

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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# PARTNERING TO CONSERVE SAGEBRUSH RANGELANDS

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Intermountain West Joint Venture (IWJV) entered into a formal partnership in June 2016 to coordinate conservation practices on public and private lands. The partnership's purpose is to increase voluntary, incentive-based collaboration across jurisdictional

boundaries for people, wildlife, and local communities. As we reflect on our sixth year of this partnership, we're excited to present this summary of our [FY 2021 Annual Report](#) to capture the major accomplishments of the BLM, IWJV, and our Sage Capacity Team.



## THIS PARTNERSHIP FOCUSES ON SIX PRIORITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND BLM:

- Reduce catastrophic rangeland wildfires
- Prevent and control noxious and invasive weeds
- Restore wet meadow and riparian habitats
- Remove conifers that have expanded into sagebrush habitat
- Support Outcome-based Grazing efforts and implement range structural improvements
- Coordinate habitat protection and restoration associated with big game migratory corridor conservation efforts

Download the full FY 2021 Annual Report here: [PartnersInTheSage.com/annual-reports](https://PartnersInTheSage.com/annual-reports)

## A LOOK AT 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

-  52 BLM Field, District, or State Offices supported with capacity
-  3 new partner positions added
-  118 field projects completed
-  181,861 acres impacted
-  \$10,623,089 in project funding
-  651 entities in our partnership network
-  129 landowners engaged

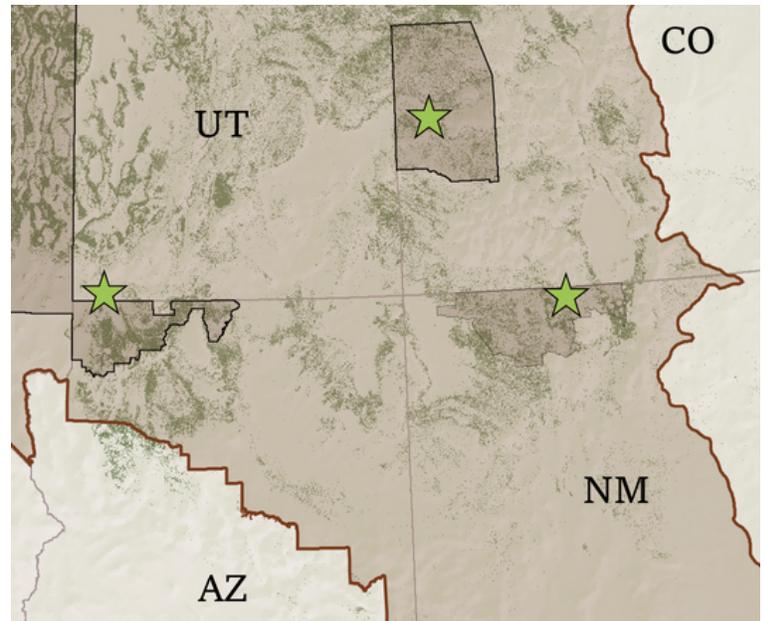


# SOUTHWEST

## CAPACITY IN THE SAGE

In 2018, the Secretary of the Interior signed [SO 3362](#), an order "Improving Habitat Quality in Western Big Game Winter Range and Migration Corridors." Three Sage Capacity Team positions are addressing this grand conservation challenge across large landscapes.

Located in Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona, these individuals facilitate partnerships in their respective regions and support field-based projects.



### FY 2021 BY THE NUMBERS



3 states supported with capacity positions specific to big game migration corridors



18 partners engaged



6,212 acres impacted

### FROM THE FIELD: KEEPING MIGRATIONS INTACT ON THE ARIZONA STRIP

The Arizona Strip BLM District is receiving a boost in capacity from Sage Capacity Team member Kaitlyn Yoder, whose position helps:

- Maximize financial resources to develop project proposals for habitat improvement.
- Increase the economic viability of grazing permit holders.
- Build relationships among stakeholders to enable landscape-level restoration of sagebrush and strengthen the conservation ethic in communities on the Arizona Strip.



