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STATE OF NEVADA
Sagebrush Ecosystem Program

Draft Minutes

MEETING OF THE SAGEBRUSH ECOSYSTEM COUNCIL

Wednesday, October 21, 2026
8:30 AM

Physical Location

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Bonnie Room
901 S. Stewart Street, Suite 1003, Carson City, Nevada 89701

Virtual Access

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More information not mentioned in these minutes can be found on the meeting recording on the Sagebrush Ecosystem website (sagebrusheco.nv.gov).

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL

Meeting called to order at 8:34am

Council Members Present: Chris MacKenzie, Jake Tibbitts, Kyle Davis, Martin Paris, Bevan Lister, Sherman Swanson, Daphne Emm Hooper, Kelly McGowan, Jon Stansfield, Alan Jenne, Kristen Julie, Richard Yien, Vinson Guthreau, Dominique Etchegoyhen

Council Members Absent: Mathew Johns

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Doug Busselman, Director of Public Policy and Public Affairs, NV Farm Bureau Federation, supports Nevadas Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation plan. Opposes agenda items with negative effects on
Agriculture.

Gary A. Reese sent public comment via email on Agenda item #8.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Action:
Member Lister motioned to approve agenda.
Member McGowan seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Member McGowan on Agenda item #6, paragraph 6; intended to say before he became part of the Council, not Program Manager. Double check spelling of “McGowan”.

Action:
Member Davis motioned to approve the change.
Member Lister seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

5. COUNCIL MEMBER ITEMS AND CORRESPONDENCE – FOR DISCUSSION:

Written public comment related to item #8 received.

6. INTRODUCTION TO GOVERNOR’S OFFICE OF ENERGY *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

Jake Herzik with the NV Governor’s office of Energy presents an introduction to the NV Governor’s Office of Energy.

Member Davis and Mr. Herzik discussed how Permit Alignment & Coordination Task Force will work with FAST 41. Mr. Herzik explains how they are still figuring out what it will look like to collaborate.

Director Guthreau and Mr. Herzik discussed details on coordinating so that proponents seek permitting from appropriate agencies. Project Manager Steele mentioned NDOM is working with SETT to make sure proponents consult with SETT as appropriately and is making a checklist of required permits.

7. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF THE CONSERVATION CREDIT SYSTEM’S DETERMINATION OF PIVOTS *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* *SETT Staff*

As of now, Pivots are considered non-habitat and cannot be credited. This is how it has always been but has not been written in a policy. Program Manager Steele's presentation was asking permission to make it policy.

Discussion was held regarding whether pivots should be habitat or non-habitat as members have witnessed positive impacts on Greater Sage-Grouse populations where pivots are being used. Currently, there is no science-based evidence if pivots impact Greater Sage-Grouse negatively or positively.

The SETT currently does not have the funds to pay for the necessary research. Project Manager Steele will reach out to other states to see if they would like to collaborate.

Action:
Member McGowan motioned to table this item.
Member Emm Hooper seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

Moved to agenda item #8, closed item #8, then came back to #7.

Action:
Member Davis motioned that in the absence of any other science, pivots are not considered habitat and are considered in the sink. If someone disagrees with that, they have the ability to come to the Council and present evidence as to why the use of pivots would be a net conservation gain. Comfortable with as the policy stands now in the absence of new science. When we get that new science, we can consider a new policy, but until then continuing with the status quo makes sense knowing a landowner can come to the SEC and make the case like we heard today (referring to agenda item #8).

Member Paris seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

8. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF COTTONWOOD RANCH - *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*

SETT Member Monaghan presented an overview of management plan and participant contract obligations.

Agee Smith discussed the history of their current pivots, and his proposal to install two additional pivots on his enrolled property.

Action:

Member Lister motioned to approve the addition of 2 new pivots to Cottonwood Ranch Credit Project and there not be any credit reversal impact.

Member Tibbitts added clarification that the reversal status would be conditioned on the results. If future annual monitoring shows the pivots are not creating uplift, then it can be revisited for reversal at that time, but not to consider that until we see the outcome on the ground with the two new pivots.

Member Lister accepted the amendment to the motion.

Member Paris seconded the motion.

SETT Monaghan stated that they will amend the Cottonwood management plan to incorporate the new pivots.

Members Lister and Paris agreed.

Member McGowan asked whether Mr. Smith was looking at requesting uplift if it is associated with the habitat values. Program Manager Steele confirmed.

Member Swanson abstained from voting on the motion.

The motion passed unanimously by the remaining voting members.

9. REVIEW AND CLARIFICATION OF THE AGRICULTURE EXEMPTION WITHIN THE CONSERVATION CREDIT SYSTEM - <u>*FOR POSSIBLE ACTION*</u> *SETT Staff*

Program Manager Steele presented the current policy of Agriculture exemptions within the Conservation Credit System. Asked for guidance on what should be included in the de minimis category.

Member Lister will abstain from voting; however, will participate in discussion.

<u>Break for lunch 12:00 pm – 1:10pm</u>

Resumed at 1:08pm

Member Tibbitts motions for new roads and new powerlines on the portion that would remain as public land would be not de minimis.

Member McGowan states he would not limit it to powerlines and new roads but would include any anthropogenic feature recognized within the Conservation Credit System.

No second motion.

Motion fails.

After further discussion it was decided to be evaluated on the December agenda due to not having enough information to make a policy decision. Sam Ault, BLM, will create a presentation focusing on Desert Land Entry and other land disposal actions.

No action taken.

10. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE GREATER SAGE-GROUSE ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT REPORT *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* *SETT Staff*

Skyler Monaghan presented the 2025-2026 Adaptive Management Report. The Council provided input and revisions to the report.

Action:
Member Lister motioned to approve the Adaptive Management Report with changes.
Member McGowan seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

11. DISCUSSION AND CONSIDERATION OF GREATER SAGE-GROUSE POPULATION MANAGEMENT UNITS / BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT UNITS CHANGES FOR VERSION 2.2 *FOR POSSIBLE ACTION* *SETT Staff*

Project Manager Steele presented potential changes to service area for CCS to address Greater Sage-Grouse habitat that falls outside of delineated BSUs.

Action:
Member McGowan motioned to include HMAs currently outside of PMU/BSU boundaries as part of the service area and include them in the nearest PMU/BSU in the interim of finding a new long-term solution.

Member Paris seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

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

Next meeting, December 18th at 8:30am.

13. FEDERAL AGENCY UPDATES AND COMMENTS – FOR DISCUSSION:

A. US Fish and Wildlife Service – no updates
B. Bureau of Land Management – no updates
C. US Forest Service – Jon Stansfield updated
D. USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service – no updates
E. Other

14. STATE AGENCY UPDATES AND COMMENTS – FOR DISCUSSION:

A. Office of the Governor – no updates
B. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – Vinson Guthreau updated
C. Department of Wildlife – Alan Jenne updated
D. Department of Agriculture – Ray Seliga updated

15. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Action:
Member Lister motioned to adjourn the meeting.
Member McGowan seconded the motion.
Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 3:22pm.