

Sagebrush Ecosystem Program

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Governor



Kathleen Steele, Program Manager
Casey Adkins, Forestry
Sarah Hale, State Lands
Vacant, Wildlife
Skyler Monaghan, Agriculture

STATE OF NEVADA
Sagebrush Ecosystem Program

MEETING OF THE SAGEBRUSH ECOSYSTEM COUNCIL

Tuesday, December 02, 2025

8:30 AM

Physical Location

Nevada State Legislature Room 3137
401 S Carson St, Carson City, NV 89701

Zoom Access for the Public

Phone number: 888-475-4499

Meeting ID: 886 2686 5517

Live streaming can be accessed on the NV Legislature Website:

<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/Calendar/A/>

NOTICE: Items on this agenda may be taken in a different order than listed, combined for consideration, or removed from the agenda at the discretion of the Chair

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL

Meeting called to order at 8:37am

Members and Ex-Officio Present: Chris MacKenzie (Chair); Jake Tibbitts (Vice Chair); Kyle Davis; Steven Boies; Bevan Lister; Daphne Emm Hooper; Mathew Johns; William Molini; Sherm Swanson; Justin Barrett for USFWS; Alan Shepherd for BLM; Chris Rose for NRCS; Chad Stephens for DCNR

Members and Ex-Officio Absent: Jon Stansfield, USFS; JJ Goicoechea, NDA

Other Staff Present: Kathleen Steele, Casey Adkins, Skyler Monaghan, Nicole Ting, Jessica Wood.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA- *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

A. Member Molini moved to approve of agenda for Tuesday, December 02, 2025. Member Lister seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES -*FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

A. Approval of minutes from the SEC meeting held on Wednesday, October 22, 2025, were moved to defer to the next meeting due to changes requested to be made.

B. Member Tibbitts moved to approve the minutes from the Regulations Hearing held on Monday, November 17, 2025. Member Emm Hooper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. COUNCIL MEMBER ITEMS AND CORRESPONDENCE - FOR DISCUSSION

None

6. CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF AN ANTHROPOGENIC DISTURBANCE CLASSIFICATION FOR DATA CENTERS - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Kathleen Steele, SETT

Kathleen Steele (SETT) presented a recap of the Delineation of Data Centers in the CCS, continued from the October meeting. Proposed language recommended by Kathleen Steele would be incorporated into the literature in the HQT, the HQT itself, and the Anthropogenic Disturbance.

SEC members and SETT worked through the document, provided feedback, and asked questions. (Please refer to Audio Recording for further details.)

Member Molini moved to motion to treat Data Centers the same as Geothermal. Member Boise seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

7. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE USE OF THE PROXIMITY FACTOR IN THE CONSERVATION CREDIT SYSTEM -*FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* Casey Adkins, SETT

Casey Adkins, SETT- presented slides to 1. share current metrics on proximity factor usage & 2. Facilitate the council's discussion if there is a desire to modify policies as this was requested by a Council Member during the August 2025 Meeting.

SEC members and the SETT worked through the document & discussed alignment, boundary lines, PMU & BSU and clarification of Map lines. Members provided feedback & asked questions. (Please refer to Audio Recording for further details.)

This item was tabled and will be addressed later. There were no motions passed.

8. CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF RESERVE ACCOUNT USE - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* Skyler Monaghan, SETT

- A. Option 1: Credit Proponent Reserve Account Contribution Upon:
 - A. Signature of Management Plan
 - B. The Sale of One Credit
 - C. The Sale of One Credit from a Map Unit
- B. Option 2: SETT will Use Grants or State Seed Funding for Public Lands Credit Projects to Generate and Contribute Reserve Account Credits
- C. Option 3: Combine Reserve Account for Public and Private Land Credit Projects
- D. Option 4: Dissolve Reserve Account

Skyler Monaghan, SETT- Presented the recap for further discussion as was requested from October 2025 meeting. SEC Members and the SETT worked through the document. Members provided feedback and asked questions. (Please refer to Audio Recording for further details.)