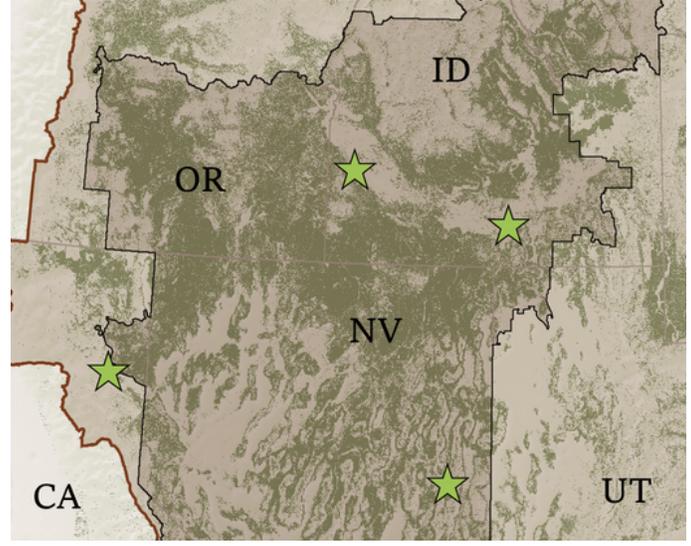
# GREAT BASIN

## CAPACITY IN THE SAGE



Four Sage Capacity Team members in three states across the Great Basin are supporting project implementation at the ground level in sagebrush country for the benefit of wildlife and people.

These sage rockstars are addressing major threats to sagebrush habitat, including encroaching conifers and invasive annual grasses.



### FY 2021 BY THE NUMBERS

- 83** partners engaged
- 86,090** acres impacted
- 12** field projects completed
- \$2,978,380** in project implementation

### FROM THE FIELD: BRUNEAU-OWYHEE SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT PROJECT

In Owyhee County, Idaho, public land managers, private landowners, and other partners have come together to remove encroaching conifers. This work builds from a growing body of science showing the benefits of conifer removal to sage-grouse. The Bruneau-Owyhee Sage-grouse Habitat Project aims to remove Western juniper from 617,000 acres.

Progress to date already makes this one of the largest conifer removal efforts in the sagebrush biome, with Sage Capacity Team member Connor White providing critical support for the partnership's landscape-scale effort and project outcomes.

### TELLING THE SAGEBRUSH STORY

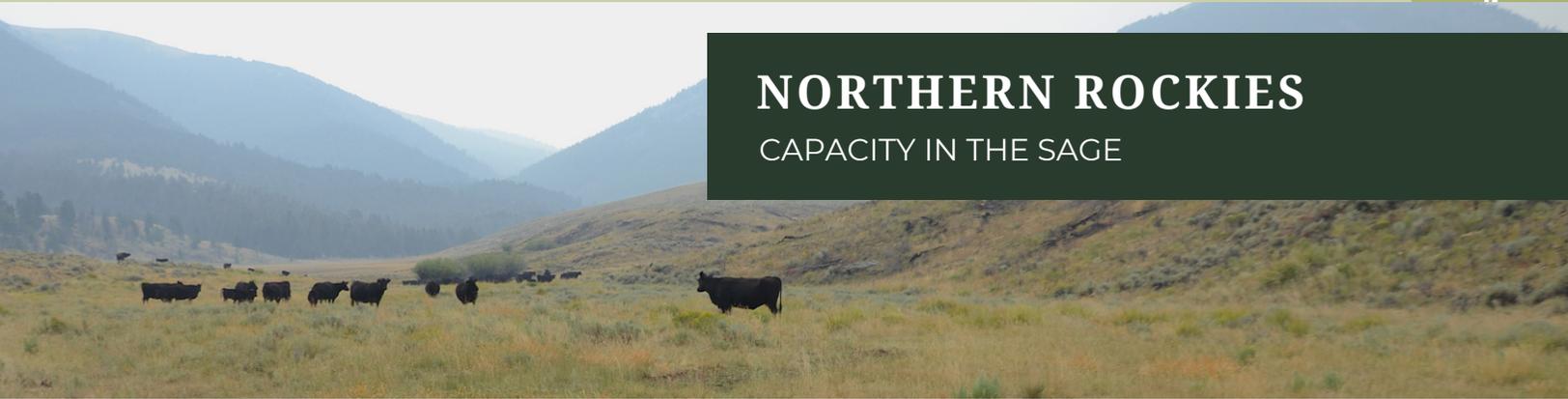
The following communications highlight FY 2021 accomplishments of these Sage Capacity Team members:

[Conifer Removal Restores Human and Wildlife Community Health](#)

[Horizon to Horizon: Improving Habitat at a Landscape Scale](#)

[Awesome Accomplishments by Sage Capacity Team Members](#)





