



STATE OF NEVADA
Sagebrush Ecosystem Program

Minutes

Date: Tuesday, June 3, 2025

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Place: Nevada Department of Wildlife
Main Conference Room
6980 Sierra Center Pkwy #120, Reno, Nevada 89511

Teams Access:

Meeting ID: 224 638 493 860 6
Passcode: Mf7m9Vd2

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL

Meeting called to order at 8:32am

Members and Ex-Officio Present: Chris MacKenzie (Chair), Jake Tibbitts (Vice Chair), Kyle Davis, Steven Boies, Bevan Lister, Sherm Swanson, Daphne Emm Hooper, Mathew Johns, William Molini, Cheva Gabor (USFS), Justin Barrett (USFWS), Kimberly Prill (BLM), Chris Rose (NRCS), JJ Goicoechea (NDA), James Settelmeyer (NDCNR).

Members and Ex-Officio Not Present: Alan Jenne (NDOW)

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Member Molini motioned to approve the agenda, member Swanson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Member Lister asked staff to correct typo (change 'members of' to 'members and').

Member Swanson motioned to approve minutes from the SEC meeting held on Thursday, April 17, 2025 with the requested correction. Member Boies seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

5. COUNCIL MEMBER ITEMS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

Member Boies announced that he will be resigning from his position at the end of the year, and disclosed that his ranch is in the process of enrolling in the CCS. Member Boies pointed out that participation in the CCS reduces the pool of those who can sit on the council, and thinks that participation in the program shouldn't disqualify anyone from being on the council.

Nicole Ting (DAG) and Member Boies discussed ethical concerns and where conflict of interest may arise. There are no specific conflicts other than potential participation in the CCS with the Boies ranch. Nicole Ting (DAG) suggested that Member Boies let the conflict be known and proceed to participate in voting on action items. Nicole Ting (DAG) said that ethical concerns about voting arise when there will be significant personal financial gain as a result of an action. Putting the conflict on the record should be sufficient for today's meeting.

Member Swanson added that he was glad Member Boies brought up the importance of having someone who understands from the credit producer's POV how the program works. Member Swanson stated that abstention would be warranted when there is a direct effect of an action on the Boies Ranch.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE SAGEBRUSH ECOSYSTEM PROGRAM STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* *Cheyenne Acevedo, SETT*

Cheyenne Acevedo presented revisions to the Strategic Action Plan, and explained their need and intent.

Member Tibbitts expressed concerns about the significant revisions and stated that he liked the 2016 State Action Plan (SAP). Stated that there's a lot in the revised SAP that isn't tied to anything in the original SAP. The original SAP called for things that were tied to Local Area Working Groups (LAWGs) and would like to have things tied back to them. Thinks we're pulling away from the 2019 NV Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan ('State Plan') that was adopted, and would like to see us get back to the 2016 SAP with adjustments and capacity, and implement it rather than revise it.

Chair MacKenzie: asked what the limitations were that prevented implementation.

Member Tibbitts: read excerpts from the 2016 SAP and reiterated the concerns discussed previously. Originally set up to work with LAWGs, but isn't sure they're still meeting or that we're providing support.

Member Lister stated that he missed that this document was direction for the SETT until he read the revised SAP. His view is that this shouldn't be the guidance for the SETT but the actions that we're going to take to put the State Plan to work. Needs to be broader.

Member Tibbitts read excerpts from the state plan that stated the SAP is a companion document to identify areas to focus conservation efforts, and looks to identify funding sources to implement management actions recommended in the state plan. Feels this document now has some disconnect as revised.

Member Boies asked if the communication between the SETT and LAWGs was the concern.

Member Tibbitts stated that we should look at what's not working in the SAP and revise rather than make this just the SETT's plan. It's implementation of the overall plan, not just the SETT. Stated that if the SETT wanted a SAP for the internal work that they do, that's different.

Member Boies stated that some LAWGs exist and some don't, some are active, and he knows that there have been efforts made to attend those meetings. He stated that they could work at it harder, but it is difficult.

Member Swanson stated that what Member Tibbitts is talking about is largely encompassed in Goal 3; as meetings have evolved through the years, we have become more locally centered. Important things happen at local level through collaborative teams. For us, the SAP should cover those bases too and be about the work that we do in the CCS but also promote collaboration. Should take this draft and strengthen it in this section as needed in the section of Goal 3.

Chair MacKenzie wondered if for moving forward we could discuss as the SETT's guiding doc now and expand going forward. What can we do from our level to make local action flourish? Can we go through from the SETT perspective now, then going forward say that this should be expanded to include other groups?

Member Tibbitts discussed his thoughts on how the SAP and State Plan relate. The SAP is meant to implement the State Plan, not act as a stand alone document.

Member Boies suggested they do a quick run-through, and stated he had some language to discuss.

Member Davis asked for clarification of development and revision timelines for the SAP and State Plan.

Council members proceeded going through the document as-is to provide comments and revisions to be incorporated.

Member Molini pointed out the phrase 'inter-collaborative stakeholder engagement' in the document; said that he agrees that we should go through this doc and just highlight where more collaboration should be incorporated

Member Davis asked clarifying question about versions

Member Emm Hooper asked who is responsible for ensuring state plan is implemented and how benchmarks are verified.

- Member Tibbitts stated that State Plan is under authority of this council; the SAP is supposed to be based on what the State Plan said.
- Chair MacKenzie asked if the council is not doing what they're supposed to with respect to the State Plan

Justin Small (NDOW) asked if Member Tibbitts was saying that the new SAP is not relevant and that we should go back to the old SAP. Believes that this version is the better document. More of a guiding document than directly under the State Plan. Suggested that the council go through it line by line.

