

Sagebrush Ecosystem Program

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STATE OF NEVADA
Sagebrush Ecosystem Program

SAGEBRUSH ECOSYSTEM COUNCIL
STAFF REPORT
MEETING DATE: April 9, 2015

DATE: April 2, 2015
TO: Sagebrush Ecosystem Council Members
FROM: Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team
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THROUGH: Kacey KC, Program Manager
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SUBJECT: Revised Management Categories Map (version March 2015)

SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to inform the Council of a revision to the Management Categories Map based on updated lek information.

PREVIOUS ACTION

April 22, 2013. The Council directed staff to proceed in development of the habitat suitability model, working with Dr. Peter Coates of the USGS.

October 10, 2013. The Council approved revisions to the “avoid process” within Section 3.0 with direction to develop definitions for management categories with the USGS and NDOW.

January 23, 2014. The Council adopted the proposed Management Categories.

October 2, 2014. Direction from Governor Sandoval’s office to publically release August 2014 Management Categories Map and put into use for management decisions.

DISCUSSION

In late February 2015, it was identified that the Management Categories Map (version August 2014) used the 2013 NDOW lek database to estimate the space use portion of the management categories map. That was the most recent lek database when the USGS began their modeling efforts. Since then, the 2014 NDOW lek database has become available. The space use concept is dependent on lek status (e.g., active, pending, inactive etc.) and 5 year average male attendance.

To ensure that the most recent data (e.g., 2014 lek database) is included in the map for the Greater Sage-grouse Northern California and Nevada Sub-regional Final EIS/LUPA, the SEP requested that the USGS update the space use portion of the management categories maps with the 2014 lek information.

On March 20, 2015, the USGS provided to the SETT the updated version. Because this is intended for the EIS, California data were included in the process. The management categories were updated by: 1) first re-calculating the space use index with the 2014 lek count data from NDOW and CDFW and associated changes in active/pending status, and 2) intersecting the index with the original habitat categories (i.e., high, mod, low, non-habitat) provided last August and described in the Coates et al. 2014 USGS Open File Report. There were net 29 total fewer active and pending leks used in the analysis.

Below is a summary of changes in management category area (acreage does not include California).

| Mgmt Cat | August 2014 Nevada Acres | March 2015 Nevada Acres | Change | % Change |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| Core | 11,503,059 | 11,453,026 | -50,033 | -0.43% |
| Priority | 8,425,062 | 8,543,610 | 118,548 | 1.41% |
| General | 7,930,206 | 7,970,584 | 40,377 | 0.51% |
| Non-Habitat | 20,768,744 | 20,659,852 | -108,892 | -0.52% |
| Total | 48,627,071 | 48,627,071 | 0 | 0.00% |

No other changes were made to the management categories map. The habitat suitability portion remains unchanged.

These changes are outside the scope of the revisions that have been anticipated since the initial drafts released. The revisions anticipated from the USGS, including updated telemetry information, pinyon-juniper layer, urban indices, and modelling by season are still forthcoming. These are expected in May/June 2015 to be brought to the June or July Council meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

SETT recommends that the Council approve the proposed revision of the Management Categories map – March 2015.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Council agree with the staff recommendations, possible motions would be:

“Motion to approve the proposed revision of the Management Categories Map-
March 2015.”

Attachments:

- 1: March 2015 Revised Management Categories Map**
- 2: August 2014 Management Categories Map**
- 3: Zoomed in area showing example changes between the maps from changes in lek status.**