# NORTHERN ROCKIES

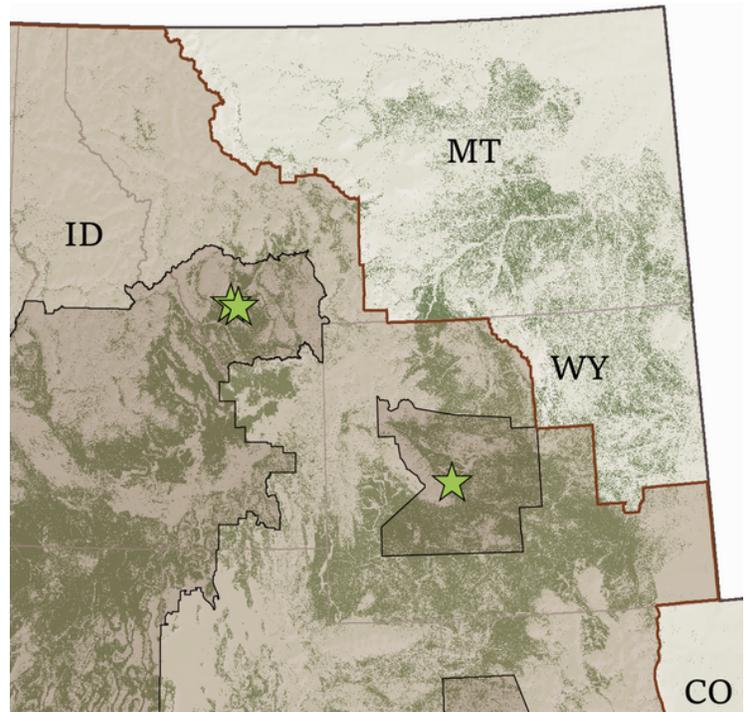
## CAPACITY IN THE SAGE

Three Sage Capacity Team positions in the Northern Rockies—two in Montana and one in Wyoming—are bringing increased energy and support to rural, sagebrush-dependent communities.

These highly skilled individuals focus on restoring wet meadows by building low-tech process based restoration projects (LTPBR), removing encroaching conifers in sagebrush habitat, and supporting the long-term health of local communities, landscapes, and wildlife.



Thanks to the partnerships these positions support, cross-boundary work is happening at landscape scales across the region.



### TELLING THE SAGEBRUSH STORY

The following communications highlight FY 2021 accomplishments of these Sage Capacity Team members:

[Southwest Montana Sagebrush Partnership Accomplishments Fact Sheet](#)

[The Conifer Conundrum](#)

[Introduction to Low-Tech Wet Meadow Restoration](#)



### FY 2021 BY THE NUMBERS



32 partners engaged



6,625 acres impacted



14 meetings/field tours conducted



\$848,814 in project implementation



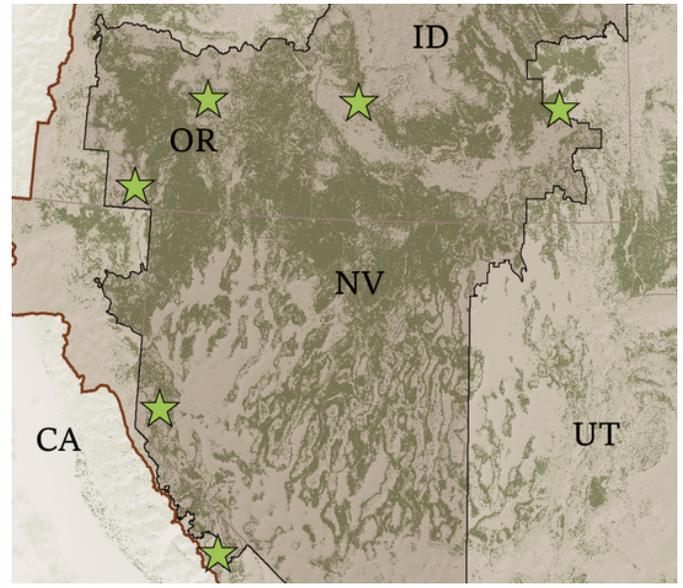
# FACILITATING PARTNERSHIPS

## CAPACITY IN THE SAGE



Six Sage Capacity Team members serve as liaisons between federal, state, and local governments and stakeholders, streamlining conservation efforts across interest groups and ownership boundaries.

Whether it's promoting viable working lands, facilitating partnerships between ranchers and land managers, or supporting partners as they navigate new and innovative ways of doing business, these individuals understand the importance of, and are key to facilitating work across boundaries.



### FROM THE FIELD: LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS IN VALE AND PRINEVILLE, OREGON

Julie Unfried, Sage-grouse Local Implementation Team (LIT) Coordinator for the Vale and Prineville LITs, assisted local partners in hosting a field tour in May 2021. Staff from the Vale BLM District Office, Oregon Department of State Lands, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Natural Resource staff for the Burns Paiute Tribe showcased post-fire recovery efforts one year after the 50,000-acre Indian Creek Fire.

Twenty-five participants from various interest groups attended the field tour to see treatments and discuss ideas about how the LIT space could help streamline future response efforts.