Member Lister had concerns about the SAP citing NDOW's NV Sagebrush Habitat Plan since it has not been adopted yet because it may be illegal

Member Tibbitts stated to make sure to use conservation, restoration, improvement, etc. in the right context throughout the document; suggests 'maintain and improve sagebrush ecosystems'.

Member Molini responded to Member Lister's comment about legality of NV's Sagebrush Habitat Plan that no court would declare that the plan is illegal because NDOW is acting within their authority.

- Chair Mackenzie asked if board was ok with keeping the reference to the Sagebrush Habitat Plan
- Member Lister does not want to reference a document that he does not know the contents of
- Justin Small (NDOW) stated he is not sure if updated plan is available but will investigate
- Members Tibbitts and Davis are fine with referencing the document

Member Tibbitts stated that the SAP should match the threats in the State Plan word-for-word

Member Davis stated that there are discrepancies between the SAP and State Plan since the SAP is an implementation document for the State Plan

Member Boies was concerned about 'overgrazing of livestock' being included as an anthropogenic disturbance, and that it should not be in that section; also stated that livestock can be used to manage cheatgrass under invasive annual grasses and this should be included (on page 6).

- Skyler Monaghan stated that he would review this in the document

Skyler Monaghan (SETT) stated that he would work with Member Tibbitts to put together an adaptive management section to be included in the revised SAP.

- Member Tibbitts agreed that this would be good.

Member Swanson stated that it may be good to pick out things on the horizon from the State Plan so that we can be strategic with the SAP

Kathleen Steele (SEP Program Manager) provided background on development of SAP, its intent, and reasons behind revisions

- State Plan was updated in 2019
- The SAP hasn't been updated since its initial creation in 2016
- Working with the former SEP Program Manager, it was determined that the State Plan can stand on its own, and the SETT shouldn't need to tell people how to implement it through the SAP
- The SAP was intended to be an implementation document for the next 5 years of work of the SETT, but has been rarely used
- Trying to step back so that we're not telling people what to do, and just focus on goals for the next 5 years of what the SETT is going to focus on
- Didn't change the goals, just the objectives
- Prudent to focus on what we can control, not tell people what to do
- Wanted to shorten it so that it's more digestible

Chair MacKenzie asked how the council would like to proceed

Member Tibbitts recommended that threats align exactly with the State Plan; said he's fine with going through the revised document and providing feedback

Dominique Etchegoyhen (Deputy Director, NDCNR) asked for clarification from Member Tibbitts that he's ok with the SAP, but just that it stays aligned with the State Plan. Said that the SAP is to be more granular and to direct the SETT in what they can do in next 5 years.

Member Molini stated that he understands where Member Tibbitts is coming from; pointed out that this is supposed to be an update of the SAP, and this document updates threats with new information. Seems to him that the SAP incorporates new data to bring it up to speed on threats.

Member Tibbitts reiterated that the SAP's goal was to implement the State Plan. Suggested changing the name of the document if it is just intended to be a SETT guidance document.

Member Swanson motioned that the SETT should harvest whatever information they can from people who have engaged in this conversation or with the document, so that they can come to us [the SEC] with a revised draft that accomplishes the best of what we have to offer as well as using the foundation of what they have already provided.

Member Tibbitts seconded the motion.

Further discussion before voting:

- Member Tibbitts apologized that he did not submit comments ahead of the meeting, but has things he can provide.
- Chair MacKenzie wondered if we should update the State Plan before updating the SAP.
- Member Davis reiterated what Member Tibbitts said about the title of the document needing to be changed to reflect its purpose.
- Member Swanson stated that since science is constantly changing, we should use new science coming along. May require us to re-write the State Plan, or use the best science to implement the plan. If the SETT comes to a realization that the State Plan needs revision, they can inform the SEC.
- Member Lister stated that he supports the motion. His concept of a SAP is that we have goals and objectives in State Plan, what are we going to do in the next 5 years, how are we going to get there. We can't do it all. What's the best we can get done in the next 5 years? Stated that he would like to discuss mapping section before closing the action item.
- Member Swanson stated that the council should submit comments to the SETT in writing, but should discuss larger concerns before closing agenda item.
- Justin Small (NDOW) explained revisions to threats section.
- Member Lister stated that it was surprising to him that water was not included in the threats section in the driest state in the nation.
- Member Lister had concerns about the mapping section. Some areas he is familiar with seem like they should not be priorities to him. Sees conflict in ideas. One priority area has several roads and powerlines just to the north of it. Misunderstanding the science somewhere and why we're calling this the best habitat. Wanted an explanation on what he's missing.
 - Cheyenne Acevedo (SETT) explained that there are debit projects coming online in these areas and that we are hoping to create opportunities for pub lands restoration because not any private projects available currently in proximity to these disturbances. Explained how maps were developed in coordination with NDOW.
 - Member Lister said he understood, and stated that we continue to be managed by the overarching lek preservation ideology. Said that it doesn't seem reasonable to him to call an area that is transect with powerlines and roads, and is of low to moderate suitability as habitat, a priority. Doesn't think we should call an area a priority just because there was a lek there once, or currently. Asked where the new leks were. Stated that new leks can be created, so why focus management on lek buffers when there is so much more to a GRS's life than a lek.
 - Chair MacKenzie wondered if these maps coincided with our mapping.
 - Member Lister said even if they do coincide, why are we calling this the best?
 - Member Boies asked what the intent of the maps was, and if it was to help focus management. Stated that to get the detail that Member Lister was asking for would be difficult. Referenced previous discussions about considering anthropogenic features

when creating priority areas, and asked how far can we really go? What Member Boies took away from these maps was just an effort to identify priority areas for management decisions.

