

Animal Enhancement Activity – ANM59 - Grazing management to improve Sage grouse habitat



Enhancement Description

Implement a grazing management plan that will allow for rest periods to provide adequate residue for nesting cover and increase diversity of vegetative structure to benefit a variety of wildlife species.

Land Use Applicability

Pastureland, Rangeland

Benefits

Wildlife habitat can be greatly improved through proper grazing management. Proper grazing management is essential to healthy wildlife populations because plants supply food and cover for nesting, loafing, roosting, travel and escape from predators and adverse weather. Planned grazing systems will provide adequate cover for sage grouse and can be implemented to increase residual cover of perennial grasses and forbs to improve sage-grouse nesting and early brood rearing success. Increased residual cover will also improve plant litter cover over the soil surface. Plant litter facilitates better moisture infiltration and produces more vegetative cover for nesting grouse as well as increased forbs for brood habitat. Grazing systems can also decrease the time anyone pasture is exposed to grazing animals and people reducing overall disturbance of sage grouse.

Conditions Where Enhancement Applies

This enhancement applies to all pasture and range land use acres.

Criteria

1. Defer 20 percent of the grazing land each year within the habitat area for year one and continuing through the nesting season in year two.
 - a. The same pasture cannot be deferred in consecutive years unless it is the only pasture within the sage grouse habitat area.
2. Develop and implement a written grazing management plan that identifies the following:
 - a. wildlife management objectives for grazing land,
 - b. targeted wildlife species,
 - c. nesting dates,
 - d. the location and number of acres to be deferred each year,
 - e. a schedule for the year of deferment,
 - f. stocking rates that will allow proper forage utilization while maintaining proper plant heights that provide food and shelter for wildlife and maintain plant health.
 - g. The grazing plan must be developed in accordance with NRCS practice standard (528) Prescribed grazing to ensure that stocking rate is in balance with forage supply, season of use is rotated to ensure plants have adequate reproduction

opportunity, and rangeland is monitored to inform of adaptive management.

Adoption Requirements

This enhancement is considered adopted when a grazing management plan targeting sage grouse has been written and 20 percent of the grazing land is avoided during the nesting season each year as prescribed.

Documentation Requirements

1. A schedule of when grazing activities occurred documenting that grazing activities were deferred on a minimum of 20 percent of the habitat.
2. A map showing the acreage where these activities are applied.
3. A written grazing plan as described in criteria g above and actual use records.

References

Beck, J.L., and D.L. Mitchell. 2000. Influences of livestock grazing on sage grouse habitat. *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 28:993-1002.

Boyd, C.S., J.L. Beck, and J.A. Tanaka. 2014. Livestock grazing and sage-grouse habitat: impacts and opportunities. *Journal of Rangeland Applications* 1:58-77.

Nistler, C. M., J. Boren and D. Rollins. 2006. Proceedings – Symposia: Prescribed Livestock Grazing to Enhance Wildlife Habitat. 112 pages. Society for Range Management.

NRCS, FWS. 2010. Conference Report for sage grouse. [http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/UT/SG_Conference_Report_Final\(508Compliant\).pdf](http://efotg.sc.egov.usda.gov/references/public/UT/SG_Conference_Report_Final(508Compliant).pdf)

Sant, E.D., G.E. Simonds, R.D. Ramsey, and R.T. Larsen. 2014. Assessment of sagebrush cover using remote sensing at multiple spatial and temporal scales. *Ecological Indicators* 43:297-305.

USDA-NRCS. 2010. Conservation Practice Standard: Prescribed Grazing-Code 528.

Utah State Supplement 2015 for ANM59

Targeted wildlife species must include sage grouse, but may also include secondary considerations for other sensitive or client-identified species. Use the Greater or Gunnison Sage Grouse WHEG to identify limiting vegetative factors and plan grazing to meet planning criteria for the “after” score.

The following conservation measures are required to be planned and implemented with this enhancement in all sage grouse habitat:

Enhancement Name	Enhancement Code 2015 (Old Code [^])	Associated SGI Practices (Code)	Conservation Measures ⁺
Grazing Management to Improve Sage Grouse Habitat	ANM59	512, 528, 550, 645	1, 2, 3, 10

See full table complete list of conservation measures in FOTG for more information.

Sage Grouse Initiative Supplement 2015 to ANM59

No additional information.



Operations & Maintenance, Conservation Measures, and Client Acknowledgement

Operation and Maintenance	
Operation:	
Maintenance:	
Conservation Measures	
Actions that must be implemented by the landowner/manager during enhancement implementat i	
Client's Acknowledgement Statement	
The Client acknowledges that:	
a. They have received a copy of the enhancement and understand the contents and requirements.	
b. It shall be the responsibility of the client to obtain all necessary permits and/or rights, and to comply with all ordinances and laws pertaining to the application of this enhancement.	
Biologist:	Date: _____

Planner:	Date:

Client:	Date:
