

Species Habitat Evaluation for the Greater Sage Grouse in Nevada

Landowner/Operator: _____ County: _____ Date: _____
 Farm No.: _____ Tract: _____ USGS Quad Name: _____
 Field(s): _____ Acres: _____ Section: _____ Township: _____ Range: _____
 Assisted By: _____

Range Inventory Worksheet (NV-ECS-01) Attached

NV-ECS-01 in Case File

General Information: This model is based on the habitat requirements of sage grouse in Nevada and can be used to rate nesting and brood-rearing habitat as well as winter habitat conditions. It is assumed that managing for this species benefits many other sagebrush-dependent species because of the variety of habitat conditions sage grouse require. Therefore, this model should be applied to all ecological sites with the potential to support a large component of sagebrush even if sage grouse do not presently occupy the habitat. If possible, this guide should be completed between March and July. Due to the complexity of this form, a team approach is strongly recommended.

Guidance: As a general rule of thumb, Sage Grouse utilize four classes of sagebrush canopy cover. These canopy cover classes are <10%, 10 to 14%, 15 to 20%, and >20%. Optimum Sage Grouse habitat consists of a mosaic of sagebrush communities having differing canopy cover classes. Ideally, one-quarter of the total vegetative landscape would fall into each of the four canopy cover categories.

Species Habitat Evaluation: Sage Grouse

FACTOR	COMPONENTS	HABITAT VALUE RATING	PRESENT	PLANNED
GENERAL HABITAT CONDITIONS				
Sagebrush Recruitment <i>(big & dwarf sagebrush)</i>	All age classes present (seedling, young, mature, and decadent)	1.0		
	Young, mature, and decadent age classes present; seedlings sparse	0.5 to 0.9		
	Mature and decadent age classes dominant; young sagebrush sparse; seedlings rare	0.1 to 0.4		
	Even aged stand; seedlings rare to absent	0		
Pinyon/Juniper Invasion	Pinyon and/or juniper trees absent	1.0		
	Pinyon and/or juniper canopy cover Trace to 5%	0.5 to 0.9		
	Pinyon and/or juniper canopy cover 6 to 15%	0.1 to 0.4		
	Pinyon and/or juniper canopy cover >15%	0		

Species Habitat Evaluation: Sage Grouse *(continued)*

FACTOR	COMPONENTS	HABITAT VALUE RATING	PRESENT	PLANNED
GENERAL HABITAT CONDITIONS <i>continued</i>				
Disturbance that Promotes Predation <i>(based on line-of-sight distance to power lines, busy roads, fences, center pivots, etc.)</i>	More than 3-miles	1.0		
	More than 1-mile and less than 3-miles	0.5 to 0.9		
	More than ½-mile and less than to 1-mile	0.1 to 0.4		
	Less than ½-mile	0		
Grazing Management <i>(including meadows, wetlands, springs, irrigated forage crops, and rangeland)</i>	Following a prescribed grazing plan and maintaining a 3- to 6-inch stubble height	0.6 to 1.0		
	Livestock exclusion	0.5		
	Uncontrolled livestock grazing	0 to 0.4		
NESTING AND BROOD-REARING HABITAT <i>Check if rating Nesting and Brood-Rearing Habitat</i>				
Sagebrush Canopy Cover <i>Big sagebrush and/or dwarf sagebrush Line-intercept transect(s) suggested Referred to NV-ECS-1(s)</i>	15 to 25% canopy cover	1.0		
	10 to 14% or 26 to 35% canopy cover	0.5 to 0.9		
	5 to 9% or 36 to 40% canopy cover	0.1 to 0.4		
	Less than 5% or more than 40% canopy cover	0		
Foliar Cover of Perennial Grasses <i>Referred to NV-ECS-1(s)</i>	More than 50% foliar cover	1.0		
	35 to 50% foliar cover	0.5 to 0.9		
	25 to 34% foliar cover	0.1 to 0.4		
	Less than 25% foliar cover	0		
Foliar Cover of Forbs <i>Referred to NV-ECS-1(s)</i>	More than 10% foliar cover	1.0		
	5 to 10% foliar cover	0.5 to 0.9		
	1 to 4% foliar cover	0.1 to 0.4		
	Less than 1% foliar cover	0		
Average Grass Height in the Spring <i>(either residual or current-year growth)</i>	More than 7-inches <i>(where grass height is less than 7-in, a score of 1.0 may be recorded if average grass height is at least 50% of expected growth for site potential - use "NOTES" section to document rationale for scoring a 1.0 with grass height <7-in)</i>	1.0		
	Average height is 5 to 7-inches	0.5 to 0.9		
	Average height is 3 to 4-inches	0.1 to 0.4		
	Average height is less than 3-inches	0		