- Member Lister stated that the maps are great to give some guidance, but SAP has to be working with LAWGs identifying what is real priority and putting work on the ground.
- Member Tibbitts stated that the mapping is where he was most disappointed in the plan. Saw disconnect in involving local knowledge to identify priorities. Discussed other concerns about what was identified as a priority area. Suggested to build-in areas where there have been triggers tripped.
- Sarah Hale (SETT) clarified that it is written into this version of the SAP that consultation with local partners will occur when identifying and evaluating priorities.
- Member Swanson referenced the next agenda item that will ask for a decision based on this map with respect to proximity factors, and asked for clarification.
 - Casey Adkins (SETT) explained what she will be proposing in the public lands presentation coming up and how the priority map will help inform decisions.
 - Member Swanson asked for clarification on whether being in the green areas of the map negated the proximity factors.
 - Casey Adkins (SETT) explained that we would be proposing that projects within the green areas of the map have proximity factors waived in some circumstances.
 - Member Swanson asked whether there is a planned mechanism for use of the dark grey map.
 - Casey Adkins (SETT) stated that it would act as guidance, but no waivers would be granted in these areas
 - Member Swanson apologized for bringing up a different agenda item, but stated that if maps were going to have credit system ramifications that lead to monetary importance, it struck him as something worth talking about at this point in the conversation today.
- Member Boies asked for clarification on the term 'focal areas'.
 - Cheyenne Acevedo (SETT) stated that she would change to 'priority areas'
 - Member Tibbitts pointed out that we used the term 'preferred' in SEP program documents when we revised them, so we should use the same term in the SAP.

The Council held a vote on the agenda item:

In Favor: Chair MacKenzie, Members Tibbitts, Johns, Lister, Boies, Davis, and Swanson.

Opposed: Members Molini and Emm Hooper

Motion passed.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSED PUBLIC LANDS CREDIT PROJECTS FRAMEWORK - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* Casey Adkins, SETT

Casey Adkins (SETT) presented on the proposed Public Lands Project Credit Projects Framework. Council members asked questions throughout and after the presentation.

Chair MacKenzie asked how the new administration would affect project load.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) explained that we expect an increase in the number of projects coming online due to the energy emergency declaration.

Member Tibbitts asked if there was a waiver for the pre-emergent herbicide in Phase II.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) answered that she was not aware of us issuing one.
- Member Tibbitts stated that he has been involved in the removal of Phase II PJ and that there have been many successful removals without the need for herbicide when the understory is present. Should be some room for a waiver in some circumstances.
- Ex-officio Member Goicoechea asked what 'removal' meant.
- Casey Adkins (SETT) explained that it would be tailored to the site during discussions with the proponent and land managers.
- Ex-officio Member Goicoechea suggested that maybe herbicide treatment could be included in this discussion.

Member Boies asked if meadow improvement on public lands could be a credit project, and asked if someone could develop credits to sell on public land.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that the approved projects being discussed are for mitigation of debits only.
- Member Swanson stated that in the past we have been limited because there was not an opportunity for someone to gain monetary value on public lands. Then we had the conservation rule that would allow that, but now that rule has been repealed, so the opportunity for anyone other than debtors directly offsetting their impact is off the table.
- Casey Adkins (SETT) agreed that this is correct.

Chair MacKenzie asked if there would be opportunity for a debit producer to partner with an NGO to harvest credits.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that debit proponent would have to have legal and financial standing within the project, but there could be a partnership of hiring contractor to manage the credit project or a proponent that wants to use the allotment.

Member Lister stated that on the PJ removal projects, he assumes that we have stipulations that when they do the projects that they remove everything, they don't leave a mosaic.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) stated that we don't have requirements on that type of action, and that there is nuance to it that comes from the permitting. These [projects] have to go through NEPA where stipulations would come in. Would also factor in issues such as pinyon jays.
- Member Lister stated that there is PJ encroachment issue in his area, and he has issue with the mosaic removal approach instead of clearcutting. Stated that we might want to consider design requirements that these areas are cleared.

Member Tibbitts brought up concerns with using cover instead of ecological state to determine PJ phase. Believes it should always tie back to what the ecological state is supposed to be (some areas should be PJ woodlands).

- Member Swanson emphasized the importance of what member Tibbitts mentioned and elaborated on PJ Phases and understory. Hopes that inclusion of Phase III removal doesn't distract from the more important work of Phase II.
- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that Phase III removal would need to be ecologically fitting for area.
- Ex-officio Member Gabor provided additional context. USFS does not treat in Phase III, efforts are focused on Phase I and II. Stated that the SETT and proponent work with federal land agencies and will look at things during the NEPA process to determine appropriateness of treatments.

Member Tibbitts asked why not build in Phase III for all projects, not just public.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that it would also be incorporated into private projects as well
- Skyler Monaghan (SETT) clarified that this would be an option, not a requirement for private projects

Member Swanson added that an additional purpose of Phase III removal is fuels management issue.

Member Tibbitts reiterated his thoughts about determining PJ phases with respect to cover and understory, and suggested that a future discussion should focus on determination of phases not just based on cover.

Chair MacKenzie asked what the reality of a proponent doing this [a Phase III removal credit project] on public land was.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) explained that there likely wouldn't be a project that is only Phase III PJ removal, but it would just be a small portion of the PJ to be removed. Likely not a desire to seek out of Phase III removal by proponents. Would also affect the amount of credits from Phase II removal if Phase III remains on landscape in the area.

