

Douglas County Multiple Species General Conservation Plan 2019 Annual Report

June 30, 2020, revised October 5, 2020



*Photo Credit:
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WGS, SG, STG)
Elizabeth Jackson, Foster Creek Cons. District (pygmy rabbit)*

Prepared by Elizabeth R. Jackson, Natural Resource Specialist, Foster Creek Conservation District

1) Status of Plan Area Permittees. Plan Area is defined as Douglas County, WA.

Number of entities	Total acres enrolled
1	4,017.4

Lands enrolled in GCP by type	Total acres to date already permitted: Owned Acres as of Dec 2019	Total acres to date already permitted: Leased Acres as of Dec 2019	Total Acres	Upper GCP quantities expected to be enrolled and analyzed in Framework BO/CO
A.) Pygmy rabbit habitat (shrub-steppe within historic range of species), excluding CRP/SAFE	673.0	37.8	710.8	107,000 acres
B.) Pygmy rabbit agriculture lands within historic range of species, excluding CRP/SAFE	2,132.4	443.8	2,576.2	134,017 acres
C.) Pygmy rabbit CRP/SAFE within historic range of species	730.4	0.0	730.4	-
D.) CRP/SAFE converted in future in pygmy rabbit historic range	0.0	0.0	0.0	5,061 acres (10% below 2013 levels) over 6 occasions, for a total of 30,366 acres
E.) Other species (*CSTG, GRS, WGS) shrub-steppe habitat in Douglas County outside of pygmy rabbit historic range, excluding CRP/SAFE	0.0	0.0	0.0	206,903 acres
F.) Other species (*CSTG, GRS, WGS) agriculture lands in Douglas County outside of pygmy rabbit historic range, excluding CRP/SAFE	0.0	0.0	0.0	269,766 acres

G.) Other species (*CSTG, GRSG, WGS) CRP/SAFE in Douglas County outside of pygmy rabbit historic range	0.0	0.0	0.0	-
H.) CRP/SAFE converted in future total in county	0.0	0.0	0.0	9,104 acres (10% below 2013 levels) over 6 occasions, for a total of 54,612 acres
J.) Total Dryland and irrigated agriculture [<i>B + F</i>]	2,132.4	443.8	2,576.2	-
K.) Approximate acres of shrub-steppe habitat to be protected for all species [<i>A + E</i>]	673.0	37.8	710.8	-
Total Acres Covered in GCP	3,535.8	481.6	4,017.4	-

*CSTG = Columbian sharp-tailed grouse; GRSG = Greater sage-grouse; WGS = Washington ground squirrel

2)

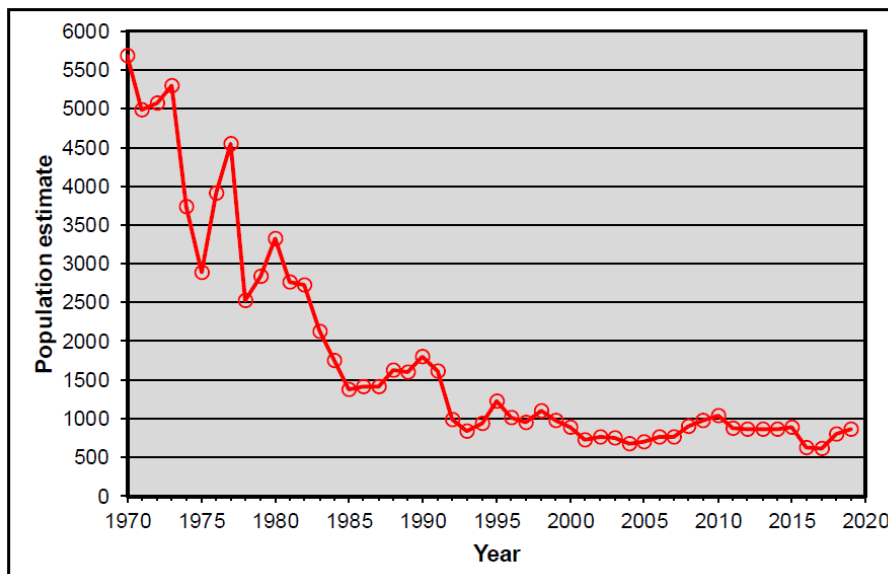
a. Biological monitoring, inventories, or survey results – WDFW Species Status Reviews

Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit (CBPR), <i>Brachylagus idahoensis</i>					
Year	Population Estimate (Douglas & Grant Counties)	Population change since previous year	Adaptive Management (Y/N)	Action Taken	Most Recent Progress Report Link
2019	329 Active burrows (AB); 85% AB's in CRP.	-2.1% active burrows	No	n/a	
2018	336 Active burrows; 79% AB's in CRP. 247 rabbits. Minimum of 172 wild rabbits at Sagebrush Flats. From 2011-2017, 1,973 rabbits (1,808 kits and 165 adults) were born (produced) within breeding enclosures and have been released into Sagebrush Flat and Beezley Hills Recovery Areas.	+130.1% active burrows	Yes	Release efforts began at Burton Draw (Douglas Co.) by relocating rabbits to this site.	Hayes, G. E. 2018. Periodic Status Review for the Pygmy Rabbit in Washington. Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife. Olympia, Washington. 19+ iii pp.
2017	146 Active burrows; 72% AB's in CRP. Minimum of 75 rabbits in a breeding population in late-2017.	+65.9% active burrows	Yes	2017 Sutherland Canyon wildfire burned 30,000 acres within Beezley Hills, claiming approx. 80 rabbits. Thirty-two rabbits were transferred to other sites.	
2016	88 Active burrows; 76.1% AB's in CRP.		No	Release Efforts: -Sagebrush Flats – 2011-2016 (Douglas Co.) -Beezley Hills – since 2015 (Grant Co.) Off-site captive breeding transitioned to on-site semi-wild breeding enclosures in 2011.	

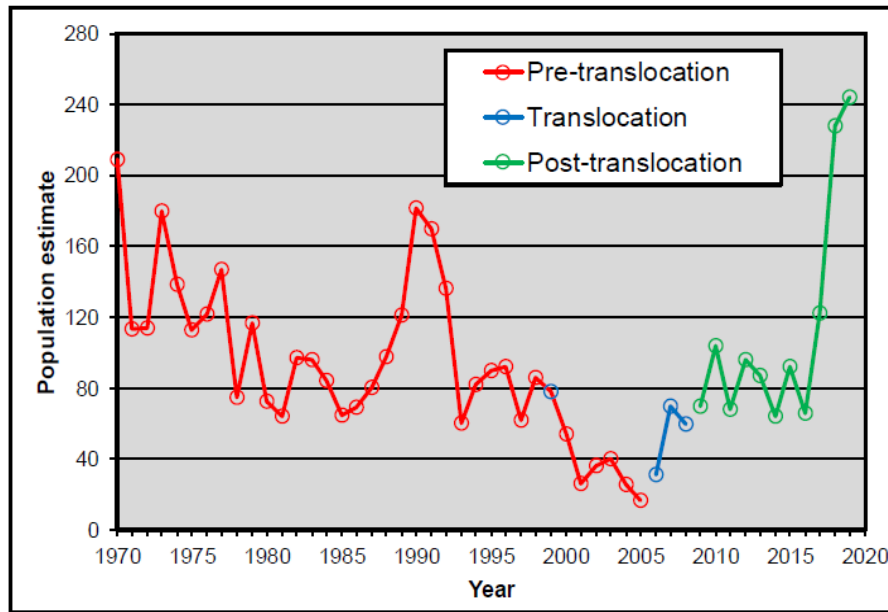
Columbian sharp-tailed grouse (CSTG), *Tympanuchus phasianellus columbianus*

