



STATE OF NEVADA
SAGEBRUSH ECOSYSTEM COUNCIL
201 South Roop Street, Suite 101
Carson City, Nevada 89701-5247
Phone (775) 684-8600 - Fax (775) 684-8604

DRAFT MINUTES

Date: Friday, May 18, 2018
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Place: Nevada Legislature – Room 4100
401 South Carson Street, Carson City, NV 89701

A full audio recording of this meeting is accessible through the following website
http://sagebrusheco.nv.gov/Meetings/Sagebrush_Ecosystem_Council_Meeting/

Council Members Present: Chris MacKenzie, Allen Biaggi, Steven Boies, Bevan Lister, William Molini, Sherman Swanson, Cheva Gabor for Bill Dunkelberger, Marci Todd for John Ruhs, Carolyn Swed, Jim Lawrence and Tony Wasley.

Council Members Absent: J.J. Goicoechea, Starla Lacy, Gerry Emm, Bill Dunkelberger, Marci Todd, Ray Dotson and Bradley Crowell

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – Vice-Chairman Chris MacKenzie called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.
- 2. PUBLIC COMMENT** – Jeremy Drew on behalf of the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO) advised that NACO had provided written comments to the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council (SEC) regarding potential amendments to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Land Use Plans regarding Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation and he is available to answer any questions the SEC may have during this meeting.
- 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA – *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**
Approval of agenda for May 18, 2018 – Member Allen Biaggi moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Member Steven Boies; motion passed unanimously. ***ACTION**
- 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**
Approval of minutes from the meeting held on April 5, 2018 – Member William Molini moved to approve the draft minutes; seconded by Member Bevan Lister; motion passed unanimously. ***ACTION**
- 5. COUNCIL MEMBER ITEMS AND CORRESPONDENCE** –
Council members may make comments at this time and the Program Manager will bring forward any pertinent correspondence directed to the Council.
Mr. Kelly McGowan, Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team (SETT) advised that he had received two items of correspondence; 1) NACO's input to BLM's Greater Sage-Grouse Land Use Plan Amendment and Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Nevada and NE California and; 2) Senator Catherine Cortez Masto regarding Sage-Grouse conservation.

Vice-Chair MacKenzie called for a brief recess due to technical difficulties at 8:39 a.m., and reconvened at 8:44 a.m.