Species Habitat Evaluation: Sage Grouse *(continued)*

FACTOR	COMPONENTS	HABITAT VALUE RATING	PRESENT	PLANNED
NESTING AND BROOD-REARING HABITAT <i>continued</i>				
Forb and Legume Species Richness <i>(Assign 0.1 point for each forb species present [to a total of 1.0]. Mark each forb species present)</i>	Agoseris (<i>Agoseris</i> spp.)	Yarrow (<i>Achillea</i> spp.)		
	Clover (<i>Trifolium</i> spp.)	Microceris (<i>Microseris</i> spp.)		
	Salsify (<i>Tragopogon</i> spp.)	Biscuitroot (<i>Lomatium</i> spp.)		
	Dandelion (<i>Taraxacum</i> spp.)	Hawksbeard (<i>Crepis</i> spp.)		
	Buttercup (<i>Ranunculus</i> spp.)	Milkvetch (<i>Astragalus</i> spp.)		
	Phlox (<i>Phlox</i> spp.)	Pussytoes (<i>Antennaria</i> spp.)		
	Sagebrush (<i>Artemisia</i> spp.)	Buckwheat (<i>Eriogonum</i> spp.)		
	Wild onion (<i>Allium</i> spp.)	Prickly lettuce (<i>Lactuca</i> spp.)		
	Sego lily (<i>Calchortus</i> spp.)	Fleabane (<i>Erigeron</i> spp.)		
	Lupine (<i>Lupinus</i> spp.)	Alfalfa (<i>Medicago</i> spp.)		
	Sweetclover (<i>Melilotus</i> spp.)	Pricklypear (<i>Opuntia</i> spp.)		
	Death camus (<i>Zygadenus</i> spp.)	Western Marsh cudweed (<i>Gnaphalium palustra</i>)		
	Broom Snakeweed (<i>Gutierrezia</i> spp.)	Curlycup gumweed (<i>Grindelia</i> spp.)		
Prairie Starflower (<i>Lithophragma</i> spp.)	Evening Primrose (<i>Oenothera</i> spp.)			
WINTER HABITAT <i>Check if rating Winter Habitat</i>				
Sagebrush Canopy Cover <i>(Big sagebrush and/or dwarf sagebrush) Line-intercept transect(s) suggested Referenced to NV-ECS-1(s)</i>	More than 20% canopy cover	1.0		
	15 to 20% canopy cover	0.5 to 0.9		
	10 to 14% canopy cover	0.1 to 0.4		
	Less than 10% canopy cover	0		

Final Habitat Model Score (*Nesting and Brood Rearing Habitat*) =

Final Habitat Model Score (*Winter Habitat*) =

NOTES:

References

Nevada Department of Wildlife. 2004. Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan for Nevada and Eastern California.

Nevada Wildlife Federation. 2002. Enhancing Sage Grouse Habitat: A Nevada Landowners Guide.

Paige, C. and S.A. Ritter. 1999. Birds in a Sagebrush Sea: Managing Sagebrush Habitats for Bird Communities. Partners in Flight, Boise, ID.

USDA-NRCS-Utah. 2004. Habitat Model for Sage Grouse.