Year	Population Estimate (Douglas County)	Population change since previous year	Adaptive Management (Y/N)	Action Taken	Most Recent Progress Report Link
2019	Dyer Hill: 244 individuals with 7 active leks out of 15. Big Bend: 108 individuals with 7 active leks out of 16.	Dyer Hill: +6.8% Big Bend: +3.8%	No	n/a	Schroeder et al. 2019. Recovery of Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse in Washington: Progress Report. WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife and Fish & Wildlife Colville Confederated Tribes. Olympia, Washington. 24+ ii pp.
2018	Dyer Hill: 230 (approx.)		Yes	Uplisted to WA State Endangered.	
2017	Dyer Hill: 122; Big Bend: 64		No	n/a	
2016	Dyer Hill: 66; Big Bend: 126		No	n/a	

Population estimate for STG in Washington State (Schroeder *et al.*, 2019, p. 11)



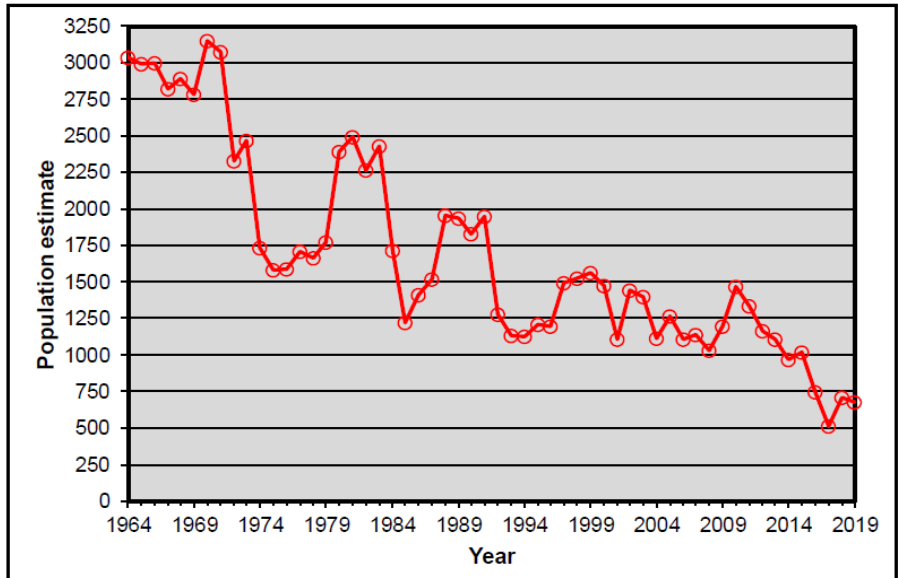
Estimated population of STG in the Dyer Hill population in Washington before, during, and after translocation of 64 STGR during 1999-2008.
(Schroeder *et al.*, 2019, p. 14)



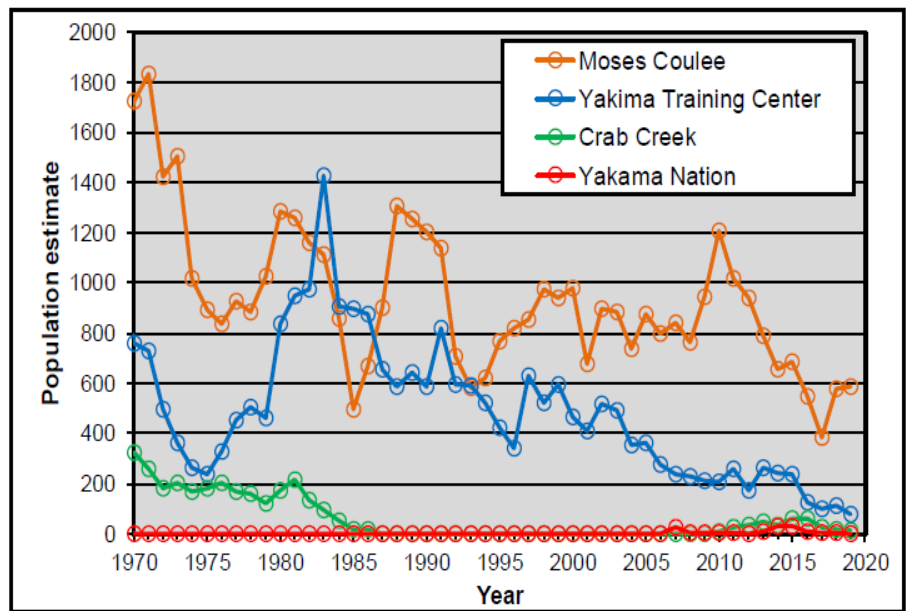
Greater sage-grouse (GRSG), *Centrocercus urophasianus*

Year	Population Estimate (Douglas County)	Population change since previous year	Adaptive Management (Y/N)	Action Taken	Most Recent Progress Report Link
2019	585 individuals with 17 active leks out of 32 historic leks	+1%	No	n/a	Schroeder et al. 2019. Recovery of Greater Sage-grouse in Washington: Progress Report. Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. Olympia, Washington. 31 pp.
2018	579	+41%	No	n/a	
2017	342 (approx.)		No	n/a	
2016	536 with 18 active leks		No	n/a	

Population trend for GRSG in Washington State
(Schroeder *et al.*, 2019, p. 10)



Population trends for GRSG in four populations in Washington State
(Schroeder *et al.*, 2019, p.11)



Washington ground squirrel (WGS), *Uroditellus washingtoni*

Population Trend Parameter (Douglas, Grant, Lincoln, Adams, and Franklin Counties)	Estimate	95% CI	Conclusions	Most Recent Progress Report
Annual probability of Local Squirrel Extinction 2012-2017	0.28	0.11-0.45	Population trend study across 202 surveyed sites (excluding private land) indicated a declining population at not significant rates due to the broad overlap of confidence intervals and overall population growth rate <1. Probability of local population extinction was estimated to be more than twice that of colonization.	Watson, J.W., and G.S. Olson. 2018. Population trend monitoring of Washington ground Squirrels (<i>Uroditellus washingtonii</i>) in the upper Columbia Basin 2012-2017. Progress Report. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Olympia, Washington.
Annual probability of Colonization 2012-2017	0.13	0.05-0.22		
Population Growth Rate 2012-2017	0.84	0.61-1.07		
Changing Occupancy 2012	0.53	0.29-0.77	The study represents two “trend” sample points. Additional sample points will help determine long-term population trends.	
Changing Occupancy 2017	0.45	0.27-0.62		
Detection Probability 2012	0.91	0.84-0.97	Covariates to include in future studies include snow cover, standing water, grazing evidence, badger sign, and fire evidence.	
Detection Probability 2017	0.60	0.40-0.80		

See Appendix.

Permittee: An incidental take permit was issued on October 7, 2019. The Permittee will perform and report sightings of the four covered species in the annual report due June 30, 2021.

Cover Species	Frequent Predator Sightings	Reporting Issues / Incidences
Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit	n/a	None
Columbian sharp-tailed grouse	n/a	None
Greater sage-grouse (GRSG)	n/a	None
Washington ground squirrel	n/a	None

FCCD: Foster Creek CD staff will begin tracking covered species presence on MSGCP enrolled lands beginning in 2020, if staff is present or adjacent to the land.

IM Committee: IM Committee meeting in the Summer 2020 determined relaying WDFW Species Status Reviews was an adequate method to provide a species presence report for the FCCD Plan Administrator.

b. Adaptive-management actions

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN

Measure 1 – Farm Level Best Management Practice Implementation Monitoring: refer to annual report numbers 3 and 4.

Measure 2 – Farm Level BMP Effectiveness Monitoring: Given that the effects of the BMPs may not be measurable immediately, Measure 1 will initially gather data for five years following the enrollment of the field into the MSGCP, but not immediately recommend any adaptations to the BMPs (MSGCP, p. 96).

Measure 3 – Landscape-level BMP Effectiveness Monitoring: Cumulative Effects of BMPs on Habitat Quality and Quantity Monitoring: Analysis of the effectiveness of BMPs will be ongoing over the initial five-year time-period, but due to the significant time-frame of the cause and effect loop, BMPs must be given sufficient time to demonstrate their success (or failure). Only after a sufficient period of time (approximately five years or longer), should modifications be recommended to a specific BMP or Farm Plan/GCP Site Plan on either a Plan Area scale or a specific land-area level. In the event of extreme events (i.e. extreme drought), modifications may be recommended before the end of the initial 5-year period (MSGCP, p. 97).

During Summer 2020, Foster Creek Conservation District (FCCD) will coordinate with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to establish habitat quality control plots across the Plan Area. During the Fall 2020, FCCD will coordinate with the Washington Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to establish dryland crop lands and CRP/SAFE control points across the Plan Area. Once established, photo monitoring will be implemented on CRP/SAFE and other dryland crop lands annually while rangeland vegetation surveys and downstream non-crop vegetation response to irrigation will be collected initially, then every five years per the IM Committee revision on December 15, 2017. The survey methodology and a reasonable number of control plots to collect the data will be determined throughout coordination efforts. Data collection is anticipated to begin during Summer/Fall 2020; however, if the establishment of control plots is delayed, then pilot studies will be conducted in 2020 with official data collection anticipated to begin in 2021. Landscape-level BMP effectiveness will be evaluated every five years from the start of control plots data collection, or for the annual report due on either June 30, 2025 or 2026. FCCD will submit the results of a change detection analysis (CDA) in a workbook and suitable habitat maps to the IM Committee by September 30, 2020. Accuracy assessment data of the CDA model is anticipated to begin during the Fall 2020 with the initial results submitted in the annual report due June 30, 2021. Continuation of data collection for the accuracy assessment of the model will likely carry on into 2021.

Measure 4 – Landscape-Level Covered Species Monitoring: refer to annual report number 2a.

Measure 5 – Changed Circumstance Monitoring:

Changed Circumstance #1 – Conversion of CRP or other Conservation Habitat to Farming if Conservation Contracts (CRP, SAFE, or other similar programs) Reduced or Not Renewed Due to Program Changes

Starting threshold of CRP/SAFE acres enrolled in 2013: 182,072 (approx. 119,072 acres CRP and 63,000 acres SAFE)

Total CRP acres in Douglas County on 12/31/2019: 196,839.9 (+14,767.9 acres from 2013)

Total habitat acres enrolled through another source: 22,865.9

Source	Acres
Easements	1,396.0
MSGCP Permittee	710.8
Sage Grouse Initiative contracts (non-permanent)	220.2
WDFW Public Land Purchases	20,538.9
TOTAL	22,865.9

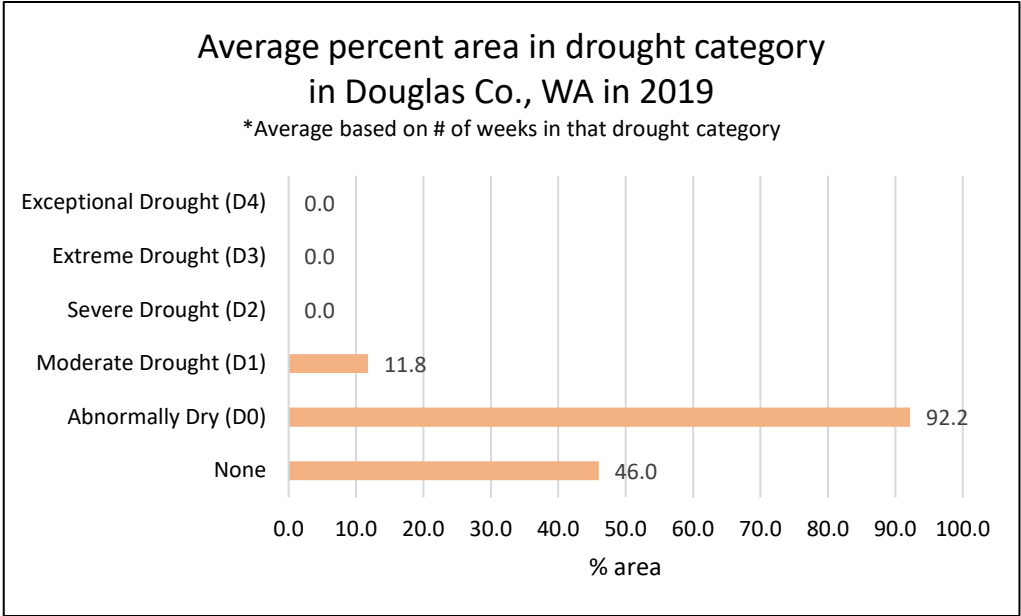
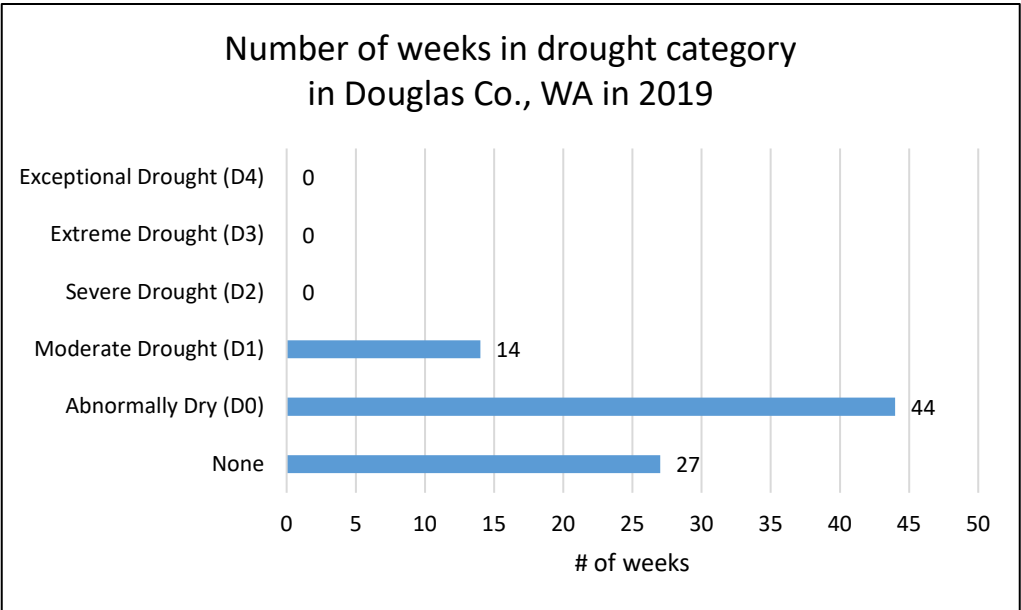
It is anticipated that changed circumstance #1 will be triggered on 10/1/2020 when approximately 15,482.3 acres of CRP/SAFE expires and on 10/1/2022 when an additional approximation of 28,341.8 acres expire, for a total of 43,824.1 acres to meet the new standards of the 2018 Farm Bill. A [Farm Service Agency Bulletin](#) issued on January 29, 2020 stated, “In general, CRP enrollment is limited to no more than 25% of the county cropland. In prior farm bills, FSA could enroll more than 25% of the cropland in Douglas County if certain waivers were granted. In recent years, that waiver was allowed for land enrolled in the CRP/SAFE program that targeted Sage grouse habitat. That waiver permitted enrollment to continue and allowed producers with expiring CRP contracts to re-enroll, often in SAFE. The 2018 Farm Bill eliminated the waiver for SAFE. As a result, FSA is not accepting offers to enroll new land in CRP or SAFE in Douglas County, nor are we allowing expiring CRP contracts to be re-enrolled.” The Bulletin continues, “Twenty-five percent of the Douglas County cropland is 143,713.3 acres. Current CRP/SAFE enrollment is 187,537.4 acres. That is just under 33% of the Douglas County cropland. Without a waiver, 43,824.1 acres will need to expire out of CRP before we would get below 25% and any further enrollments or re-enrollments could be accepted.”