6. SETT RECOMMENDATION TO AMEND THE 2014 NEVADA GREATER SAGE-GROUSE CONSERVATION PLAN TO INCLUDE ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT TRIGGERS RELATING TO GREATER SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT LOSS AND POPULATION DECLINES - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Ms. Katie Andrie (SETT) reviewed a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Triggers and Adaptive Management," as well as the Staff Report, copies of which can be found on the Program's website. Ms. Andrie advised that she will be reviewing Appendix D – Adaptive Management Plan within the Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement (RMPA/EIS). Ms. Andrie stated that most of the presentation will be a review of the Appendix, followed by the SETT recommendations on the incorporation of the BLM adaptive management plan into the 2014 Nevada Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan (State Plan). Ms. Andrie outlined the 3 spatial adaptive management scales identified in Dr. Peter Coates' [Hierarchical population monitoring of greater sage-grouse in Nevada and California](#) published with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) as Lek – individual breeding sites; Lek Cluster – group of leks with high amount of interchange and connectivity; and Biologically Significant Unit (BSU) – nested lek clusters with similar vegetation and environmental characteristics. Ms. Andrie continued by saying that Appendix D describes the use of population and habitat thresholds to identify soft or hard triggers; a causal factor analysis to determine reason for decline, and management responses. Ms. Andrie explained that population triggers identify nested spatial scales and the population thresholds for population stability and decoupling from higher-order scales. Ms. Andrie defined habitat triggers as based on percent landscape sagebrush cover at lek cluster and BSU scales. Ms. Andrie stated that the SETT will be assembling a Science Work Group (SWG) to further define and develop habitat triggers currently identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Member Molini asked for further information regarding the SWG, such as make-up of the group. Ms. Andrie replied that the SWG would be comprised of local experts in fields from various state and federal agencies, with specific knowledge and expertise in landscape and rangeland ecology. Member Biaggi stated that he was not aware there would be habitat and population triggers, and he is concerned that they are additive and may result in triggers from both the habitat and/or a population perspective that will significantly impact land uses. Ms. Andrie said that the methods to determine the triggers are separate analyses; however, they are covering the same spatial extents. Ms. Andrie also said that whether the trigger is population or habitat, a causal factor analysis would be commenced to identify the decline and what management actions should be implemented. Member Boies stated that he is concerned with habitat triggers within the BSU and asked if there was a 40,000 acre fire within an approximately 3 million acre BSU, could that fire create a trigger for the entire BSU. Ms. Andrie replied that it could if the fire reached a certain threshold of percent of sagebrush cover lost. Ms. Andrie supplied that following that trigger, a group of federal, state and local stakeholder partners will be invited to determine, collectively, the causal factor and the management responses. Mr. Mathew Magaletti, Sage-Grouse Lead, BLM, provided further information to Member Boies regarding his questions and concerns. Mr. James Lawrence asked if the existing RMPAs currently contain habitat triggers. Mr. Magaletti responded affirmatively. Member Biaggi asked if the research prepared by Dr. Coates was considered the best science and has the publication been peer reviewed. Mr. Magaletti responded that the open file report was peer reviewed prior to publication. Mr. Lawrence stated that he believed Dr. Coates' research was population based and not habitat based and asked Mr. Magaletti to clarify. Mr. Magaletti responded that Dr. Coates' research was only related to population base. The Council had further discussion, questions and concerns regarding triggers, habitat factors and raven predation, which are captured in the audio recording located on the Program's website. Ms. Andrie continued the PowerPoint presentation with the definitions of hard and soft triggers: 1) Soft triggers are defined as an intermediate threshold indicating management changes are needed at the project or implementation level; and 2) Hard triggers are defined as a threshold indicating immediate action necessary to stop a severe decline, degradation, or deviation from Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG)

populations, habitat, or conservation goals and objectives. Ms. Andrie said that the evaluation process is a three step process; 1) Estimate thresholds; 2) Warnings; and 3) Triggers, and how those warnings would be activated. Ms. Andrie outlined the trigger responses and causal factor analysis as follows:

- Step 1: Assessment of GRSG population and habitat baseline conditions
- Step 2: Determine the causal factor
- Step 3: Identify appropriate trigger responses
- Step 4: Implement trigger responses
- Step 5: Monitor responses

Member Boies expressed concern with the trigger response and causal analysis noting that this could include a change in grazing as well as a vast number of items that could be included in the response. Ms. Andrie replied that grazing would be handled separately under permit renewals and changes to grazing management would occur under this process. Mr. Magaletti supplied that the BLM would have to initiate the permit renewal process to make modifications to livestock grazing practices. Member Swanson stated that Step 3 should include language stating, "Or no action locally, due to lack of a need, lack of effective actions to address causes or higher priorities for habitat management." Member Molini also suggested that Step 3 should include "...delaying issuance of new permits and authorizations, *or adjusting existing permits...*" . Vice-Chair MacKenzie asked the SEC if there was any objection to the addition of this language if the Council moved forward with approving this issue, and he noted that no objections were made. Ms. Andrie continued with the longevity of trigger responses and setting a minimum time frame in which to preserve a trigger. Ms. Andrie stated that the SETT's recommendations for removing a trigger response should be equivalent to the length of time it took to result in the warning. Ms. Andrie concluded with a list of the SETT recommendation as follows:

- Adopt the USGS hierarchical population modeling framework to identify population triggers using three nested spatial scales to identify population thresholds, decoupling from higher order spatial scales and triggers.
- Approve the continued development of defining the spatial extent of the individual lek for inclusion within the causal factor analysis and management response.
- Approve the continued development of habitat triggers, which may include revising the landscape cover metrics, data type analyzed, and baseline values.
- Adopt the causal factor analysis and management response process with the changes specified in the PowerPoint presentation located on the Program's website.

After further discussion, questions and concerns regarding the recommendations, Member Biaggi moved to defer action on the population triggers and adaptive management and ask that the SETT bring the issue back at a future meeting with the inclusion of habitat triggers and adaptive management, as well as how the lek cluster boundaries may be modified in the future; seconded by Member Sherman Swanson; motion passed unanimously. ***ACTION**

Vice-Chair MacKenzie called for a recess at 11:07 a.m., and reconvened at 11:22 a.m.

