

Private Lands Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Protocol

Conservation actions targeted for private lands require an approach that involves three main steps: 1) identification of areas of high value for sage-grouse; 2) evaluating existing or potential threats to those lands and their integrity into the future; and 3) undertaking a strategy to conserve those values through conservation easements or other public-private partnerships (i.e., habitat restoration or enhancement projects).

A simplified protocol consists of the following specific actions:

1. Assess core or priority habitats for sage-grouse using GIS and applying specific habitat and occupancy filters such as:
 - distance to lek(s),
 - existing telemetry locations
 - existing habitat models
 - distance to known late brood-rearing habitat/features
2. Identify private inholdings with conservation potential and value within core or priority habitats;
3. Conduct a field visit to area(s) to determine existing condition of and juxtaposition of habitat types or vegetation important to sage-grouse
4. Identify agency or non-governmental organization leads to approach landowner
5. Identify and foster conservation options (e.g., conservation easement, habitat enhancement projects, etc.)
6. Develop a monitoring plan for agreed upon conservation actions.