Member Lister asked for clarification on the release of credits. Credits would be released at end of treatment? We are requiring retreatment at 10 and 20 years. Are we holding partial credits until retreatments, or are they released at end of initial treatment?

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that they will be released at the end of the initial treatment (cutting, herbicide application, and seeding).

Member Boies expressed his concerns with how we're approaching this and that private land owners that are already involved in the CCS can't generate credits on public lands and sell those. Wondered if the only way to do public lands projects is to create a debit project that needs to be offset. Believes public lands credits will affect market and demand/supply of credits. Can't vote for this now as-is.

- Skyler Monaghan stated that private projects are more a return on an investment. Compared to a [public lands credit project for a] debit project, it's a 1:1 offset, no return on investment or profit to be made from credits. While we do have an excess of credits right now, the 'energy crisis' that has been declared will cause depletion of private credits fairly quickly as projects go through quickly. Need to avoid running out of private credits and stalling out industry while trying to implement public lands restoration.
- Member Boies expressed that he is all for creating credits on public lands, and believes landowners should be able to do so as well, but we're just not there yet. Stated that he would feel more comfortable if that 1/3 [of the debit obligation that is required to be purchased from private credit producers] was 1/2.
- Chair MacKenzie expressed concerns about influencing the market.
- Member Boies asked if we are creating an incentive for debit proponents to buy more land
- Member Tibbitts stated that we're developing potential public land sideboards. More like a mitigation plan. Credits aren't going to be developed on public lands in advance in anticipation of creating debits, just upon creating a debit project as a direct offset. No speculation with respect to credit development.
- Casey Adkins (SETT) agreed that this was the case.
- Kimberly Prill (BLM) stated that these [public lands credit projects] would still go through the NEPA process which they would pay for. The BLM would only view this in specific mitigation to the application, and when the SETT concurred with that project plan. Lots of work to be done on behalf

of the proponent. Would be mitigation of specific project. BLM wouldn't be responding to applications to be 'buying ahead' of debits, it would have to be tethered to a specific project.

- Casey clarified that the proponents don't receive credits for permitting, it is a part of their expenses.

Ex-officio Member Gabor stated that if Phase III not included [as one of our treatment options], you could impair success of treatments because you can't get credit for Phase III removal, leaving islands, so treatments wouldn't restore function as planned. Asked for clarification on credit release schedule for PJ treatments and assurances that credits have to remain functional.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that credits are all released up front, except for the portions generated within Phase III. Stated that all financial assurances have to be set up so that actions can be completed.

Member Johns disclosed that the next agenda item relates to a project that he is involved in with his employer. Added to the conversation from the debit perspective. It's a collaborative effort and a different risk profile for a proponent pursuing one of these projects. Try to find a balance between private projects market and try to find improvement through the public lands project. More of a collaborative effort than a transactional effort.

Chair MacKenzie stated that PJ removal projects are basically successful once removal occurs. Restoration projects are less successful, so is that why they have higher [reserve account] contribution than the PJ removal? How do we factor in the chance for failure?

- Casey Adkins (SETT) stated that she will clarify that in upcoming slides that discuss tiered release schedule.

Member Lister asked for clarification on the public lands credit project process, wants 'nuts and bolts'

- Casey Adkins (SETT) walked through the general process of early consultation, finding a viable project area, and collaboration with the proponent and agencies. Ideally would be lumping restoration NEPA in with disturbance NEPA.

Member Tibbitts asked if there a state-level IM about requiring offsetting mitigation to be authorized within NEPA that authorized the project

- Kimberly Prill (BLM) stated that proponents can embed mitigation within NEPA for debit project
- Alan Shepherd (BLM) stated that they [the BLM] can tie it in if they know ahead of time, but can't put compensatory mitigation on them [the proponent], but they can voluntarily do mitigation elsewhere. Would be best to bring into NEPA document at the beginning, or could direct proponent to work that doesn't have funding but does have NEPA clearance already.

Member Lister pointed out the need to make fire rehab happen in timely manner

- Member Johns discussed the Greenlink North project and stated that the proponent works with the program to offset project in accordance with state regulation
- Casey Adkins (SETT) discussed how having a pre-approved project type for fire rehab within the CCS would allow a timely response to fires
- Kimberly Prill (BLM) stated that there are certain mechanisms such as emergency rehab/stabilization in place
- Chair MacKenzie asked how long after a fire we are considering 'post-fire'.
 - Casey Adkins clarified that there is no upper limit to time after fire, but if a long time has passed after a fire, the area will likely fall into the 'weed control' restoration category.

Member Davis asked for clarification on reserve account rates

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that the flat-rate is applied to all public project types, but the three times multiplier is only for anthropogenic feature removal

Member Tibbitts asked why post-fire or weed control is not applied to private.

- Sarah Hale (SETT) clarified that weed control is already required on private.
- Skyler Monaghan added that it is a bigger lift on the front end for restoration on private lands because credits are expected on back end, and there is no guarantee they will get those [if restoration is not successful]. Stated that we could work on incentivizing restoration more on private lands.

Member Tibbitts wondered if it was good to issue credits for something that's already required by the state (noxious weed treatment)

Member Tibbitts asked if the tiered credit releases would always be the same amount.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) discussed the ways they could be divided or weighted.

Member Tibbitts asked if always would treat the most degraded area first.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that this was just for the example, and areas would be ranked by priority based on project needs and goals.
- Member Tibbitts asked that the LAWGs and adaptive management groups be involved in developing projects and identifying areas for potential projects.
- Skyler Monaghan (SETT) stated that the public lands and adaptive management processes could be paired to accomplish necessary work.

