

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Habitat Fragmentation State Work Group Participants**

**FROM: INR Staff**

**SUBJECT: July Habitat Fragmentation State Work Group**

**DATE: July 26, 2013**

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This memo follows up on the July 26th meeting of the Fire and Invasives State Working Group. The memo includes the following: (1) identified action items and (2) brief meeting summary

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meeting	Date	Location	Potential Agenda Items
<b>Habitat Fragmentation Work Group</b>	September 20, 2013	Prineville, OR	Updated Work Plan  How state plan aligns with core areas, BLM PPH and PGH's and the COT Report PAC's

### ACTION ITEMS

Action Item	Who	Date
Distribute a more complete work plan with Richard and Brett's input	Jamie	Early August
Review and send comments and edits for work plans	All participants	Prior to September Meeting
ODOE request (Todd Cornett) for ODFW and USGS data layers and GIS contact	Eric Rickerson	Early August

## BRIEF MEETING SUMMARY

### Presentation: County data- Jon Jinings

- Working closely with counties to understand data capacity.
- Good meeting with Harney County to brief them on SageCon efforts, the staff let us know they feel informed
- Local distribution transmission lines-are being considered in work plan. Lead will be with ODOE and PUC

### Presentation and Discussion: Disturbance Framework – Richard and Theresa

Theresa developed a presentation to review some of the science factors and considerations for implementing a disturbance threshold, Richard discussed some of the anticipated policy implications. Below are some of the discussion points that came up, please see Theresa's powerpoint for more information.

- Connection between disturbance threshold and habitat fragmentation; need to know the impact of different development types and activities across a variety of conditions and geographies. Main concerns:
  - \*How to provide documentation for FWS that adequate regulatory mechanisms are in place to prevent disturbance.
  - \*How to develop a system that allows economic development activity to continue.
  - \*How to set disturbance threshold linked to out of kind mitigation for offsite activities.
- Disturbance characteristics will look at the severity and intensity as well as how the ecosystem recovers. Knick developed a similarity index to compare lek characteristics that could serve as a guide. Biology and ecology foundational to understanding variations in scale. Steve Knick's work shows that 99 percent of active leks, or breeding sites, are in areas with no more than 3 percent of the land disturbed by humans for uses such as roads, power lines, pipelines and communication towers. [Read more here.](#)
- BLM has been utilizing 70/30 ODFW goals to assess district compliance. Density and Disturbance Calculator Tool being used to create models for the BLM RMP which is leading to some deeper analysis into understory characteristics.
- BER analyzed existing level of disturbance by management. zone 2 and zone 5 populations in OR. If review 3% already met by current footprint alone but there is variation in direct vs indirect effects.
- Baseline analysis of disturbance? Will disturbance be determined retroactively? Need to review test area to understand what factors are involved in making these decisions as we anticipate a lot of variation.
- LIT action areas provides some initial analysis. With the LIT's the first exercise was to identify core area and low density that didn't match conditions on the ground; next meeting define common problems in those areas. Irrigated vs non-irrigated land. Need for local level technical analysis as some areas not identified in core could be important to protect populations.

- Fundamental question, will the disturbance threshold consider existing activity and development and how will natural disturbance be addressed?
- FWS already determined that listing sage grouse is warranted, the state will need to directly address threats. Regulatory mechanisms show how conservation actions prevent negatives impacts and reverse trends. Be clear about baseline determination and provide information about existing conditions to contain disturbance and show certainty over time. Other items support these efforts such as conservation actions,ccas and ccaas, mitigation banks, etc. need to have range of mandatory and voluntary actions that are well-documented.
- Showcase that OR plan is based on Knick and other scientific reports and crosswalk with BLM plans to cover core. Shows strengths of program in terms of regulatory analysis.
- Policy and governance aspects. The listing is warranted, BLM is determining the disturbance framework and the state is working to be consistent. Need to determine how to administer policies between state and counties on managing related development activities. Land use and energy siting program covers some of the regulatory mechanisms.
- Many disturbance activities are discrete and not traditionally regulated through land use; OHV, dry-land farming, power lines, cell towers. Unclear whether fire (prescribed) and grazing counted toward threshold. Most uses regulated under land use processes handled through goal revisions. Roads are the most difficult to regulate. Not a lot of new disturbance occurring and traditional development growth has been limited. COT report shows the main threats are fire and invasives.
- There are relationships inherent with certain methods, have to crosswalk. If we think understory important factor to qualify percentage. Same thing with disturbance over time, the caveats for methodology will be key to coordinate.
- Discussion: Draft Work Plan – Jamie and Richard
- Work Plan detailing out specific tasks that will need to be done by whom and when, please help us identify things that are missing. Are there people who should be assigned to tasks?
- Want to come out of this meeting with understanding about big decisions that should be made. Below is a discussion about data needs related to the work plan and how to move forward.
- Making progress, want to recognize the integrated discussion we were able to have on the disturbance threshold based on past work and planning from our meetings. How will tasks, future data/presentations help us to narrow our focus?
- Core team of people working to build state level staff support. Governor's Office will hire someone to draft framing chapters of state plan.
- Obtain building permit data from counties
- County plans are being compiled and draft summary overview of land use regulation information to assess adequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms.

- DLCD, ODOT and ODPRD have traffic count data. Work with counties for their data sets. OHV use in consultation with BLM, issue informal use and working with user groups to understand where use is occurring.
- Harney and Malheur committee to inventory roads for maintenance evaluation. Cattlemen asked to identify roads and will have road inventory.
- Proposal for new transmission lines; Captain Jack for Pacificorp significant on its own right. Need to work directly with Pacificorp and PUC. Develop planning process mechanisms to limit impacts.
- Solar, geothermal, wind analysis can work with RNP for mobile and immobile development. Limited resources for these reviews; how to design framework to be less speculative.
- DOGAMI assistance with projected mining activity
- Conversion of irrigated and dryland farming data; work with ODA. Not large increase in dryland farming.
- How to monitor disturbance over time to adjust threshold when there are population or habitat changes?

### **Attendance**

Andrew Shields, Roaring Springs Ranch

Angela Sitz, USFWS

Bob Hooton, ODFW

Bruce Taylor, Defenders of Wildlife

Cathy Macdonald, TNC

Dawn Davis, ODFW

Dede Steele, USFS

Eric Rickerson, ODFW

Garth Fuller, TNC

George Houston, Foundation for North American Wild Sheep

Glenn Frederick, BLM

Isaac Sanders, DOGAMI

Jamie Damon, Governor's Office

Jeff Everett, USFWS

Jon Jinings, DLCD

Lanny Quackenbush, DSL

Lynn Sharp, Renewable Northwest Project

Meta Looftsgaarden, OWEB

Mike Freese, BLM

Phil Stenbeck, Crook County

Richard Whitman, Governor's Office

Shauna Ginger, USFWS

Stacy Davies, OCA

Theresa Burcsu, INR

Turner Odell, Oregon Consensus

On Phone

Bill White, NRCS

Jimmy Kagan, INR

Todd Cornett, ODOE