

INTERMOUNTAIN WEST
JOINT VENTURE

conserving habitat through partnerships

January 31, 2014

Joyce Swartzendruber, State Conservationist
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USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
10 East Babcock Street
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Joyce & Tim:

On behalf of the Intermountain West Joint Venture (IWJV) Management Board and staff, I extend our sincere appreciation to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for partnering with the IWJV on the Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI) Strategic Watershed Action Team (SWAT).

Please find attached the SGI SWAT NRCS Quarterly Report for October - December 2013. The report also contains the following appendices and attachments: Objectives and Evolution of the SGI SWAT; SGI SWAT Field Capacity Accomplishment Report; and SGI SWAT Agreements.

Please give me a call at (406) 549-0287 if you have any questions. We look forward to reporting on future SGI SWAT successes!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dave Smith
Intermountain West Joint Venture Coordinator

Sage Grouse Initiative Strategic Watershed Action Team Quarterly Report: October 1 – December 31, 2013

Intermountain West Joint Venture
January 31, 2014

The Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI) Strategic Watershed Action Team (SWAT) continued to make significant gains this past quarter in each of its four focus areas: field delivery, science, communications, and partner development. The following reports on these accomplishments from October – December 2013.

FIELD DELIVERY CAPACITY

The SWAT field team continued to expand and accelerate SGI conservation delivery this quarter with support from local and state USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff, funding partners, and the Intermountain West Joint Venture (IWJV). The team's 24 dedicated and enthusiastic range conservationists, wildlife biologists, and natural resource specialists not only help get conservation on the ground but also spread the shared vision of achieving wildlife conservation through sustainable ranching throughout the West. Below are some of the incredible highlights from the SWAT field team and the IWJV's efforts to support SGI delivery this reporting period.

Conservation Implementation

The IWJV maintains a detailed tracking system to document SWAT team progress on a quarterly basis. These contributions are rolled-up with other NRCS actions and reported to the (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) during the annual sage grouse status review process to ensure landowner and partner efforts are considered in Endangered Species Act listing decision reviews.

Partner Positions Accelerate Conservation—Additional field capacity support provided by SWAT partner positions across the West has essentially enabled NRCS to double the amount SGI conservation. Partner staffs have helped plan or implement:

- **936,483 acres** of rangeland improvement to increase sage grouse hiding cover during nesting season. Additional grass cover is expected to increase sage grouse populations by 8-10%.
- **174,504 acres** of conifer removal in key nesting, brood-rearing, and wintering habitats. Removing encroaching conifers from sagebrush rangelands eliminates tall structures in otherwise suitable habitat. As birds re-colonize former habitats, increased bird abundance is anticipated.
- **115 miles** of "high risk" fence near leks to be marked or removed. Marking fences is expected to reduce sage-grouse fence collisions by 83%.

Leveraging Farm Bill funds for Wildlife—More boots on the ground means more Farm Bill conservation funding put to work for wildlife. *Every \$1 partners invest results in \$69 put into habitat improvement!*

BLM nominates Idaho SGI Partner Project for Prestigious Award

Calling it a “*model for sage-grouse partnerships in the West*,” BLM-Idaho has nominated the [Burley Landscape Sage-Grouse Habitat Restoration Project](#) for the Interior Secretary’s Partners in Conservation Award. The Burley project is an innovative collaboration between the BLM-Idaho Burley Field Office, (NRCS), Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), Pheasants Forever (PF), and permittee allotment holders that seeks to restore sage-grouse habitat by removing juniper to allow healthy sagebrush communities to thrive in southern Idaho.

Partners have already treated close to 10,000 acres and plan to treat another 22,000 acres in the next 3-5 years. The project’s overall goal is to treat 38,000 acres of BLM land by 2017 in addition to treating state and private lands. Lek counts and other field observations provide early evidence



*Vegetation ‘masticators’ mulch encroaching junipers.
Photo by: BLM*

that sage grouse are returning to areas once overgrown with juniper and recent [SGI science](#) suggests these types of treatments play a crucial role in maintaining bird distribution and abundance.

In this community-based solution, partners have found a way to combine resources to get sage-grouse conservation on-the-ground at landscape scales. NRCS is key in coordinating conservation plans with local permit-holding ranchers on public lands and provides SGI Farm Bill funds to enable restoration treatments. Pheasants Forever’s local SWAT employee Scott Scroggie, plays a pivotal role in

facilitating treatments across land ownerships. The Burley SWAT position is made possible with the support of Pheasants Forever, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, NRCS, ConocoPhillips Company, and the IWJV. PF hires contractors for project implementation using funding from multiple partners, administers contracts, and jointly conducts project inspection on contractor work with BLM project representatives. In addition, the IDFG and the BLM provide technical expertise to project development and implementation.

The Burley Landscape Project—and the people who make it possible—showcase SGI’s proven model for what’s possible when individuals and organizations rally behind a shared vision. Furthermore, it provides a template for how SGI can help accelerate conservation implementation across private and public lands throughout the West.

