



# 2025 BI-STATE SAGE-GROUSE ACTION PLAN

*Mono County Board of Supervisors*

*March 18, 2025*



Photo Credit: Bob Wick

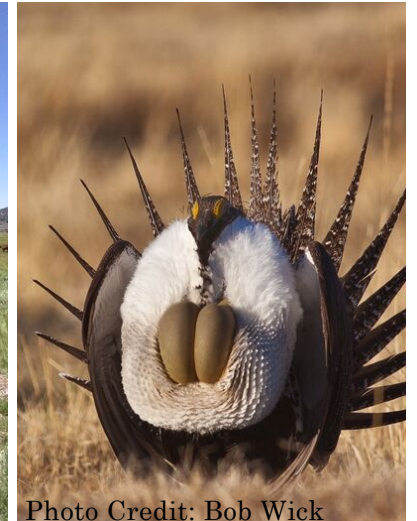


Photo Credit: Bob Wick

# OUTLINE

- Background
- Accomplishment overview
- 2025 Action Plan
- Mono County's involvement
- Action review
- Questions



# GREATER SAGE-GROUSE

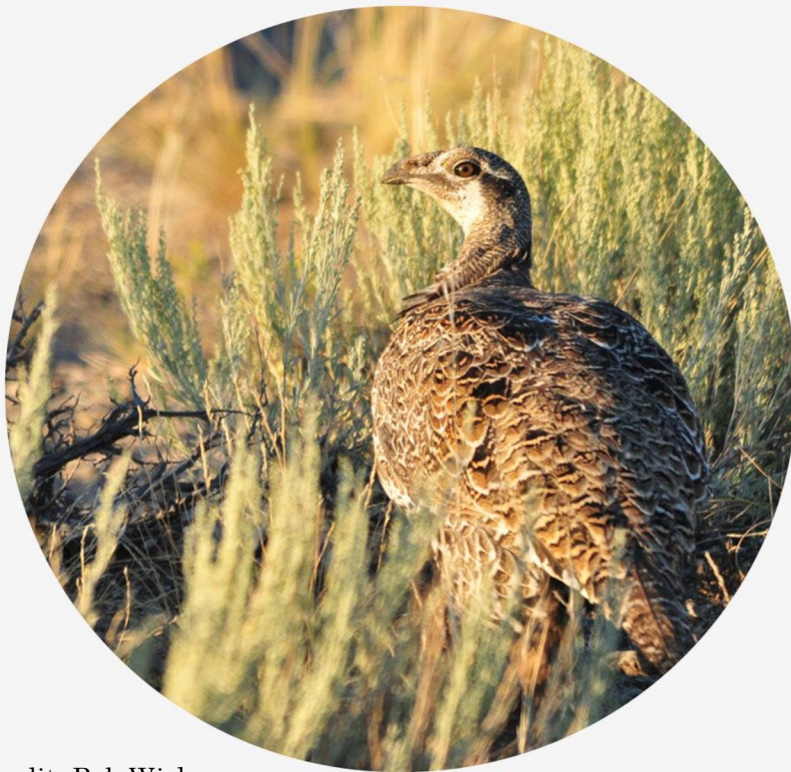


Photo Credit: Bob Wick



# BI-STATE SAGE-GROUSE

- Genetically distinct from other greater sage-grouse populations
- Considered a Distinct Population Segment by the Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bi-State sage-grouse is currently being reviewed for a listing as federally threatened by USFWS
- Greater sage-grouse is currently being reviewed for a potential state listing as threatened or endangered by the State of California



O'Donnell et al. 2022 Ecology and Evolution



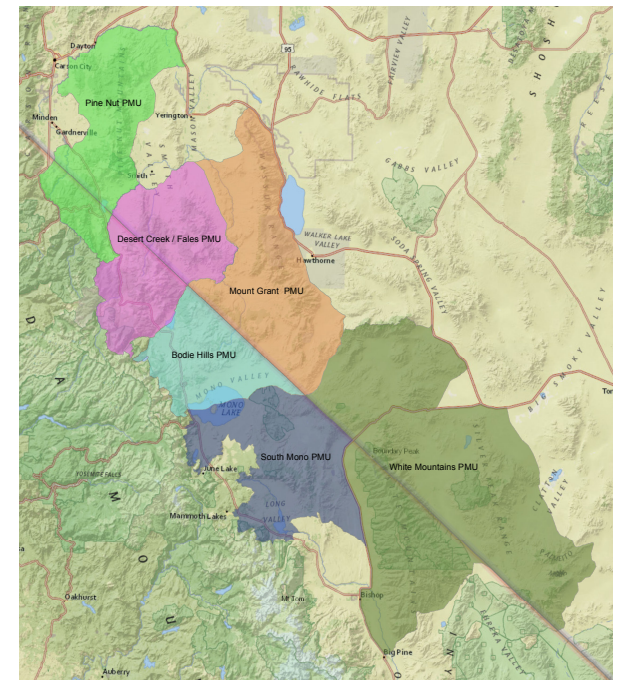
# SAGEGROUSE CONSERVATION HAS POSITIVE LANDSCAPE LEVEL IMPACTS

- Umbrella species
- Conservation actions that benefit the sagebrush ecosystem reach beyond the sage-grouse
- Sage-grouse conservation efforts in the Bi-State aims to benefit multiple ecosystems, and the communities associated with them.



