

OFFICE OF SPECIES CONSERVATION

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Request for Sage-grouse Habitat Restoration Projects

The Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation (OSC) and Sage-Grouse Actions Team (Actions Team) are accepting proposals for sage-grouse habitat restoration projects. For state Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24), \$800,000 will be available for projects that implement actions outlined in the Governor's Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy (Strategy), contingent on approval by the legislature. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) are working to secure additional internal funding to leverage this program in supporting sage-grouse conservation in Idaho.

OSC and the other state agencies charged with implementing the Strategy (Idaho Department of Lands and Idaho Department of Fish and Game) partnered with federal agencies (FWS, BLM, USFS, and Natural Resources Conservation Service), as well as the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission, Idaho State Department of Agriculture, and The Nature Conservancy to create the Actions Team. The Actions Team meets regularly to identify, prioritize, and fund projects that target the primary threats (invasive plant species and wildfire) and limiting factors to sage-grouse.

The grant application, application instructions, ranking information and Request for Proposals (RFP) documents can be found on the OSC website (<https://species.idaho.gov/sage-grouse-actions-team/>).

Projects that will rank higher in FY24 are located in the following Focus Areas based on the 2020 GRSG Adaptive Management Team Recommendation Report and "Grow the Core/Defend the Core" principles. Note: Projects outside of these Focus Areas will be accepted but will not receive the additional ranking score for being in a Focus Area.

(For Focus Area locations see below, in the Application Instructions or click this link [Story Map](#)):

- Big Desert Fine Scale Area
- Craters of the Moon Fine Scale Area
- Twin Buttes/Tractor Flats Landscape
- Medicine Lodge/Table Butte Fine Scale Area
- Lemhi Fine Scale Area
- Sand Creek Desert Fine Scale Area
- Greater Curlew Fine Scale Area
- West Owyhee – Antelope, Ridge and Cow Lakes Fine Scale Areas

Funding will be prioritized for projects that address threats to sage-grouse, including:

- Invasive annual grass treatment
- Juniper removal
- Revegetation with native sagebrush, grasses, and forbs.
- Wet meadow/riparian restoration
- Wildfire prevention (i.e. Strategic Fuel Breaks, Engine Fill Stations)
- Wildfire rehabilitation

- Improving perennial grass and forb cover/diversity

Project ranking criteria will also emphasize:

- Collaborative project proposals that span multiple land ownerships and benefit large landscapes
- Ongoing projects that warrant additional funding
- Projects on state and private lands
- Projects that provide matching funds
- Projects on federal land with completed NEPA analysis
- “Shovel ready” projects that can be completed by June 2024

Applications for this application period, FY24, must be received by Friday, May 5, 2023.

Funds will be available to successful applicants on July 1, 2023.

Submit applications electronically, in person, or by mail to one of the addresses below.

Award notifications will be sent after projects are ranked and approved by the Actions Team mid-May.

Mailing and hand delivery: Idaho Office of Species Conservation Attn: Joshua Uriarte 304 N. 8th Street, Ste. 149 Boise, ID 83702	Electronically: species@osc.idaho.gov
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Your role in sage-grouse conservation across Idaho’s rangelands is crucial to protect and restore key habitat areas and support the economic vitality of rural communities in Idaho.

For additional information or questions please contact Joshua Uriarte (OSC) at 208-332-1556, or joshua.uriarte@osc.idaho.gov.

Adaptive Management Team Focus Area/Fine Scale Recommendations

Big Desert and Craters of the Moon:

Management Recommendations:

- Expand sagebrush restoration (seeding, planting)
- Expand cheatgrass treatment (herbicide spraying, seeding diverse perennial grass mix with forbs)
- Identify areas to improve wet meadow and riparian resources for late brood-rearing habitat.

Twin Buttes

Management Recommendations:

- Expand sagebrush restoration (seeding, planting) in critical winter and nesting habitat
- Improve protection of sagebrush in important winter habitat and migration corridors
 - Fire prevention on public lands
 - Limit brush control projects
 - Conservation easements or land purchase of private tracts.
 - Encourage the initiation of a Rural or Rangeland Fire Protection Association

Medicine Lodge (Table Butte)

Management Recommendations:

- Expand sagebrush restoration (planting, seeding, expanding existing winter areas)
- Work with NRCS and local conservation districts to identify potential ways to incentivize producers to swath in a manner to minimize direct mortality to sage-grouse (e.g., swath from inward to outward to push birds out)
- Identify areas to improve wet meadow and riparian resources for late brood-rearing habitat.
- Work with land management agencies, utility companies and private landowners to discourage raven perches and subsidies.

Lemhi

Management Recommendations:

- Continue stream and riparian restoration work to improve late brood-rearing habitat.
- Continue Early Detection Rapid Response strategies for cheatgrass/noxious vegetation.

Sand Creek

Management Recommendations:

- Continue rehabilitation efforts on the 2018 Grassy Ridge Fire
- Expand sagebrush restoration (seeding, planting)
- Identify and treat areas of expanding cheatgrass invasion (herbicide spraying, seeding diverse perennial grass mix with forbs)
- Continue local efforts to manage and plan strategic brush treatment efforts across land ownership boundaries and time.

Greater Curlew

Management Recommendations:

- Continue rehabilitation efforts on 2006-2007 fire scars by restoring sagebrush overstory.
- Continue cheatgrass/noxious vegetation treatments and native sagebrush/grass/forb seedings.
- Maintain and expand riparian/wetland exclosures.
- Encourage additional projects that compliment the National Joint Chiefs Restoration Grant (this grant will be completed in 2021)
- Work with land management agencies, utility companies and private landowners to discourage raven perches and subsidies.

West Owyhee – Cow Lakes

Management Recommendations:

- Follow up on Soda Fire rehabilitation efforts
- Determine where additional work is needed including re-treating annual grasses and expanding sagebrush plantings and perennial bunchgrass seeding

West Owyhee – Antelope Ridge

Management Recommendations:

- Continue juniper removal projects in the Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-grouse Habitat (i.e., BOSH) landscape, including Antelope Ridge
- Encourage juniper projects that improve habitat connectivity with the adjacent Soldier Creek Fine Scale Areas
- Expand cheatgrass/medusahead treatment (herbicide spraying, seeding diverse perennial grass mix with forbs).
- Continue to work with private landowners to improve wet meadow development/enhancement