The Interior Department will formally announce those selected to receive an award in January. See more on [BLM’s website](#).



Days after restoration, sage-grouse take advantage of habitat recently reclaimed from dense juniper invasion. SGI-SWAT staff and partners are instrumental to the project’s success. Photo by: BLM

SWAT Position Updates

SWAT field team talent does not go unrecognized by other employers. As position vacancies arise, the IWJV works with hiring entities and funding partners re-assess position locations to ensure technical assistance is focused where it's needed most and then to quickly refill positions and minimize disruption to conservation delivery. Here are changes that occurred this quarter:

- William Wolston accepted a position with the Colorado State Land Board and Blaise Allen has been selected to backfill his position in Powell/Meeteetse, WY.
- Pheasants Forever brought on the following individuals to help carry conservation forward in their communities: Rachele Peppers (Elko, NV), Michael Brown (Ephrata, WA), Lara Fondow (Rexburg, ID), and Eduardo Contreras (Mountain Home, ID).
- Tammy Koldyke (MDF-Ogden, UT) has moved on. The vacancy is in the process of being re-filled.

Monthly Coordination Conference Calls

The IWJV continues to host monthly conference calls in which SWAT team members receive SGI updates, share accomplishments and experiences, ask questions, and receive continuous technology transfer and training.

SWAT Field Team Support

To help ensure SWAT team success, IWJV provides two support staff that work one-on-one with team members. Jeremy Maestas, NRCS-IWJV SGI Technical Lead, specializes in conservation delivery assistance by providing direct technical support to team members and NRCS staff. He also fosters regular team coordination and helps maintain funding partner relations. Tina Dennison, IWJV Project Coordinator, provides assistance to the team with accomplishment tracking and reporting, as well as, administrative support for team meetings.

SCIENCE CAPACITY

The efforts of SGI science are in full swing with numerous research projects underway and at various phases, including:

- A range-wide brood habitat mapping project investigates the significance of wetlands on private lands to nesting and rearing areas for sage grouse.
- A mule deer study in Wyoming researches habitat overlap with sage grouse.
- A major genetics and connectivity study involving multiple agencies and universities continues to make progress.
- Two Montana sod-busting studies under one umbrella project will assist in focusing on the highest risk core areas for tillage, and the bird response to tillage.
- A range-wide conifer study scales up the work completed in Oregon to help focus efforts on the most important sage grouse areas for conifer removal.
- A long term study of sage grouse use in areas of Oregon's Warner Mountains will enter its 4th field season in 2014.
- Two mapping projects in Utah are focusing on riparian and upland restoration projects for sage grouse to analyze effectiveness.
- Rest-rotation grazing studies in Montana have several field seasons of data investigating benefits to nesting sage grouse, as well as to songbirds and insects.

In addition to the projects listed above supported with NRCS SWAT funding, the IWJV catalyzed and is helping fund two important projects that strengthen the SGI science foundation and evaluate SGI outcomes for migratory birds:

- A study of songbirds and their use of sagebrush areas before and following conifer removal in Oregon's Warner Mountains looks at how other sagebrush-dependent species respond. This project is a partnership between BLM, the IWJV, and Northwest Wildlife Sciences LLC. It is being carried out by a team of researchers led by Dr. Aaron Holmes.
- Songbirds are also the focus of study in a range-wide evaluation of how their use overlaps with SGI core areas. The study relies on Breeding Bird Surveys for these sagebrush-dependent species: sage thrasher, sage sparrow and Brewer's sparrow. This project was funded by the FWS and is being implemented by the IWJV's Science Coordinator and Spatial Ecologist.

COMMUNICATIONS CAPACITY

Communications are at the core of successful SGI implementation. Our efforts in this arena are continually helping connect agricultural producers with the SGI field delivery capacity in NRCS Field Offices and extending the reach of SGI successes through numerous mediums.

Sage Grouse Initiative Website Highlights

The [new website](#), launched in September, is an effective tool for communications, and a visually attractive and well-received "go to" portal for all things sage grouse, especially for showcasing success stories and partners.

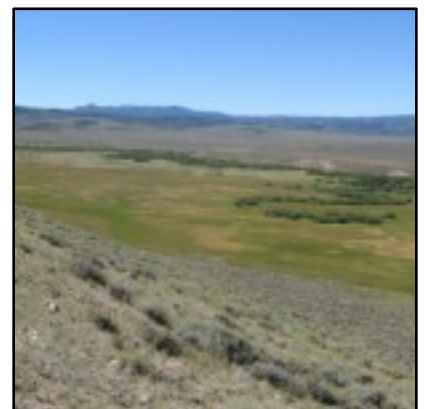
The [Partners](#) list on the website continues to grow with 59 groups listed, all recently contacted and updated with the latest information. The list is now sortable by organization type and has an easy print version for sharing. Each month an SGI partner is featured on the home page tile. The website started with Pheasants Forever, which was followed by Eastern Sierra Land Trust (California/Nevada) in November, and COR Enterprises in Montana.

