



Sage-grouse Partnership Committee Meeting  
Manyberries Curling Rink  
Meeting Notes  
November 28, 2013  
6:00 p.m.

**Attendees:**

David Heydlauff (Co-Chair)  
Ralph Heydlauff  
Sue Michalsky  
Mack Murray  
Christyann Olson  
Cliff Wallis (Co-Chair)  
Kevin Redden  
Joel Nicholson  
Valinda Ivanics  
Franzisca Britschgi

Todd Whiklo  
Andre Breault  
Terry Hood

**Regrets:**

Bayot Britschgi  
Tanya Jangula  
Ronda Reesor  
Travis Reesor  
Greg Seefried – LGX  
Darcy Wills

1. Call to Order (David Heydlauff)
2. Agenda - Approved (David Heydlauff)
3. Review of notes from October meeting (Cliff Wallis and David Heydlauff)
4. Ranch Plans – (Kelly Williamson from Saskatchewan)

Kelly provided an overview of his work emphasizing the project is just getting started and involved federal and provincial government developing ranch plans. He has used a number of resources including maps and work has encompassed prospects and cost discovery. Forbs are now recognized as important for fledging habitat. Measuring based on range health and condition may be a naïve approach because there is a need for higher forb and/or sage component. Need to fine tune targets and score cover higher and recognize predator pressure. It is possible that a 25% utilization is needed to “grow” sage-grouse.

Economic assessments are not complete, but the costs related to decreased utilizations need to be defined and resources found to compensate. Cautions were raised about other species at risk requiring heavily utilized areas within Greater Sage-grouse range.

Discussion about grassbanking as an offset, sagebrush height and relationship to hydrology, and work that will continue in the spring.

Surveys for Sage-grouse in SK for 2013 revealed no birds outside of Grasslands National Park.

5. South Saskatchewan Regional Plan Update (everyone)

Review of process, discussions heard at the SSRP stakeholders sessions and need for participation in the process. Of particular concern in the Medicine Hat session was the fact that the draft plan





includes the sale of irrigable public lands. Given the over allocations of the rivers, this seems incredulous to participants.

6. Access Management Working Group Update (Sue Michalsky, David Heydlauff and Darcy Wills)

Discussion about seasonal closures to public access including foot access in sensitive areas and critical habitat. Sue and David will discuss with Terry and Andre to see if there is a solution that will not put the responsibility on the rancher but support the rancher and achieve protection from users who can cause serious issues for sensitive and threatened wildlife. ACTION: Sue, David, Terry and Andre

7. Grassbanking – (Sue Michalsky)

The opportunity that the federal government disposition of Onefour presents discussed in relation to potential grassbank that could be used for offsetting costs related to decreased utilization that may be needed to “grow” sage-grouse. Awareness of the option for Onefour helping with sage-grouse management. needs a broader audience including ministers and civil servants who may have influence. ACTION: Cliff and David (see next)

8. Next steps – with/without next funding in place (to keep momentum going, get things done) (Cliff Wallis)

Funding source, grasslands conservation opportunities related to larger family foundations discussed. Ian can help with some of those approaches as well as taking a role in creating awareness in Ottawa of the scale of support needed to change the trajectory of sage-grouse decline. A large commitment will be needed to effectively deliver Greater Sage-grouse recovery in Canada. The need for a coherent and cooperative national approach was emphasized.

Everyone made a commitment made to keep process going. We are past the initial planning stage so meetings will become less frequent and more on the ground work started. There are low cost tactics and work to be done. AWA has made a clear commitment to continue funding this and keep moving forward and will work to find resources. ACTION: AWA

AESRD is working through their priority listing of structure to be removed. Todd and Joel agreed to write an article for the SGP newsletter that would include background, what they are working on now in relation to structure removal, the predator issues being addressed as they return the landscape to its more natural state and the support they could use and help they can give to ranchers wanting structures removed on private land. ACTION: Todd and Joel

Feathers – Joel will send pdf of thesis reporting work on the genetic testing of feathers ACTION: Joel

Onefour – the group agreed that the SGP chairs could send a note to governments to keep options open (ie. don't make long term commitments) for Onefour in case it is needed to offset grazing losses in other areas needed for sage grouse recovery/for grassbanking etc. ACTION: Cliff and David

9. Celebrate achievements and best of season

Everyone was thanked for their ongoing contribution and support. Franzisca was thanked for the lovely meal.

Working together to add value to everyone’s resources and effort remains a priority as we move into the New Year.





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Future meetings and field days will be determined but March was slated as possible next date.

ESRD is completing report of success with translocation work – there will not be any birds available in 20014 – but perhaps in 2015 there will.

South of the Divide initiative Action Plan is close to being released. Sue will make available for SGP.

10. Adjourn at 8:30 pm.

**Quote of the night *“you know it ain’t gonna work if you don’t try”***

Next Meeting - In 2014 we will plan on quarterly meetings and where possible include field trips