7. SETT RECOMMENDATION TO AMEND THE 2014 NEVADA GREATER SAGE-GROUSE CONSERVATION PLAN AND THE NEVADA CONSERVATION CREDIT SYSTEM MANUAL TO INCLUDE AN ADDITIONAL MITIGATION FACTOR LAND USE ALLOCATION EXCEPTIONS AUTHORIZED UNDER THE BLM/USFS RMPA/DEIS - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Mr. Dan Huser reviewed a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Treatment of Anthropogenic Disturbances Resulting from Land Use Allocation Exceptions within the Conservation Credit System (CCS)," a copy of which is located on the Program's website. Mr. Huser stated that the objectives are two-fold; 1) determine the State's position on the exceptions process for unallocated projects in the Federal Land Use Plan (LUP); and 2) if otherwise unallocated projects with direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts to GRSG habitat should be treated differently within the CCS when exceptions by Federal Land Management Agencies authorize them to move forward. Mr. Huser provided the background information noting that land uses not allocated in General habitat management areas (GHMA) or Primary Habitat Management Areas (PHMA) may be authorized by Federal

Land Management Agencies through exceptions, while the State Plan lacks exceptions, but does contain a robust "Avoid" process to gain an exemption in Section 3.1.2 of the State Plan; however this process has yet to be implemented fully. Mr. Huser then presented Table 3-1, The Avoid Process for Proposed Anthropogenic Disturbances within the Service Area, as well as BLM's Table 2-1. Mr. Huser also provided BLM's exceptions i through vi, noting that items i and ii would be the primary items for discussion. Mr. Huser provided an option for a 0.1 increase in the debit site management factor being applied on impacts from exceptions to PHMA or GHMA. Mr. Huser provided the rationale for this change as follows:

- Support additional avoidance, deterrence, and co-location through higher debit results.
- Projects that ultimately move forward would generate greater conservation gain.
- This change may also be viewed as a greater regulatory assurance in future listing decisions. If a policy were to be adopted, it should be considered for implementation regardless of which exceptions process is used by Federal Land Management Agencies.

Mr. Huser continued by saying that if the additional policy were to be adopted, similar language could be added to the State Plan in Section 3.1.2. Vice-Chair MacKenzie stated that the CCS already contains a higher ratio for PHMA and GHMA and would prefer to have more time to review the matter, as well as have legal counsel review the information for defensibility. There was further discussion, questions and concerns from the SEC, and a full account of the discussion is captured in the audio recording located on the Program's website. Member Biaggi moved to not take action on this item, at this time; seconded by Member Boies; motion passed unanimously. ***ACTION**

Vice-Chair MacKenzie called for a recess at 12:15 p.m., and reconvened at 1:15 p.m.

10. REVIEW OF AUTHORITIES AND DUTIES OF THE SEC - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* Deputy Attorney General, Bryan Stockton

For the convenience of the SEC, Vice-Chair MacKenzie took Item 10 out of order. Mr. Bryan Stockton, Senior Deputy Attorney General reviewed a PowerPoint presentation regarding the duties and powers of the SEC, a copy of which is located on the Program's website. Mr. Stockton outlined the provisions of NRS Chapter 232 for the Council. Member Lister had questions of Mr. Stockton and a full account of the discussion is captured in the audio recording located on the Program's website. ***NO ACTION**

