

BAKER COMPREHENSIVE SAGE-GROUSE THREAT REDUCTION



Photo by Greg Jackle (ODFW)



Partnership Overview

Eight counties in eastern Oregon provide crucial habitat for the Greater sage-grouse, a unique upland gamebird of conservation concern throughout the American West. Oregon's Sage Grouse Action Plan empowers Local Implementation Teams throughout the state to develop collaborative conservation plans and implement them while meeting the unique needs of each community. In Baker County, sage-grouse populations are geographically isolated from other, more stable populations in Oregon, and have experienced steep declines throughout the past decade.

Quick Facts

OWEB Investment: \$6.12 million

Estimated Leverage: \$8.57 million

Goals by 2025:

- Treat weeds on 25,000 acres, and prevent their spread on over 57,000 acres
- Increase private landowner participation in voluntary conservation efforts by 25%
- Establish at least one grass bank for livestock grazing, providing alternative to sage grouse habitat

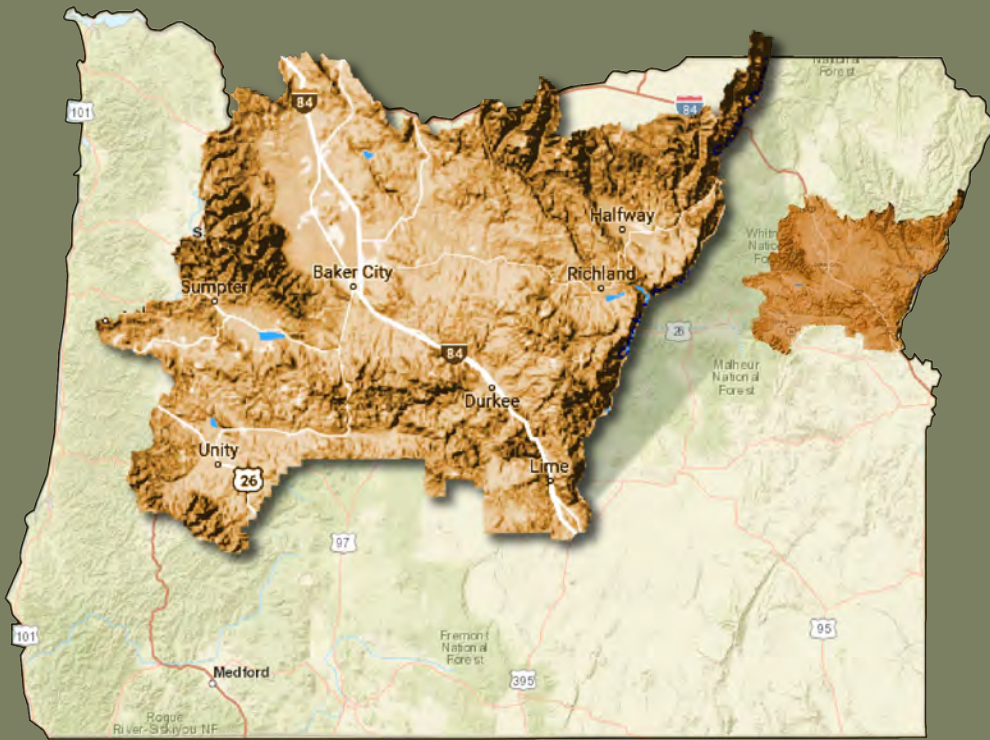
In January 2019, the Baker Comprehensive Sage-grouse Threat Reduction initiative was awarded funding through the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board's (OWEB) Focused Investment Partnership (FIP) grant program. A FIP is an OWEB investment that addresses a board-identified priority of significance to the state, achieves clear and measurable ecological outcomes, uses integrated and results-oriented approaches as identified through a Strategic Action Plan, and is implemented by a high-performing partnership.

Initiatives are eligible for up to six years of OWEB funding. For the 2019-2021 biennium, the board awarded \$1,714,565. When combined with investments from 2019 to 2025, the anticipated total investment is approximately \$6,124,908.

Core Implementing Partners

- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Tri-County Cooperative Weed Management Area
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Baker County
- Powder Basin Watershed Council
- Private landowners





Sage-grouse hen getting transmitter



Sage-grouse nest Greg Jackle (ODFW)

Ecological Outcomes

In Baker County, the majority of land is privately owned, and voluntary conservation is key to success. The Baker Comprehensive Sage-grouse Threat Reduction initiative has identified specific strategies to work with land managers and private landowners in to address threats to sage-grouse and sage habitats. Specific ecological outcomes will be assessed throughout this six-year time frame, but some desired ecological outcomes will only become evident over a longer period of time.

Strategies and anticipated results in the Baker Comprehensive Sage-grouse Threat Reduction initiative include:

Strategy

Coordinate among partners and increase voluntary efforts to address known range-wide concerns for sage-grouse, including invasive annual grasses; wildfire; and juniper encroachment. Address local issues including habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation resulting from historic land uses. Explore potential impacts to sage-grouse from West Nile virus, limited nesting habitat, and raven predation.

Conservation Action

Implement vegetation management activities, including: annual grass and weed prevention and treatment; wildfire prevention and restoration; wet meadow and stream enhancement and protection; enhancing understory vegetation; promoting healthy lands through grazing management and juniper removal. Adaptive management incorporating new information on data gaps, such as the role of disease and avian predation, is ongoing.

Intermediate Ecological Outcome

- Increase the pace and scale of on-the-ground conservation
- Increase education, awareness, and engagement in voluntary conservation on sage-grouse habitat
- Increased extent and quality of native vegetation and sage grouse habitat

Long-Term Ecological Outcome

- Increase quantity and quality of native vegetation and sage-grouse habitat
- Reduced frequency and severity of wildfires
- Stable to increasing trends in sage-grouse populations in Baker County



Greg Jackle, ODFW