



Sage-Grouse Initiative in Idaho



NRCS developed the Sage-grouse Initiative to help private landowners conserve sage-grouse populations and habitat on their lands.

The greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) is a large ground-dwelling bird that depends on large tracts of sagebrush grasslands. Habitat loss is one of the main threats to this species and has contributed to its decline. However, voluntary conservation can play a key role in protecting and restoring sage-grouse habitat.

Focusing on Manageable Threats

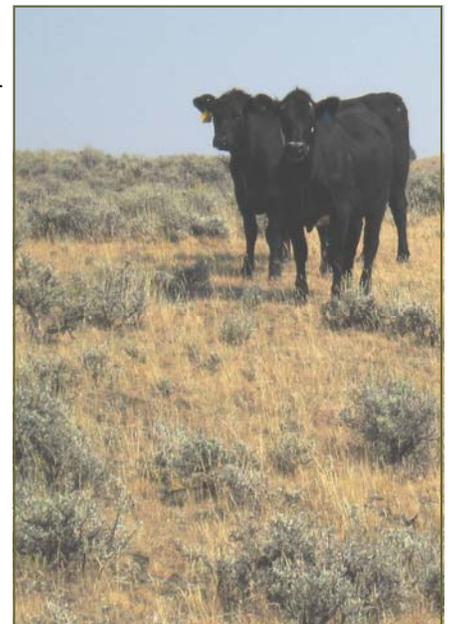
Using the Idaho Department of Fish and Game's 2006 *Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage-grouse in Idaho*, NRCS identified 10 threats to sage-grouse that private landowners could eliminate or reduce on their land. These include threats to birds, such as collisions with fences, escape from watering troughs and predation; and threats to sage-grouse habitat, like juniper encroachment, noxious weed spread, inadequate nesting cover, drained natural moist areas, or range health and condition.

NRCS technical and financial assistance available for implementing specific practices

The threats were matched with 23 specific range-related conservation practices. NRCS offers financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program to implement those conservation practices.

The following examples are conservation practices for which landowners may receive a financial incentive under the Sage-grouse Initiative:

- Removing fences or obstructions to assist bird movement
- Marking fence wires to increase visibility
- Applying management strategies that treat invasive species
- Restoring altered hydrology in spring or moist areas
- Planting native shrubs
- Implementing grazing strategies that improve range health, condition and increase cover for nesting



For the complete list of the conservation practices and the threats they address, visit the Idaho NRCS Web site at www.id.nrcs.programs.sagegrouse.gov/



A landowner does not have to treat all threats identified on his property, but the more threats that are addressed through the conservation practices, the higher their application will rank.

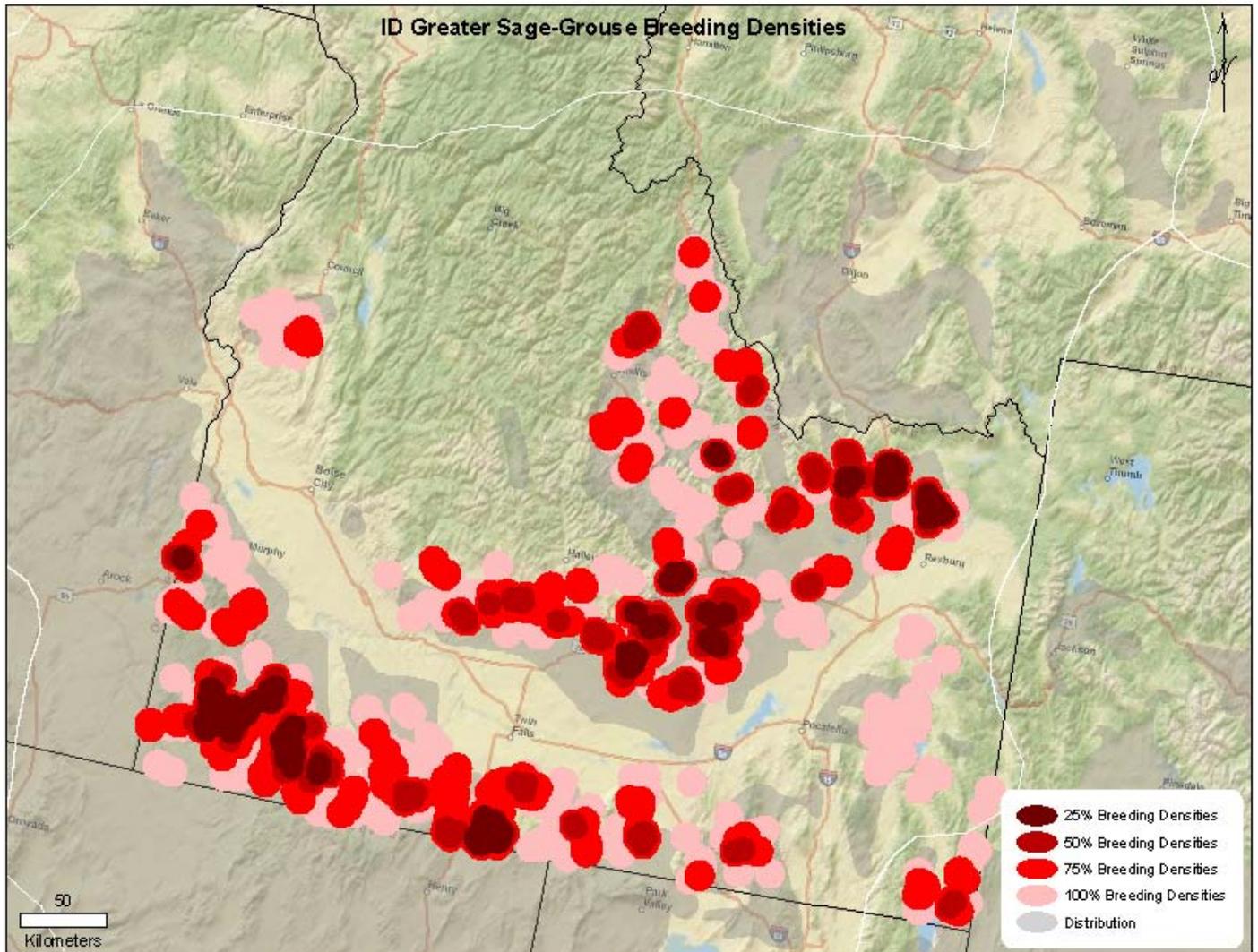
Idaho sage-grouse habitat priorities areas for NRCS ranking

Priority 1 - Areas within a 25% Breeding Density Area (contains 25% of breeding sage-grouse population)

Priority 2 - Areas within a 50% Breeding Density Area (contains 50% of breeding sage-grouse population)

Priority 3 - Areas within a 75% Breeding Density Area (contains 75% of breeding sage-grouse population)

Priority 4 - Areas within a 100% Breeding Density Area (contains 100% of breeding sage-grouse population)



For more information, visit the Idaho NRCS Web site

at http://www.id.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/sage_grouse/index.html. Or, visit the NRCS office near you.

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