Member Tibbits motioned to implement 1A and option 2 and merge them together. Member Lister Seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Break 10:54am – 11:07am

9. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF GREATER SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT MAPPING CHANGES FOR VERSION 2.1 TO ALIGN WITH THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* *Kathleen Steele, SETT Staff*

SEC members and the SETT worked through the document. Members provided feedback and asked questions. It was discussed that the SEC would like to review this again next year. They would like further clarification of the map. (Please refer to Audio Recording for further details.)

Member Davis motioned not making any changes at this time. Member Molini seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

10. CONSIDERATION OF THE DECEMBER 2025 SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT FOR SUBMISSION TO THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR, IN ACCORDANCE WITH NRS 232.162. - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* *Sarah Hale, SETT Staff*

Sarah Hale, SETT was absent, Kathleen Steele, SETT, presented in her absence. Ms. Steele reminds us that this report is due at the end of the year and therefore may have minimal changes.

Member Lister motioned to approve with updates as they see needed. Member Boies seconded the motion.

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

- A. Kathleen Steele announced a potential Range Camp presentation by one of the Campers, as she could not make it to this meeting but hoped she would be able to attend the February meeting.
- B. Kathleen Steele is hopeful of bringing a potential public lands project that they want to

collaborate with.

- C. Kathleen Steele mentioned that the US fish and wildlife service hopes to give a presentation at that meeting as well.
- D. Kathleen Steele is hopeful of getting the literature updates done, depending on the workload.
- E. Kathleen Steele mentions a potential discussion about reserve account credits on public lands from private lands depending on the workload for the meeting and a potential discussion of aligning the WAFA zones and PMUs.

Next meeting was set for Monday February 2nd, 2026. Location TBD

12. FEDERAL AGENCY UPDATES AND COMMENTS-FOR DISCUSSION:

A. US Fish and Wildlife Service – Laura Enders

USFWS is still settling in from the shutdown. They announced a new Assistant Regional Director for Ecological Services - Adam Johnsen. Mike Send retired earlier this year. There is a Proposed rule out in the Federal Register right now for Fish and Wildlife Service and in the National Marine Fishery service, there are 4 proposed revisions to the ESA that are out for public review and comment. There are regulation changes that were made to sections 4 & 7 of the ESA under the first Trump Administration that were then modified under the Biden Administration and now they are looking to reinstate what was put in under the first Trump Administration. The proposed rules are found on SWS.GOV. Link will be forwarded to Kathleen Steele to send out.

B. Bureau of Land Management – Alan Shepherd

Mr. Shepherd reported on emergency permitting process for critical minerals, as they recently approved a Barrit Mine (Coyote Mine) through that process in Elko County. It went from 45 acres to roughly a potential build-out of 100 acres as they build they are filling in. They have some other emergency permitting potentially so there may be more to come.

On Fire & Fuels: Fuels staff end-of-year reporting completed 61,400 acres of fuel breaks were implemented, 2500 acres of prescribed fire so far. 29,000 acres of conifer removal & 152,700 acres of Habitat improvement within Greater Sage grouse habitat. Various offices are doing work trying to do the right thing for habitat and urban interface situations. They are spending money wisely and making great benefits to public lands.

Wild Horse & Burros: Previously John had discussed the removal plans for Beatty; they were able to remove them from the area safely.

New Director nominated by the President, Steven Pierce out of New Mexico, former congressman who has ties in the Oil and Gas industry. Currently, they have not heard of when any confirmation hearings are.

John Raby is out today as he is testifying in front of the Senate on several bills affecting BLM matters from his stay as the acting director, and in a couple of weeks he will go in front of the House.

Deputy Secretary had questions about the layout of the ROD's that are coming out and

some of the language. She provided the comments to the headquarter office, and the contractors are working through making global adjustments to the plan and to the State plan documents. They hope to have the California/Nevada Plan in the next day or two, staff will make final edits within the next week or so and then potentially will have a ROD signed by the holidays and they will be out of the planning effort by the end of the next month and go towards implementation.