### FY 2021 BY THE NUMBERS

-  467 partners engaged
-  29,282 acres impacted
-  72 meetings/field tours conducted

### TELLING THE SAGEBRUSH STORY

The following FY 2021 communications highlight accomplishments of these Sage Capacity Team members:

- [The People Component to Land Management](#)
- [Updates to Outcome-Based Grazing Program Shared in New Webinars](#)
- [Hope After Rangeland Fire](#)

## ADDITIONAL FY 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### SCIENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS

#### TECHNICAL TRANSFER

##### *Sharing Science With the Field*

#### Low-Tech Wet Meadow Restoration Module Webinar

In [this virtual workshop](#), over 100 participants were introduced to reading the landscape to recognize meadow conservation opportunities, building low-tech “Zeedyk” structures, and project planning, implementation, and monitoring. This webinar effort was hosted in partnership with NRCS Working Lands for Wildlife.

#### Protecting Carbon in Sagebrush Rangelands Report

Rangelands are vast and store over 25% of carbon found in western ecosystems. As the climate warms and the West experiences more extreme weather events like drought and fire, as well as landscape-scale changes like conifer expansion and land-use conversion, it is more important than ever to promote management practices that protect existing carbon stored in rangelands.

In FY 2021, the IWJV produced a [full report](#) and [report synthesis](#) to help individuals across the West understand how management actions affect carbon sequestration and stored carbon in rangelands.



#### SAGEBRUSH COMMUNICATIONS

##### *Telling the BLM's Story*

#### Playing With Fire

[This video](#) encourages and empowers sagebrush country recreationists to:



- Learn more about the invasive weeds fueling rangeland wildfires
- Understand that recreation spreads weeds and starts fires
- Promote the value of sagebrush rangelands within their communities
- Support land managers in the conservation and management of this landscape

#### SageWest Communicators Workshop

In March 2021, the IWJV co-hosted [this virtual workshop](#) for communications professionals working in sagebrush country. Participants enjoyed presentations, panels, and breakout discussion groups on the topics of evaluating conservation communication impacts, studying sagebrush organizational networks, podcasting, and communicating with diverse audiences.



# STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

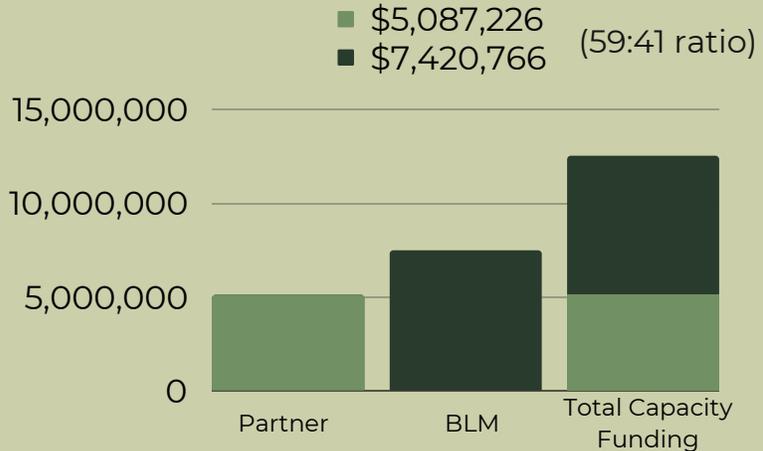
IWJV SUPPORT

## THE DURABILITY OF COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION

The power of this public-private partnership is that we interface with the people who are key to conserving this nationally important ecosystem across multiple scales with shared vision and purpose. Our partnership network includes 651 entities that work together to develop innovative approaches to landscape conservation, resulting in positive ecological, social, and economic outcomes for communities across the West.

### CAPACITY FUNDING FY 2016 - 2021

*Powerful Leverage for Conservation*



Between FY 2016 - 2021, new funding was added to support field delivery, communications and outreach, technical transfer, and other aspects of our work. Leveraging these investments through our diverse and dynamic partnership is making a difference in communities across the West for the future of conservation in the sagebrush biome.

Total capacity funding between FY 2016 - 2021:

**\$12,507,992**



*With a strong, expanding partnership and powerful record of accomplishments, we're working across boundaries to build capacity and achieve durable impacts. As we look toward future years, our goal is to continue inspiring partnership and success in the sage.*



## LEARN | JOIN | CONSERVE

*You can help grow this partnership!  
Contact us to learn more.*

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Learn more about our partnership by visiting  
[www.PartnersInTheSage.com](http://www.PartnersInTheSage.com)



INTERMOUNTAIN WEST  
JOINT VENTURE

