

## **Sheeprock Sage-grouse Field Update- July 13, 2016**

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Population Dynamics and Seasonal Movements of Translocated and Resident Greater Sage-Grouse of the Sheeprock SGMA

### **Purpose and Background:**

For the past 9 years, the Greater Sage-Grouse population in the Sheeprock SGMA has been declining, with 23 males being counted on leks in 2015. This research will evaluate the use of translocations as a tool for the conservation of declining sage-grouse populations with the intent of providing managers with relevant information to aid in successful implementation of management techniques. With the current habitat improvements that are being performed in this area, the habitat that the sage-grouse are using will provide good data in support of the planned projects in the Sheeprocks.

### **Survival:**

No mortalities were detected throughout the month of June. To date we have documented 6 mortalities. These were translocated birds.

### **Nesting and Brooding Update:**

Of the 5 nest initiations this season from 4 of our translocated females and 1 resident female, 3 hatched successfully. The 3 broods—1 resident and 2 translocated females— currently still have their chicks, and the resident female's brood has successfully reached the 50-day survey with one chick. The other two broods have their 50-day brood surveys coming up on July 19<sup>th</sup>, and July 30<sup>th</sup>, respectively. These nests and broods were all located in the McIntyre lek area. Several resident broods are being regularly sighted as well around all three areas.

### **Movement Notes:**

Most of the radio-marked grouse have begun to localize around the McIntyre, Benmore, and Government Creek leks. One translocated female is residing in the Little Valley area. There are a few females that will appear near a lek for a while and move to an area farther away for a period of time before they are found again. On McIntyre, most of the sage-grouse—male and female— have moved to one ridgetop in particular adjacent to the lek. The sage-grouse in the Government Creek area are using the burned and treated juniper areas south of the lek. In Benmore, the sage-grouse are using sagebrush areas west of the Benmore pastures. The resident female detected near Delta continues to reside near the area.

### **Trapping:**

We captured and radio-marked a resident yearling female near the McIntyre lek mid-June and deployed a GPS PTT backpack put on her. The data that has been collected thus far is positive; she has remained around the same ridge where she was caught.

### **Landowners:**

We thank the landowners who allowed us access to their properties to capture birds. We also are indebted to the dozens of volunteers who have helped with the translocation effort.

**Other Notes:** The field season will be suspended on July 30<sup>th</sup>, but I will be monitoring the GPS birds by satellite, and the VHF birds will be monitored bi-weekly throughout the year.