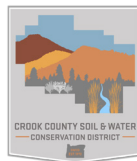


OREGON SAGE GROUSE HABITAT INITIATIVE



Photos credit: Oregon Sage Grouse Partnership



Lakeview
Soil and Water
Conservation
District

MALHEUR COUNTY
SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT



Partnership Overview

Engaging private landowners is a crucial component in achieving landscape-scale habitat conservation, and approximately 2.2 million acres of sagebrush-steppe habitat in Oregon are privately owned. The Oregon Sage-Grouse Habitat Initiative is rooted in resilient ranching practices, and the Partnership's primary ecological outcomes are generated by implementing the work that is prescribed in Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAAs).

Under the Oregon Sage-Grouse Habitat Initiative, partners will continue to write, implement, and monitor the long-term plans that are agreed to by the landowner, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and participating Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs).

Goals by 2030:

- Enroll a minimum of 33 properties encompassing 450,768 acres of privately owned sage-grouse habitat in CCAAs within the FIP geography with approved Site Specific Plans
- Implement conservation measures to address the threat of wildfire on a minimum of 450,768 acres of enrolled acres
- Treat at least 25,807 acres of sage-grouse habitat currently infested with exotic annual grasses and other invasive vegetation
- Improve livestock grazing on a minimum of 90% of pastures where identified as a threat
- Address the threat of conifer encroachment on at least 16,075 acres of enrolled sage grouse habitat

Work is located within high-priority habitat areas and connect sage-grouse "strongholds" within the planning area and can have benefits that continue well beyond fence boundaries.

In April 2024, the Oregon All Counties CCAA Steering Committee was awarded funding through the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (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

Core Implementing Partners

Crook County Soil and Water Conservation District

Harney Soil and Water Conservation District

Lakeview Soil and Water Conservation District

Malheur County Soil and Water Conservation District

US Fish and Wildlife Service

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 first biennium, OWEB awarded \$2,004,839 to the Oregon All Counties CCAA Steering Committee. When combined with investments from 2024 to 2030, the anticipated total investment is approximately \$9,943,674.



credit: NRCS

Ecological Outcomes

Expansion of contiguous habitat, improved resiliency of sagebrush communities, and increased sage-grouse population trend.

Strategies

1. Provide sufficient capacity to enroll private lands in the Greater Sage-grouse Programmatic CCAAs and execute Site Specific Plans.
2. Outreach and Engagement. Communicate the benefits of enrollment to landowners and local supporting partners
3. Enhance and/or protect sage-grouse populations and their habitat following CCAA actions. Reduce threats from invasive vegetation, wildfire, juniper and improper grazing practices.
4. Monitoring and Reporting

Conservation Actions

- Treat invasive annual grasses
- Protect intact habitat from exotic species invasion
- Remove juniper
- Develop grazing management plans
- Fence marking
- Install wildlife escape ramps
- Seeding
- Support conservation measures addressing severe wildfire threats
- Facilitate communication among all CCAA permit holders
- Annual meetings with landowners

Near-term Ecological Outcomes

- Reduce the dominance of exotic annual grasses and other invasive species
- Expansion of plant communities with desired plant species to provide habitat structure (deep-rooted perennial vegetation) and forage (sage-grouse preferred forbs)
- Reduced continuity of fine fuels and thus, the frequency and severity of wildfire.
- Reduced direct mortality of sage grouse due to drowning and fence collisions

Longer-term Ecological Outcomes

- Increased quantity and quality of sage grouse habitat to promote sage grouse populations
- Stable to increasing trends in sage-grouse populations and ecological conditions
- Reduced wildfire risk