# POPULATION MANAGEMENT UNITS

- 6 population management units represent localized breeding populations
- Delineated in 2001 by the NV Governor's Sage-Grouse Conservation Team
- The two largest sub-populations occur in Mono County.



# COOPERATIVE CONSERVATION



- **Federal, state, and local government agencies**

*USFS, BLM, CDFW, NDOW, NRCS, USFWS, LADWP, State Parks, California & Nevada Counties*

- **Native American Tribes & representatives**

*Bi-State area Tribes, BIA, agency Tribal liaisons*

- **Non-profit organizations**

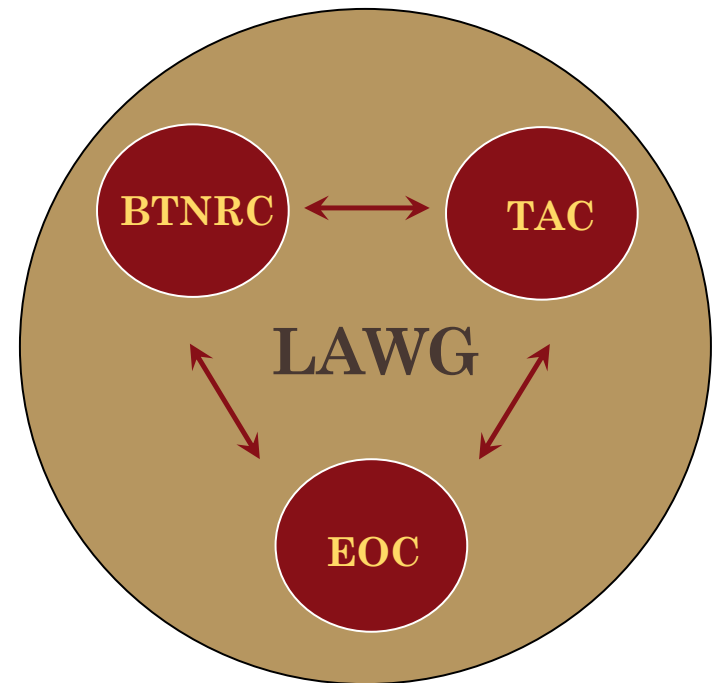
*Eastern Sierra Land Trust, Sierra Forever, Walker River Basin Conservancy*

- **Private landowners, ranchers, and interested citizens**



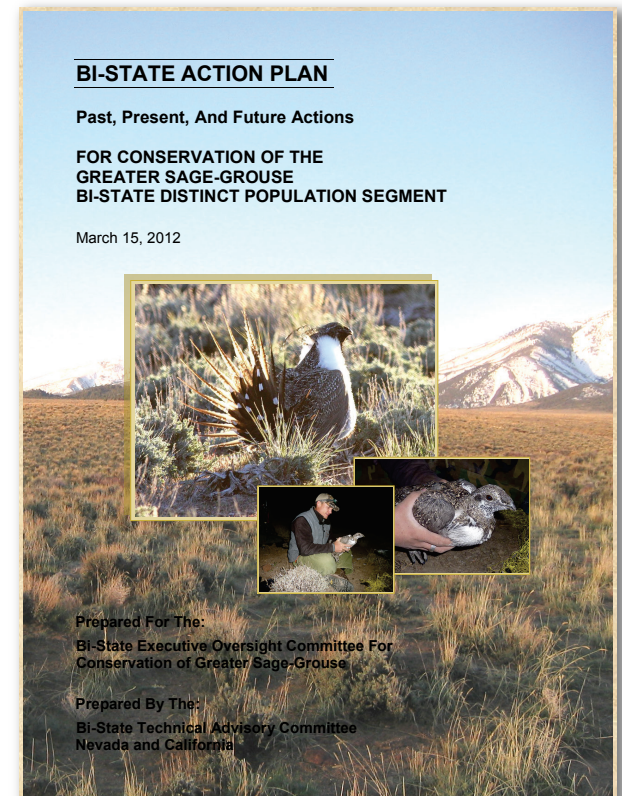
# PARTNERSHIP ORGANIZATION

- **Local Area Working Group:** The foundation for the partnership which includes all engaged stakeholders
- **Bi-State Tribal Natural Resources Committee:** Facilitates communication between Tribes and land and wildlife agencies in the Bi-State
- **Technical Advisory Committee:** Provides guidance to ensure the strategy for conserving the BSSG is adaptive and science-based
- **Executive Oversight Committee:** Ensures a coordinated interagency approach and commitment to implementation



# 2012 ACTION PLAN

- Updated and expanded upon the 2004 Action Plan
- Roadmap to conserve the Bi-State sage-grouse
- Addresses threats and priorities in each PMU individually as well as across the entire area
- In 2014 partners committed \$45M toward implementation of the Action Plan over a 10-year period.



