

-----Original Message-----

From: Amy Glovan [<mailto:aglovan@cnwra.swri.edu>]  
Sent: Friday, January 14, 2011 1:58 PM  
To: 'Bjornsen, Alan'; 'Marla Roberts'  
Cc: 'Swain, Patricia'; 'Davis (FSME), Jennifer'  
Subject: RE: Re: definition of lek "abandonment" - Crooked Well lek

The reference is cited in the text and is listed in the references section. The document is otherwise known as Marked Comment document L020; in between comments L020-093 and -094 is the sentence where WGFD describes the 'unknown' status. PDF page 31 of 41 of that document.

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-----Original Message-----

From: Bjornsen, Alan [<mailto:Alan.Bjornsen@nrc.gov>]  
Sent: Friday, January 14, 2011 1:26 PM  
To: Marla Roberts; [aglovan@cnwra.swri.edu](mailto:aglovan@cnwra.swri.edu)  
Cc: Swain, Patricia; Davis (FSME), Jennifer  
Subject: FW: Re: definition of lek "abandonment" - Crooked Well lek

Marla/Amy,

As I was going through the references for Ch. 3, I couldn't find the reference for the Crooked Well Lek in the NE portion of the Lost Creek Site. This should be more than adequate.

Alan

-----Original Message-----

From: Greg Hiatt [<mailto:Greg.Hiatt@wgf.state.wy.us>]  
Sent: Friday, January 14, 2011 12:45 PM  
To: Bjornsen, Alan; Carrie Dobey  
Subject: Fwd: Re: definition of lek "abandonment" - Crooked Well lek

Carey and Alan,

I never saw the formal response on the status of the Crooked Well lek to the NRC or company from Kent Schmidlin, the Lander supervisor at that time, but he based it upon my review of the Crooked Well lek data, which I am forwarding to you both. Under the current criteria, the status of the lek is still classified as "unknown" and that cannot change until at least 10 years have passed since 2006. Assuming surveys to determine annular status of the are continued. And, of course, the question becomes moot if grouse are seen using the site again.

Hope this helps,  
Greg

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>>> Kent Schmidlin 7/22/2009 11:00 AM >>>

Thanks Greg. This appears to be more than adequate for a response.  
Kent

>>> Greg Hiatt 7/22/2009 10:28 AM >>>  
Kent,

Yes, Tom answered on the 10th... sorry I didn't notice that you weren't copied. And yes, he confirmed the 2007 criteria still apply.

As far as the Crooked Well lek is concerned, the company consultants (one of whom called me yesterday on this project, but not this lek) have done a good job confirming the lek was inactive in 2006, 2007, 2008 and again in 2009. Although they saw 4 males on the lek once in 2007, they didn't see them strut. But the status of this lek was "Unknown" for each of the previous six years (2000-2005). I checked it in five of those six years, with no strutting grouse seen, but several of those were late morning checks, outside of the protocol, and no years had more than one check, a requirement to determine a lek as "Inactive". Sage grouse were last seen strutting on the lek in 1994, and I confirmed it as "Inactive" in 1995.

The protocol for declaring a lek as abandoned requires confirmation of inactivity in four nonconsecutive years (meaning the consultants only have two nonconsecutive years confirmed so far) spanning ten years (meaning both the first and last years of your ten-year span must be adequately confirmed as "Inactive"). Since sage grouse populations appear to have a 10-11 year cycle, this protocol is designed to protect breeding sites that may come into use again in years when grouse numbers are high. As long as these protocols remain in effect, the soonest the lek could be listed as "Abandoned", assuming grouse don't start using it again, would be ten years from 2006, or after the 2015 strutting season.

As far as the lek itself, it was active every year from discovery in 1986 through 1994. Numbers were initially high (30 in 1986) then tapered off to 5 in 1994 and 0 in 1995. The grouse strutted about 50-100 meters east of the small Crooked Well reservoir, and the use of the site appears to have stopped when the reservoir went dry. There was water in

the reservoir briefly in the 2006 and 2008 strutting seasons, and if it began holding water regularly I suspect we would again see grouse using the site.

Let me know if you need more for your response,  
Greg

>>> Kent Schmidlin 7/22/2009 9:15 AM >>>

Greg,

Have you heard anything back from Christiansen? I still have this request and would like to get it off my task list. I can follow-up as needed.

Kent

>>> Greg Hiatt 7/10/2009 11:16 AM >>>

Tom,

We have received a request from a uranium mining company to declare a sage grouse lek as "abandoned." Since the criteria have changed a few times over the years, I wanted to confirm that we are still using the 2007 criteria listed below to determine if a lek has been abandoned before responding to the company:

"To be designated abandoned, a lek must be "inactive" in at least four non-consecutive strutting seasons spanning the ten years."

- inactive = Any lek where sufficient data suggests that there was no strutting activity throughout a strutting season. Absence of strutting grouse during a single visit is insufficient documentation to establish that a lek is inactive. This designation requires documentation of either: 1) an absence of birds on the lek during at least 2 ground surveys separated by at least 7 days. These surveys must be conducted under ideal conditions (4/1-5/7, no precipitation, light or no wind, ½ hour before to 1 hour after sunrise) or, 2) a ground check of the exact known lek site late in the strutting season (after 4/15) that fails to find any sign (droppings/feathers) of strutting activity. Data collected by aerial surveys may not be used to designate inactive status.

Thanks,  
Greg

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