

# Financial Assistance Available for PINYON AND JUNIPER REMOVAL on Nevada Sage-Grouse Habitat

FY 2012



Since the late 1800's, pinyon and juniper have subtly been invading vast acreages of rangeland in the northern two-thirds of Nevada that were once dominated by grasses, wildflowers, and shrubs. Although pinyon and juniper are native plants, reduced fire frequency is the main factor that has allowed the trees to expand to sites they never occupied historically. Resource problems caused by invading pinyon and juniper are reduced forage production, increased soil erosion, altered wildlife habitat, and reduced stream and spring flows.

## Sage-Grouse and Trees Don't Mix

Besides affecting your bottom line by reducing forage production, pinyon and juniper invasion is severely impacting rangeland wildlife, such as mule deer and sage-grouse. These wildlife species depend primarily upon the shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers that are lost when trees move in. Sage-grouse, in particular, are sensitive to pinyon and juniper invasion. Their populations have declined dramatically due to the loss of habitat, in part because of these encroaching trees.

## Early Intervention Is the Key

Once pinyon and juniper become dense and mature, the understory grasses and shrubs die out and it becomes much more difficult and expensive to restore the shrub/grassland cover and reverse other resource problems. However, areas that are still in the early phases of pinyon and juniper invasion often retain a large component of grasses and shrubs. This provides an opportunity to reverse resource degradation relatively inexpensively through the removal of young trees.

## Financial Assistance

NRCS has several voluntary conservation programs that provide financial assistance to landowners who want to treat pinyon and juniper on their private property or public land

allotments. Participants in the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) receive payments to implement conservation practices according to approved specifications. NRCS reimburses participants the set rate upon successful completion of the practice. Program participants may choose to do the work themselves or hire it out.

## Conservation Practice Payments

Payment rates for removing pinyon and juniper in fiscal year 2012 will depend on the method and amount of removal.

Interested landowners can apply for WHIP, EQIP, and other programs at their local NRCS office. Eligible applications will be ranked and will compete against other projects for funding. Generally, higher preference for pinyon and juniper management is given for projects located within 3 miles of active leks.

Information provided for conservation planning purposes is strictly confidential.

## Nevada NRCS Field Offices located within Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Areas:

Caliente Field Office.....	775-726-3101
Elko Field Office .....	775-783-8431
Ely Field Office.....	775-289-4065
Fallon Field Office .....	775-423-5124
Lovelock Field Office .....	775-273-2134
Minden Field Office.....	775-782-3661
Winnemucca Field Office.....	775-623-5025
Yerington Field Office.....	775-463-2265

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