# BI-STATEWIDE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



- Implemented 90% of the Bi-State Action Plan
- Improved 143,000 acres of habitat
- Evaluated success through the monitoring of over 800 vegetation plots
- Annual lek counts
- Radio-marked and tracked ~1000 sage-grouse across all PMUs



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## SOUTH MONO PMU (579,483 acres)

- 2,926 acres of post-wildfire restoration
- Closure of the Benton Crossing Landfill
- 1,246 acres of seasonal road closures during lekking
- 52.8 miles of permanent road closures in critical habitat
- 2,305 acres protected through conservation easements
- 5.7 miles of fence removal, modification and marking
- 6,275 acres of conifer expansion treatment
- Implement LADWP's Adaptive Management Plan in Long Valley
- Raven monitoring and egg oiling to reduce predation
- 5 acres of invasive weed treatment
- 4 projects to improve permitted livestock grazing management



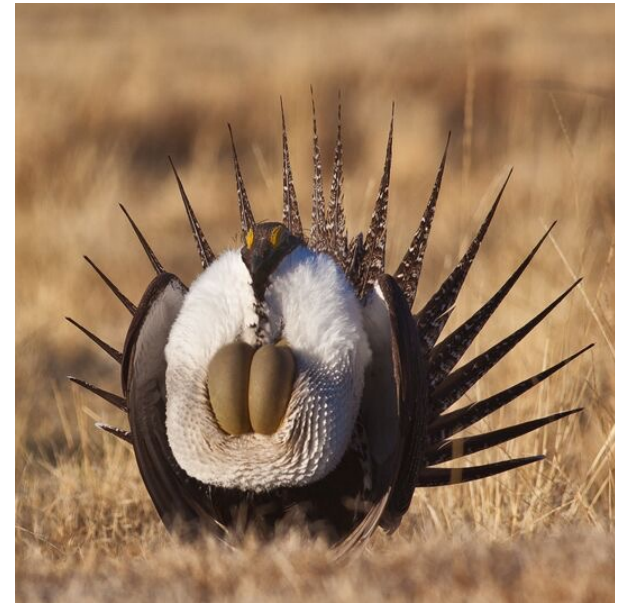
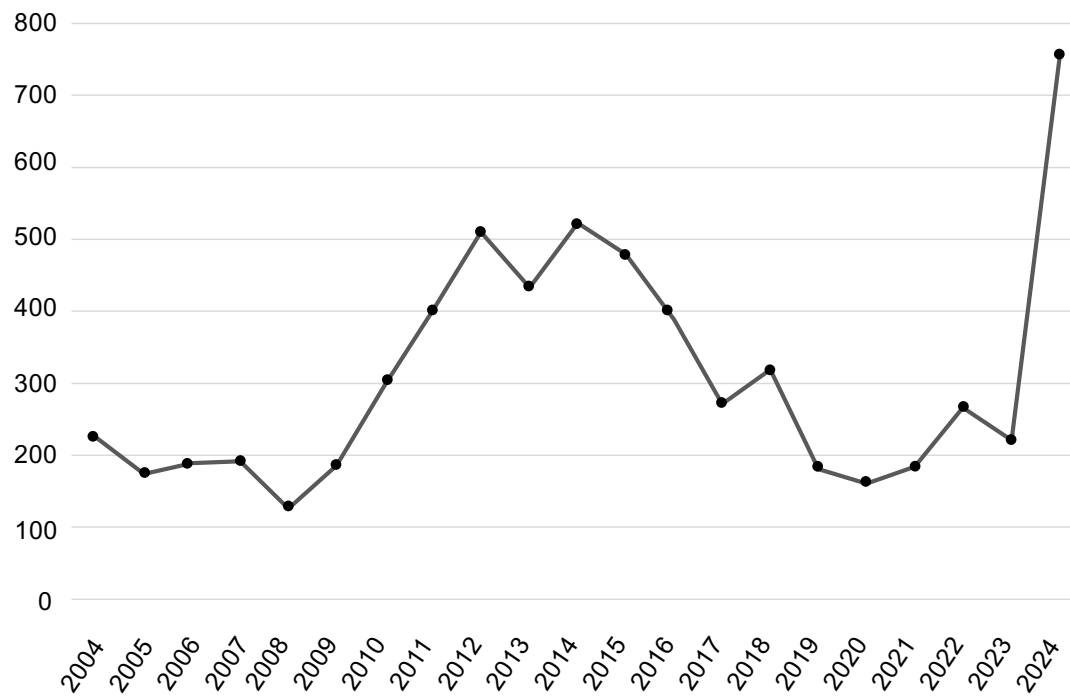
# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## BODIE HILLS PMU (349,630 acres)

