

GREATER SAGE-GROUSE CONSERVATION IN IDAHO



Photo courtesy Ed Dahlberg

Opportunities for Farmers and Ranchers



Photo courtesy NRCS

GREATER SAGE-GROUSE CONSERVATION IN IDAHO

US Fish and Wildlife Service



Idaho Department of Fish and Game



Natural Resources Conservation Service



Sage-grouse have become a symbol of healthy sagebrush ecosystems across the Western United States. Maintaining and improving sagebrush habitat throughout Idaho is good for active sustainable ranching operations, the health of our lands, and for sage-grouse.

Farmers and ranchers can help sage-grouse on their lands

- Implement projects on your land that improve sagebrush habitat
Projects could include juniper removal; range plantings; livestock grazing management; fencing removal, modification and relocation; and other practices to benefit sage-grouse and their habitat.
- Get involved in a Sage-grouse Local Working Group
For information, contact Ann Moser, Idaho Department of Fish and Game; (208) 287-2705 or ann.moser@idfg.idaho.gov

Assistance with sage-grouse projects

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) have several programs that may provide the funding and technical assistance you need for sage-grouse-related projects.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers through two programs:

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) offers eligible farmers and ranchers financial and technical assistance to implement conservation practices on agricultural land.

Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) promotes creating high quality wildlife habitats for species with national, state, Tribal, and local significance. Eligible farmers and ranchers can receive technical and financial assistance to enhance upland, wetland, riparian, and aquatic habitats.

Greater Sage-grouse Conservation in Idaho: Opportunities for Farmers and Ranchers

Natural Resources Conservation Service *(con't)*

West Region Sage-grouse Initiative:

The NRCS Sage-grouse Initiative makes additional EQIP and WHIP funding available for specific conservation practices that enhance or restore sage-grouse habitat.

For more information, please contact the District Conservationist at the NRCS field office nearest you. For office locations go to

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?state=ID>

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game has several programs that focus on improving habitat for wildlife and building relationships with agricultural producers such as the **Habitat Improvement Program (HIP)** and the **Mule Deer initiative**. The Department has staff available to work with interested producers to develop sage-grouse habitat plans as well as work with you to submit applications for NRCS funding. In addition the Department may be able to assist you with state matching dollars to put towards projects accomplished in partnership with the NRCS sage-grouse initiative.

For more information, please contact: Sal Palazzolo, (208) 287-2752 or the IDFG Regional Office nearest you

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/about/offices/>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be able to assist you with federal matching dollars and to help you apply for NRCS funding. The **“Partners for Fish and Wildlife” Program**, working with private landowners in Idaho, has implemented 19 separate sage-grouse habitat conservation projects totaling 4,040 acres.

The Partners Program follows a common sense approach to habitat conservation that supports wildlife, agriculture and rural lifestyles by working with private and tribal landowners who want to voluntarily improve fish, wildlife and plant habitat on their lands. The program provides cost-share funding and technical expertise to these landowners. The program's focus is on enhancement or restoration of habitat to benefit migratory birds, threatened or endangered species, and other sensitive or declining species.

Landowners can request assistance at any time through the year. There is no application period.

For more information, please contact: Dennis Mackey, (208) 378-5267

Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances

The *Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA)* program is another tool the US Fish and Wildlife Service has to encourage private landowners, states and Tribes to engage in conservation for sage-grouse. Under the CCAA program, farmers and ranchers voluntarily agree to implement conservation actions on their non-federal lands and in return receive assurances that no further commitment of resources or land-use changes will be requested in the future on those private lands.

For more information, please contact: Kendra Womack, USFWS (208) 685-6951

The IDFG, in cooperation with the Governor's Office of Species Conservation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the West Central Local Sage-grouse Working Group, have completed the first *Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA)* for greater sage-grouse on private lands. Landowners that enrolled in this CCAA that undertake voluntary sage-grouse conservation measures are assured they will not be subject to increased regulation if sage-grouse are listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Or, Don Kemner or Alan Sands, IDFG (208) 334-2920 or go to the following link

http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/cms/wildlife/plans/sage_grouse/ccaa.cfm