Changed Circumstance #2 – Poor Growing Conditions for Rangeland/Pastureland/Shrub-steppe Due to Unseasonable Weather, Climatic Drought, or Climate Change

Source: United States Drought Monitor, <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Data/DataDownload/ComprehensiveStatistics.aspx>

Drought Category	Description	Possible Impacts
D0	Abnormally Dry	Going into drought: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term dryness slowing planting, growth of crops or pastures Coming out of drought: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some lingering water deficits • Pastures or crops not fully recovered
D1	Moderate Drought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some damage to crops, pastures • Streams, reservoirs, or wells low, some water shortages developing or imminent • Voluntary water-use restrictions requested
D2	Severe Drought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop or pasture losses likely • Water shortages common • Water restrictions imposed
D3	Extreme Drought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major crop/pasture losses • Widespread water shortages or restrictions
D4	Exceptional Drought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional and widespread crop/pasture losses • Shortages of water in reservoirs, streams, and wells creating water emergencies

Figure 1: Drought Key, Source: <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



Max/Min Cumulative Percent Area of County in Drought Category						
Year	None – Max	None – Min	D0 – Max	D0 – Min	D1 – Max	D1 – Min
2019	100	0.7	100	2.27	37.51	0.99

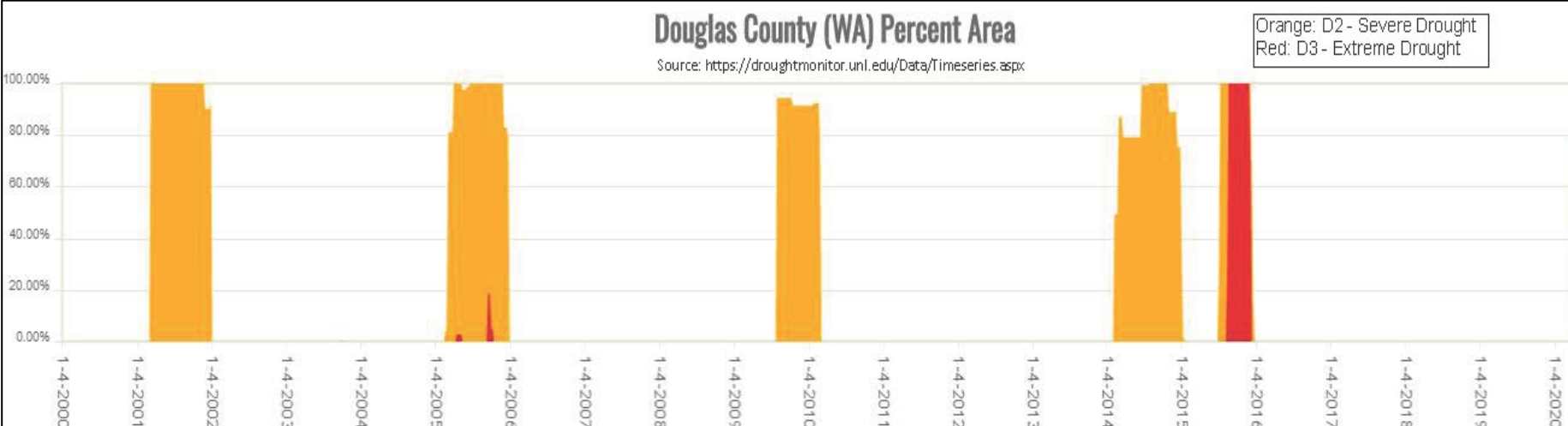
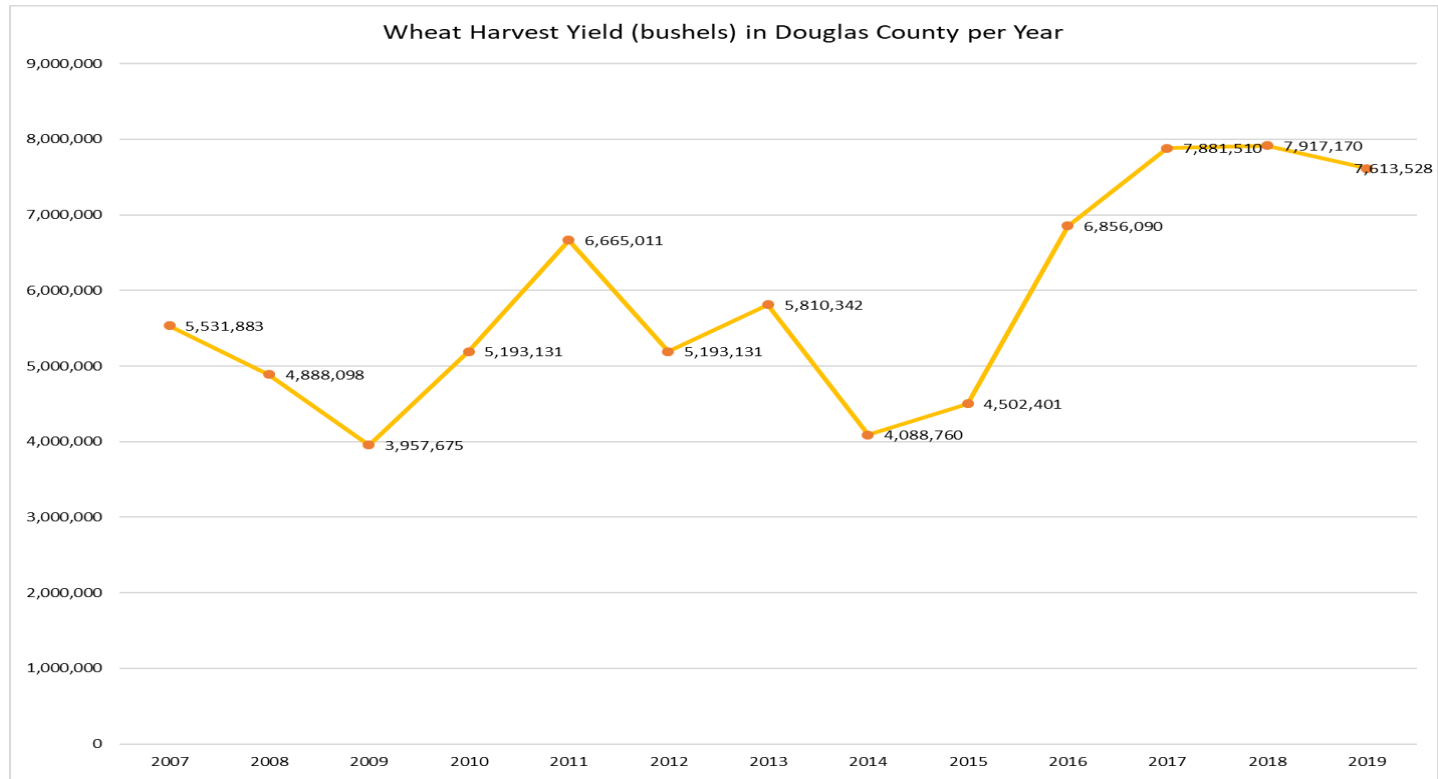


Figure 1: Percent Area in D2 and D3 Drought Categories from 2000-2019.

