

Agenda Item 7

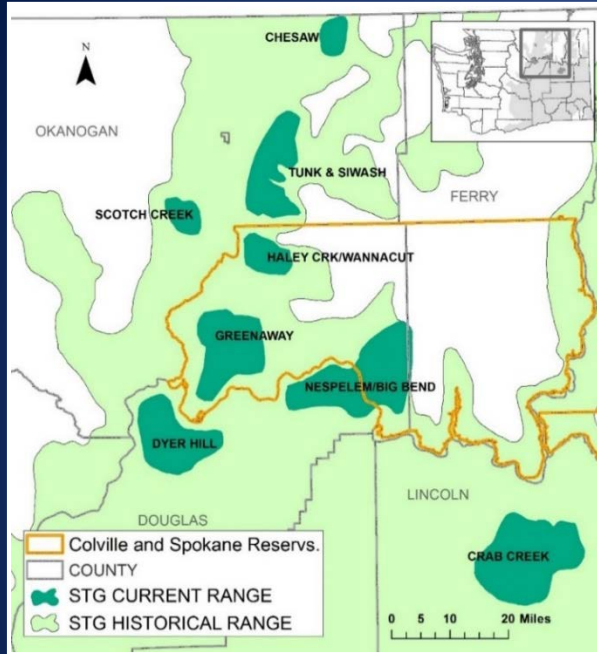
Periodic Status Review: Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse



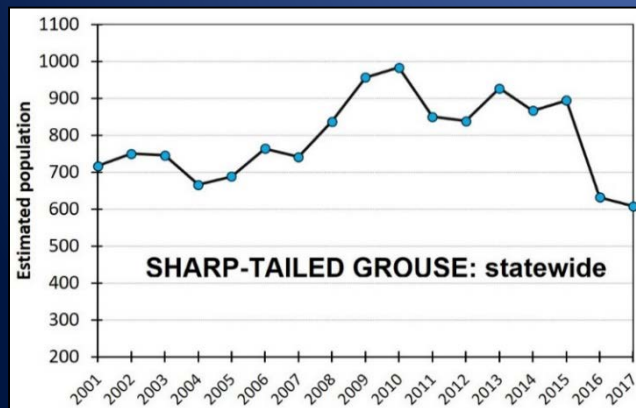
Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

Hannah Anderson
Listing and Recovery Section Manager, Diversity Division
Wildlife Program

Status in Washington



- State-threatened, 1998
- Currently occupy ~8% of historical range, declining
- Reliant on grassland/steppe habitat for breeding, riparian for winter
- Threatened with habitat loss, degradation, and fragmentation, small population size, predation
- Multiple conservation actions underway



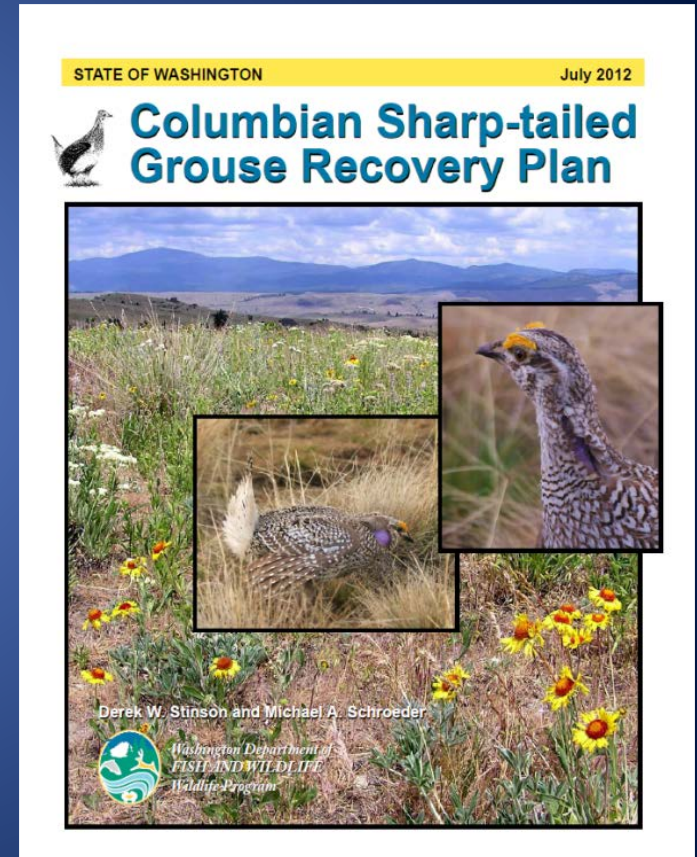
Recovery Plan

Up-list from threatened to endangered if population drops to less than 450

- current estimate = 608

Recommendation:

- Sharp-tailed Grouse should remain on the list of threatened species



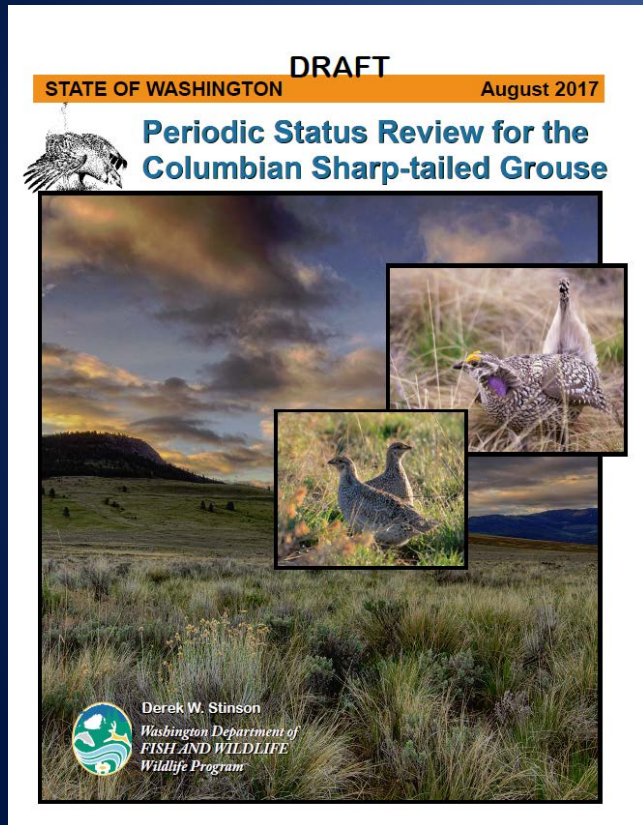
Additional Considerations

- All local populations are now <200 birds, and may require augmentation
- Wildfires had short-term and unknown impact
- Habitat connectivity continues to diminish



Total	Scotch Creek	Tunk & Siwash	Chesaw	Dyer Hill	Greenaway & Haley Crk	Big Bend	Nespelem	Crab Creek
608	78	14	34	122	52	64	112	132

Summary of Comments



90-day Public Comment Period:

- 3 support keeping the Sharp-tailed Grouse listed
- 1 suggested de-listing

Letters Received:

- 2 suggested uplisting to endangered
 - Washington Diversity Advisory Council
 - Seattle Audubon

Public Testimony: 8 December 2017

- 3 recommended uplisting to endangered
 - WDAC
 - Tahoma Audubon
 - Washington State Audubon

Commission Decision Point and Process

If the decision is to maintain Threatened status as proposed by the Department:

- Decision is made and finalized today
- There is no additional forms or filings, because the rule has not changed.

Commission Decision Point and Process

If the decision is to initiate uplisting to Endangered status:

- Final decision cannot be made today
- Process would include:
 - Department initiates rule making by filing a CR-102 before 21 Feb 2018.
 - CR-102 form announces specific proposed rule making and opens 3 week public comment period.
 - Department also initiates concurrence with State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).
 - SEPA requires 30-day comment period on proposed action, which can run concurrently with CR-102 comment period.
 - Second briefing and public hearing at April FWC meeting.
 - Final decision at June FWC meeting (or alternatively, FWC could vote in April).
 - CR-103 is filed with final decision. Rule becomes active 30 days after filing.

Commission Decision Point and Process

Regardless of status, recovery implementation continues to be a priority, yet limited by availability of resources

- Habitat protection
- Habitat restoration
- Population augmentation
- Private lands incentive programs
- Partnering for biggest impact/leverage

Questions?