Ex-officio Member Barrett stated that the proposed framework seems very similar to how BEA is applied; suggested to try to match up process and semantics between that and the public lands as best we can.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) discussed why 'tiered' was chosen instead of 'phased'
- Chair MacKenzie stated that 'tiered' seems appropriate as opposed to 'phased' based on use of 'phase' throughout SEP in other aspects.
- Skyler Monaghan (SETT) added that much like the private credit projects, the public lands mitigation plan does have contract type language that makes it legally binding for life of project.

Member Lister stated that if the debit and credit project have to be same term length, he's struggling to see what the term might be for a weed control project or fire rehab project. How would term be determined.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that the public lands credit project will always have the same term as the debit project it is offsetting.

Member Davis asked whether the additional obligation [if a debit project impacts a public lands project] would be part of, or over and above the initial 1/3 required to be offset for their own project.

- Casey Adkins confirmed that it would be in addition to their 1/3 offset.

Chair MacKenzie and Ex-officio Member Goicoechea asked clarifying questions about the tiered release and whether debits are produced before restoration work has occurred.

Member Boies asked how the initial private purchase relates to tiered release.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that the release schedule only includes remaining obligation after 1/3 is offset from private purchase.

Ex-officio Member Barrett asked why one tier's work had to be finished before another could be started.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that tiers could overlap, but the example was just cleaner.

Ex-officio Member Barrett asked where and when there would be discrepancies with how projects are applied on private vs public land. Is the intent for waiving the phasing factor to incentivize restoration? Could this be the reason for waiving it?

Member Tibbitts stated that if we want to develop incentives for credit shortfall, should incentivize private land as well. Should come down to merit of project whether phasing and proximity factors are waived.

Weary of waiving the phasing and proximity factors.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) stated that the phasing factor would not function for public lands projects as it is currently set-up; it is in place to penalize debit proponent for not purchasing all at once. What would be the purpose of penalizing a proponent for implementing a restoration project that is inherently phased?
- Member Tibbitts clarified that phasing factor was put in place to align credits and debits and make sure offset is at same time as disturbance.
- Casey Adkins (SETT) proposed applying a factor to all treatments not completed in first 10 years, which could incentivize up-front treatment application?
- Member Tibbitts stated that this sounds like a good middle ground.

Member Johns stated that there should be balance that proponent is willing to fulfill credits in timely manner

Casey Adkins (SETT) proposed postponing decision on phasing factor today, and coming back with revised proposal based on the discussion.

Member Tibbitts brought up Greenlink North as an example while discussing the proximity factor waiver. Discussed that there are a lot of projects that have been done in Eureka County that the [power] line will go through. A lot of public funding went into these. They [Greenlink North] will offset benefit of these projects, and Greenlink North doesn't have to offset these impacts because they [the projects in Eureka County] are not credit projects; mitigation will take place elsewhere on top of this. Other land users that are authorized in the area will pay the local price, while mitigation occurs elsewhere. Suggests that instead of a full proximity waiver, can knock the proximity factor down by one as long as they're in the priority areas identified in the SAP.

Ex-officio Member Gabor stated that it looks like SAP priority areas overlap with shared stewardship priority areas, so good alignment.

Member Tibbitts stated that we're not all about the CCS and that State Plan never talks about waiving factors, and impact still exists at the site of disturbance.

Member Lister noted that there were no green priority areas in Lincoln county.

Member Molini moved that we approve the package with the exceptions of the proximity and phasing factor that will have future review.

Member Davis seconded the motion.

Further discussion before voting:

- Member Tibbitts stated that he is prepared to support motion, but wants on the record that the team take on-the-ground conditions into account when discussing Phases and herbicide application.
- Member Johns disclosed that the next agenda item applies to him, but since this one is general he will vote
- Member Swanson raised point for consideration while revising factors: zone in NE Nevada is where we have a lot of projects. Maybe exclude public lands projects getting reduction up there since already a lot of private lands projects. But to get projects in other two zones to incentivize credit project development there.

The Council held a vote on the agenda item:

In Favor: Chair MacKenzie, Members Tibbitts, Johns, Lister, Davis, Swanson, Molini, and Emm Hooper.

Opposed: Member Boies.

Motion passed.

8. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE GREENLINK ALTERNATIVE MITIGATION PLAN ON PUBLIC LANDS - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* Casey Adkins, SETT

Casey Adkins (SETT) presented on the Greenlink North (GLN) proposed public lands credit project to offset their debit obligation.

Member Boies asked if there was private land within the boundaries.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) answered no.
- Member Boies asked if there was a permittee
- Casey Adkins (SETT) answered yes, and that we will start consultation with them immediately upon approval.

Member Tibbitts asked if proximity factors had been applied.

- Casey Adkins answered no, but that this project would cover the proximity factor if applied.

Member Tibbitts stated that he thinks it is a good restoration project, but has heartburn about proximity of project to Greenlink North project that it is offsetting. Said there are lots of NEPA-ready projects along the [power] line that could be completed to offset. Philosophically has concerns with project being so far from the impacts.

Ex-officio Member Barrett asked if the private credits [that are being purchased] were in the locality of the disturbance.

- Member Johns stated that both private projects are within WAFWA zone 3, but both have proximity factors assigned to them. Very little along the actual route immediately adjacent to the project.