Changed Circumstance #3 – Changes in Agriculture Economic Opportunities



Changed Circumstance #4 – Wildfire Occurs

Adaptive-management actions for Changed Circumstance #4 Wildfire Occurs has been identified (MSGCP, p. 108).

The changed circumstance #4 was triggered from the Grass Valley wildfire in 2018, burning approximately 76,838.4 acres in the northeast corner of Douglas County. Habitat for the Greater sage-grouse and sharp-tailed grouse were the most impacted out of the four covered species. Foster Creek CD facilitated a Landowner Fire Recovery meeting in Grand Coulee on September 11, 2018. In the months following, Foster Creek CD requested a total of \$704,505.50 in two FEMA grant applications in response to the Grass Valley wildfire: Fire Adapted Communities requesting \$223,494.00 and Priority Erosion Control and Re-seeding requesting

\$536,885.00. As of July 2020, the FEMA-Hazard Mitigation Grant Program has awarded \$223,494.00 towards the Fire Adapted Communities grant, with a Federal award of \$167,620.50 and \$55,873.50 match (12.5% FCCD, 12.5% WA Military Department), and \$150,000 towards Phase 1: Priority Erosion Control and Re-seeding grant.

2018 Wildfires in Douglas County, WA									
Source: Northwest Interagency Coordination Center, https://gacc.nifc.gov/nwcc/									
Name	Acres Burnt	Date Started	Date Contained	Latitude Coordinate of Ignition	Longitude Coordinate of Ignition	Cause	Source	Approx. Acres of Burnt Cropland, excluding CRP/SAFE	Approx. Acres of Burnt Vegetation Cover, including CRP/SAFE
Baird Springs	1,104.56	3-Jul	4-Jul	47.254	-119.993	Unknown	Unknown	0.00	1,104.56
Chelan Hills	1,841.73	27-Jul	16-Aug	47.79041	-119.9829	Unknown	Mixed Methods	84.46	1,757.27
Crystal	2,610.48	1-Sep	1-Sep	47.423889	-120.231944	Human	Unknown	61.74	2,548.74
East of Mansfield	350.00					Human	Unknown	0.00	350.00
Grass Valley	76,838.39	11-Aug	15-Aug	47.84	-119.34	Human	Baler	3,934.98	72,903.41
Jameson	4.00	26-Oct	26-Oct			Spon. Combust	Hay	4.00	0.00
Moses Coulee	41.00	15-Jun	15-Jun			Unknown	Unknown	0.00	41.00
P Rd x Rd 9	950.00	23-Oct	25-Oct			Human	Harrow	0.00	950.00
Ragged Butte	1,286.09	6-Aug	6-Aug	47.974	-119.441	Unknown	Unknown	2.50	1,283.59
Turtle Rock	716.56	24-Jul	26-Jul	47.54975	-120.2514	Unknown	Mixed Methods	0.00	716.56
Washington Flats	384.91	11-Jul	13-Jul	48.01496	-118.96019	Human	Unknown	0.00	384.91
Total	86,127.72							4,087.68	82,040.04

2019 Wildfires in Douglas County, WA

Source: Northwest Interagency Coordination Center, <https://gacc.nifc.gov/nwcc/>

Name	Acres Burnt	Date Started	Date Contained	Latitude Coordinate of Ignition	Longitude Coordinate of Ignition	Cause	Source	Approx. Acres of Burnt Cropland	Approx. Acres of Burnt Vegetation Cover, including CRP/SAFE
2/97 North Fire	12.00	1:30 pm on July 2	3-Jul			Lighting	Lighting	0	12
Desert Canyon	1,460.73	24-Jul	27-Jul	47.707514	-120.166267	Undetermined	Unknown	0	1,460.73
Hwy 17 Fire	80.00	May	May			Human	Vehicle	0	80
Total	1,552.73								

Changed Circumstance #5 – Flood Damage to Riparian Areas

None reported.

Changed Circumstance #6 – Invasion by New Exotic Species or Impacts from Disease

Non-indigenous Plants – The Douglas County Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) seeks to engage land owners, land managers, and agencies to collaboratively manage noxious weeds. The CWMA has defined 3 priority species lists. Priority 1 weeds are species which have not been reported in Douglas County, but are likely future invaders. Priority 2 weeds are species which already exist in Douglas County with limited distribution. A subset of Priority 2 species has been designated Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) species and are of particular concern. Priority 3 weeds are species which are widely distributed throughout Douglas County. The Priority group lists are updated annual by CWMA participants. In addition, the CWMA tracks reports of noxious weed infestations in Douglas County. To date, no new noxious weed species have been reported since flowering rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) was first identified in 2015.

CWMA Priority Group Number	Noxious weeds in Priority Group	
1 (not present)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual Bugloss (<i>Anchusa arvensis</i>) - Black henbane (<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i>) - Common bugloss (<i>Anchusa officinalis</i>) - Common crupina (<i>Crupina vulgaris</i>) - Common Reed grass (<i>Phragmites australis</i>) - English ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i> 'Baltica', 'Pittsburgh', and 'Star'; <i>Hedera hibernica</i> 'Hibernica') - Hoary alyssum (<i>Berteroa incana</i>) - Leafy spurge (<i>Euphorbia virgata</i>) - Medusahead (<i>Taeniatherum caput-medusae</i>) - Spurge Flax (<i>Thymelaea passerina</i>) - Tansy Ragwort (<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>) - Ventenata (<i>Ventenata dubia</i>) - Wild 4 O'clock (<i>Mirabilis nyctaginea</i>) 	
2 (limited distribution)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baby's Breath (<i>Gypsophila paniculata</i>) - Bull thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>) - Houndstongue (<i>Cynoglossum officinale</i>) - Purple loosestrife (<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>) - Rush skeletonweed (<i>Chondrilla juncea</i>) - Scotch thistle (<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>) - Spotted knapweed (<i>Centaurea stoebe</i>) - Yellow starthistle (<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>) 	<p>EDRR:</p> <p>Yellow star-thistle; Rush skeletonweed; Houndstongue; Scotch thistle; Spotted knapweed; Purple loosestrife</p>
3 (widely distributed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bulbous bluegrass (<i>Poa bulbosa</i>) - Canada thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>) - Cereal rye (<i>Secale cereale</i>) - Cheatgrass (<i>Bromus tectorum</i>) -Dalmatian toadflax (<i>Linaria dalmatica</i>) - Diffuse knapweed (<i>Centaurea diffusa</i>) - Field bindweed (<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>) - Japanese brome (<i>Bromus japonicus</i>) 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kochia (<i>Bassia scoparia</i>) - Perennial pepperweed (<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>) - Puncturevine (<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>) - Reed canary grass (<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>) - Russian knapweed (<i>Rhaponticum repens</i>) - White top (<i>Lepidium draba</i>)
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Non-indigenous animals, impacts from disease, and predator levels – reference number 2a.

