

# Working Lands for Wildlife

WLFW



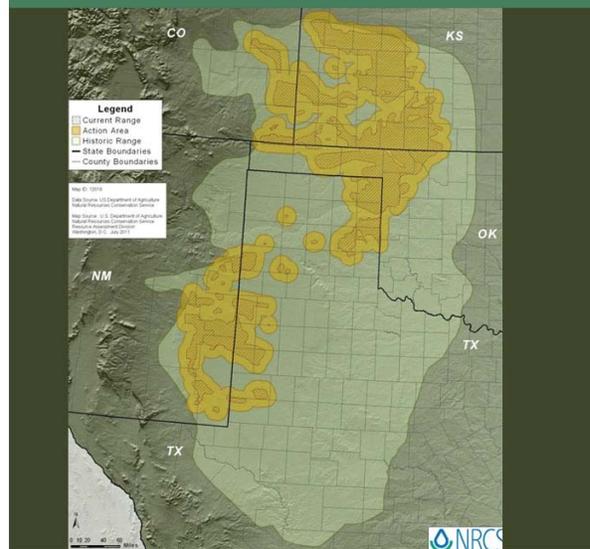
## Lesser Prairie Chicken

Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma,  
New Mexico, Texas

**Listing Status: Candidate**

### Focal Area Map

#### Lesser Prairie Chicken



### Background

The lesser prairie chicken (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*) is an upland bird found in mixed grass, sand-sage and shinnery oak prairies of western Kansas, southeast Colorado, northwest Oklahoma, the Texas panhandle, and eastern New Mexico. Once widely distributed, the bird has experienced dramatic reductions in population and is now a candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act. Biologists estimate that only about 50,000 breeding birds remain.

As with the other prairie grouse species, the lesser prairie chicken requires large, intact native grasslands and prairies to thrive. Population declines have been attributed to habitat loss, modification, degradation, and fragmentation within its range.

In 2011, NRCS launched the Lesser Prairie Chicken Initiative (LPCI) to focus technical and financial resources on improving lesser prairie chicken habitat. Under the initiative, NRCS and its conservation partners are helping farmers and ranchers enhance, restore and protect habitat for this sensitive and reclusive bird. Many of the conservation practices that promote healthy grazing lands also benefit the lesser prairie chicken and other wildlife; the primary practices are: prescribed grazing, upland wildlife habitat management, brush management, prescribed burning, range plantings, and restoration and management of rare or declining habitats.

Resource Concern	Total Acres Needing Treatment
<b>Fish and Wildlife</b> Habitat degradation, inadequate habitat	
<b>Degraded Plant Condition</b> Inadequate structure and composition	

### Goals / Objectives

Working Lands for Wildlife will assist ranchers voluntarily restore or enhance 500,000 acres of rangeland over five years, combating lesser prairie chicken habitat loss, increasing habitat connectivity, and helping to ensure the continued viability of western ranching.

## Actions

- Support sustainable grazing management that results in residual nesting cover and supports native plant communities.
- Increase connectivity of existing lesser prairie chicken habitat.
- Improve weed and invasive species management.
- Reduce tillage on agricultural fields.
- Protect, maintain, and restore large tracts of native oak/tallgrass or sand sagebrush grassland.
- Maintain stability of land use, and conserve shrub-dominated habitats near lek sites.
- Promote use of government programs that provide incentives for

## Outcomes and Impacts

Working Lands for Wildlife will complement the existing Lesser Prairie Chicken Initiative, by providing additional targeted funding to help farmers and ranchers enhance, restore and protect habitat for lesser prairie chicken, and increase landowner confidence that the conservation practices they volunteer to implement will

Core Practices	Supporting Practices	
528 Prescribed Grazing (only a core practice where livestock are present)	314 Brush Management	512 Forage and Biomass Planting
645 Upland Wildlife Habitat Management	315 Herbaceous Weed Control	516 Pipeline
	338 Prescribed Burning	533 Pumping Plant
	340 Cover Crops	550 Range Planting
	342 Critical Area Planting	574 Spring Development
	378 Pond	614 Watering Facility
	382 Fence	642 Water Well
	394 Firebreak	643 Restoration of Rare and Declining Habitats
	410 Grade Stabilization	647 Early Successional Habitat Development and Management
	472 Access Control	
	500 Obstruction Removal	
	511 Forage Harvest	



## Partners

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