

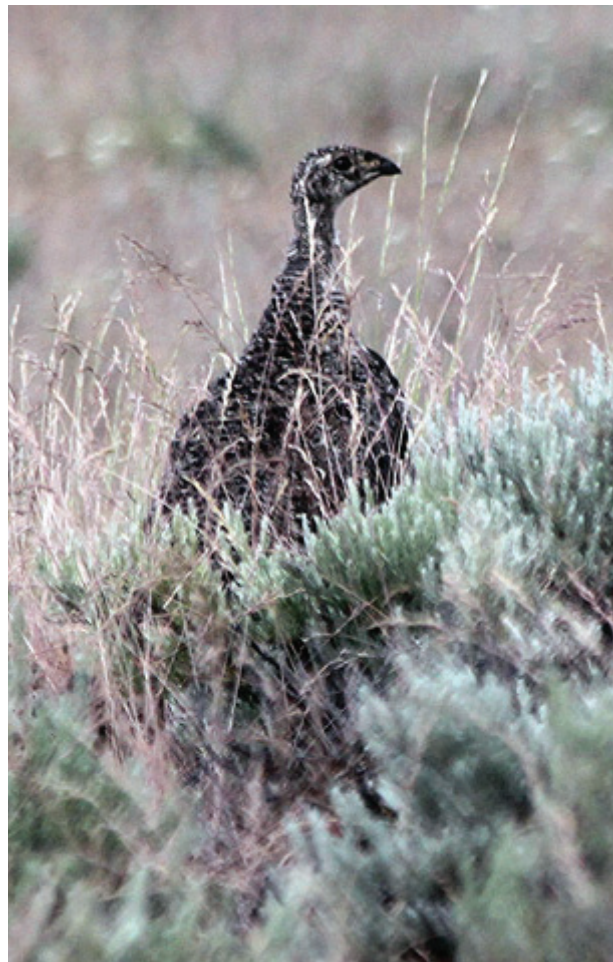
Threats to sage-grouse survival

- The loss of sagebrush habitat due to agriculture and development.
- Wildfires that further reduce and fragment remaining habitat.
- Overgrazing that degrades the quality of sagebrush habitat.
- Collisions with fences, power lines, and vehicles.
- Unnaturally high populations of predators, such as ravens, which are a significant source of egg and chick mortality.

Recovery needs

WDFW estimates that for a sage-grouse population to remain in the long term, at least 3,200 birds would need to be recovered to the state. To reach this goal, it will be necessary to:

- Expand grouse populations beyond the existing, occupied areas.
- Involve both public and private lands in recovery efforts.
- Improve fire prevention and control in sage brush habitats.
- On grazing lands, when needed, provide grass cover and leafy greens needed by nesting hens and chicks.
- Limit the impact of predators by continuing and increasing where necessary an appropriate array of predator management measures.
- Offer incentives to landowners who practice sage-grouse friendly management on private lands.



Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

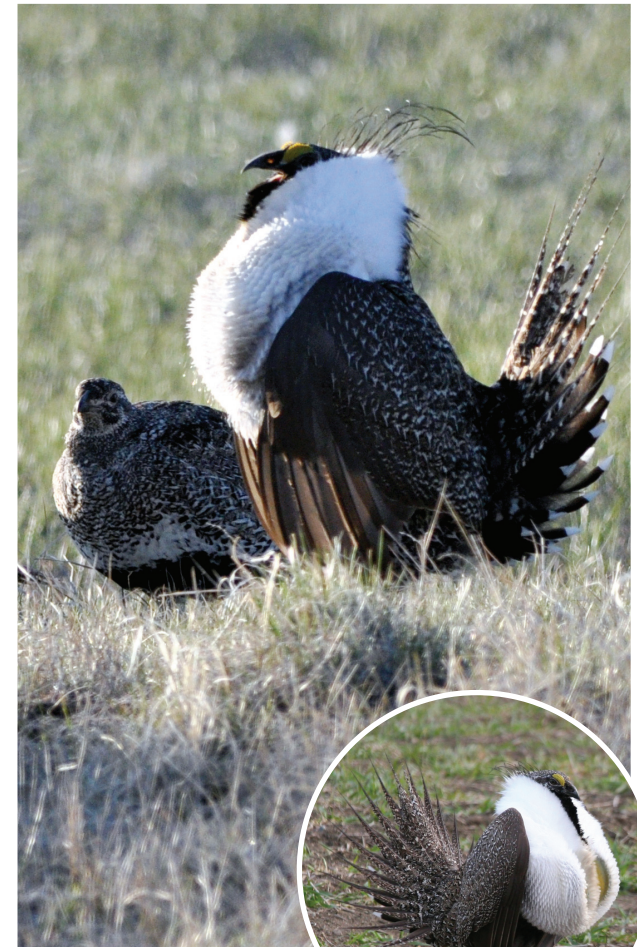
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Sage-Grouse In Washington



Washington
Department of
**FISH and
WILDLIFE**

Sage-Grouse In Washington

Washington is one of 11 western states with populations of greater sage-grouse, all of which have declined due to habitat loss in recent decades. Once common throughout the shrub-steppe areas of eastern Washington, the species now occupies about 8 percent of its historical range.