[Success stories](#) are a key part of the website shows what success looks like on the ground. For this quarter:

[Sage Grouse and Wetland Habitat Preserved on Colorado's Coyte Ranch](#)

December 18, 2013

Sage grouse and wetland habitats are conserved together along with the future of a working ranch in Northwest Colorado. The closing of the Coyte Ranch conservation easement this week is a landmark achievement. It is a story of vision, tragedy, persistence, and optimism for the future of the great places of the Intermountain West.





[Ray Owens: Innovative Ranch Manager Teams Up With Sage Grouse Initiative in NW Colorado](#)

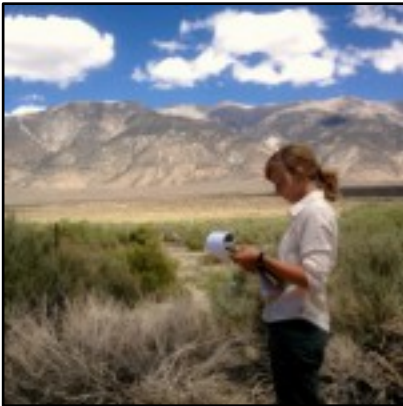
December 16, 2013

Ray Owens is a ranch manager of the Bord Gulch Ranch, north of Craig, Colorado, in Moffat County. He may also be one of the most vigilant observers of sagebrush land, and an innovator who constantly searches for ways to improve the ranch for wildlife and livestock.

[Montana Launches First “Fence-marking Partnership Project” in Ekalaka](#)

December 5, 2013

The state’s first fence-marking partnership project to prevent sage grouse collisions started not in Ekalaka, but another hour and a half drive from there into a vast sea of sage.



[Eastern Sierra Land Trust Works to Conserve Sage Grouse Habitat and Rural Heritage](#)

November 11, 2013

“It is important to preserve and maintain the history of the area and the legacy of the cattle. The only way to protect the land is to not put houses on it.” – Mark Lacey, rancher (from ESLT website)

[Sage Grouse Initiative Field Team Chalks up a Million Acres Worth of Success](#)

November 4, 2013

Conservation enhancements directly linked to the SGI field staff working one-on-one with landowners have crossed the million acre mark.





[Meet me at the Border: Sage Grouse Initiative Projects Converge on Utah-Colorado Boundary](#)

October 31, 2013

Ranchers Scott and Alan Chew know what it's like to work across borders. The Utah and Colorado boundary literally crosses through their property that's part of vast sagebrush steppe known as Blue Mountain, found east of Vernal, Utah, and including part of Dinosaur National Monument.

[Joe Painter: South Dakota Rancher Voluntarily Improves Prime Sage Grouse Habitat](#)

October 1, 2013

Joe Painter credits his grandfather for his appreciation of the sage grouse, sharp-tails, pheasants, ducks, wild turkeys and Hungarian partridge that share his windswept cattle ranch outside of the tiny town of Buffalo, in the far northwest corner of South Dakota.



SGI Joins Twitter

In December, SGI joined Twitter and now sends out tweets almost daily. In the first two weeks, [@sagegrouseinit](#) attracted 300 followers and the list grows. Twitter is connected to our Facebook and website. We believe it will help to reach journalists, partners, publications, and attract new audiences.

SGI Facebook

The [Facebook](#) page serves a growing and engaged audience – approximately 300 more “Likes” added since last quarter to put the page over 1600 “Likes.”

Google Ad Grant to Boost Visibility

Sage Grouse Initiative applied for and was awarded a Google ad grant for nonprofits, via our partner Pheasants Forever. The grant will give a substantial free boost, with ads on Google to direct people to the SGI website via strategic use of keywords.

SGI Communications Strategy 2014-2016

The new SGI Communications Strategy is complete and circulating among partners. NRCS Public Affairs Specialists in 11 western states received and discussed the strategy and how to best succeed in delivering the SGI message via NRCS and SGI partners. A newly compiled spreadsheet of media representatives for all partners and available publications for SGI articles will help meet this objective, and further coordination with all media partners. Part of the strategy focuses on a clear articulation of our message. The website [“About”](#) section now features a [two-page fact sheet](#) and a clarifying of the SGI “brand”.

Bi-monthly SGI E-News Subscriber list grows

The SGI E-News is delivered to the inboxes of more than 2000 subscribers twice a month. The topics have ranged from covering the on-the-ground successes of the SGI-SWAT partnership to introducing stimulating ideas for discussion, like grass banking as a promising match for SGI.

SGI YouTube Channel

We are filling the content on the [YouTube Channel](#) with all 5 SGI videos, more than 30 recommended videos, and 2 webinars.

