

Nomination Process for the Rangeland and Sage-Grouse Habitat Stewardship Awards

Award Criteria

A total of four awards will be given. There will be an individual and a group award in each of two categories. The categories are: (1) recognizing rangeland stewardship in general and (2) recognizing resource stewardship for sage-grouse habitat. These awards have similar criteria except the second award will have additional sage-grouse related criteria.

The nominees will be judged on:

A. The Condition of Public Rangelands

Conditions must be exceptional and noteworthy, or recently improved through changes in management. Factors evaluated will include:

1. Must provide healthy functioning plant communities that are consistent with ecological site potentials (including invasive species management).
2. Must provide wildlife habitat.
3. Must provide healthy functioning watershed and riparian conditions (including water quality issues).
4. Must provide for meeting rangeland health standards. A rangeland health standards and/or habitat assessment framework evaluation is not required to be considered for this award. However, there should be a discussion of how the lands involved would:
 - a. meet the rangeland health standards including the seasonal habitat requirements for sage-grouse, or
 - b. have documentation of progress toward meeting those standards, or
 - c. have documentation that the reasons for not meeting the standards are unrelated to the activities of the nominated group or individual.
5. Sage-grouse stewardship award: Must provide for meeting the sage-grouse seasonal habitat needs.

B. The Use of Beneficial Management Practices to Restore, Protect, or Enhance Rangeland Resources such as:

1. Grazing management or other rangeland management.
2. Vegetation treatments.
3. Flexibility in management during drought or other emergencies.
4. Efforts to use new or innovative practices to address resource issues.
5. Sage-grouse stewardship award: Sage-grouse habitat improvements.

C. Collaboration or Cooperation

1. Willingness and ability to work within a diverse group.

2. Commitment to multiple use benefits and sustained yield (e.g., schedule grazing to reduce conflicts with other users).
3. Efforts to participate in regional or national committees such as riparian initiatives, weed management areas, joint ventures, partnerships, etc.
4. Sage-grouse stewardship award: Sage-grouse specific coordination efforts such as sage-grouse working groups, Natural Resources Conservation Service's sage-grouse initiative projects, contributions to local sage-grouse conservation strategies.

D. Communication

1. Efforts to communicate successful management practices to others (i.e., workshops, tours, publicity, etc.).

Nomination Process

The BLM Field Office Managers are to submit their nominations to their respective state office by June 15, 2016. Up to one nomination for each award in each category, (1) grazing permittee/lessee and (2) collaborative team should be forwarded by each state office to the Washington Office (WO) Division of Forest, Rangeland, Riparian, and Plant Conservation by July 1, 2016.

Each nomination should include a coversheet containing the following:

- The nominating field office manager's name and telephone number.
- Name, telephone number and address of the nominated party or the nominated group's representative.
- The award for which they are being nominated (i.e. Rangeland Stewardship or Sage-Grouse Habitat Stewardship).
- Category of the nomination: (1) grazing permittee/lessee, or (2) collaborative planning team.

Narrative description (no more than 3 pages) including:

- Description of the specific criteria noting leadership, creativity, problems, solutions, approximate costs, partnering, land ownership, and unusual circumstances,
- Short- and long-term benefits to rangeland health.
- Effectiveness of the individual's or group's work, quantified where possible.
- A list of references, with telephone numbers of individuals who can validate the successful application of the criteria.
- Statement summarizing why the individual or group deserves the award.

Photographs (recommended): Photographs are highly encouraged if they help to document the success of the nominated individual or group. Not all rangeland management activities can be photographed, but pictures should be included whenever possible. Photographs should include a description explaining what is illustrated, and the location and date the photograph was taken.

Photographs are to be submitted electronically as jpg files, along with a signed statement that the photographs are released for public use.

Supporting Documentation (recommended): Please attach summaries concerning the status and/or results of rangeland health assessments and/or habitat assessment framework evaluations. Copies of supporting monitoring data or summaries of monitoring information can also be provided, but photographs of resource conditions are preferred.

Supporting documentation, such as letters of recognition, is not required, but may be submitted with the nomination.

How will the award winners be selected?

The WO Division of Forest, Rangeland, Riparian, and Plant Conservation will select a committee to review nominations and recommend individuals or groups for the awards. The selection committee may include, but is not necessarily limited to, BLM staff and external partners such as: the livestock industry (e.g., Public Lands Council, National Cattlemen’s Beef Association, and American Sheep Industry Association), Public Lands Foundation, Society for Range Management, sportsmen and/or recreation groups, environmental groups, The Wildlife Society, and the National Association of Conservation Districts.