More than 1,000 sage-grouse remain in Washington. The largest populations are in Douglas County and on Yakima Training Center. Very small populations of reintroduced grouse exist in Lincoln County and in the vicinity of the Yakama Reservation.

Sage-grouse were added to Washington's threatened species list in 1998 and are now being considered for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act. Since 70 percent of the state's current sage-grouse population occupies private property in the Columbia Basin of Washington, the future of the species depends on the continued stewardship of those working lands.

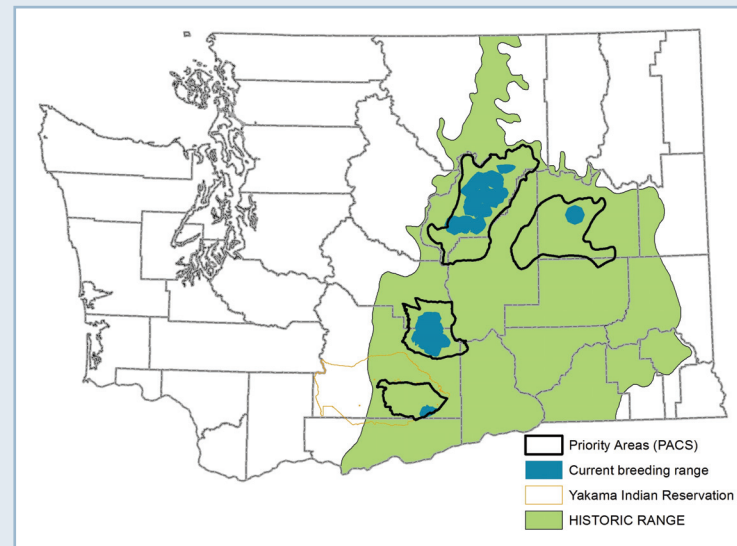
Sage-grouse needs

Sage-grouse need large areas of sagebrush and bunchgrass habitat to thrive. Sagebrush is the main staple of an adult grouse's diet, providing almost 100 percent of its food during winter. Green leafy forbs are a key food source for nesting hens before they lay eggs in the spring, and insects are essential for growing chicks. A healthy grass understory is necessary to hide sage-grouse eggs and young chicks from predators. In some areas, predator control efforts may be required to protect sage-grouse nesting and brooding sites.



Recovery efforts

- **Habitat restoration:** The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management have restored habitat on roughly 2,500 acres in Lincoln County.
- **Private landowner programs through the federal habitat restoration on private lands:**
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture's *Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)*, provides incentives to private landowners that implement conservation practices on their land including the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement program. Together, more than 200,000 acres are enrolled in CRP throughout sage grouse range in Washington, nearly 150,000 acres of which are in Douglas County.
 - Through its *Sage-Grouse Initiative*, the Natural Resources Conservation Service has been working with many landowners to make their lands and management practices more grouse-friendly.
 - *Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurance (CCAA)* – State and private landowners can agree to apply conservation measures that support grouse recovery on their lands. In exchange, they'll receive regulatory protections should the sage-grouse be federally listed. WDFW is working with private landowners, Washington Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to develop CCAs.



- **Fire protection:** The Yakima Training Center has expanded its sage-grouse protection area and improved fire response capabilities. Planning is underway for fire breaks in Lincoln County.
- **Reintroductions:** Sage-grouse have been reintroduced in Lincoln County and on the Yakama Indian Reservation.
- **Predator management efforts:**
 - Targeted control of ravens and crows at areas in Lincoln County where sage-grouse have been re-located.
 - The Yakima Training Center is initiating a study on ravens and removing raven nests on structures.
 - USFWS and WDFW are investigating an experimental raven control study for sage grouse recovery in Washington.
- **Fence-removal or marking:** Attaching markers to make fences more visible has been shown to reduce collisions. Nearly 27 miles of unnecessary fencing have been removed and 160 miles of fencing marked.