8. CONSOLIDATE AN OFFICIAL RESPONSE FROM SEC AND STAFF COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THE "BLM NEVADA AND NORTHEASTERN CALIFORNIA GREATER SAGE-GROUSE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Mr. McGowan, SETT Program Manager, reviewed a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Comments for the Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment and Environmental Impact Statement," a copy of which is located on the Program's website. Mr. McGowan provided background stating that the BLM released the draft Resource Management Plan Amendment and draft Environmental Impact Statement on May 4, 2018, and the deadline for providing comments to the BLM is August 2, 2018. Mr. McGowan said that the EIS presented two alternatives for managing Greater Sage-Grouse habitat on BLM managed lands in Nevada; 1) No-Action Alternative; and 2) Management Alignment Alternative created through coordination with the State and cooperating agencies. Mr. McGowan provided the Council with the SETT's comments noting that of particular interest was an item found in Chapter 2 of the DEIS as follows: "In addition, DOI and the BLM are evaluating whether the implementation of a compensatory mitigation standard on public lands is appropriate and consistent with applicable legal authorities." Mr. McGowan said that the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program (SEP) should present a unified and comprehensive response to this language and identify that the State Plan developed by Nevada implies compensatory mitigation and this standard should be required for anthropogenic disturbances wherever and whenever possible. Mr. McGowan also provided that moving in a different direction at this point would be in direct opposition to what the State of Nevada has adopted as a means to properly offset disturbances, minimize

their impacts and reasonably protect the sagebrush ecosystem while continuing to allow for the responsible multiple uses of its natural resources. Mr. McGowan queried whether BLM is calling into question their legal authority to require compensatory mitigation and the SEC may want to consider attempting to make compensatory mitigation applicable under state law. Member Lister asked if there was a current state permitting process. Mr. McGowan replied that primarily, the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) issues permits for air and water quality and reclamation and other states have adopted regulations for permitting. Member Swanson asked if the mine reclamation law contain language regarding avoid, minimize or mitigate which could be useful. Mr. Stockton replied that a reclamation bond must be posted when there is a land disturbance through the BLM, or the Division of Minerals, but that is only for reclamation. Member Biaggi noted that the goal of the Nevada mining reclamation program is to provide for a productive-post mining land use and that the focus is recontouring, revegetating, alternative land uses and other industrial uses and that avoid, minimize and mitigate is not a factor of that law. Member Swanson noted that the State of Nevada has jurisdiction over water, water rights and water permitting and perhaps that vehicle could be developed for permitting under compensatory mitigation. Mr. Lawrence offered that if the State of Nevada takes a strong position on this matter and it stands behind net conservation gain and the CCS, perhaps the federal agencies will align with the State Plan. Mr. J.A. Vacca, BLM, added that he believes it is imperative that the State of Nevada relay its concerns to the Department of the Interior (DOI) regarding this issue. Mr. McGowan continued with the presentation stating that the State Plan utilizes the language, "avoid, minimize, mitigate," while the BLM utilizes the language, "avoid, minimize, compensate," in the Management Alignment Alternative. Mr. McGowan advised that this discrepancy would require clarification from the BLM in order to align the correct terminology. Mr. McGowan continued with the statement that the SETT has not yet been consulted by the BLM regarding avoidance and minimization. Member Swanson asked if the Habitat Quantification Tool (HQT) was being utilized by the BLM for avoidance and minimization when considering potential projects on BLM-owned lands and if not, should this be addressed in the DEIS review. Mr. Vacca replied that in the Management Alignment Alternative the language requires the use of the HQT for projects that would have direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to GRSG or their habitat, in order to quantify the functional acres. Mr. Vacca said that if the Record of Decision (ROD) contains that language, it would solidify the use of the HQT as the appropriate tool. Mr. McGowan continued the presentation with a slide on Table 3-1: The Avoid Process for Proposed Anthropogenic Disturbances within the Service area, and noted that the DEIS contains a reference of utilizing this avoidance process. Mr. McGowan recommends that the SEC review Table 3-1 for augmentation, revisions or deletions. Mr. McGowan provided the next SETT comments by stating that if the BLM does adopt the HQT as the methodology for calculating disturbance, he would recommend that the BLM include the word "most current" version of the HQT, as the HQT may undergo revisions. Mr. McGowan advised that the next comments were in regard to proponent driven mitigation, the allocation exception process, hierarchical population modeling, defining a minimum time period in which a trigger response can be removed, reclamation and durability. There was further discussion, questions and concerns from the SEC regarding SETT's comments, and a full account of the discussion is captured in the audio recording located on the Program's website. ***NO ACTION**

9. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF SEC AND STAFF REVISIONS AND TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS TO THE 2014 NEVADA GREATER SAGE-GROUSE CONSERVATION PLAN - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Mr. McGowan provided the SEC with a table entitled, "Nevada State Plan Actionable Items," a copy of which is located on the Program's website. Mr. McGowan advised that the Council previously considered and approved certain revisions and technical corrections to the State Plan, however four items were not approved and the SETT was instructed to bring them back to the Council for further discussion. Mr. McGowan began with Item 2, Table 3-1, Avoid Process and Exemptions, stating that this table outlines the "avoid process." Mr. McGowan highlighted the areas of the table that may require attention from the SEC. After discussion of the highlighted items, Member Biaggi noted that he believes there is a fundamental difference between the State Plan and the BLM Resource Management Plan (RMP), as the State Plan is consultation based, while the BLM RMP is more

process based. Member Biaggi said that he believes the SEP should continue with the use of a consultation based State Plan. Member Swanson said that the SETT should bring this matter back to the SEC with a more detailed or proposed wording change at a future meeting. Mr. McGowan continued with Items 5 and 6, Map Updates Process and Map Updates Changes/Deletions, noting that this item was introduced at the last SEC meeting. Mr. McGowan outlined the revisions to the processes to be followed to update the biological and management tools contained in the State Plan. Member Biaggi moved to approve the map update process, Section 6.0 Mapping; seconded by Member Boies; motion passes unanimously. ***ACTION** Mr. McGowan moved to Item 14, Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Desired Habitat Conditions Questions and Answers and reminded the SEC that this item was also introduced at the last SEC meeting. Mr. McGowan advised the SEC that Appendix B of the State Plan contains Questions and Answers that should either be updated or deleted. Member Swanson moved to delete the Questions and Answers section, but continue to ensure that the preceding sections cite relevant current resources; second by Member Biaggi; motion passed unanimously. ***ACTION**

11. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS DISCUSSED DURING THIS MEETING AND SCHEDULING NEXT SEC MEETING - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

- A. With staff assistance, the Council will review items discussed, as well as items acted upon during this meeting, and determine which of those they wish to direct staff to do further work on, as well as which items the Council wishes to act on that may not have been acted upon during earlier discussion.
- B. The Council scheduled their next meeting for Tuesday, July 17, 2018, location and time to be determined.
- C. Finalize official comments from SEC and Staff regarding the BLM Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Resource Management Plan Amendment Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

12. FEDERAL AGENCY UPDATES AND COMMENTS –

- A. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – (USFWS) Ms. Carolyn Swed advised that USFWS received an adverse ruling with regard to USFWS' 2015 decision to withdraw the proposed listing of Bi-State Sage-Grouse. This case was heard in the Northern District of California and the ruling is still being reviewed by USFWS. Ms. Swed recognized the effort of USFWS and also USGS, whose science has been invaluable as the USFWS has sought to make the right management decisions on behalf of conservation and remain committed to working with those partners, as well as the Court, to determine the next steps.
- B. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – Ms. Marci Todd advised that Mike Courtney has been appointed Acting State Director of the BLM for a 120 day period. Ms. Todd also advised that Esther McCullough is the new district manager for Winnemucca and Pete McFadden is the new district manager for Ely. Ms. Todd also advised that the BLM has hired most of its seasonal firefighters and all BLM aircraft will be available shortly. Ms. Todd advised that BLM presented a webinar on outcome based grazing with permittees involved.
- C. US Forest Service (USFS) – Ms. Cheva Gabor advised the SEC that there have been updates on the USFS Sage-Grouse planning process noting that the current timeline is a release of the second Notice of Intent (NOI) on June 21, 2018, with the DEIS finished by August 20, 2018, the draft Record of Decision (ROD) and final EIS by December 6, 2018, and the close of the objections process and final decision in April of 2019. Ms. Gabor provided the SEC with follow-up information as to why the USFS cannot compel the use of the CCS; however she noted that the National Sage-Grouse Program Lead, John Shivik, believes that the state systems should be utilized wherever possible. Ms. Gabor read language from the USFS' Mitigation Implementation Guide as follows, "The Forest Service should favor use of state managed systems when compensatory mitigation is required, but excepting particular compensatory mitigation stipulations is the responsibility of the deciding official." Ms. Gabor provided further language as follows: "The Forest Service may not defer its

authority and responsibility for project level approval and could require additional mitigation and more restrictive measures than state plans.” Ms. Gabor then reviewed a presentation regarding the wild horse gather in Cold Creek, Nevada. Ms. Gabor advised that in early winter, reports were received from the public regarding starving horses in the Wheeler Pass joint management area and USFS began a gather under emergency regulations. Ms. Gabor said that to date, 123 horses have been gathered and the majority has been transferred to the BLM facility in Ridgecrest to be prepared for adoption or to long-term holding. Ms. Gabor noted that the horses that have been gathered are in extremely poor condition.

