



## Historic, Landscape-Level Sagebrush Ecosystem Conservation Program Announced for Nevada

CARSON CITY, August 30, 2016 – The State of Nevada (acting through the Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (NDCNR)) and the U.S. Department of the Interior (acting through the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)) today announced an agreement with Newmont Mining Corporation on a [sagebrush ecosystem conservation program](#) that will guide management of more than 1.5 million acres of habitat in Nevada.

A first of its kind in the United States for its scope and scale, the agreement establishes a mutually-agreed upon framework governing Newmont's management of sagebrush habitat under the company's stewardship. The company also may partner with the BLM to implement sagebrush ecosystem enhancement measures on BLM-managed public lands in Nevada.

"Through this historic agreement, Newmont has committed to implementing a wide-ranging, landscape-level conservation plan that includes voluntarily managing certain areas of its private rangelands and ranches in Nevada to achieve net conservation gains for sagebrush species," said Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval. "This good-faith, public-private partnership represents a significant and meaningful achievement in the cause of sagebrush habitat and species protection in the western United States."

Implementation of the agreement will allow the State of Nevada to work with federal agencies and a private entity (Newmont) for the first time to put into practice its Conservation Credit System (CCS). Under the terms of the agreement, Newmont will seek approval from signatory agencies for individual habitat conservation projects for which the company may receive conservation credits that can later be used to offset impacts related to future proposals for Newmont's mining operations in Nevada.

"This agreement reinforces the Department's efforts to partner throughout the West with the private sector and other stakeholders to demonstrate the power of collaborative conservation and that continued economic growth and conservation of our important natural resource heritage need not be at odds," said Janice Schneider, Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management. "Working together, the BLM, FWS, NRCS, and Newmont will help protect and restore habitat for the Greater sage grouse - while continuing mining operations in Nevada. We appreciate their leadership and that of the state of Nevada and NDOW in making this success story possible."

"As the owner of private lands and a steward of a significant amount of BLM-managed public lands in Nevada, Newmont is uniquely positioned to work in concert with the BLM and the State of Nevada to advance and test land and habitat management techniques that will inform conservation practices going forward," said BLM Nevada State Director John Ruhs. "The BLM looks forward to applying the habitat conservation methods generated as a result of this partnership between the agencies and Newmont."

**\*\* JOINT NEWS RELEASE \*\***

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has identified invasive annual grasses as the primary threat to the sage-steppe ecosystem due to the risk they pose in fueling wildfires that destroy sagebrush habitats. One of the first pilot projects implemented under the agreement will deploy targeted grazing activities on a large private land parcel owned by Newmont to improve the health of desirable plants and manage cheatgrass, with an overall goal of minimizing wildfire frequency. Other related Newmont activities will include the testing of other invasive species management techniques; evaluation of strategic fuels management; changes in livestock grazing to promote native sagebrush ecosystem health by increasing the density of deep-rooted perennial grasses; and implementation of practices to reduce human-induced advantages for predators of greater sage-grouse.

"Through this planned and coordinated effort to conserve and restore sagebrush habitat on a landscape level, we will be able to advance protection for more than 350 different species of animals and other wildlife and more than 3,500 species of plants that call this ecosystem home," said Ted Koch, Reno Fish and Wildlife Office Supervisor. "By joining with land managers, scientists, industry and other stakeholders across the Great Basin, we can share the responsibility for enhancing resource management and collectively learn from our outcomes to create measurable and sustainable long-term conservation improvements on the ground."

The historic agreement builds upon a longstanding and ongoing collaboration among a wide variety of other Newmont partners, including The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, Nevada Governor Sandoval's Sagebrush Ecosystem Program, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and Agricultural Research Service, and the University of Nevada - Reno.

"Newmont looks forward to embracing this historic opportunity and building upon our 50 years of responsible mining and environmental stewardship in Nevada," said Dr. Elaine Dorward-King, Newmont's Executive Vice President for Sustainability and External Relations. "We appreciate the good-faith demonstrated by all the parties involved to achieve this historic agreement which will advance sagebrush habitat management in Nevada while supporting continued sustainable mining practices over the long term."

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