



September 17, 2015

KATE BROWN
Governor

RE: Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse Action Plan and Executive Order

Dear SageCon Partners,

Recognizing nearly five years of collaboration, it is with great pride that I sign this Executive Order advancing the *Oregon Greater Sage-Grouse Action Plan*. Together, we have charted a clear path forward for our state built on science, partnership, and responsible wildlife conservation policies. I deeply appreciate the commitment and dedication the SageCon Partnership has advanced across agency, organizational and land ownership boundaries. I also appreciate the leadership of state agencies, federal and local partners, and the Oregon legislature in advancing meaningful funding, programs, as well as regulatory and voluntary commitments to ensure the Plan moves forward successfully.

With over 10 million acres of sage-grouse habitat within the stunning high-desert and working rangelands of eight counties that comprise two-thirds of our state, a lot is at stake not just for wildlife but for all Oregonians. At a critical time in federal decision-making under the Endangered Species Act, our Plan and my Executive Order advance increased coordination, commitment, and investment in a strong state-based approach to the threats and opportunities facing sage-grouse as well as rural community health.

Oregon's leadership around sage-grouse and sagebrush ecosystem conservation hinges upon the vitality and sustainability of our rural communities and economies. We lead the nation in the development of Rangeland Fire Protection Associations, our rural communities' "first responders" to wildfire. Thanks to local landowners, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, our agencies and other partners, we are also national leaders in the advancement of Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances, representing well over a million acres of new conservation actions and continued commitments to stewardship. Tied to this is our leadership in management-relevant research and partnerships around working lands conservation. Finally, Oregon's national leadership is represented through our historic land-use planning system and recent strengthening of components critical to sustaining rural communities, economies, and wildlife habitat.

There has never before been anything like this sage-grouse conservation effort across the West. In Oregon, over the past five years we have stayed at the table, recognizing the power of collaboration and partnership. Founded on the importance of strong rural communities and a strengthened commitment to our conservation heritage, I believe the State Action Plan and my Executive Order secure an Oregon-based approach to successful and robust sage-grouse conservation.

Thank you, SageCon Partners, for all you have done for Oregon.

Sincerely,

Governor Kate Brown

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