Member Swanson stated that the projects Member Tibbitts mentioned being closer to impact sound much more attractive. Asked to what degree has there been comparison of alternatives to this big one far away.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) answered that the proposed project was not the first evaluated as offset for GLN. None fit the need and scope of GLN. Because of how high the debit obligation is, it required a large acreage for a credit project.
- Member Swanson asked what is wrong with doing many smaller projects rather than one large.
- Casey Adkins (SETT) answered that it was mainly a management burden for SETT and project proponent
- Member Swanson Stated that he didn't hear anything about benefit to sage grouse
- Casey Adkins (SETT) stated that there are several leks in and within 6km of GRSG of the proposed credit project
- Member Swanson stated that we don't know benefit of potential projects to leks in the area of GLN though
- Casey Adkins (SETT) stated that this project presented an excellent opportunity and there were not many projects ready to go at the scale needed, and there was lack of interest in public lands projects as debit offset close to GLN from cooperating agencies.
- Member Swanson stated that if we're serious about doing something for GRSG in the area of GLN, we'll be needing to treat an abundance of PJ encroachment. Seems like there could be suitable projects at scale in that area that would be more local to the disturbance.
- Casey Adkins (SETT) stated that she ran 100,000 acre potential project for PJ removal in local area, which wasn't even half of the obligation for GLN. The proponent would have to treat hundreds of thousands of acres to meet obligation, which isn't logistically feasible.

Member Emm Hooper asked which tribal liaisons you will submit to for review. Asked whether tribes closer to actual project have been met with and what concerns they have.

- Katie Andrie (NDOW) stated that this DNA part of large collaborative effort with BLM, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, Shared Stewardship, and Sheldon refuge. Have been working with them already to identify treatment areas on tribal lands and on adjacent BLM lands. Coordination is ongoing. Upcoming field visit is with all those partners and visiting areas on all of those land areas.
- Member Emm Hooper asked if it was BLM tribal liaisons, or others.
- Katie Andrie (NDOW) stated that they are working with Summit Lake Paiute Tribe bios (James Simmons), but several other tribal bios; BLM will coordinate with tribal liaison to inform tribes of treatments and allow time for comments. Will not occur until details are more finalized.
- Member Emm Hooper encouraged true consultation instead of simply sending notification.

Member Tibbitts reiterated his concerns and stated that he doesn't think effort has been done to look at local projects. Has current projects with BLM working in that space. Projects completed for GRSG that would have to be offset by GLN if they were CCS projects. Not even looking at that. Three Bars Project Area has NEPA completed, 1000's of acres of cleared acres we could be doing out there. Fire rehab and weed control along footprint of GLN that could be done. Need to do projects to benefit birds that are affected by GLN. Can't support this project as proposed.

Kathleen Steele (SEP Program Manager) elaborated on the additional benefits of the proposed projects. Stated that due to funding cuts, NDOW already prepared for this project to move forward, but funding was unavailable. Opportunity to step in where funding has been lost. Also a great opportunity for SETT to learn how to implement public lands restoration projects, contracting, supply acquisition, managing funding, coordination, etc. Possible project adjacent to this one that could tie into and maximize efforts. Not a lot of debit projects with this magnitude of debit obligation that can take over a project of this scale before

permitting expires. We've looked into Three Bars restoration area and told that all sections were spoken for and didn't need SETT help. Proposed project is a really good area for this particular debit project.

Member Boies stated that the proposed project covers a large area with a permittee. Asked whether fencing and water development was going to come into play, or just seeding and brush control.

- Katie Andrie (NDOW) stated that currently as planned no spring developments/fencing/off-site water planned, but NDOW engages in that with the BLM regularly. As it moves forward, that would be considered and discussed. Will engage in those conversations.
- Member Boies added that he would be interested in seasonal pasture fencing and help with managing that.
- Katie Andrie stated that NDOW is starting to reengage with Winnemucca district on range improvements to benefit wildlife and livestock operations.

Member Molini stated that he agreed with Member Tibbitts. Summit Lake country has lots of potential, but it is a long way from GLN. Plenty of GRS habitat associated with GLN debit project. Sees how things fell into place for GLN, SETT, and NDOW for this project. Won't vote against it. Suggests that when there is development ancillary to GLN, that SETT look pretty hard at trying to develop projects in closer proximity to the causal factor of declining habitat.

Chair MacKenzie asked if there were potential debit projects in proximity to soldier meadow that will need credits.

- Cheyenne Acevedo (SETT) stated that there is one, but it's been paused. Not a lot of debit impacts in that portion of the state.

Member Johns stated that in speaking just generally about the project, he's happy having a healthy discussion; if not the perfect project, NVE will want to continue to explore ways to benefit the habitat. Feedback today is helpful. Seems like there is benefit for the SETT to work collectively to move forward on this or find other projects, and explore how to best implement public lands project.

Chair MacKenzie stated that it sounds like there were communication issues somewhere about the Three Bars Restoration Area; would like to hear more about that issue and availability of large-scale projects in that area

- Member Tibbitts stated that PJ work is probably what was getting eaten up that Kathleen Steele was referring to. All along the way within the general area of GLN there are projects that can be done. Very concerned about the distance between the debit and proposed credit project. GLN wanting to offset with public lands restoration wasn't brought up at a recent adaptive management meeting.

Chair MacKenzie stated that there are a lot of moving parts needing to be worked out before the SEC can make a decision.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that this is the first of this project type, and at this scale. Wanted to bring it to the SEC early before discussing it with all stakeholders so that we could get feedback. Site visit will also occur next week to help further develop.
- Chair MacKenzie stated that he wants some alternatives developed as well that are in closer proximity to compare with.

Member Tibbitts stated that it has become obvious that current proximity factors are not sufficient to keep projects in the vicinity of their disturbance [should be a future discussion].

