

| 14. Lek Viewing | | | | | |
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| ISSUE 14.1 | The disturbance from lek viewing may be impacting the breeding success of GrSG. | | | | |
| OBJECTIVE 14.1.1 | Minimize disturbance to GrSG at leks while allowing for public viewing of lek activity. | | | | |
| Reference Number | Conservation Strategy | Responsible Parties | Timeline | Implementation | Effectiveness |
| 14.1.1.1 | Develop and implement a lek-viewing protocol for guidance in managing lek-viewing activities to minimize the impacts to GrSG. Include activities such as monitoring visitors to leks, and providing an opportunity for the public to view leks without disturbing the birds (e.g., lease of private property, signs, viewing blinds, defining parking areas). | CPW, LWGs | 2008 | NP - CPW developed a lek viewing brochure for NP and directs lek viewers to specific leks on State Land. MP - Public, organized lek viewing does not occur in MP and is not encouraged. All known leks in MP are regularly checked by CPW staff and so it would be known if public view was occurring. NESR - no public viewing. | |
| 14.1.1.2 | Develop public lek-viewing areas in consultation with CDOW and land management agencies to minimize disturbance to GrSG. Encourage local communities to develop and implement a managed lek-viewing opportunity. | LWGs | 2008 | NP - The NP LWG has discussed the need for managed lek viewing in NP. Commercial lek viewing tours are completed in NP, despite the fact that the BLM has not permitted these tours through special use permits. There is large public desire for additional lek viewing opportunities. The LWG and CPW cooperate with the NP Chamber of Commerce to provide lek viewing educational programs. CPW has designated a lek on a State Wildlife Area as a Watchable Wildlife Site. NESR - CPW does not recommend lek viewing opportunities in this population. Private landowners do not allow lek viewing on private property. MP and PPR - LWGs do not promote or encourage lek viewing of leks. In PPR, most leks are on private land or inaccessible due to weather. NWCO - strategy not occurring. | Commercial lek viewing is not currently managed well. |
| 14.1.1.3 | Manage lek viewing on developed sites to minimize the impacts to GrSG. Encourage managed lek-viewing (using protocols) on private lands as a revenue source for landowners, or provide incentives, if possible. | CPW | 2008 | NWCO - There is only one known "developed" lek viewing site that CPW knows of in the NWCO population and it is on private land. CPW has let a private organization borrow a lek-viewing trailer and requested that certain conditions be met to minimize adverse impacts to breeding GRSG as a condition of loaning the trailer. MWR - There is currently only one known active lek within the MWR population. It is located on private land and is not viewable by the general public or visible from a public road. NP - CPW has worked with BLM to assess the amount of non-permitted commercial lek viewing in NP. There is extensive commercial lek viewing in NP; however this activity is technically illegal because BLM has not issued any special use permits. CPW works with the NP Chamber of Commerce to provide managed lek viewing tours on State land. CPW is currently working with a private landowner to provide a lek viewing opportunity on private land in NP. There is a huge desire for lek viewing in NP. Current lek viewing is not effectively regulated or monitored. MP and PPR - Public, organized lek viewing does not occur and is not encouraged. NESR - NESR has very few leks and CPW does not encourage public lek viewing sites in NESR. There are no public lek viewing sites in NESR. Most of the leks are on private land and the private landowners do not allow access. The leks on BLM in Eagle County are protected through a seasonal closure to protect winter wildlife. | |

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| 14.1.1.4 | Limit the number of managed lek viewing sites for each GrSG population, and encourage the public to use developed sites. Encourage agencies to develop a remote lek-viewing opportunity (e.g., "webcam"). | CPW | 2008 | NWCO - There is only one known "developed" lek viewing site that CPW knows of in the NW Colorado population area. MWR - There is currently only one known active lek within the MWR population. It is located on private land and is not viewable by the general public or visible from a public road. MP - Public, organized lek viewing does not occur in MP and is not encouraged. The public is directed toward tours in NP, an hour north of Granby. All known leks in MP are regularly checked by CPW staff and so it would be known if public view was occurring. NP - CPW has attempted to limit the number of leks used as viewing sites through the development of a NP lek viewing brochure that directs lek viewers to a specific lek on State land. CPW is also working with BLM to try and reduce the amount on non-permitted commercial lek viewing on BLM. CPW does not share the vast majority of lek locations with the public. PPR - none. NESR - NESR has very few leks and CPW does not encourage public lek viewing sites in NESR. There are no public lek viewing sites in NESR. Most of the leks are on private land and the private landowners do not allow access. The leks on BLM in Eagle County are protected through a seasonal closure to protect winter wildlife. | |
| 14.1.1.5 | Educate the GrSG viewing public about ethical viewing and photography of GrSG (e.g., provide information in viewing guides, internet sites focused on bird watching, brochures). [See Information, Communication, and Education Strategy 12.2.1.3] | CPW | 2009 | General - CPW has released a watchable wildlife brochure detailing grouse biology with suggestions for viewing to limit negative impacts. | |
| 14.1.1.6 | Educate commercial bird watching tour guides and photographers about ethical GrSG lek-viewing protocol. [See Information, Communication, and Education Strategy 12.2.1.3] | CPW | 2009 | General - CPW has released a watchable wildlife brochure detailing grouse biology with suggestions for viewing to limit negative impacts. NP - CPW has discussed ethical lek viewing with some commercial tours. However, the vast majority of commercial tours in NP are non-permitted and CPW generally does not have the opportunity to meet with commercial tours. | |
| 14.1.1.7 | As appropriate, encourage local volunteers (e.g., Audubon Society, Chambers of Commerce) to help with lek counts to increase educational opportunities. Ensure that all volunteers are trained about the sensitivity of lek location information. | CPW | 2008 | NWCO - CPW has encouraged a private organization that runs a commercial viewing operation on private land to share GRSG lek count data to improve monitoring. NP - CPW works with the NP Chamber of Commerce to organize lek viewing tours. Counts from these tours are included in the CPW lek count database. NESR - NESR has very few leks and CPW does not use volunteers to help with lek counts. | |
| 14.1.1.8 | Evaluate the impact of lek viewing on GrSG. [See Research Strategy 21.2.1.5] | CPW, Other Research Institutions, Universities | Begin by 2020 | | |
| 14.1.1.9 | Treat lek locations as "sensitive information", i.e, not published on the web or in books. Lek locations need to be available for planning purposes to appropriate agency or private consultant biologists. | BLM, CPW, LWGs, NRCS, SLB, USFS, USFWS | 2008 | CPW : considers lek locations sensitive information and requires a non-disclosure agreement prior to release of the information for all agencies that require the information for specific project planning purposes. Local CPW staff protect location information and does not share this with the general public. | |
| 14.1.1.10 | Monitor and quantify the effects of viewing on lek attendance patterns. [See Research Strategy 21.2.1.5] | CPW, Other Research Institutions, Universities | Begin by 2020 | | |