SGI in the News

As a direct result of Dave Naugle, SGI National Science Advisor, and Deborah Richie, SGI Communications Director, meeting with media at the Western Outdoor Media Summit (prior quarter), several prominent articles emerged featuring SGI, including:

Sports Afield: Conserving Western Hunting Grounds, One Sage Grouse at a Time (Oct. 17)
<http://www.sagegrouseinitiative.com/sports-afield-conserving-western-hunting-grouse-one-sage-grouse-time/>

Agri-Pulse: Sage Grouse Offers Win-Win Conservation Partnership (Oct. 17)
<http://www.sagegrouseinitiative.com/agri-pulse-sage-grouse-offers-win-win-conservation-partnership/>

Montana Outdoors, Last Stand of the Sage Grouse (Nov. 7):
<http://www.sagegrouseinitiative.com/montana-outdoors-last-stand-sage-grouse/>

Field and Stream Magazine Awards Sage Grouse Initiative Volunteer as “Hero of Conservation” (Dec. 4)
<http://www.sagegrouseinitiative.com/field-stream-magazine-awards-sage-grouse-initiative-volunteer-hero-conservation/>

Other stories resulting from SGI Communications contact with media include:

Wildlife Management Institute: Early Removal of Invasive Conifers Essential to Habitat Restoration for Sage Grouse
<http://www.sagegrouseinitiative.com/wildlife-management-institute-early-removal-invasive-conifers-essential-habitat-restoration-sage-grouse/>

Ultimate Upland: Quest for the Sage Grouse
<http://www.sagegrouseinitiative.com/ultimate-upland-quest-sage-grouse/>

Missoula Independent: “Bird in a Bind”
<http://www.sagegrouseinitiative.com/bird-bind-shows-sage-grouse-initiative-success-field/>

Billings Gazette Fencemarking Partnership story
http://billingsgazette.com/news/local/vinyl-siding-helping-to-protect-sage-grouse/article_21d43258-5323-5416-be56-2f76f44bd6cf.html

PARTNER DEVELOPMENT

The IWJV continues to strengthen the partnership for SGI implementation through extensive coordination and collaboration among state and federal agencies, non-profit conservation organizations, and corporations – all facilitated by the leadership of its Management Board. The Partner Development element of the SGI has played a critical role in maintaining strong support for SGI across a diverse group of conservation partners.

In cooperation with Pheasants Forever (PF), a key partner of the SGI, the IWJV has now executed 52 field capacity, science, communications, and management agreements. Together, the IWJV and PF closely manage these agreements to ensure successful implementation and achievement of SGI objectives. These projects encumber a total of \$5,325,625.58 in SWAT funds. In the next quarter, we anticipate finalizing a new agreement with University of Montana for continued grazing research in 2014. Also under the SGI science banner, we are expanding our agreement and partnership with The Nature Conservancy to further strategize conservation investments. Several communications agreements are in development as well including ranching and SGI success stories, a new SGI video, and implementation of our Google Adwords campaign. Most importantly, we will focus on amending all field capacity agreements to keep boots on the ground through 2015.

The IWJV devotes significant staff time and resources to maintaining existing partnerships as well as to the development of new partnerships. Frequent communications with the NRCS SGI Coordinator, NRCS SGI Science Advisor, and SGI Technical Liaison ensures that the implementation of the SGI is precisely aligned with NRCS objectives and has built a solid foundation for regular communication and coordination that will yield substantial benefits over the life of the SGI SWAT. We held our eighth SGI SWAT Coordination Meeting in December 2013, involving NRCS, SGI, IWJV, and PF staff. The focus of this meeting was the overall SGI budget. Managing the budget to ensure primary objectives are met while allowing flexibility to capitalize on new opportunities and address emerging needs presents many challenges. We are happy to report that we have been successful in finding this balance thus far. More importantly, it appears we will not only meet but exceed the match requirements set forth in the USFWS-NRCS IA – a true testament to the power of this landscape effort! Our next SGI SWAT Coordination Meeting is scheduled for March 2014. These coordination meetings have proven valuable for maintaining partnerships, identifying needs and opportunities, and setting a long-term direction for SGI SWAT.

The IWJV continues to seek expansion of partnerships that catalyze non-federal investments in SGI SWAT activities. During the last quarter, we received an important \$20,000 contribution from Rocky Mountain Power to the IWJV (through Pheasants Forever) for implementation of the SGI SWAT in 2014. This generous donation supports the IWJV's work in implementing the SGI as described in our 2014 Annual Operational Plan and the SGI SWAT Quarterly Reports. These non-federal funds provide key flexibility in implementing all aspects of SGI SWAT and will serve as match for securing future funding from federal sources. A special thanks to Sherry Liguori, IWJV Management Board Member, and her counterparts at Rocky Mountain Power!