- 825 acres of post-wildfire restoration
- 7,713 acres of conifer expansion treatment
- 1,690 acres of sagebrush and meadow restoration
- 32 miles of fence removal, modification, and marking
- 11,624 acres protected through conservation easements
- 170 acres of invasive species removal
- Monitoring of the Montgomery Pass wild horse herd
- 32 projects to improve livestock grazing management

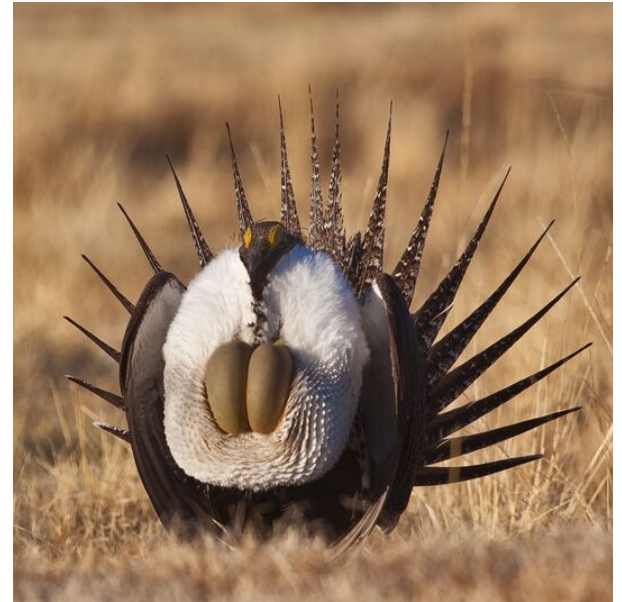
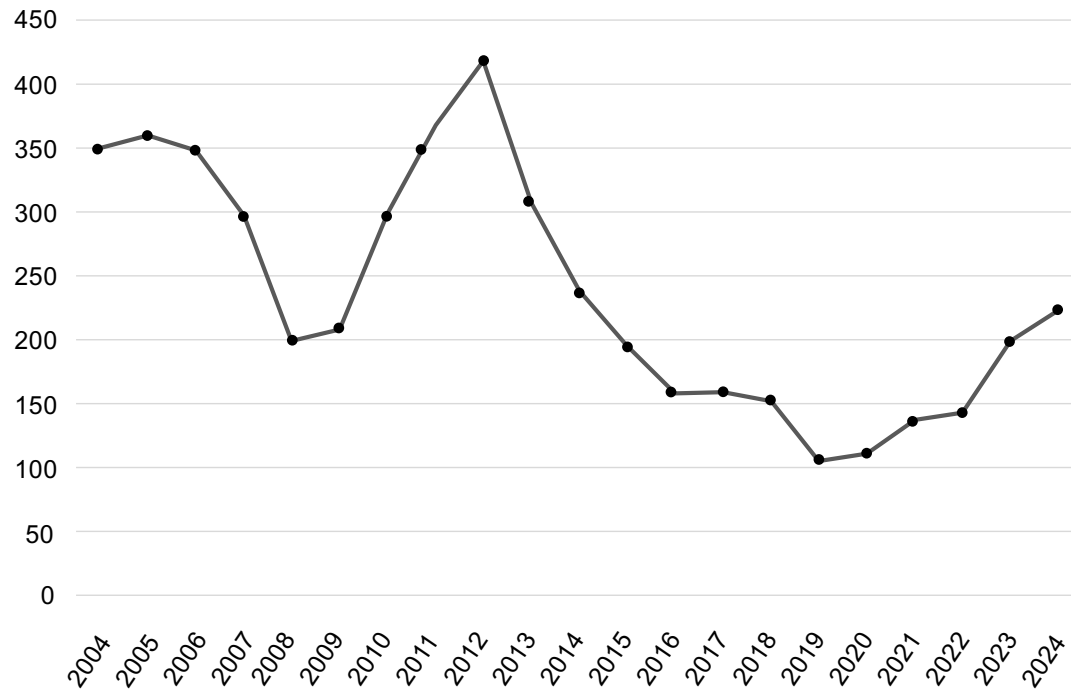


