



Crook County Soil and Water Conservation District

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January 29, 2015

Deschutes County Board of Commissioners
1300 N.W. Wall Street, Suite 200
Bend, OR 97701

RE: SAGE-GROUSE CCAA UPDATE

Dear Commissioners;

Thank you for allowing me to update the county on the progress of the Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) for sage-grouse within Crook and Deschutes County. There has been a lot happening in the last seven months since we last spoke.

With the determination of listing sage-grouse as threatened or endangered on the near horizon, Crook County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD) have worked with a variety of partners to develop a CCAA. A CCAA is a formal agreement between USFWS and one or more parties to address the conservation needs of a proposed candidate species before they become listed as threatened or endangered. Landowners voluntarily commit to land management practices that will remove or reduce threats to the species on private land. As part of the agreement, USFWS provides assurances that, in the event the sage-grouse is subsequently listed as threatened or endangered, USFWS will not assert additional restrictions or require additional actions above those listed in the site specific plan.

The sage-grouse issue effects 458,964 acres of private land within Deschutes and Crook Counties. Once landowners sign a letter of intent with Crook County Soil and Water Conservation District, they participate in developing a site-specific plan for their ranch. As the permit holder for USFWS, CCSWCD are responsible for developing the plans, monitoring sites, and protecting landowners' privacy.

We are also coordinating with Baker, Grant, Malheur, Lake, and Harney counties to develop funding opportunities to assist landowners with restoration projects. I look forward to sharing all the new developments with you in February. Deschutes SWCD will be presenting the role of their district and how Deschutes County can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Johnson