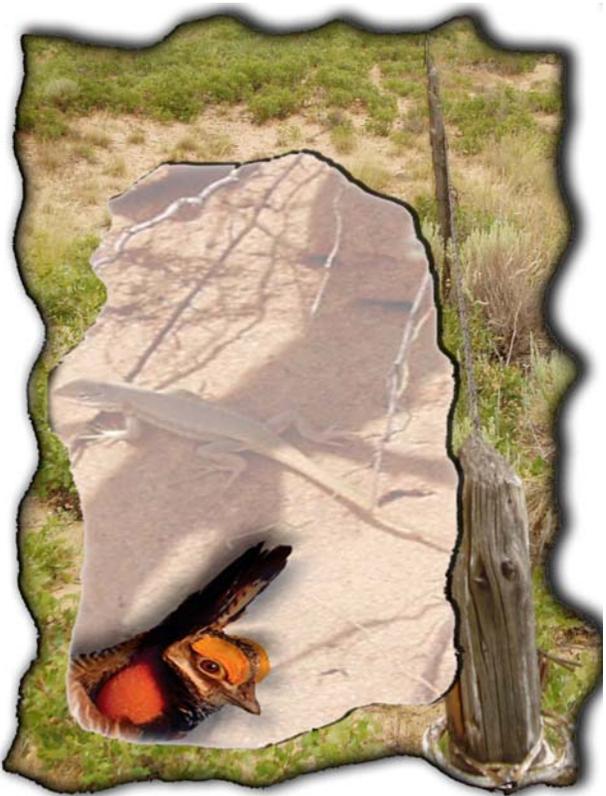


Appendix 4



APPENDIX 4

USFWS POLICY FOR EVALUATING CONSERVATION EFFORTS

PECE – POLICY ON EVALUATION CONSERVATION EFFORTS

When determining whether listing a species is warranted under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the US Fish and Wildlife Service evaluates all the threats to the species and also evaluate all conservation efforts. Conservation efforts that have been or are being implemented, and for which effectiveness is known, often play an important role in reduction threats to a species. In addition, conservation efforts that have not yet been implemented or have not yet demonstrated effectiveness may play a role in reducing threats to the species. The Policy on Evaluating Conservation Efforts (PECE) (68 FR 15100; March 28, 2003) provides a policy framework and criteria for evaluating this second category, i.e. those conservation efforts that have not yet been implemented or have not yet demonstrated effectiveness.

We use PECE to evaluate whether a conservation effort is sufficiently certain to be implemented and sufficiently certain to be effective so as to have reduced or removed a threat to the species. PECE applies to formalized conservation efforts, which are defined as “conservation efforts identified in a conservation agreement, plan, management plan or similar document. An agreement or plan may contain numerous conservation efforts.” Because certainty of effectiveness and implementation will vary among efforts, we evaluate each conservation effort individually. Again, PECE is not used to evaluate conservation efforts that are already being implemented and for which effectiveness is known.

In evaluating whether there is sufficient certainty of implementation, we use the following PECE criteria:

1. The conservation effort, the party(ies) to the agreement or plan, and the staffing, funding level, funding source and other resources necessary to implement the effort are identified.
2. The legal authority of the party(ies) to implement the effort and the commitment to proceed with it are described.
3. Legal procedural requirements (e.g. environmental review) necessary to implement the effort are described, and information is provided indicating the fulfillment of these requirements does not preclude commitment to the effort,
4. Authorizations necessary to implement the effort are identified (e.g. permits, landowner permission), and a high level of certainty is provided that the authorizations will be obtained.
5. The type and level of voluntary participation necessary for implementation is identified (e.g. the number of participants agreeing to alter management practices and the acres involved), and a high level of certainty is provided that this level of voluntary participation will be obtained.
6. Regulatory mechanisms necessary to implement the effort are in place (e.g. laws, regulations).
7. A high level of certainty is provided that the necessary funding to implement the conservation effort will be obtained.
8. An implementation schedule, including incremental completion dates, is provided.
9. The conservation agreement or plan is signed/approved by all responsible parties.

In evaluation whether there is sufficient certainty of effectiveness, we use the following PECE criteria:

1. The nature and extent of threats being addressed are described, and how the conservation effort reduces the threats.
2. Explicit incremental objectives for the conservation effort and dates for achieving them are stated.
3. Steps necessary to implement the conservation effort are identified in detail.
4. Quantifiable, scientifically valid parameters that will demonstrate achievement of objectives, and standards by which progress will be measured, are identified.
5. Provisions for monitoring and reporting progress on implementation and effectiveness are provided.
6. Principles of adaptive management are incorporated.

In addition to criteria described above, we may consider other factors as appropriate.

US Fish and Wildlife Service – March 4, 2004