C. US Forest Service - None

D. USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service - Chris Rose

FY26 signup deadline is January 15th, 2026, a Nationally mandated deadline for all States to comply with. If there is a need for it, they can do follow-up signup periods after that.

Staff Meeting was postponed in October due to the shutdown; they are looking at holding that in late January possibly the 22nd or 29th.

They have a poll that closes this week, ½ day meeting with the same agenda as the October meeting and will put out an announcement about that early next week.

Conservation Stewardship Program has a budget of 5 million for this year, \$3.8 million increases from FY25, this is an opportunity to benefit wildlife.

CSP maximum contracts have been increased from \$200k–\$300k, and there has also been increased payments for conservation practices. Something like irrigation pipeline or fencing the previously the CSP rate was about 10% of the EQIP payment rate and now it is about 75% on the same practice.

ESD status, Chris Savastio, State Soil Scientist, provided that ecological sites should be 100% improved to the provisional level and are publicly viewable in the edit database, all MLRA's have published ecological site information. MLRA 22A (Sierra Nevada Mountains) & MLRA 23 (Malheur High Plateau) feature ecological site groups and will be going into more detail on the ESD's with where they are at and where they stand during the January Staff meeting

Working through engineering items, older contracts FY23 and earlier are the highest priority. The first project is funded under an alternative funding agreement with Duck Valley Tribe. The AFA's allow Tribal entities more flexibility to complete projects and deliver conservation, in this case it is about a \$1 million project to address resource concerns associated with an outdated irrigation system.

As far as funding this coming year their total allocation for EQUIP, CSP & ASEP is about \$21.9 million, this is \$3 million more than expended in FY25. \$15 million for EQUIP, \$5 million for CSP & \$2 million for the ASEP program (conservation easements)

For FY25, NRCS spent more than 105% of their initial EQIP allocation and more than 100% of their CSP allocation so they had to go out and get more funds, they have the money and funds in the programs to help people out and they are coming to them. They surpassed ASEP easement funding for the last 5 years combined in FY25. There is an increase in easement funding, and they have brought on staff to help with that.

13. STATE AGENCY UPDATES AND COMMENTS-FOR DISCUSSION:

A. **Office of the Governor** – None

B. **Department of Conservation and Natural Resources** - Chad Stephens

Mr., Stevens announced State Parks had the Ribbon Cutting at Valley of Fire a couple of weeks prior. After nearly two years, the Department recently brought on a Land Use Planner named Joseph Marynak who comes from Reno. The National Christmas Tree came from the Humboldt Toiyabe forest this year up by Mount Rose. The Capitol Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony was that day at 2:30 PM, lit by a contest-winning 4th grader from Virginia City, NV.

C. **Department of Wildlife** - None

D. **Department of Agriculture** - None

14. MEMBER COMMENT

Steven Boise announced that this will be his last meeting, after 13 years. He stated he has enjoyed his time on the Council and feels he was always listened to. Steve was thanked by SEC and SETT and presented with a gift

15. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

16. ADJOURNMENT

12:53 pm

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Notice of this meeting was posted in the following location:

Department of Wildlife, 6980 Sierra Pkwy #120, Reno, NV

Sagebrush Ecosystem Program, 201 S. Roop Street, Ste. 101 Carson City, Nevada

Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources 901 S. Stewart Street, Carson City, Nevada

Department of Agriculture, 405 South 21st Street, Sparks, Nevada

Department of Wildlife, 1100 Valley Road, Reno, Nevada

Capitol Building, 101 North Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada

Notice of this meeting was also posted on the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program website at:

<http://sagebrusheco.nv.gov> and the Nevada Public Notices Website at <http://notice.nv.gov/>

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Please contact Kathleen Steele by calling 775-687-2001; or email ksteele@sagebrusheco.nv.gov, to obtain

support material for the agenda. Meeting materials will also be posted on the <http://sagebrushco.nv.gov> website.