NRCS SGI SWAT AGREEMENT PERFORMANCE METRICS

- a) *Efforts for outreach to, and participation of, beginning farmers or ranchers, and Native American Tribes within the project area.* The SWAT field capacity workforce worked directly with 4 Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Producers this quarter and no new Indian Tribal members.
- b) *Assistance provided to program participants to help meet local, state, and/or federal regulatory requirements.* The intent of SGI is to proactively conserve sage grouse habitat to negate the need for additional regulations. Participating producers are highly committed to sage grouse conservation, and the SGI provides an excellent vehicle for addressing threats to sage grouse populations at very large scales.
- c) *Numbers of NRCS program participants assisted and/or cooperating in the project effort.* The 24 SWAT partner positions made 1,409 contacts (field visits, etc.) with 641 different agricultural producers as of December 31, 2012. The reporting system was revised in 2013 and we now track Technical Assistance days. Since January 1, 2013, the SWAT provided 2,670.5 Technical Assistance days. This level of technical assistance provision is indicative of how the SWAT will ratchet up SGI implementation over the next few years.
- d) *Number of Full-time Equivalents (FTE) being employed through the SWAT agreement.* Thirty-four (34) FTEs (24.0 Field Delivery Capacity Partner Position FTEs, 1.0 SGI Technical Lead FTE, 1.0 SGI Communications Specialist FTE, 1.0 Communications Support FTE, 3.0 IWJV FTEs, and 4.0 Science Support FTEs) were employed during the reporting period.
- e) *Acres of project area addressed in NRCS program contracts and/or extents of conservation activities implemented in the project area.* The SGI SWAT, to date, resulted in the following accomplishments (see Appendix B1: SGI SWAT Field Capacity Accomplishment Report – Practice Totals and Appendix B2: SGI SWAT Field Capacity Accomplishment Report – Activity Totals): conservation planning for 936,483 acres of grazing systems; 174,504 acres of conifer removal; 607,728 feet (115 miles) of fence marking or removal; 8,492 acres of wetland restoration; and 8,772 acres of rangeland seeding; and 22,213 acres of conservation easements.
- f) *NRCS program dollars obligated in agreements in the projects area by program.* A total of \$503,356 in Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds were obligated during the reporting period. ***This brings the total amount contracted by the SWAT, to date, to an impressive \$40,806,958.***
- g) *Other partner or resource contributions from other agencies or organizations, which help implement provisions of the agreements.* We have secured \$4.96 million in partner funding toward all aspects of the SWAT through the first three years and project an additional \$2.03 million in partner funding leveraged in Years 4 and 5. We are in the process of securing commitments from partners for continuation of their SWAT field delivery capacity matching contributions for the out-years.

Appendix A. Objectives & Evolution of the Sage Grouse Initiative Strategic Watershed Action Team

Launched in 2010, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI) is a highly targeted and science-based landscape approach to delivering enough of the right conservation practices in the right places, in order to elicit a positive sage grouse population response to management. SGI uses dedicated Farm Bill conservation program funds at appropriately large scales to alleviate threats that otherwise fragment habitats, the primary reason for the species "candidate" designation under the federal Endangered Species Act. SGI targets Farm Bill resources to high sage grouse abundance centers, or "core areas", to maintain large and intact habitats rather than providing palliative care to small and declining populations.

The SGI Strategic Watershed Action Team (SWAT) was established to strengthen NRCS' capacity to implement SGI. The SWAT builds field capacity and strengthens the science guiding SGI, as well as bolsters communications capacity – all through partnerships that leverage the NRCS SGI funding with significant contributions from other sources. The Intermountain West Joint Venture (IWJV), in close collaboration with NRCS at multiple levels, continued to make significant progress toward the following objectives in launching the SGI SWAT during the reporting period:

- *Increase field-level capacity by placing specialized human skill sets at critical geographic "pinch points" to increase SGI benefits.*
- *Increase science capacity to better focus SGI implementation, assess biological outcomes, and continually improve program delivery.*
- *Improve and enhance outreach and communication strategies to increase partner buy-in and SGI participation from landowners.*
- *Expand SGI partnership to further leverage NRCS contributions resulting in increased outcomes and participation.*

This work is facilitated by execution of an Interagency Agreement (IA) between NRCS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and subsequent modifications to the IA. The \$4 million in SWAT funds were obligated in an NRCS-FWS IA, signed June 24, 2011. NRCS provided an additional \$3 million to the SGI SWAT NRCS-FWS IA late in FY 2011, from another funding source, to bring the total NRCS commitment to \$7 million. The "Phase 2" \$3 million was obligated in a modification to the IA, executed on September 13, 2011. NRCS provided an additional \$2.3 million to extend the agreement through December 1, 2016, through a "Phase 3" modification to the IA on September 28, 2012. As with all SWAT projects, the IWJV leveraged NRCS' investment by raising 25% of the funds needed to implement the SGI SWAT from an array of conservation partners, including the FWS, state wildlife and agricultural agencies, conservation districts, non-governmental conservation organizations, and corporations.

The IWJV, through the FWS, subsequently entered into a Cooperative Agreement with Pheasants Forever (PF) to facilitate fiscal administration and partnership-based implementation of SGI SWAT, effective August 9, 2011. PF works closely with the IWJV staff on SWAT implementation and is also playing a key role in building field capacity for SGI, specifically by supervising seven of the 24 positions through agreements they have negotiated with state fish and wildlife agencies and other partners. For the purpose of this and future reports, we consider the overall \$14.7 million effort as the SGI SWAT, even though only \$4 million arose from NRCS' FY 2011 SWAT appropriation.