Changed Circumstance #7 – Change to Habitat Conservation Area (HCA) Acres

- Bureau of Land Management – 53,965 acres (to be confirmed by BLM)
- The Nature Conservancy – 21,586 acres (-90.0 acres from 2013 threshold of 21,676.0 acres)
- WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife – 16,361.0 acres (+278.67 acres from 2013 threshold of 16,639.67 acres)

The MSGCP Implementation and Monitoring (IM) Committee, with support from HCA agencies, believe these acres will remain static throughout the life of the MSGCP, therefore, the addition or purchase of new acres will contribute to depleted CRP/SAFE acres. The change in HCA acres reported are likely due to a discrepancy in the initially reported 2013 baseline acres.

Changed Circumstance #8 – New Listings of Species Not Covered by the MSGCP

No change.

Changed Circumstance #9 – Designations of Critical Habitat for a Covered Species

No change.

Changed Circumstance #10- A Covered Species is Delisted

No change.

Changed Circumstance #11 – Funding is Not Acquired as Expected

Reference numbers 6 and 7.

Changed Circumstance #12 – FCCD Cannot Implement or Monitor as Expected

Reference numbers 6, 7, and 9.

Measure 6 – Landscape Level Habitat Suitability Index Modeling: refer to annual report number 5. Mapping results will be published in the June 30, 2021 annual report.

3) Description of conservation activities in the Plan Area in 2019

Land-use Measure	Conservation Measure No.	Description	Amount Installed
Conversion	GCP CM-Dryland-Conv1	If CRP/SAFE or other conservation contracts cannot be maintained due to program changes, enroll these conservation lands into other Federal Farm Bill conservation program such as Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), or other similar Federal, State, or other similar programs if available.	n/a
	GCP CM-Dryland-Conv2	Maintain original remnant patches of shrub-steppe within CRP/SAFE fields when converting back to crops.	n/a
	GCP CM-Dryland-Conv3	To minimize the disturbance to Covered Species using CRP/SAFE, ensure that conversion does not occur within species-specific timing restrictions in Table E-3.	n/a
Erosion	GCP CM-Dryland-Erosion1	Farm plans/GCP Site Plans will include erosion control measures to reduce sheet, rill and gully erosion at field edges by trapping sediment and reducing surface runoff.	0.0 ac
Fish and Wildlife Protection	GCP CM-Range-Str1a	Ensure escape devices for small wildlife (such as a boards or ramps) are located in stock watering tanks.	0
	GCP CM-Range-Str6	Protect sensitive areas, such as riparian habitat, occupied Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit habitat, Washington ground squirrel colonies, greater sage-grouse/Columbian sharp-tail grouse leks, and rare plant populations from unnecessary impacts caused by livestock concentrations. Possible management practices include:	-
	GCP CM-Range-Str6a	Locating mineral supplements, water troughs and supplemental feeding sites on shallow, gravelly, or rocky soils or rocky areas away from sensitive areas.	1 unit

	GCP CM-Range-Str9	Maintain chemical use on livestock and rangelands at a level that is effective, but not in amounts or in areas that would cause contamination of soil, forage, water, wildlife or habitat.	710.8 ac
Grazing Grazing continued	The standard grazing guidelines and species- specific measures below provide prescriptions with the goal of producing or maintaining habitat for covered species' life history needs, including providing for cover, forage, and reproduction habitat. Other alternative grazing rotations or prescriptions might be acceptable, as long as they met similar expectations, including utilization rates, stubble heights, and distribution and timing that encourages plant productivity and vigor, seed production, photosynthesis, recovery and re-growth. Alternative grazing prescriptions may need more stringent monitoring plans that are developed and implemented to ensure that expectations are being met. If expectations are not met, the grazing prescriptions may need to be modified as implementation proceeds.		
	GCP CM-Grazing	A grazing prescription that will promote better habitat and encourage plant productivity and vigor, seed production, photosynthesis, recovery and re-growth.	75.6 ac
	GCP CM-Grazing1	Develop a grazing management plan that accounts for the intensity of grazing and the timing of both grazing periods and recovery periods. The plan should include:	75.6 ac
	GCP CM-Grazing2	Graze a pasture no more than once every third year during the critical period for key bunchgrass species (boot stage through seed formation: typically, May 15 to July 15).	0.0 ac
	GCP CM-Grazing3	Manage utilization to achieve:	-
	GCP CM-Grazing3a	No more than 50 percent utilization during the growing season	75.6 ac
	GCP CM-Grazing3b	No more than 60 percent utilization during the dormant season.	75.6 ac
	GCP CM-Grazing4	Maintain a minimum stubble height of 5" at all times on desirable bunchgrasses on average in a pasture. Note that a stubble height of 8" is better than 5" in appropriate growing sites.	75.6 ac

	GCP CM-Grazing5	Manage livestock distribution to minimize overgrazing, especially during drought. Tools such as fencing, the placement of water & salt, and riding can be used.	n/a
	GCP CM-Grazing6	During winter, use one smaller sacrifice area for feeding to minimize impacts to shrub-steppe and other habitats.	n/a
	GCP CM-Grazing7	Utilization of woody species will not exceed 50 percent of annual leaf and twig growth within reach of animals, unless a grazing system is implemented which has a high rest to grazing period ratio which allows for adequate recovery following heavier use.	98.8 ac
Pest/Weed Management	GCP CM-All Ag-Invasives1	Integrate pest management techniques. Design control methods to target pest species only.	0.0 ac
	GCP CM-All Ag-Invasives2	Implement integrated weed management plans to ensure timely elimination of invasive plants to prevent their spread to adjacent habitats.	2,576.2 ac
	GCP CM-All Ag-Invasives3	Implement biological control of weeds.	400 insects
Protect shrub steppe	GCP CM-All Ag-Remnant	Remnant habitat is defined as shrub-steppe patches that were not previously farmed prior to enrollment in a CRP, SAFE, or similar program.	-
	GCP CM-All Ag-Remnant1	Maintain, enhance, and protect from degradation remnant patches of shrub-steppe interspersed in CRP/SAFE and cropland. Rock piles that do not support shrub-steppe vegetation are not considered remnants.	471.9 ac
Recreation	GCP CM-All Ag-Rec1	Restrict recreational use during critical mating, nesting, and brood-rearing periods, especially near sharp-tailed grouse leks (March 1 to June 30) and sage grouse leks (February 1 to June 30).	4,017.4 ac
	GCP CM-All Ag-Rec2	Ensure proper use of gates and other livestock management devices.	2 units
	GCP CM-All Ag-Rec3	Minimize motorized access.	4,017.4 ac
	GCP CM-All Ag-Rec4	Consider potential impacts on wildlife, site habitat features, ranch operations and quality of life before permitting hunting and recreation. Educate visitors about limits, rules, and cautions needed to make sure their land use has minimum impact on habitat, wildlife resources, forage production, and ranch operation.	0 people