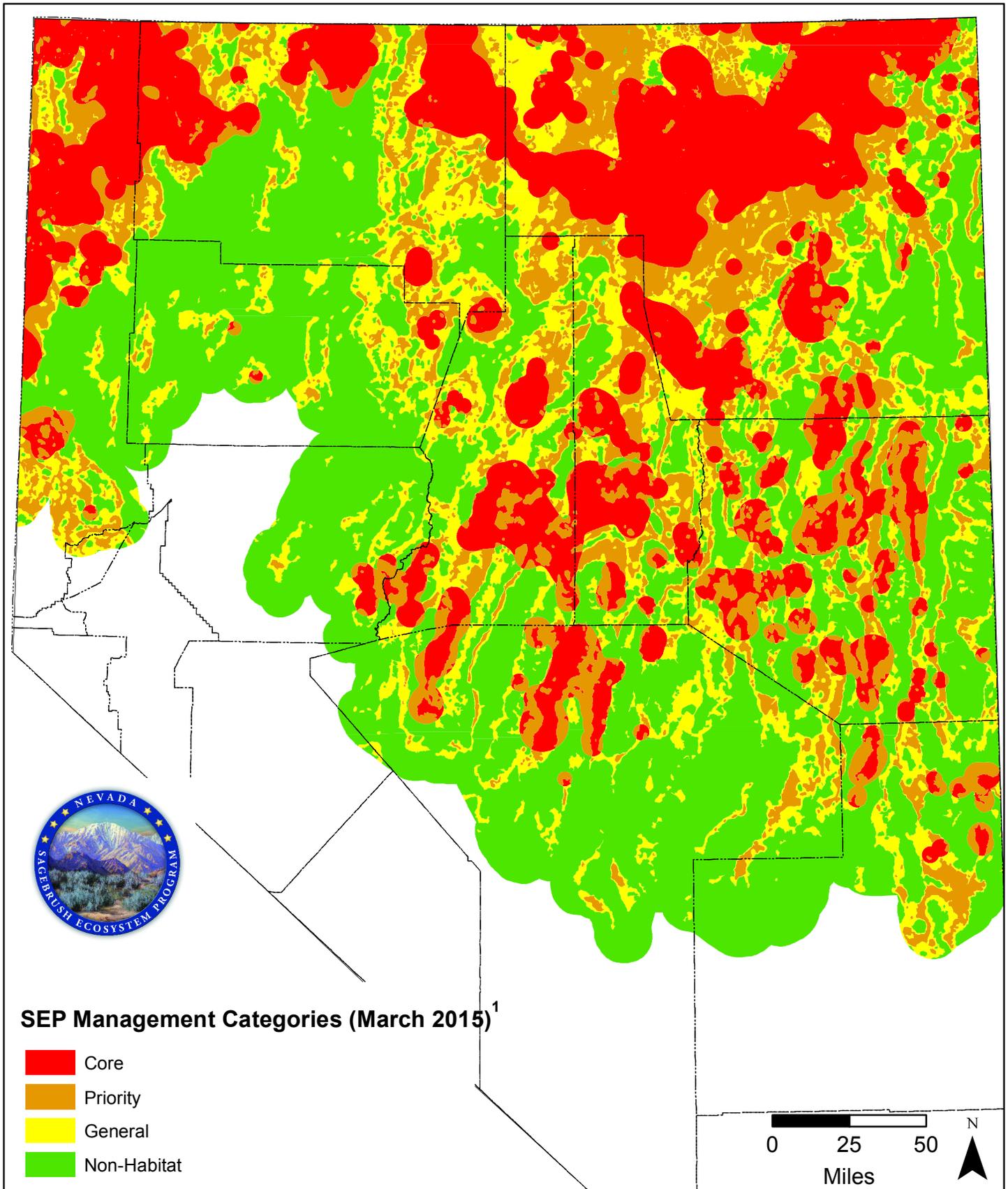


Figure 4. Management Category Map

1. Coates et al. 2014

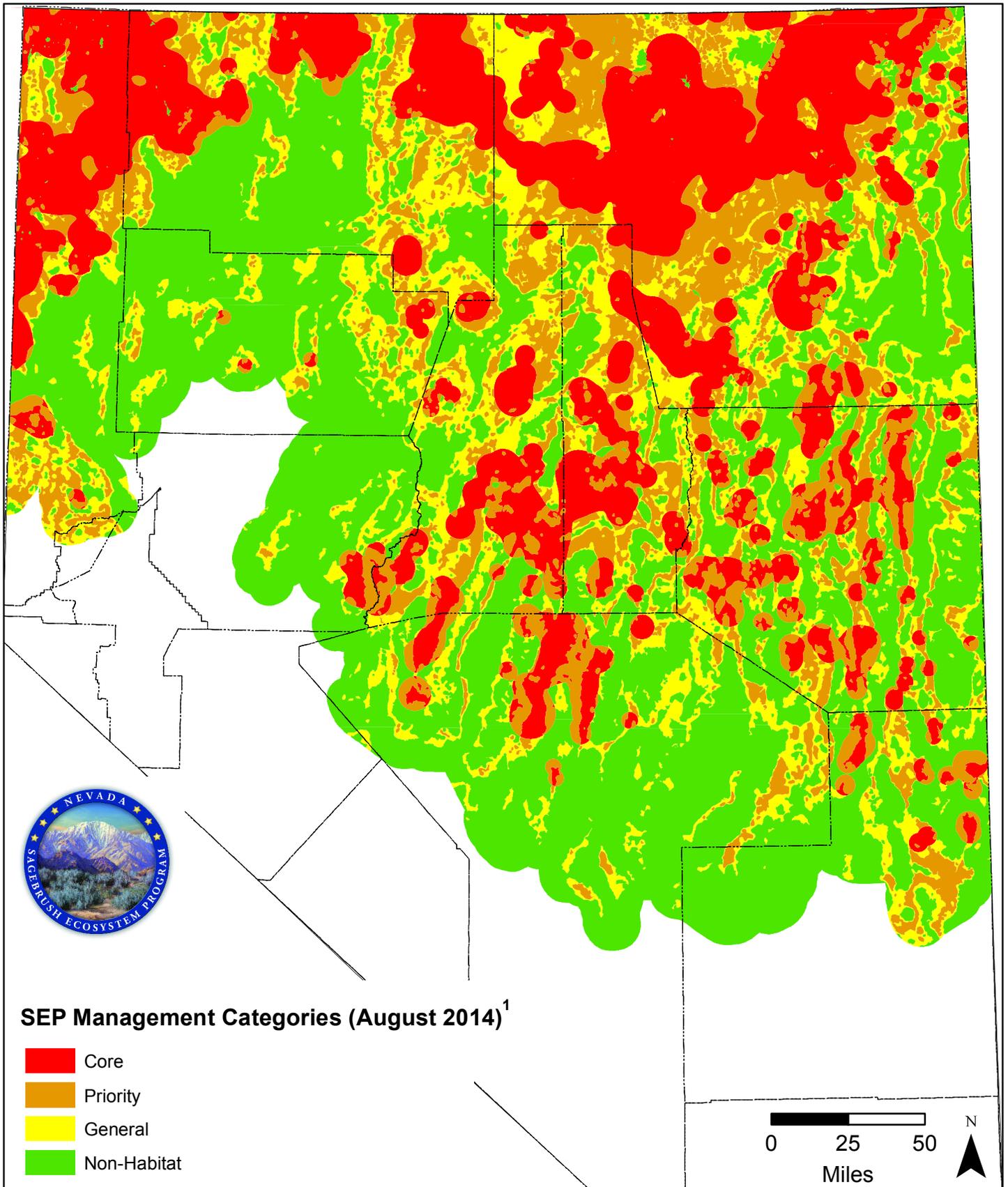


Figure 4. Management Category Map

1. Coates et al. 2014