# BODIE HILLS LEK COUNTS





# LONG VALLEY LEK COUNTS

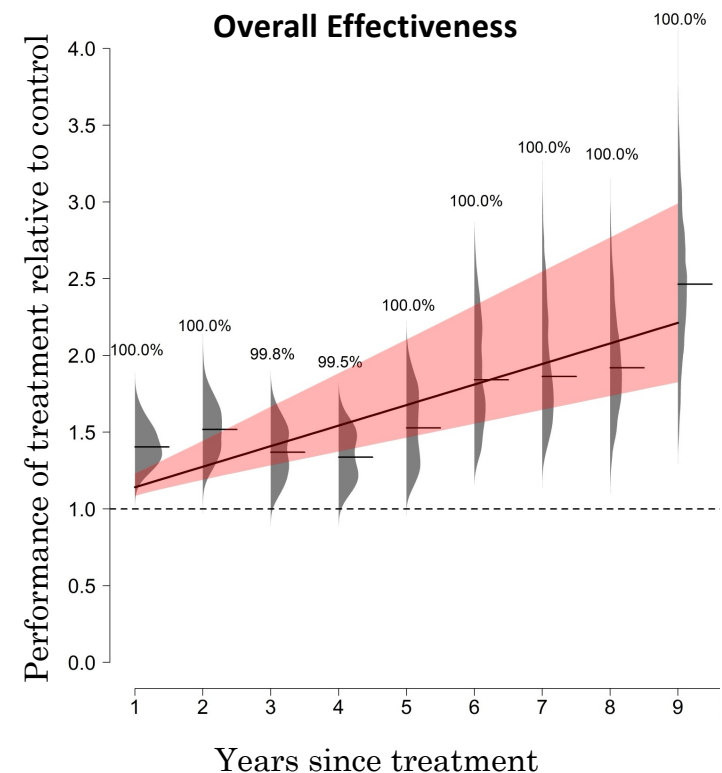


# CONSERVATION ACTION EFFECTIVENESS



- Combined impacts of conservation actions on sage-grouse are positive and increase over time
- Conservation actions in the Bi-State have been effective at increasing sage-grouse abundance by 4.4% per year
- **37% increase in Bi-State sage-grouse population success since 2012**

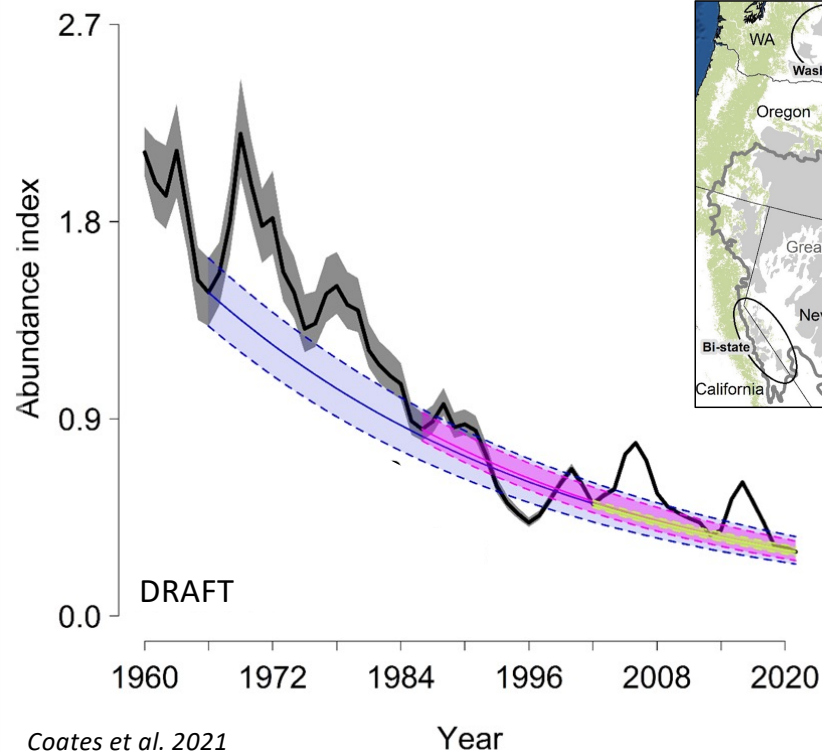
*Coates et al. 2024. Rangeland Ecology and Management*



