



Western Governors' Association

Department of the Interior LCC Meeting

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Western Governors' Wildlife Council State Decision Support Systems

Madeleine West
Western Governors' Association



Western Governors' Association (WGA)

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www.westgov.org

- 19 Western U.S. States
- 3 U.S. Flag Pacific Islands:
 - Guam
 - North Mariana Islands
 - American Samoa

3 Canadian Provinces also participate—BC, AB, SK



Wildlife Corridors Initiative

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*Western Governors' Association
Wildlife Corridors Initiative*



Photo courtesy of W. Kersh ©WCS

June 2008 Report

2007: Policy to identify key wildlife migration corridors and crucial wildlife habitats & policy options and tools for preserving those landscapes

2008: Year-long stakeholder process. Formation of Western Governors' Wildlife Council & mapping task

2009/2010: State wildlife mapping effort – pilot projects

Western Governors' Wildlife Council



- Governors tasked Wildlife Council to develop state-based, regionally compatible wildlife Decision Support Systems (DSS)
 - GIS-based tool
 - Publically available
 - To provide proactive, transparent information on crucial wildlife habitat and corridors
 - To ensure wildlife information is considered early in planning and decision-making processes
 - **State DSS data will be compatible across jurisdictions in the West to present a regional picture of crucial wildlife habitat and corridors**



State-based DSSs



DSSs will:

- Promote the conservation objectives of each state wildlife agency
- Will give the public access to important wildlife information for use in proactive planning and decision-making processes
- Support wildlife corridor identification, conservation planning, and gross infrastructure siting efforts
- Utilize landscape-level mapping to show crucial wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors, and can identify areas that warrant more fine scale analysis
- Serve as a tool for better understanding science and planning for climate adaptation
- Compile information; assure data quality; and make the data, models and analyses available at scales useful to anyone analyzing proposed development projects or examining climate adaptation strategies



State-based DSSs (cont'd)



- DSSs are NOT regulatory
- Will not support assessment of individual projects, but will contain information to advise or guide individual project assessment.



DSS Components



- Regional Definitions
 - Prioritization to meet state conservation objectives
 - First step to compatible categorization for species in West
- Steps to Develop DSS
 - Step 1: Raw data collection & regional standardization
 - Step 2: Analysis
 - Step 3: Information Delivery
- Updated with public input from past meetings – ongoing discussion draft





Data Collection & Integration



- DSS base data layers
 - o Species of Concern
 - ✦ SGCN (within SWAPs or other assessment)
 - ✦ T&E species
 - o Unfragmented Habitat Riparian & Wetland Habitat
 - o Connectivity or Linkage Assessments
 - o Quality Habitat for Species of Importance
 - o Sport fish & game animal quality
- Data Analysis
 - o Data compatibility among states
 - o Consistent protocols
 - o Prioritization/ranking models
 - o Scale of mapping



Wildlife Decision Support System Pilots

- Eight multi-state/multi-jurisdictional pilot projects to develop DSSs in each state:
 - Test the ability of state wildlife agencies to map shared habitat across political boundaries.
 - Develop site-specific, consistent protocols (e.g., standards for defining and collecting data for shared use)
 - Determine useful scales for showing data, models and analyses for use in proposed energy, transportation and other land use projects
 - 2-year pilots will launch in April '10
- Coordination with Federal agencies, NGOs, industry is essential.



