Local Unit Fire Program Conservation Efforts Related to Sage-Grouse

Many local units with sage-grouse habitats have established protocols that address sage-grouse and fire suppression activities. Examples of these protocols are:

Preseason:

- Ensuring that land use plans, resource management plans, and fire management plans are current and include guidance for management of sage-grouse and sage-grouse habitat.
- Conducting informational meetings and workshops with federal, state, and local cooperators to share sage-grouse information such as location of habitats, best management practices (BMP) for suppression activities in habitat areas, rehabilitation priorities in habitat areas, etc.
- Ensure Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Multi-Area Coordination (MAC) representatives at all levels (local, geographic, and national) understand sage-grouse issues and that it is a high agency priority.

Initial Attack:

- Ensuring that interagency fire managers update pre-planned responses within the dispatch zone to align the initial attack response with protection priorities and resource values.
- Encouraging dispatch centers to utilize Geographical Information System (GIS) maps in Wildland Fire Computer Aided Dispatch System (WildCAD) to determine if new starts are within sage-grouse habitat or in close proximity to other identified values or assets, and relay that information to responders.
- Briefing all local initial attack crews on awareness of sage-grouse habitat during response and suppression, and ensuring they review and are familiar with best management practices (BMP).
- Ensuring out-of-area resources (severity crews, overhead, etc.) receive a full briefing, which includes (among other things) awareness of sage-grouse habitat during response and suppression, and ensuring they review and are familiar with the sage-grouse suppression BMPs.

Extended Attack:

- Ensuring field or district officers and Resource Advisors (READ) are present to brief incoming incident management teams, which may be unfamiliar with sage-grouse issues.
- Ensuring READs are assigned to fires in the zone whenever fire suppression activities may affect resource values, including sage-grouse habitat.
- Ensuring READs are assigned to incidents as early as possible.
- Ensuring READs participate in annual READ workshops which address (among other things) sage-grouse concerns and BMPs.
- Ensuring READs have access to pre-built kits which include: hard copy and electronic resource information, GIS sage-grouse habitat data, fire suppression BMPs for sage-grouse, and rehabilitation guidelines.

- Ensuring sage-grouse issues are addressed throughout the Wildland Fire Decision Support System (WFDSS) process (particularly in decision documents), and specified in delegations of authority to Incident Management Teams (IMT) and Incident Commanders.
- Ensuring READs are assigned to large incidents managed by an IMT for the duration of the incident. Ensure that, per delegations of authority, READS are included in planning meetings, firefighter briefings, and provide input to the Incident Action Plan.

Post-Incident:

- Ensuring READs complete a READ Report upon demobilization of an incident. This report should summarize suppression actions, suppression damage, and damage caused by the fire itself. The READ Report should provide preliminary recommendations for stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration and vetted by the Emergency Stabilization Rehabilitation (ESR) Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) prior to preparation of the ESR Plan. This preliminary assessment (READ Report) and subsequent ESR Plan should include impacts to sage-grouse habitat and recommendations for mitigation.