# GREATER SAGE-GROUSE POPULATIONS ARE DECLINING RANGEWIDE



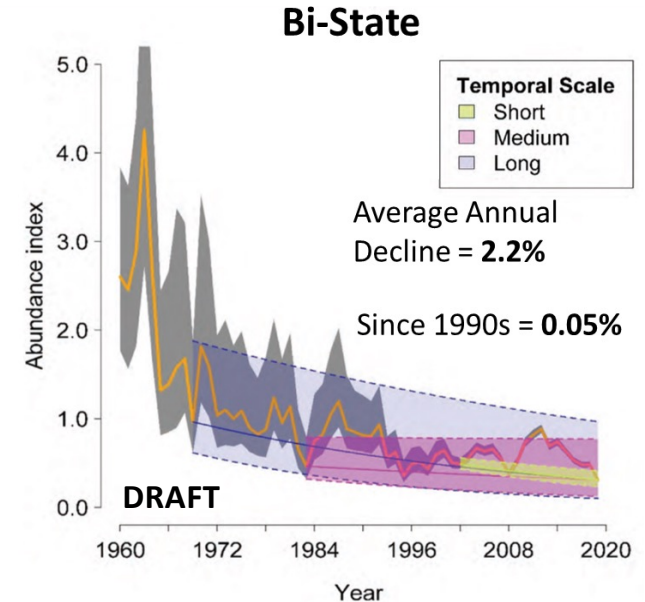
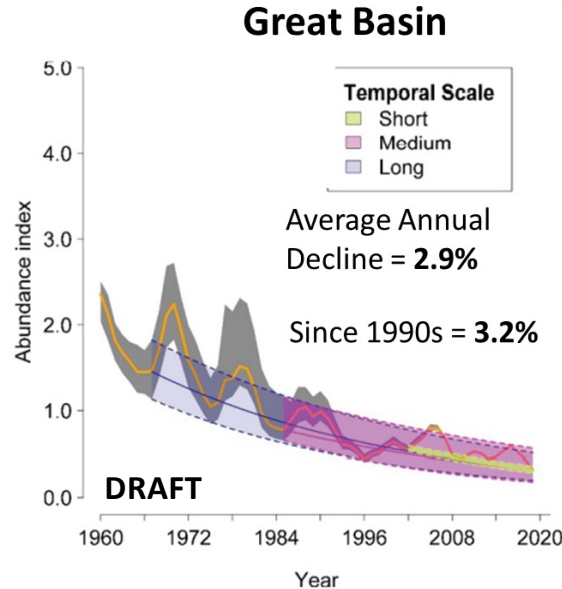
- Rangewide the greater sage-grouse has been experiencing an average annual decline of 2.9%



# BI-STATE SAGE-GROUSE POPULATIONS APPEAR TO BE STABILIZING



- Since the 1990's greater sage-grouse populations in the Great Basin have declined 3.2% annually
- In that same time Bi-State sage-grouse populations have only declined 0.05%



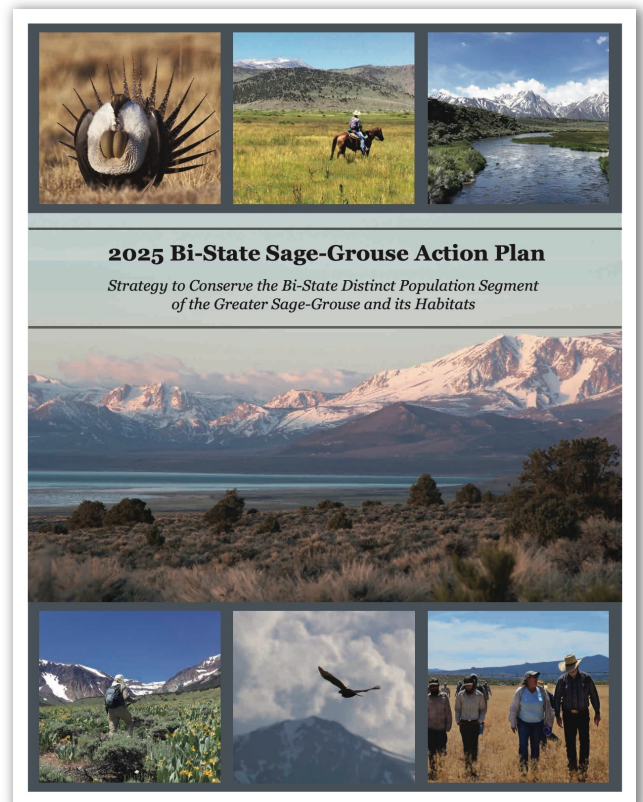
*Unpublished preliminary results: Not for citation or distribution*

*Coates, P.S., et al. 2023. Data Report 2023-1175*



# 2025 ACTION PLAN

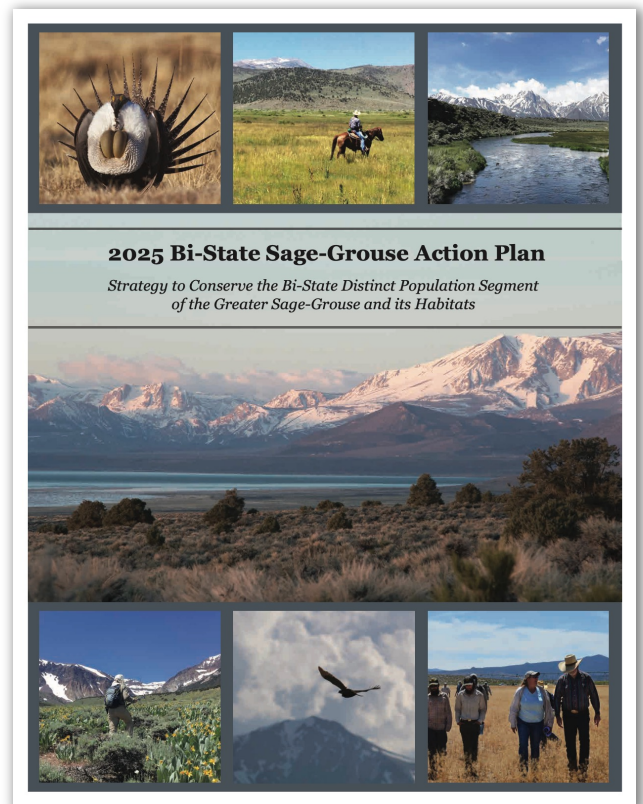
- Maintains the same adaptive priorities and aims as the 2012 Action Plan
- Builds on the 2012 Action Plan and work completed over the last decade.
- As with the 2012 Action Plan, each organization is responsible for the planning, compliance, and decision making required for carrying out each action.
- The 2025 plan was developed with much greater involvement from some additional stakeholders
- Takes a more holistic view than the 2012 Action Plan by considering the health of adjacent ecosystems and their species.