State/Federal Cooperation

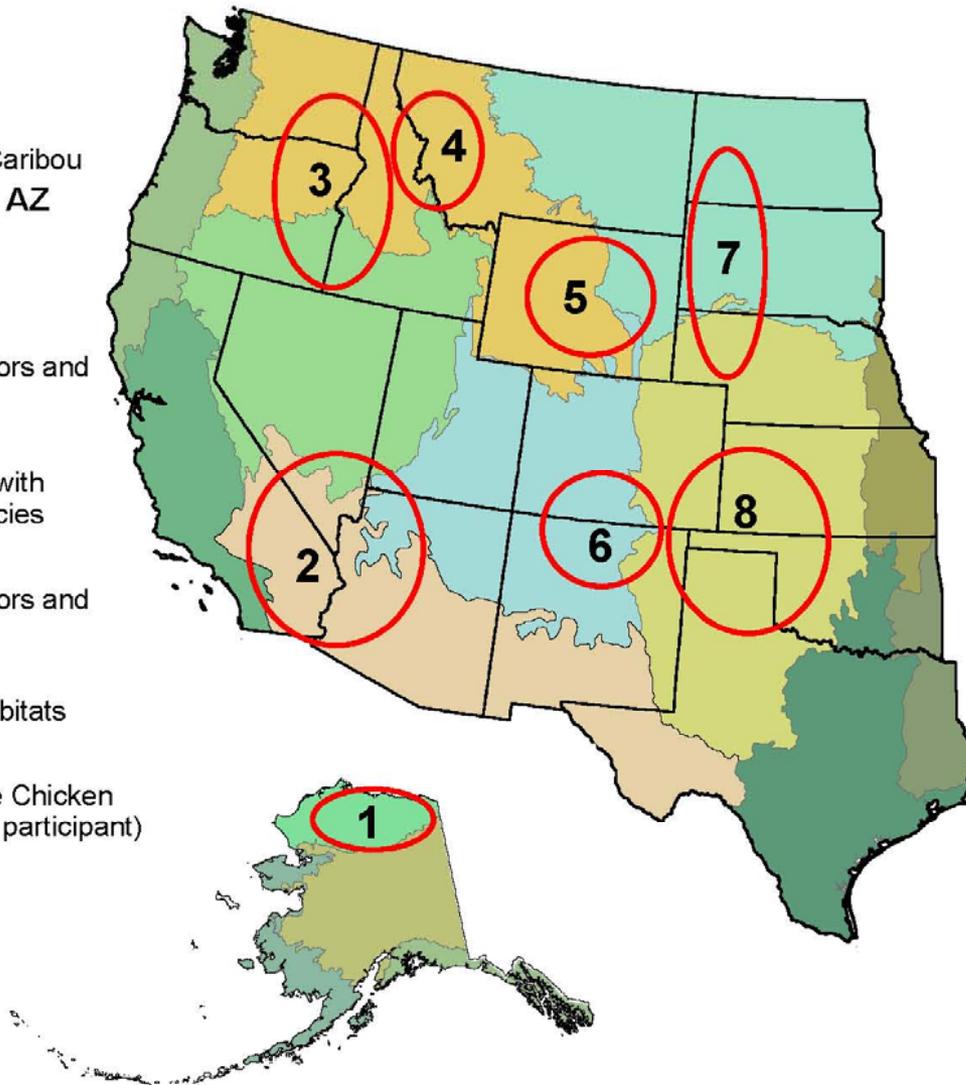


- 2009 MOU between Western Governors and Secretaries of Agriculture, Energy and the Interior
 - *“Agencies assist WGA to develop state-based DSSs that integrate data about wildlife, corridors and crucial habitat”*
 - *“Coordinate respective efforts to assist in development of DSSs”*
- WGWC State/Federal Implementation Group



WGA Wildlife Council Pilot Projects

1. AK
North Slope Caribou
2. CA, NV, UT, AZ
Arid Lands
3. WA, ID, OR
Border Corridors and Connectivity
4. ID, MT
Border Corridors and Connectivity
5. WY
Coordination with Federal Agencies
6. CO, NM
Border Corridors and Connectivity
7. ND, SD, NE
Grassland Habitats
8. KS, OK, TX
Lesser Prairie Chicken
(TX not WGA participant)



FWS LCC Areas

- Arctic*
- California*
- Desert
- Eastern Tallgrass Prairie & Big Rivers
- Great Basin
- Great Northern*
- Great Plains*
- Gulf Coast Plain and Ozarks
- Gulf Coast Prairie
- North Pacific
- Northwestern Interior Forest
- Plains and Prairie Potholes*
- Southern Rockies
- Western Alaska

* LCC funded in FY 2010

Successful DSS Principles



- Data development and management maintained within each state
- Foundation in SWAPs or other similar plans
- Builds upon existing conservation partnerships
- Recognizes need to coordinate with Federal agencies, but acknowledges state trust responsibility (setting species population goals and objectives)





For more information, please visit:

www.westgov.org

Or contact:

Madeleine West

mwest@westgov.org

303-623-9378