Katie Andrie stated that she understands where Member Tibbitts is coming from and mitigation should be conducted as close to impact as possible. This discussion started with identifying low-hanging fruit for public lands credit project development. This area provided a good opportunity to start implementing public lands work through the CCS and how to get it into the program. Asked whether tier 1 could be a test project for herbicide/seeding treatment type of project? Asked Member Tibbitts about rangeland herbicide and seeding NEPA ready to go in area closer to GLN.

- Member Tibbitts stated not at this scale. Some middle ground options; say proximity factor waived for this; fulfills the CCS obligation, but perhaps savings go to other projects that can occur locally. May not be considered a credit, but can fund other important work.

Member Swanson asked where the private credit projects were that are being purchased from.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) and Skyler Monaghan (SETT) detailed locations and parcels of projects that are being purchased from.

Member Tibbitts stated that there are NEPA-ready things that don't fit in CCS but are other options; roadside fuels break work, PJ projects, fuels reduction EAs, and others.

Member Lister asked if we have specific windows where we have to do assessments for CCS.

- Casey Adkins (SETT) stated that it wouldn't be a part of the public lands projects; no requirements for same field verification as private credit projects and debit projects. Why the reserve account contribution is higher.
- Member Lister asked how we value the credits without doing site specific field work
- Casey Adkins (SETT) stated that it was from individual site visits and the calculator output
- Member Lister stated that he needs to rethink the whole thing because site verification not being done
- Casey Adkins (SETT) pointed out that this is the approved process in the existing public lands credit project framework.

Katie Andrie (NDOW) stated that there is more work that needs to go into this and proximity. Suggests that council move forward with the tier 1 of the project to cover a portion of the credit obligation from the standpoint that we've been discussing public lands restoration since the program's inception and have yet to implement anything. We have the opportunity to begin the process here and get some work done and test it out. It would be beneficial for development of the CCS public lands credit generation framework if we could do a treatment. Would need approval and go-ahead so that NDOW has time and ability to plan and move forward. Can adjust in future years based on what we learn from this effort to improve other projects.

Member Swanson pointed out that the council did approve this type of public lands project earlier today. Don't usually have each projects coming to us for a decision. Would seem that we do a public lands project soon anyways. Not sure why we need to have action on this since it's up to the engaged process to be engaged and do their work.

- Member Tibbitts stated that regulations require us [the SEC] to approve one.
- Casey Adkins (SETT) clarified that if it's not a pre-approved project type it has to come before council. Member Swanson is right that technically since the weed control project was approved, this technically could go forward, but the SETT and proponent wanted to provide transparency here.

Member Molini stated that he wondered about the consequences of SEC's actions today. If we say we don't want to approve, bring something else back, it will set back progress. But if we go with phase I, are we not locked into following through with whole project?

- Katie Andrie responded that no, we would not be required to go forward with entire project as it is broken down into tiers and Map Units. This could be proof-of-concept of the herbicide treatment/reseeding project type. Could carry out this tier while investigating and planning other projects closer to the GLN project.

Nicole Ting (DAG): clarified that the SEC already approved new project types, and this project fits within this matrix, so it could move forward.

Member Emm Hooper stated that she was concerned about this process. What she heard earlier was that we're bringing this to the council early, but getting pushed to make a decision. Worried about moving forward with a process that is inconsistent. Has concerns about proximity and stakeholder engagement so can't support this today.

Nicole Ting (DAG) added that to stay in compliance with open-meeting law, we would likely need a new agenda item if only approving a portion of the project to go forward.

Member Tibbitts stated that the SEC's actions taken earlier were approving practices, not a project. The types of practices you can do under a public lands project. His understanding is that any public lands project be approved by the council.

Council Members and DAG discussed interpretation of whether SEC approves all public lands projects or just those outside of the pre-approved types. Needs further investigation.

The SETT will work on this and revise to a smaller portion then present alternatives.

Member Molini stated that if we wait, this project can't go forward this fall.

Member Johns stated that they want to work with all agencies on the right project. Part of today is getting issues out on the table to work on them. Willing to participate this year if that's an option.

Member Tibbitts asked when GLN will break ground.

- Member Johns answered 2026. Stated that he's glad to work through the process with the teams and be flexible. Wants to get a public lands project as an element of GLN's mitigation.

Ex-officio Member Barrett stated that we all seem to be on same page; to speak on behalf of USFWS, it's a good project and has strong merit; first out of the gate but a lot of different partners and will put a lot of good work on the ground for GRSG. Likes Member Tibbitts suggestion of parsing this out and keeping some value locally. If possibility of approving phase I of this and not missing an opportunity, good to keep in mind.

Ex-officio Member Settelmeier thinks that there is lots of merit to conversation; may still have time for herbicide application if come back in a few months. Wouldn't like for group to deny or put-off, but may need to table.

Chair MacKenzie called to table this agenda item; no action was taken.

Katie Andrie (NDOW) added that she would encourage flexibility when developing mitigation plans on public lands. When working with federal partners, things change all the time. Cautions them to keep in

mind that mitigation plans may have to change after signed by the council. Admin, logistical, other species, monetary constraints.

9. CONSIDERATION OF THE JUNE 2025 SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT FOR SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNORS OFFICE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH NRS 232.162. - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* SEP Staff

SETT staff presented the semi-annual report to the SEC.

Member Tibbitts suggested to include the sponsors for the Credit/Debit Proponent Workshop; reach out to LAWGs to see what they have been implemented on the ground outside of the CCS to incorporate in December.

Member Swanson moved to approve the semi-annual report

Member Molini seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

10. STAFF BRIEFINGS AND UPDATES TO THE COUNCIL - SETT Staff

A. Greater Sage-Grouse Draft RMP Amendment – Skyler Monaghan updated on the status of the RMPA and the process going forward; BLM hopes to have ROD signed by October.