# 2025 ACTION PLAN

Priorities are adaptive and aim to:

- Implement a coordinated interagency approach
- Incorporate science-based adaptive management
- Address regulatory mechanisms
- Minimize and eliminate risk
- Improve and restore habitat
- Monitor sage-grouse populations
- Maintain stakeholder involvement



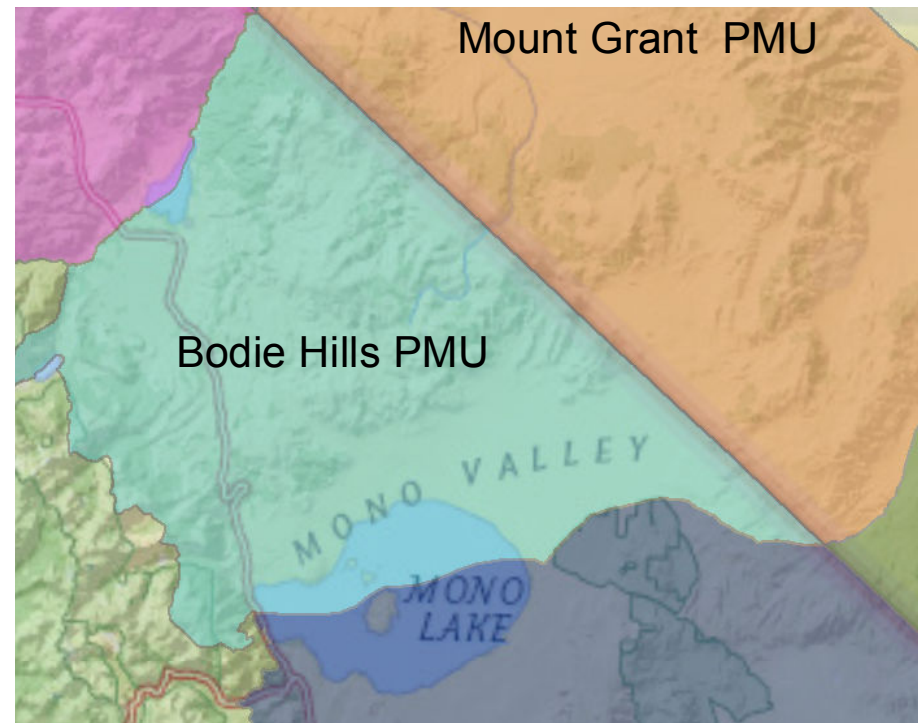
# RISKS & THREAT LEVELS

- Wildfire
- Infrastructure
  - Small-Scale Infrastructure
  - Large-Scale Infrastructure
  - Urbanization
- Recreation
  - Motorized Recreation
  - Non-Motorized Recreation
- Wild Horse Overpopulation and Expansion
- Predation
- Small Populations
- Invasive Plant Species
- Conifer Expansion
- Climate Change
- Mesic Habitat Availability
- Permitted Livestock Grazing
- Disease and Parasites



