



April 2018

# FACTS

## AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

### *SAGEBRUSH HABITAT*

BLM updates policy for  
habitat and economy

### *COUNTING GROUSE*

Visit a lek to count  
Oregon's elusive  
sagebrush bird

### *SAGECON TEAM*

Twenty-five big  
partners working on  
the local level

The Bureau of Land Management Oregon & Washington

# New Sagebrush Policy Takes Hold Out West

Guidance will manage habitat and create sustainable landscapes

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**Fact:**

The BLM and other federal agencies manage more than 13 million acres of sage grouse habitat in Oregon.

Recently, the BLM issued updated policy statements designed to maintain healthy sagebrush habitat in the West, while continuing to allow for multiple uses of the land and local economic development.

These six documents, known as Instruction Memoranda, give BLM managers and staff guidance for putting sage grouse habitat management plans into effect at the field level.

“The updated policies are in response to concerns raised by the states, local partners and our own field staff,” said Brian Steed, BLM deputy director for programs and policy. “They were developed from the ground up with the goal of improving sagebrush habitat while permitting measured economic and recreational activity.”

The memoranda provide guidance for the BLM on-the-ground management actions in oil and gas leasing and development, livestock grazing leasing and permitting, and evaluating the health of sagebrush habitat.

Three of the policies revise memos issued in 2016; two others supersede guidance issued that year. The sixth policy is new and directs field staff to use a habitat objective table for sage grouse management plans, to ensure utilization of the best available science and support management decisions.

Read the full Instruction Memoranda at [blm.gov/policy](http://blm.gov/policy)

## Spring Ritual: Counting Sage Grouse at Dawn

Waking at 4 a.m. to check the pulse of the range

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**Fact:**

Male greater sage grouse weigh 4–5 pounds while hens are 2–3 pounds.

**Fact:**

The birds live and mate among the sagebrush, and eat it almost exclusively.

Each spring, remote areas in Oregon’s sagebrush steppe attract scores of greater sage grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) for elaborate mating rituals. These areas, called leks, provide wildlife biologists a golden opportunity for census-taking, because they host the largest annual gathering of male and female sage grouse.

Since the males are in full display — strutting their uniquely shaped pin-like tail feathers, inflating and deflating distinctive golden throat sacs, and cooing and clucking a range of sounds — they stand out in the landscape and are more easily identified and counted.

This counting is critical. The BLM and its partners are taking steps to protect the greater sage grouse and more than 350

other species that rely upon the sagebrush landscape for their survival. These annual censuses, called lek counts, provide vital information about sage grouse population health.

Lek counts are like a blood pressure monitor for the greater sage grouse and the sagebrush ecosystem: They provide important data that indicate health, and also inform prescriptive paths toward recovery.

Read the full story at the BLM Oregon’s Facebook page: [facebook.com/blmoregon](https://facebook.com/blmoregon).



**GETTING  
AMERICA  
BACK TO WORK**



**SHARED  
CONSERVATION  
STEWARDSHIP**

# The Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership

Working with partners to promote multiple-use on public lands

**Fact:**  
More than 25 organizations participate in the Oregon SageCon.

**Fact:**  
There are five implementation teams working on SageCon initiatives at the local level.

The Sage Grouse Conservation Partnership, known as SageCon, is a group of partner organizations in Oregon, including the BLM, formed out of discussions beginning in 2010 related to the greater sage grouse.

This forum serves to promote rural community and economic health, and was created through collaborative work involving landowners, non-governmental organizations, local governments, and state and federal agencies.

SageCon compliments existing sage grouse conservation efforts, such as the implementation teams led by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife that provide a broader forum for coordination and improved integration of strategies across agencies and jurisdictions.

This year, the BLM has specific goals for working with SageCon: develop and deliver training and education opportunities to BLM staff, public land users, and partners related to the implementation of approved plans; use SageCon tools to support decision-making in relevant BLM districts; and to enhance consistency between the state action plan and the amended resource plan from the BLM.

The BLM is also submitting a proposal through the Intermountain West Joint Venture to fund a position with the state for coordination and facilitation of implementation teams in Prineville and Vale.



## By the Numbers

Your monthly stats, facts and more.



**Facts at Your Fingertips**  
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[blm.gov](http://blm.gov)

Cover Photo/Bob Wick

**BLM OR/WA**  
14 million acres of  
rangeland

**BLM OR/WA**  
2,000 grazing  
allotments

**BLM OR/WA**  
Weed control on  
673,034 acres