Appendix B1: SGI SWAT Field Capacity Accomplishment Report - Practice Totals

4th Quarter 2013 (8th Qtr Overall)	Grazing Systems (Ac)		Conifer removal (Ac)		Fences Marked or Removed (Ft)		Wetland Restoration (Ac)		Seeding (Ac)		Easement (Ac)		Funds Obligated (\$)		
	Plan-In-Prog	Applied	Plan-In-Prog	Applied	Plan-In-Prog	Applied	Plan-In-Prog	Applied	Plan-In-Prog	Applied	Plan-In-Prog	Applied	WHIP	EQIP	GRP
Name/Position															
Chris Yarbough: Craig, CO	28,563		200		17,260	6,500			17						
Noah Bates: Kremming, CO									2,000					\$ 4,270	
Scott Scroggie: Burley, ID				7,740		42,489	80,838							\$ 499,086	
Eduardo Contreras: Mountain Home, ID				565											
Lara Fondow: Reburg, ID															
Scott Anderson: Forsyth, MT		18,480													
currently vacant: Malta, MT	21,000														
John Fahlgren: Glasgow, MT															
Rachelle Peppers: Eiko, NV															
Tyrel Brown: Ely, NV			62												
Brandt St.Clair: Lakeview, OR			292	2,791											
Josh Ujarte: Baker City, OR				2,338		14,678				4,230					
Laura Schnapp: Ontario, OR			11,466	640											
Gillian Brooks: Belle Fourche, SD		74,702				4,390									
currently vacant: Ogden, UT															
Natasha Gruber: Roosevelt, UT		1,135		90											
Taylor Payne: Randolph, UT		1,120	640	1,500			3,000	3,000			12,200				
Mike Brown: Ephrata, WA															
currently vacant: Buffalo, WY															
Mandi Hirsch: Lander, WY		14,451													
Blaise Allen: Powell, WY															
Garrett Pantle: Saratoga, WY		12,182													
Meghann Durbrow: Pinedale, WY						85,945									
Quarter 8 Totals	76,196	1,135	94,302	14,164	17,260	42,489	192,351	3,000	3,000	4,230	12,200	-	\$ -	\$ 503,356	\$ -
TOTAL YTD	1,054,683	936,483	406,466	60,689	148,858	607,728	375,226	3,006	8,492	8,772	4,578	7,298	4,803,931	17,909,559	18,093,468
													Total Obligated		40,806,958

Appendix B2: SGI SWAT Field Capacity Accomplishment Report - Activity Totals

Name	Indian Tribe	Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Producer	Amount of Technical Assistance (days)	Conservation Activity	Units	Planning-In-Progress Acres	Planning-In-Progress Feet	Planned Acres	Planned Feet	Applied Acres	Applied Feet	Program	Funds Obligated (\$)
Chris Yarbough: Craig, CO	-	-	25	Fence Marking/Moving/Removal	Ac	17	17,260				6,500		
				Seeding/Planting	Ft								
				Improved Grazing System	Ac	28,563							
Noah Bates: Kremmling, CO	-	-	34	Conifer Removal	Ac	200							
Scott Scroggie: Burley, ID	-	-	80	Seeding/Planting	Ac	2,000				7,740		EQIP	\$ 4,270
				Conifer Removal	Ac								\$ 486,506
Eduardo Contreras: Mountain Home, ID	-	-	-	Fence Marking/Moving/Removal	Ft				42,489			EQIP	\$ 12,580
				Conifer Removal	Ac					565			
Lara Fondoso: Rexburg, ID	-	-	-										
Scott Anderson: Forsyth, MT	-	-	31	Improved Grazing System	Ac	-				18,480			
Brandon Sandau: Malta, MT	-	-	63	Improved Grazing System	Ac	21,000							
John Fahlgren: Glasgow, MT	-	-	16	Improved Grazing System	Ac								
Rachelle Peppers: Elko, NV	-	-	10	Conifer Removal	Ac	62							
Tyrel Brown: Ely, NV	-	-	24.5	Seeding/Planting	Ac	68							
Brandi St.Clair: Lakeview, OR	-	1	78	Conifer Removal	Ac	292				2,791			
Joshua Uriarte: Baker City, OR	-	-	78	Weed Control	Ac					2,815			
				Conifer Removal	Ac					2,338			
				Seeding/Planting	Ac					4,230			
Laura Schnapp: Ontario, OR	-	3	32.5	Fence Marking/Moving/Removal	Ft	11,466				640			
Gillian Brooks: Belle Fourche, SD	-	-	35	Improved Grazing System	Ac					74,702			
				Fence Marking/Moving/Removal	Ft					4,390			
Vacant: Ogden, UT	-	-	60	Improved Grazing System	Ac			1,135		1,120			
Natasha Gruber: Roosevelt, UT	-	-		Conifer Removal	Ac			1,500		90		other funding	
				Conservation Easement	Ac	12,200							
Taylor Payne: Randolph, UT	-	-	56	Wetland Restoration or Improvement	Ac	3,000		3,000		3,000			
				Conifer Removal	Ac	640							
Mike Brown: Ephrata, WA	-	-	13	Improved Grazing System	Ac								
Vacant: Buffalo, WY	-	-	44	Improved Grazing System	Ac	14,451							
Mandi Hirsch: Lander, WY	-	-	2	Improved Grazing System	Ac								
Blaise Allen: Powell, WY	-	-	7	Improved Grazing System	Ac	12,182							
Garrett Pantley: Saratoga, WY	-	-	38	Fence Marking/Moving/Removal	Ft						85,945	other funding	\$ 6,330
Mieghann Durbrow: Pinedale, WY	-	-		Other	Ac	1,547							
				Remove 4 windmills & raptor perches	Ac					4			
Quarter 8 Totals	0	4	649			107,688	17,260	5,635	42,489	118,515	192,351	EQIP	\$ 503,356
												other funding	\$ 6,330

