



Temporary Mitigation Regulations Adoption Hearing

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SEP

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Brief History

- NRS 232.162 provides authority for the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council to adopt regulations specific to the management of sagebrush ecosystem and the establishment and oversight of a mitigation program.
 - The Sagebrush Ecosystem Council is a governor-appointed council, established to create and carry out strategies for "the conservation of the greater sage grouse and sagebrush ecosystems in this State".
- NRS 321.594 provides authority for the Division of State Lands to adopt regulations for the oversight and administration of a program to mitigate damage to sagebrush ecosystems.



Sagebrush Ecosystem Council

- On October 11, 2018, the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council passed a motion to “proceed with seeking regulation to require a permit for implementation of the CCS system for the mitigation process for any projects undertaken on state or federal land”.
- Most of the land in Nevada is public land. The Nevada Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan requires “net conservation gain” as well as the use of the Conservation Credit System. In order to obtain net conservation gain, mitigation on public lands needs to be required, and the Federal Government will not require it unless the State requires it.



Proposed Temporary Regulation

Definitions (not included here)

- **Section 1. Purpose.** The purpose of this regulation, inclusive, is to ensure continued management and conservation of Greater Sage-Grouse and sagebrush ecosystems pursuant to NRS 232.162, NRS 321.592, and NRS 321.594 by setting forth requirements to mitigate certain anthropogenic disturbances in identified Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat.



Proposed Temporary Regulation

Sec. 2. Applicability of regulations. Mitigation of residual direct or indirect anthropogenic impacts resulting in potential habitat loss or degradation as defined by the Nevada Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan and the Nevada Conservation Credit System, within Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Management Areas is required when the anthropogenic disturbance is subject to state or federal review, approval, or authorization, as ordered by Nevada Executive Order 2018-32, signed on December 7, 2018. The following are not subject to these regulations:

- 1) Activities that are in compliance with authorized land uses that were signed prior to December 7, 2018,
- 2) Activities using any mitigation agreement or framework signed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service prior to December 7, 2018, including any “Bank Enabling Agreement” or “Conservation Framework Agreement”, between the Department of Interior and private companies, or any amendments thereto,
- 3) Direct impacts of projects or actions located on privately owned lands,
- 4) Mineral exploration activities causing surface disturbance of five (5) acres or less,
- 5) *De minimis* activities as identified in the Nevada Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan, or
- 6) Anthropogenic disturbances outlined in the Nevada Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan and the Nevada Conservation Credit System which directly address public health and safety, through the approval of the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program Manager.



Proposed Temporary Regulation

Sec. 3. Any Project Proponent proposing an anthropogenic disturbance activity that results in impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Management Areas as defined by the Nevada Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan and the Nevada Conservation Credit System must be fully compliant with these regulations and receive written authorization from the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program Manager indicating mitigation requirements have been met (as defined in Section 5 below) prior to commencement of the anthropogenic disturbance.

- 1) Any Project Proponent proposing such activity shall submit geographic information system data files sufficient to indicate any existing, authorized, and proposed disturbances, and any other information required by the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team in order to assess potential impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Management Areas as a result of the proposed activity.
- 2) The Project Proponent shall consult with the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team and provide an analysis of the Avoid and Minimize measures considered and those planned to reduce impacts.
- 3) Following incorporation of the Avoid and Minimize measures into a final Project Proposal, the Project Proponent, in coordination with the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team, shall quantify the residual impacts associated with the planned disturbance using the most current version of the Nevada Conservation Credit System and Habitat Quantification Tool.



Proposed Temporary Regulation

Sec. 3. (Cont.)

- 4) The number of Debits resulting from the proposed project shall be confirmed by the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program Manager within thirty (30) days of a final and complete Verifier submittal.
- 5) Confirmed impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Management Areas in the form of Debits shall be deemed to have adequate mitigation measures under the following circumstances:
 - a) The Project Proponent has secured through a Nevada Conservation Credit System contract the purchase or transfer of an equal or greater number of Credits to offset the number of Debits generated from the project; or
 - b) A Mitigation Plan developed in coordination with the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team and approved by the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program Manager or the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council that considers the following factors:
 - i. Conservation activity (e.g. pinyon/juniper removal, cheatgrass treatment, fire restoration, etc.),
 - ii. Location of the mitigation,
 - iii. Durability of the mitigation,
 - iv. Credit generation term,
 - v. Number of Credits generated or estimated using the most current version of the Habitat Quantification Tool, and
 - vi. Other supportive documentation deemed necessary by the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council or the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team.



Proposed Temporary Regulation

Sec. 3. (Cont.)

- 6) Upon confirmation of adequate mitigation in accordance with Section 5 of these regulations, the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program Manager shall provide written notification within ten (10) working days to the Project Proponent and the authorizing land agency certifying that mitigation requirements have been or are expected to be satisfied.

Sec. 4. Authorization for the use of state lands within Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Management Areas:

- 1) The State Lands Registrar shall receive a letter from the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program Manager certifying that mitigation requirements have been satisfied prior to issuing an authorization for any use, activity, or project that results in anthropogenic impacts to Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Management Areas.
- 2) Prior to any state agency or department authorizing a project that results in anthropogenic disturbances to Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Management Areas as defined by the Nevada Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan and the Nevada Conservation Credit System, the authorizing agency must receive certification from the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program Manager that all mitigation requirements have been satisfied.



Comments?

- Now opening the floor to Public Comments and Discussion.