	GCP CM-All Ag-Rec5	Minimize visitor vehicle traffic on ranch roads to prevent noxious weed introduction.	4,017.4 ac
	GCP CM-All Ag-Rec6	Develop educational information about Covered Species that Applicants/Permittees can share with hunters.	0 unit
	GCP CM-All Ag-Rec7	Washington ground squirrels are a protected species under state law and should not be subjected to recreational shooting by the landowner or the public. In situations where the landowner believes that the squirrels pose a threat to crops, the landowner should contact USFWS and/or WDFW to discuss non-lethal options for resolving the problem.	4,017.4 ac
Riparian / Wetland	GCP CM- Range-Str4	Locate salt licks away from riparian or wetland areas.	1 unit
Water quality	GCP CM- Range-Str8	To minimize fertilizer loss to ground water or surface flow, use fertilizers in hay fields at an agronomic level that provides plant benefit but is not in excess of plant needs.	n/a
Wildfire Management	GCP CM-All Ag-Fire	Wildfire management activities listed should be coordinated with FCCD and Douglas County fire districts. Applicant is encouraged to implement activities consistent with their local Rangeland Fire Protection Association (RFPA), if available.	n/a
	GCP CM-All Ag-Fire1	Develop fire management plans with local fire districts.	4,017.4 ac
	GCP CM-All Ag-Fire2	Manage mechanical firebreaks and backfires to minimize impacts to Covered Species and supporting habitats.	0.0 ac
	GCP CM-All Ag-Fire3	Along with local fire districts, identify habitats that need special consideration during wildfire control and discuss special control techniques. Identify areas where fire control is not a critical issue.	0.0 ac
	GCP CM-All Ag-Fire4	Use mechanical firebreaks and backfires to minimize the adverse effects of wildfire control on critical habitats.	0.0 ac
	GCP CM-All Ag-Fire5	Group land units into control, limited control, and minimal wildfire control areas.	0.0 ac

Species-Specific Measure	Conservation Measure No.	Description	Amount Installed / Meet Compliance (MC)
Pygmy Protection	CBPR-1	Provide USFWS and WDFW access to enrolled properties through a mutually agreeable notification process to survey for and monitor any pygmy rabbits present	MC
	CBPR-2	Notify USFWS at least 30 days prior to undertaking any habitat-altering activity (such as conversion of CRP or SAFE lands) that could result in authorized incidental take of pygmy rabbits. Provide the USFWS and WDFW the opportunity to translocate any affected pygmy rabbits to suitable alternate site(s) prior to implementation of those activities.	n/a
	CBPR-3	Immediately notify USFWS upon finding any dead or injured pygmy rabbits on enrolled property, or immediately contact an appropriate representative of USFWS or WDFW for assistance if identification of the specimen is uncertain.	MC
Pygmy and WGS Protection	CBPR and WGS-1	Avoid constructing new structures that serve as perches or nest sites for avian predators (e.g., windmills).	MC
	CBPR and WGS-2	Survey fence lines to locate active burrows. Limit clearing of fence line to 8' width by hand or mower. No mowing or brush removal within 30' of a burrow.	MC
	CBPR and WGS-3	No in-ground posts (metal or wood) within 30' of a burrow. Use rock jacks or figure 4 braces within 30' of a burrow and no posts of any kind within 10' of burrow. Limit activities to late summer and fall (avoid breeding, rearing period, and winter high stress period).	MC
	CBPR and WGS-4	Utilize Integrated Pest Management practices that consider the range of treatment options (including: biological agents, mechanical, hand pulling, grazing practices).	400 bio-control insects
WGS Protection	Known WGS Occupied Habitat-1	When possible, avoid grazing during Washington ground squirrel active season (typically from April 1 until June 30 when Washington ground squirrels enter their extended period of dormancy, or when documented to enter summer dormancy).	MC
	Known WGS	Notify USFWS at least 30 days prior to undertaking any habitat-altering activity (such as conversion of CRP or SAFE lands) that could result in authorized incidental take of Washington Ground Squirrels. Provide the	n/a

	Occupied Habitat-2	USFWS and WDFW the opportunity to translocate any affected Washington Ground Squirrels to suitable alternate site(s) prior to implementation of those activities. USFWS or WDFW staff are unlikely to undertake unplanned translocations of ground squirrels unless a significant population of squirrels is present on the conversion site or the species becomes federally listed.	
	Known WGS Occupied Habitat-3	Immediately notify USFWS upon finding any dead or injured Washington Ground Squirrels on enrolled property, or immediately contact an appropriate representative of USFWS or WDFW for assistance if identification of the specimen is uncertain.	MC
	Known WGS Occupied Habitat-4	Avoid cultivating lands that contain active ground squirrel colonies. Habitat conversion activities or CRP/SAFE takeout shall not occur January 21 to June 30.	MC
	Known WGS Occupied Habitat-5	Washington ground squirrels are a protected species under state law and should not be subjected to recreational shooting or poisoning by the landowner or the public. In situations where the landowner believes that the squirrels pose a threat to crops, the landowner should contact USFWS and/or WDFW to discuss nonlethal options for resolving the problem.	MC
CSTG Protection –	CSTG Breeding Habitat-1	In areas with leks, adjacent to leks, or within likely occupied habitat: CRP/SAFE takeout or other conversion activities shall not occur April 1 to July 31.	n/a
	CSTG Nesting Habitat-1	In likely occupied nesting habitat with grazing: Where appropriate retain a residual cover of perennial grasses and forbs of at least 20 cm (8 in) for cover during the nesting season (April 1 through June 30).	MC
CSTG and GRSG Protection	Known CSTG and GRSG Occupied Habitat-1	In areas with leks, adjacent to leks, or within likely occupied habitat: Immediately notify USFWS upon finding any dead or injured sharp-tailed grouse or sage grouse on enrolled property, or immediately contact an appropriate representative of USFWS or WDFW for assistance if identification of the specimen is uncertain.	MC
	CSTG and GRSG Breeding Habitat Protection	For activities in or near leks: Minimize impacts to Greater sage-grouse and Columbian sharp-tail grouse leks and nesting habitats during the spring breeding season and nesting season (may vary by site but typically March through June for sharp-tailed grouse; and February 20 through June for sage grouse).	MC

	CSTG and GRSG Breeding Protection	For activities in or near leks: Avoid disturbance to occupied leks. Typical season is between March through June for sharp-tailed grouse, and February 20 through May 15 for sage grouse. Within 0.5 mile of known leks, schedule essential springtime agricultural activities to occur in the middle of the day (avoid activities from one hour before sunset to 3 hours after sunrise). At those times and locations, avoid physical, mechanical, and loud noise disturbances.	MC
	CSTG and GRSG Breeding Habitat Protection	For activities in or near leks: Plan and design placement of new fences away from occupied and historic leks. If this is not possible, adequately mark fences to increase visibility. Identify existing fences that are nearby to an occupied or historic lek and consider removing or relocating the fence to a site further from the lek. At a minimum, mark all existing fences within ¼ mile from an occupied or historic lek, or in high risk areas where collisions are likely or known to occur. Use NRCS, SGI, or other appropriate national or local fence collision tools to prioritize fence marking	MC
GRSG Habitat Protection	GCP CM-GRSG-1	Areas with Leks or Adjacent to Leks or in Likely Occupied Habitats: CRP/SAFE takeout or other conversion activities not to occur between March 15 and July 14.	n/a
GRSG Habitat Protection	GCP CM-GRSG-2	Likely occupied Nesting Habitats with Grazing: In grazed pastures, implement measures to promote nesting cover (through appropriate rotations, stocking rates, rest, and/or deferment schedules).	98.8 ac

4) Best Management Practices initiated or modified as a result of MSGCP implementation activities