D. US Department of Agriculture (NRCS) – No update.

E. Other – No update.

13. STATE AGENCY UPDATES AND COMMENTS

A. Office of the Governor – No update.

B. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) – Mr. James Lawrence advised that Director Bradley Crowell was not able to be present today as he is meeting with other federal agencies in Washington, D.C. Mr. Lawrence advised that the Nevada Division of State Parks (NDSP) is continuing work on the planning efforts for the opening of the Walker River Recreation Area. Mr. Lawrence advised that he traveled to Kentucky for the National Mitigation and Ecosystem Banking Conference and served on a panel to discuss the CCS and in particular, the solicitations the SEP has undergone for credit production projects.

C. Department of Wildlife (NDOW) – Mr. Tony Wasley advised that aerial infrared surveys were conducted during late March and early April and no new LEKs were detected in the Monitor or Toiyabe Ranges; two possible new LEKs were located in the Toiyabe Range; one new LEK was discovered in the North Snake Range; and one new LEK was discovered in the Nut Mountain area of northern Washoe County. Mr. Wasley further advised that no detections were made in the Jackson Mountains, or North Schell Creek Range; 20 known LEKs were surveyed in the eastern Owyhee Desert; and 18 known LEKs were surveyed in the Diamond A PMU. Mr. Wasley also advised that all aerial infrared detections made in central Nevada last year were verified either by ground or helicopter with positive detections at all suspected new LEK sites. Mr. Wasley provided a study site update by stating that the Desatoya, Monitor, Mount Grant, Desert Creek, Santa Rosa, Sheldon Massacre and Virginia Mountains all have a full complement of hens that were captured and radio-marked for a total of approximately 180 birds. Mr. Wasley advised that chick hatch began in early May and it is not known at this time if the recent precipitation has affected chick mortality. Mr. Wasley advised that LEK counts are completed and biologists are entering the data into the database, but NDOW cannot speculate at this time as to whether trends are up or down.

D. Department of Agriculture (NDA) – Ms. Meghan Brown advised that today is Director James Barbee’s last day with the NDA and Jerri Conrad has been named the interim Director and will be attending future SEC meetings. Ms. Brown also advised that on May 22, 2018, the NDA will be holding its second Native Seed Forum in Ely, Nevada. Ms. Brown noted that UNR will be presenting at the forum, as well as NDOW, BLM, NDA, USFWS and USFS. Ms. Brown also noted that the group will also be attending a tour of the feed warehouse. Ms. Brown said that they are approximately fifty percent complete with implementation of the first round of projects utilizing grant money received from USFS. Ms. Brown then advised that the NDA has hired Ethan Mower as the newest member of the SETT.

E. Conservation Districts Program – Ms. Bettina Scherer advised that she attended the Nevada Collaborative Conservation Network (NCCN) Workshop and that it was well attended. Ms. Scherer advised that the Conservation Districts (CDs) must submit their projected annual work plans and proposed budgets by the end of May. Ms. Scherer also advised that she has been traveling through Nevada to meet with the CDs that she has not yet had the opportunity to meet with.

F. Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team (SETT) – Mr. Kelly McGowan advised that in the future, he would like to invite the NCCN and local area working groups (LAWGs) to meetings on a semi-annual basis for updates and presentations. Mr. McGowan said that he would also like to invite The Nature Conservancy at a future meeting for a presentation with regard to their habitat modeling and mitigation efforts. Mr. McGowan then advised that the SETT will be working in the field at Cave Valley and will be meeting with a landowner in Elko who has expressed an interest in the CCS.

G. Other – No update.

14. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

15. ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before the Council, Vice-Chair MacKenzie adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.