B. AB 242 – Casey Adkins updated that the bill had not come out of ways and means committee. Ex-officio Member Settlemeyer stated that it may come back in the future though.

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

Potential future agenda items:

- Who facilitates LAWG meetings and application of State Plan?
- Bring forth the public lands projects
- Degree to which the SETT thinks the proximity works vs is too low that it is ignored. Is it effective at getting projects to move closer?

Next meeting date set for Monday August 4th, 2025

12. FEDERAL AGENCY UPDATES AND COMMENTS:

A. US Fish and Wildlife Service – Justin Barrett updated on partnerships and collaborations; recently proposed listing of the Fish Lake valley tui chub; down about 30% in staff in office and across region. Asks for patience in this time.

B. Bureau of Land Management – Kimberly Prill updated on coordination and deliberation work on the draft RMP; next step is for BLM to respond to gov consistency review. Depending on what they land on, may need to open up for 30 day pub comment period before the ROD. Will continue to coordinate with partners on aspects of it. Emergency procedures caused 3 projects from Ormat to be approved by BLM; have 9 applications, but three got approved to move forward under 14 day EA period. One of second states to process applications under emergency procedures. Several had

begun baselines and pre-NEPA, so not starting from scratch. Lots of permitting work and identifying efficiencies. DOI has access to more CXs. Like to emphasize NV's expedited permitting processes. On a hiring freeze and have quite a few vacancies.

Alan Shepherd: Horse gathers done for rest of the fiscal year; hearing that there will be a lower budget and typical space issues next FY. Fulfilled gathers (~3,000 horses) across the state for the FY. Same anticipated for next FY.

Kimberly Prill: added thoughts on land management about the collaboration and coordination being a big part.

C. US Forest Service – Cheva Gabor updated that they are working on fire readiness and identifying issues ahead of fire season. Received FS chief's letter of intent for fire season; no major changes with an emphasis on fireman safety, initial attack, working heavily with cooperators. Active forest management strategy was just released last week (is public document) on how to apply Exec Order about timber and biomass. Will have collaborative meeting in late June, with SETT involved, to discuss how to remove biomass from treated areas and how to best use it (will go to disadvantaged parties that need it). Some tools in the toolbox: aerial herbicide EA signed in late March. Will help take advantage of NDOW's capacity to apply aerial herbicide and work across boundaries. Rx fire assessment in review. Gives more expedited way to use Rx fire as management tool. Filling critical vacancies with lateral transfers.

D. USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service – Chris Rose updated that staffing is down to 35 employees throughout the state. Keeping field office map and contact list updated. Not requesting any more funds for FY25, got all of it out the door. May contact SETT about resources listed in SAP. Want to develop more in-depth fact sheet for producers to better outline tradeoffs.

E. Other

13. STATE AGENCY UPDATES AND COMMENTS:

A. Office of the Governor – No update

B. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – James Settelmeyer (Director) updated: projects are going to go through quickly and will come through DCNR. Legislative session had no bills passed that hurt or benefit the SEC. In future sessions we'll need to request more funds for meetings since more projects will be going through. Secured additional funding for shared stewardship.

Dominique Etchegoyhen (Deputy Director): DCNR as a department did pretty well in legislative session; got 30 positions for the department primarily in parks, IT, fire billing. Bond program got \$63mil in competitive grant program. \$5mil is going to NDOW, \$5mil going to State Parks. SEC and SETT – funding for new vehicle, website, and database.

James Settelmeyer commended all DCNR employees and SEC team and council for being available to answer last minute questions that came up in legislature session.

C. Department of Wildlife – Justin Small updated on restoration project acreages; much has occurred within sagebrush ecosystems and GRS habitat; 2025 lek counts trending upward. Not

same jump seen from 2023 to 2024, but ~15-20% jump in attendance. Probably reaching top of intrinsic growth rate (max potential growth under ideal condition). Close to peak in lek attendance, so may start to go back down in next few years.

D. Department of Agriculture – No update

14. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comments may be made on any matter, provided that the comments will be limited to matters relevant to the Council. Public comments may be limited to 3 minutes per person at the discretion of the Chair. Comments will not be restricted based on viewpoint. No action will be taken on any matters raised during the public comment period that are not already on the agenda. Persons providing comments will be asked to begin by stating their name for the record.

Liz Munn (TNC): While we recognize there are still significant barriers to development of credits on public lands, TNC is very interested in working with partners to pursue this opportunity, with a particular emphasis on projects that are identified by grazing permittees. Wanted to clarify that the administration announced the intention to rescind the public lands rule, but it is not rescinded yet. While there are many differences of opinion about the rule, there's an area of interest and potential co-benefit that remains. Believes there are important opportunities to speak to this administration and strengthen mitigation leasing and ask that this clarifying policy be kept in-place outside of the larger rule. There are concerns that are valid and clarifications that are needed, but the opportunity for permittees, NGOs, and others to co-develop credits in a manner that could benefit people and nature is worth exploring further. TNC is interested in working grazing lessees, the BLM, the SETT, the SEC, and others to further explore what authorities might be available to unlock the potential of restoration by permittees, the value of which could be exchanged through the system. Welcomes further discussion.

Member Lister stated that in the broader SAP and things we discussed today, one thing that helped LAWG in Lincoln County was support that they got from CDs, coop extension, and conservation district program. Steve Lewis was a huge asset in facilitating LAWG meetings. Since he left and with covid, they haven't started back up. Important to have someone to facilitate LAWG meetings. Not critical who it is as long as we have someone to do it.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Member Lister motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Member Swanson seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:38pm.