Conservation Practice	NRCS Code	Description	Amount Installed
Brush Management	314	The management or removal of woody (nonherbaceous or succulent) plants including those that are invasive and noxious (NRCS WA eFOTG, September 2017)	0.0 ac
Herbaceous Weed Control	315	The removal or control of herbaceous weeds including invasive, noxious and prohibited plants (NRCS WA eFOTG, September 2017)	0.0 ac
Livestock Pipeline	516	A pipeline and appurtenances installed to convey water for livestock or wildlife (NRCS WA eFOTG, February 2014)	0 feet
Pumping Plant	533	A facility that delivers water at a designed pressure and flow rate. Includes the required pump(s), associated power unit(s), plumbing, appurtenances, and may include on-site fuel or energy source(s), and protective structures (NRCS WA eFOTG, January 2015)	0 unit
Structures for Wildlife: Escape Ramp	649	A structure installed to replace or modify a missing or deficient wildlife habitat component (NRCS WA eFOTG, January 2015)	0 unit
Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	645	Provide and manage upland habitats and connectivity within the landscape for wildlife (NRCS WA eFOTG, October 2014)	710.8 ac
Water Well	642	A hole drilled, dug, driven, bored, jetted, or otherwise constructed into an aquifer for water supply (NRCS WA eFOTG, January 2015)	0 unit
Watering Facility	614	A watering facility is a means of providing drinking water to livestock or wildlife (NRCS WA eFOTG, January 2015)	0 unit

5) Non-conservation (development) or conversion activities in the Plan Area

In 2019, Aspect Consulting LLC in Wenatchee, Washington developed a scripted ESRI Model Builder tool to perform a change in land use detection analysis using Landsat 7 and Landsat 8 images. Foster Creek CD performed quality control by visually comparing vegetation change from the July 2011 to the July 2017 National Agricultural Imagery Program (NAIP) imagery. Agriculture land use change, excluding Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres, is used as a surrogate to determine the extent of shrub-steppe habitat in Douglas County.

Land use 2011	Land use 2017	Acres converted
Shrub-steppe	Irrigation-Orchards	477.1
Shrub-steppe	Irrigation-Cropland	173.2
Shrub-steppe	Dryland Agriculture	23.5
Dryland Agriculture	Shrub-steppe	10.65
Total shrub-steppe loss		663.15

In Spring/Summer 2020, Foster Creek CD contracted with Aspect Consulting LLC to develop a land use change detection analysis and suitable habitat maps for the four covered species using the National Land Cover Database (NLCD) 2016 Shrub Shrubland Fractional Component from the Multi-Resolution Characteristic Consortium (MRLC). The revised data source will provide insights to shrub-steppe quality where the results will be provided in the June 30, 2021 report.

6) Significant issues encountered during implementation in the Plan Area in 2019 and proposed resolutions

Issue	Proposed resolution	Date Resolved
Adaptive Management and Monitoring Plan (AMMP) requirements are incomplete	Hold a series of IM Committee meetings to finalize the requirements for existing Permittee and future Permit Applicants	To be resolved in 2020 – refer to annual plan number 9 – Plan of Action
Personnel constraints – FCCD reduced by 1.5 FTE	Hire one new staff member to assist in project implementation	September 23, 2019
Budget constraints – The initial funding sources for implementation reflected in the MSGCP annual budget is not achievable (MSGCP, p. 83)	Leverage existing funds with support from the Douglas Co. Voluntary Stewardship Program to implement MSGCP	April 16 and November 7, 2019
	Budget \$5,949.50 for MSGCP implementation using Washington State Grants	July 1, 2019
	Funding acquisition through grant application	Not resolved and an on-going issue
Incidental Take Permits have not been issued	Expect application results from the USFWS Pacific Region office in Portland, Oregon	October 7, 2019

7) Expenditures in 2019 and 2020 budget

The primary funding sources for the MSGCP are through Washington State Grants where a percentage of total awarded funds are allocated to MSGCP expenses. Foster Creek CD is unable to implement the MSGCP based on the direct funding sources listed on p. 83. Washington State Basic Funding and Douglas County Basic Funding are no longer funding sources. NRCS and WSCC RMS Task Order funding may cover aspects of MSGCP technical assistance, depending on Applicant objectives, but this source will not cover the entire plan development and ITP application. It is possible that the COVID-19 pandemic will further impact MSGCP funding.

2019 Expenses*	Cost (\$)	Hours
Salaries/Benefits (total)	6,134.04	138.0
Administration (vouchering, funding acquisition)	1,169.28	24.0
Implementation (meetings, coordination, reporting, template design, etc.)	1,019.58	25.5
Monitoring	805.80	20.0
Technical Assistance (plan development)	2,723.16	58.0
Training (CEUs, state agency assistance, new staff)	416.22	10.5
Mileage/Travel	75.98	131 miles
Overhead (S/B approx. 20%)	1,226.80	-
Total	7,436.82	138.0

*MSGCP implementation was reduced in 2019 due to personnel and budget constraints – refer to annual report number 6.

A reduction in plan develop and IM Committee meetings occurred while expecting the issuance of the first incidental take permit to establish monitoring requirements once permit is issued.

2020 Budget* DRAFT	Cost (\$)	Hours
Salaries/Benefits (total)	19,272	466
Administration (vouchering, funding acquisition)	1,150	24
Implementation (meetings, coordination, reporting, template design, etc.)	3,280	80
Monitoring	6,601	161
Technical Assistance (plan development)	6,601	161
Training (state agency assistance, new staff)	1,640	40
Mileage/Travel	172.50	300 miles
Equipment	500	-
Overhead (S/B approx. 20%)	3,854.40	-

Total	23,798.90	466
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*Actual cost and actual hours to be included in the June 30, 2021 annual report.

8) Compliance activities of Permittees

Activity	No. of Permittees	No. of Compliant Permittees
Allow property access for FCCD, WDFW, and USFWS, when requested	1	1
Farm Level BMP Implementation Monitoring	1	1
Implement intended conservation practices	1	1
Implement land-use measures	1	1
Implement species-specific measures	1	1
Total individual permit compliance	1	1

9) Plan of action for 2020 implementation activities.

Action	Goal	Anticipated Completion Date
Collect data: Control Sites	Collect shrub-steppe quality habitat data across control plots in the Plan Area. Control sites will also serve as accuracy assessment points for the change detection and habitat quality analysis.	November 30, 2020, or November 30, 2021 if delayed. Then 2020 data will serve as pilot sites.
FCCD Technical Assistance for Farm Level BMP Implementation Monitoring	Assist one Permittee to continue compliance for BMP implementation and monitoring requirements	November 30, 2020
IM Committee Meeting: AMMP review, approval, and finalize	Reconvene members to finalize AMMP matrix at Summer and Fall/Winter 2020 meetings	December 11, 2020, AMMP to be revised as necessary into 2021 based on (pilot) data collected in Fall 2020.
	Reconvene members to determine the location of AMMP control sites, number of control sites, and if necessary, a methodology to collect data	
	Coordinate with BLM and WDNR to determine control points of CRP/SAFE and dry land crops for AMMP Measure 3a, if available	December 15, 2020, on-going if needed
IM Committee Meeting: Annual report review and approval	Reconvene members to review the first annual report at a Summer 2020 meeting	August 15, 2020
	Reconvene members to approve the first annual report at a Fall/Winter 2020 meeting	December 11, 2020
	Present results and receive Committee approval for mapping results of the change detection analysis and suitable habitat maps of the four covered species across the Plan Area	December 11, 2020
FCCD Board Members: Annual report review and approval	Receive approval of the first annual report	November 20, 2020
Submit a final version of an annual report	First annual report template created, approved, and submitted	December 15, 2020
Submit USFWS ITP Permit Application	One permit application	TBD due to 2020 wildfire