# 2024 BODIE HILLS PMU

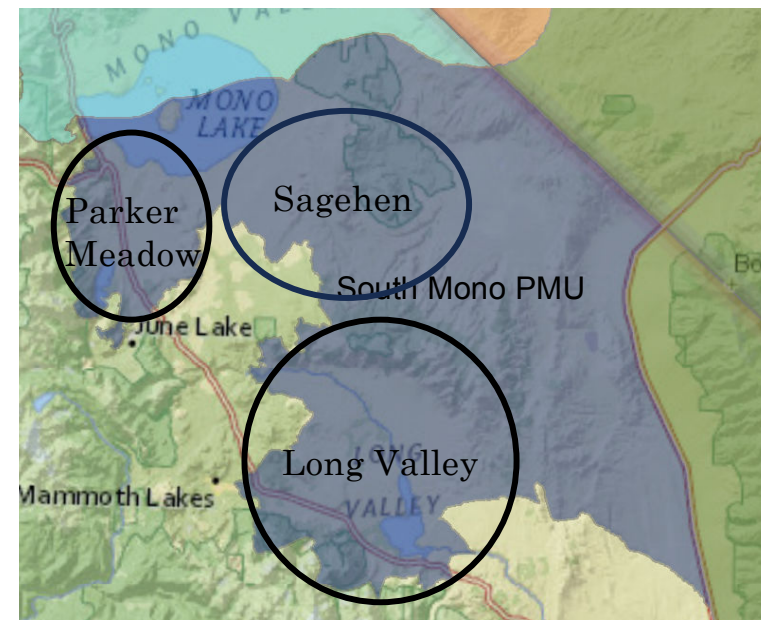
Risk	Bodie Hills
Wildfire	High
Small-Scale Infrastructure	Low
Large Scale Infrastructure	Moderate
Urbanization	Low
Motorized Recreation	Moderate
Non-Motorized Recreation	Low
Wild Horse	Moderate
Predation	Moderate
Small Populations	Low
Invasive Plant Species	Moderate
Conifer Expansion	Moderate
Climate Change	Moderate
Mesic Habitat Availability	Moderate
Permitted Livestock Grazing	Low
Disease and Parasites	Low





# 2024 SOUTH MONO PMU

Risk	Long Valley	Parker Meadow	Sagehen
Wildfire	High	High	High
Small-Scale Infrastructure	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Large Scale Infrastructure	Moderate	Moderate	Low
Urbanization	Moderate	Low	Low
Motorized Recreation	High	Moderate	Low
Non-Motorized Recreation	High	Moderate	Low
Wild Horse	Moderate	Moderate	High
Predation	High	Moderate	Low
Small Populations	Low	High	High
Invasive Plant Species	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Conifer Expansion	Low	Low	Low
Climate Change	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Mesic Habitat Availability	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Permitted Livestock Grazing	Low	Low	Low
Disease and Parasites	Low	Low	Low



# MONO COUNTY INVOLVEMENT

- Member of the Bi-State LAWG and EOC and TAC
- Assisted with lek counts, educational workshops, website development/hosting and public messaging
- Minimized gull and raven subsidies through Benton Crossing Landfill Closure Pumice Valley Landfill design
- Major role in driving the development of the Adaptive Management Plan for Bi-State Sage-Grouse Brood-Rearing Habitat on Los Angeles Department of Water and power Lands in Long Valley
- Involved in the development of the 2025 Action Plan



# MONO COUNTY ACTIONS

## IMPLEMENT REGULATORY MECHANISMS

**Action # 14:** Continue to coordinate with Mono County to develop and incorporate sage-grouse conservation guidance into applicable policies, plans, and programs.

# MONO COUNTY ACTIONS

## URBANIZATION

**Action #207:** Continue to collaborate and communicate with Mono County to provide them with the best available information on the Bi-State sage-grouse and its habitats.

**Action # 259:** Collaborate with Mono County, LADWP, and Caltrans to limit development in sage-grouse habitat in Parker Meadows or in areas that may limit population connectivity between Parker Meadows and other subpopulations. When new development is necessary, collaborate to ensure that design features and mitigation measures are implemented to reduce negative impacts on sage-grouse.



# MONO COUNTY ACTIONS

## URBANIZATION

**Action # 260:** Collaborate with Mono County to limit development in sage-grouse habitat in Long Valley or in areas that may limit population connectivity between Long Valley and other subpopulations. When new development is necessary, collaborate with the County and Town to ensure that best management practices are implemented to reduce negative impacts on sage-grouse. Priority areas include but are not limited to:

- Private parcels near Layton Spring
- Upper Owens River
- Waterson Divide

**Action #258:** Continue to collaborate and communicate with Mono County to provide them with the best available information on Bi-State sage-grouse and their habitats and make recommendations for continued protections.

# MONO COUNTY ACTIONS

## LARGE-SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE

**Action #254:** Continue to coordinate with Mono County to monitor and mitigate potential adverse impacts on sage-grouse that may occur during the closure and restoration of the Benton Crossing Landfill in Long Valley.

**Action # 255:** Coordinate with Mono County and the Town of Mammoth Lakes on any potential airport use expansions.

**Action # 256:** Coordinate with the Town of Mammoth Lakes on any potential expansion to the sports complex and dog park in the Whitmore Recreation Area.

# MONO COUNTY ACTIONS

## RECREATION

**Action #210:** Coordinate with Caltrans, CA State Parks and Mono County to ensure that recreational use and maintenance of State Highway 270 and the Cottonwood Canyon Road does not pose a threat to nearby leks.

**Action #262:** Collaborate with the Town of Mammoth Lakes, Mono County and LADWP on existing recreation uses and proposals for expansion of recreation activities to reduce, minimize, and eliminate impacts to sage-grouse.

**Action #264:** Coordinate with LADWP and Mono County to reduce vehicle speeds along Parker Meadows Road leading to Parker Lake trailhead.

# THANK YOU

---



Photo Credit: Bob Wick