off for DNA testing and the test results are expected within the next several days.

“We are doing all we can to gather information regarding this sighting and will keep the public updated as we learn more information,” said NDOW Director Alan Jenne. “Nevada is not a historic habitat for wolves, and we’ve had very few confirmed sightings in the state. Wolves are not known to reside in the state of Nevada, but we know that they may occasionally cross state lines for brief periods.”

NDOW is committed to working with all applicable state and federal agencies to ensure public safety amidst this incident, and the department will continue to ensure that Nevada ecosystems and natural resource industries are not negatively impacted by the presence of wolves in the state.

NCBA NEWS

NCBA is Your Partner

By Mark Eisele, NCBA President

Working in the cattle business is not for the faint of heart. Between the physical demands, early mornings, late nights, and battling the elements, we all work in an extremely challenging industry. I learned early on that if I was going to be successful, I couldn’t do it alone; I needed partners to have my back. During my career, those partners have included local USDA staff, my lender and my accountant, but the most important partner is NCBA.

The founders of our association recognized this, too. Back in 1898, the first convention of the National Live Stock Growers Association — which would later become NCBA — focused on the need for producers to join together and speak with one unified voice. Attendees like Colorado rancher G.F. Patrick spoke about the major powers of the day that held disproportionate sway over individual producers. Patrick’s solution? A national association. “Alone, the [cattlemen] is nothing; in combination, everything,” he said.

NCBA’s policy success in Washington, D.C., is strengthened by our partnerships with other agricultural organizations. NCBA is host to a regular “barnyard” meeting consisting of other livestock and crop industry associations where we discuss the major issues threatening farmers and ranchers in all segments of agriculture. These meetings lead to comments to federal agencies on major rules or advocacy for legislation supporting producers. When not just the cattle industry, but all agriculture aligns on an issue, we are a force to be reckoned with in Washington, D.C.

One of the most impactful partnerships to me is our relationship with the Public Lands Council (PLC). Since 1968, PLC has represented western ranchers who hold federal grazing permits. Approximately 22,000 ranchers hold permits to graze on more than 250 million acres managed by the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management. In fact, nearly 40% of the western cattle herd spends time on public lands. Public lands ranchers face a particularly challenging set of issues. Raising cattle on your own private land is already difficult enough, but for us in the West, we must also deal with the federal government being our landlord. Because of our relationship with federal agencies, anti-agriculture activists target

us with a host of environmental restrictions with the goal of removing our cattle from the range all together. Public lands are a testing ground for these activists. If they succeed in the West, you can count on them trying the same tactics on your private land, too.

Across the years, our operation has changed with the introduction of new tools and technology. We can now watch trends and measure the different heights of our grasses, track moisture, and even fly drones to monitor our cattle. These practices have made our ranch more sustainable and improved our efficiency, which is also a priority for NCBA. Through webinars, hands-on trainings, and educational resources shared through land-grant universities, NCBA is proud to share the latest information in animal husbandry, sustainable grazing and conservation. I certainly believe “The Right Way is the Only Way” to raise cattle, and our partnerships with experts have helped expand the Checkoff-funded Beef Quality Assurance program. I am BQA certified, and I hope you are too, because continuous improvement moves our entire industry forward.

To recognize sustainability in the cattle industry, NCBA partners with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, conservation groups and private companies to honor producers’ conservation achievements with the Environmental Stewardship Award Program. The award showcases the great work being done on farms and ranches across the country that protect our natural resources, and the national winner will be announced this month. In yet another example of partnership, nominations for the award come from groups like the Nature Conservancy, Society for Range Management, state game and park services, state extension services, universities, wildlife organizations and livestock groups. It is a testament to NCBA’s work bringing people together that these various groups can all be at the same table focusing on the cattle industry.

Whether you’re a part of NCBA for representation in Washington, D.C., the educational resources, or to have a voice in cattle industry policy — thank you for trusting us to be your partner. Together, we’re building a brighter future for the cattle industry.

BLM Proposes Stronger Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plans

Analysis uses best available science and lessons learned to benefit species and western communities

WASHINGTON – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is announcing a draft plan to strengthen greater sage-grouse conservation and management on public lands, informed by the best-available science and input from local, state, federal, and Tribal partners. The draft plan is built on decades of partnership, research, and on-the-ground knowledge and experience in maintaining, protecting and restoring healthy sagebrush habitats.

Greater sage-grouse rely on sagebrush lands for all aspects of their life cycle to meet seasonal needs for food, cover and reproduction. A local population may need up to 40 square miles of intact landscape to stay healthy. Populations once in the millions now number fewer than 800,000, largely due to habitat loss exacerbated by climate change, such as drought, increasing wildfires, and invasive species. Protecting and restoring sagebrush on BLM-managed public lands across the West is critical not just for greater sage-grouse, but also for the health of western communities and other iconic Western species that rely on healthy sagebrush, including mule deer, pronghorn, and the pygmy rabbit. Additionally, these collaboratively developed landscape-level plans will ensure that other multiple uses of BLM sagebrush lands – including clean energy projects – move forward in a manner that limits impacts to sensitive resources and can also help combat climate change—a main driver of greater sage-grouse habitat loss.

“The majesty of the West and its way of life are at stake. Sagebrush lands are

places where people work and play, and they are the headwaters for the West’s major rivers,” said BLM Director Tracy Stone-Manning. “Joint efforts to conserve the greater sage-grouse and its habitat led to the largest collaborative conservation effort in our history, and we are building on that work, together with our partners, to ensure the health of these lands and local economies into the future.”

The BLM manages the largest single share of sage-grouse habitat in the United States—nearly 67 million acres of 145 million total acres. The draft plan offers a range of alternatives for sustainable management of these lands. Balancing a consistent management approach across the range while addressing conditions and policies unique to individual states, BLM will be able to work more effectively with state and local managers to protect and improve sagebrush habitats on public lands.

Alternatives in the proposal build on the most successful components of the plans that the BLM adopted in 2015 and updated in 2019. The draft plan incorporates new sage-grouse conservation science and lessons learned, accommodating changing resources conditions while increasing implementation flexibility. The agency considered nearly 1,900 comments gathered during an initial public scoping period and information shared by state, local, federal, and Tribal partners in more than 100 meetings.

The BLM will hold 13 public meetings to answer questions and take further comments on the draft alternatives and analysis. Information on public meetings will be posted in the events column on the main page of the BLM website.

In addition to actions guided by the greater sage-grouse management plans, the BLM is actively restoring and conserving sagebrush habitat across the West through the Biden Administration’s Investing in America agenda. Annually, the BLM invests approximately \$35 million of its congressional appropriation in sagebrush ecosystem projects, supplemented by \$123 million from President Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and complemented by investments by state and local governments, Tribes, stakeholder groups, and private landowners.

The draft environmental impact statement and plan amendments will open for public comment on March 15, 2024. The comment period will end on June 13, 2024. More information on how to comment on this draft will be posted at <https://www.blm.gov/sagegrouse>. A final environmental impact statement is expected this fall, followed by Records of Decision in each state.



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