



## Legislative Background/Testimony



- 2015 Legislative Session approved \$2 million (\$1 million each year of the biennium) for habitat work associated with CCS.
- Legislative Testimony and Discussion:
  - GRSG habitat protections/improvements
  - Demonstrate State commitment
  - Generate Credits
  - Establish self-revolving fund



## Sagebrush Ecosystem Budget Account



- NRS 232.161 (2013 Session) established “Account to Restore the Sagebrush Ecosystem”.
- Funds in the account are carried over.
- Interest is credited to the account.
- Funds may only be used for the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program (e.g. projects, CCS contracts, etc.)



## Proposed FY 16 Project Objectives



- Produce high quality GRSB habitat projects.
- Create a pool of readily accessible credits.
- Demonstrate effectiveness of CCS.
- Creates interest for additional participation in CCS amongst stakeholders.
- Create “user friendly” application process.



## Proposed Overall Process

- Project solicitation (LOI) by end of 2015.
- LOI to include:
  - Project Location and Description
  - Partners/Matching Funds (if any)
  - Implementation schedule
- Interest letters due January/February 2016
- SETT Recommendations/Council Approvals Early Spring 2016.
- Agreements in place April 2016.





## Selection Criteria



- Habitat Value
- Projected Habitat “Uplift”
- Estimated credit production
- Timeliness (e.g. results by end of 2016)
- Cost/Benefit
- Risk Reduction
- Other?



## Other Potential Guiding Elements



Do we want to strive for

- multiple projects or a few large projects?
- projects spread across multiple geographic areas?
- different types of projects (e.g. meadow restoration, P-J removal, disturbance removal, etc.)?
- projects on different land ownerships?



## “Self-Direct” Funds



- Do we want to “self-direct” a portion of funds to State agencies/programs (e.g. CD, NDOW, AG, NDF).
- Some Advantages:
  - Shows state commitment to effort (particularly on State owned property).
  - Possibly more expeditious.
- Some Disadvantages:
  - May be perceived that CCS is solely a mechanism for funding state agencies.
  - Potentially less funds for private landowner participation. 7



## “Self Directed” Project Examples



- SETT members reached out to identify potential habitat improvement projects that are currently planned for 2016.
- NDOW identified five possible projects. (Telephone line removal, 2 P-J projects, meadow enhancement, and spring exclosures)
  - Cost range from \$24,900 to \$126,500.



## “Self Directed” Project Examples (cont.)



- State Conservation District Program identified:
  - Potential projects across six different conservation districts.
  - Diverse projects – PJ removal, riparian improvements, spring protection.
- Some projects are on BLM land with NEPA completed (will need to address “additionality”).



## Considerations



- Advertisement (website, publications, etc.)
- Ensure additionality is addressed.
- Determine “share” of credits for projects that are done in partnership with private landowner investment.



## Next Steps



- Develop LOI
- Finalize Selection Criteria
- Advertise
- Continue work with BLM/USFS regarding projects on Federal Land