FIELD CAPACITY AGREEMENTS				
CONTRACTOR	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	SGI FUNDS	STATUS
Baker Valley Soil & Water Conservation District	SGI Range Conservationist (Baker City, OR)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$135,000.00	Active
Lake DeSmet Conservation District	SGI Range Conservationist (Buffalo, WY)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$126,000.00	Active
Meeteetse Conservation District	SGI Range Conservationist (Meeteetse, WY)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$135,000.00	Active
Montana Association of Conservation Districts	SGI Range Conservationists (Forsyth, MT, Malta, MT & Glasgow, MT)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$387,000.00	Active
Mule Deer Foundation	SGI Wildlife Biologists (Ogden, UT and Roosevelt, UT)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$252,000.00	Active
Native X	SGI Archaeologist	Archaeological surveys in Nevada and California	\$126,000.00	Active
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife	SGI Habitat Biologists (Lakeview, OR & Ontario, OR)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$252,000.00	Active
Pheasants Forever	SGI Range Conservationists (Burley, ID, Mountain Home, ID, Arco, ID, Elko, NV, Ely, NV, Belle Fourche, SD, & Ephrata, WA)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$891,000.00	Active
Popo Agie Conservation District	SGI Range Conservationist (Lander, WY)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$126,000.00	Active
Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory	SGI Range Ecologists (Kremmling, CO & Saratoga, WY)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$261,000.00	Active
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	SGI Range Conservationist (Craig, CO)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$126,000.00	Active
Sublette County Conservation District	SGI Range Conservationist (Pinedale, WY)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$135,000.00	Active
Utah Department of Agriculture and Food	SGI Range Conservationist (Randolph, UT)	Market NRCS conservation programs (FRPP, WRP, GRP, EQIP, CRP, CSP, WHIP) to private landowners; Private landowner assistance (develop and implement conservation plans using NRCS specifications, develop applications, monitoring)	\$135,000.00	Active
Randall Gray	SGI Field Capacity Coordinator	Develop partnerships with the NRCS and others to advance SGI conservation objectives through Farm Bill conservation programs; Develop SWAT Progress database; SWAT hires (workshops, monthly teleconferences, webinars); SWAT outreach and communications; Develop SOW for SWAT field employees	\$101,570.00	Complete
SCIENCE AGREEMENTS				
CONTRACTOR	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	SGI FUNDS	STATUS
Intermountain West Joint Venture	Wetlands Persistence Modeling	Measuring intra and inter annual wetland persistence and variability during sage grouse brood-rearing periods over a 30-year time span in Oregon, Nevada and California	\$141,665.00	Active
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Evaluation of Rest-Rotation Grazing on Sage-Grouse Population Dynamics (2012-2014)	Measure vegetation response to grazing treatments; quantify population-level response to treatments; identify sage-grouse movement between grazing treatments; create habitat-based measures of fitness; create habitat-linked population model; monitor for West Nile virus; generate habitat maps; transfer knowledge.	\$114,389.76	Active
The Nature Conservancy	Measuring SGI Conservation Benefits to Sage Grouse	Range-wide assessment to evaluate effectiveness of SGI investments by weighing relative costs of strategies against bird benefits. Establish relationships between conservation threats and grouse population indices; Predict population indices under potential landscape and management scenarios; Assess economic tradeoffs between conservation investments and losses from ESA listing	\$100,000.00	Active
The Nature Conservancy (Wyoming)	Relating Mule Deer Corridors to Sage Grouse Conservation	Develop mule deer migration corridor models and apply sage-grouse core area and easement evaluation techniques to measure the value of sage-grouse conservation actions for mule deer populations	\$100,000.00	Active
University of Idaho	Assessment of Sage Grouse to the Removal of Encroaching Juniper (2012-2014)	Assessing structural changes in vegetation within seasonal habitats where juniper removal has occurred; measuring responses of individual birds to juniper removal; quantifying sage-grouse population-level responses at local and landscape scales	\$99,987.33	Active

United States Forest Service	Genomics and Range-Wide Connectivity of Greater Sage Grouse (Northern Tier)	Northern tier sage grouse genetics analysis via microsatellites. Research and develop a greater sage grouse SNP (single nucleotide polymorphism) marker panel	\$243,690.00	Active
United States Geological Survey	Range-Wide Greater Sage Grouse Microsatellite Analysis	Molecular analyses involving microsatellites. DNA will be extracted from feather samples collected through 11 western states and 2 provinces and genotyped using ~15 microsatellite markers	\$550,000.00	Active
Utah State University	Greater Sage-Grouse Response to Season-Long and Prescribed Grazing (2012-2014)	Vegetation and habitat monitoring; nutritional analysis; predator surveys; lek counts; radio-telemetry; data analysis	\$62,087.00	Active
Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies	Sagebrush Management Decision Support Tool	Develop a sagebrush management guidance tool (field guide) for resource managers to employ when considering whether or not sagebrush treatments are necessary and/or justified for the benefit of Greater sage-grouse.	\$45,444.00	Active
Open Range Consulting	Assessing Range Condition of Core Sage Grouse Habitat near Roundup, MT (Rangeland Mapping)	Develop upland cover maps denoting the percentage of vegetation conditions on 330,000 acres utilizing NRCS grazing management practices	\$24,000.00	Complete
University of Montana	Evaluation of Rest-Rotation Grazing on Sage-Grouse Population Dynamics	Measure vegetation response to grazing treatments; quantify population impacts of treatments; identify sage-grouse movement between grazing treatments; monitor for West Nile virus; generate habitat maps; transfer knowledge.	\$36,480.00	Complete
University of Montana	Fencing Study in North Central Montana	Fencing modifications and monitoring; collision surveys; lek counts; data analysis	\$15,020.63	Complete

COMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENTS

CONTRACTOR	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	SGI FUNDS	STATUS
Andy Rieber	Cattlemen to Cattlemen TV Project	Propose, develop, and coordinate a series on the National Cattlemen's Beef Association television series "Cattlemen to Cattlemen" that highlights the NRCS SGI program and showcases 4-5 ranches where SGI partnerships are helping to improve grouse habitat and preserve working landscapes	\$2,250.00	Active
Deborah Richie Communications	SGI Communications Specialist/Director (2011-2014)	Facilitate SGI media exposure; Manage, improve, market, and develop content for SGI Website; Social media strategy and management; Develop Communications Strategies for SGI; Develop SGI publications and reports; Develop and produce SGI Fact Sheet	\$216,610.00	Active
Maja Design	SGI Graphic Design	Graphic design support for a variety of SGI outreach and communications materials	\$4,500.00	Active
Partners Creative	SGI Website Redesign	Design and develop new SGI website; provide maintenance and hosting services	\$31,120.86	Active
Alexandra Murphy	Partnership-Building for SGI Communications	Develop media contact list for SGI partners; Draft Featured Friend articles	\$2,500.00	Complete
Audubon Wyoming	SGI Communications Support	Sagebrush Ecosystem Initiative outreach; NRCS and Audubon communications partnership	\$25,000.00	Complete
Conservation Media	SGI Communications Support	DVD authoring; Photographic services; Video production	\$54,335.00	Complete
DJ Case & Associates	SGI Communications Support (2011-2013)	SGI website definition, design, development, deployment, site hosting and technical maintenance (1 year); Enable Facebook linking; Content management user support (as needed); Technical maintenance and content management system upgrades	\$27,222.00	Complete
Maja Design	2012 SGI Annual Report	Develop and produce SGI 2012 Annual Report	\$12,229.00	Complete

PARTNER DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS

CONTRACTOR	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	SGI FUNDS	STATUS
Brian McDonald	SGI Agreements & Grants Specialist (2013-2014)	Agreements (develop and oversee RFPs, develop and administer agreements, and maintain agreement database); General support (assist with quarterly SGI and CEAP reports and assist with SGI budgeting)	\$40,202.00	Active
Lori Reed	SGI Operations Specialist (2012-2014)	SGI SWAT central office filing system; IWJV partnership database; SGI materials procurement, inventory, and distribution; SGI & CEAP quarterly reports; Meeting and event planning and support	\$63,748.00	Active
Tina Dennison	SGI Project Coordinator (2012-2014)	Budget tracking; SGI Technical lead assistance (monthly SWAT Field Capacity conference calls, training delivery, progress reporting); General support	\$55,025.00	Active
Ali Duvall	SGI Assistant Coordinator	Strengthen SGI Partnerships; Communications; Operations and Contracting; JV Coordinator Assistance.	\$40,000.00	Complete
Ronni Flannery	SGI Contracting and Agreements Specialist	Contracts and Site Specific Agreements; General support	\$29,550.00	Complete

FIELD CAPACITY AGREEMENTS TOTAL	\$3,188,570.00
SCIENCE AGREEMENTS TOTAL	\$1,532,763.72
COMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENTS TOTAL	\$375,766.86
PARTNER DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS TOTAL	\$228,525.00
SGI AGREEMENTS TOTAL	\$5,325,625.58