



# Mountain-Prairie Region

## *Region 6 External Affairs*

### *FY 2014 Accomplishments*

#### Overview

The Mountain-Prairie Region External Affairs Office is responsive to the public, media, Congress, Tribes, partners, other stakeholders, Headquarters, DOI and the regional office and field stations in communicating and facilitating information about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's programs, issues and activities in the eight-state region. External Affairs strives to be a "one stop" shop for regional communication goals and objectives.

#### Our Goals

1. Increase the effectiveness of internal communications throughout the Region.
2. Develop strategic, proactive activities and approaches to support Regional and Service Priorities.
3. Establish mutually beneficial communications partnerships and campaigns.
4. Implement measures to increase and monitor the effectiveness of External Affairs activities.



*Greater sage-grouse on a lek /*  
Tatiana Gettelman

#### Public Affairs:

External Affairs identifies and communicates Service issues of public interest and concern. We provide outreach rollout and advice on issues, activities, and actions of regional significance. We assist with outreach strategy development, media relations, partnership building, success stories, campaigns, after action reviews, internal communications, field visit coordination, and special events planning.

#### *Accomplishments for 2014:*

- Facilitated and responded to over 100 media inquiries.
- Developed over 40 communications plans, disseminated over 100 news releases and produced 90 top stories.
- Submitted articles to national Service publications including Fish and Wildlife News, and Endangered Species Bulletin.
- Coordinated media events including Ivory Crush, black-footed ferret release and Recovery Center.
- Drafted emails to all employees for major holidays.
- Managed and populated Regional blog.
- Distributed Regional Director surrogate species monthly messages to employees.
- Conducted media and social media training at Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge.
- Developed and featured Wilderness Act 50th Anniversary articles.
- Utilized live web cam to capture black-footed ferrets.
- Developed sage-grouse fact sheet.
- Created 4 PowerPoint presentations on greater sage-grouse for RD, DRDs, USFWS Director, etc.
- Reviewed/edited numerous documents, including sage-grouse Q&As, Decision Analysis Framework.
- Distributed daily clips/weekly clip memo on greater sage-grouse.
- Attended Bi-Annual Greater Sage-Grouse Workshop in Elko, NV.
- Organized greater-sage grouse coordination meeting with R1/R8 in Portland, OR.
- Developed and implemented 7 communications plans for National issues;
  - Greater sage-grouse
  - Greater sage-grouse Data Call/ CED communications plan
  - Energy (wind energy)
  - Ivory Crush
  - Eagle Conservation Plan
  - Eagle Repository
  - Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program
- Developed and implemented 39 communications plans for high-profile, Regional issues;
  - Arctic grayling
  - Black-footed Ferret (SHB)
  - Cokeville Meadows CCP
  - Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery
  - Coral Pink Sand Dunes Tiger Beetle
  - Crisis Communications Strategy
  - Graham's Beartongue
  - Grizzly Bear Conservation Plan
  - Greater Sage-grouse
  - Gunnison Sage-grouse
  - Ivory Crush
  - Keystone Biological Opinion
  - Least Chub
  - Lesser Prairie Chicken
  - Lynx
  - National Bison Range Annual Funding Agreement
  - New Mexico Jumping Mouse
  - Niobrara Confluence and Ponca Bluffs
  - Northern long-eared bat
  - Pallid Sturgeon
  - Prairies Conservation Campaign
  - Prairie Pothole Wetlands Report
  - Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse
  - Prescribed Burn RMA
  - Quivira NWR CCP and EA
  - Rocky Mountain Arsenal CCP
  - Rocky Flats RMG



*United States Capitol / Architect of the Capitol*

- Safety Communications Strategy
- Salt Creek Tiger Beetle
- San Luis Valley CCP/EIS
- Section 6 grants
- Sierra Madre Choke Cherry Wind Energy
- Southwest Willow Flycatcher
- Topeka Shiner
- Utah Prairie Dog
- White River Beardtongue
- Wolf Livestock Demo Project
- Wolverine
- Yellow-billed Cuckoo

### **Congressional Affairs:**

External Affairs serves as the liaison between the Service, Congress and other political entities in the region. We monitor legislative and policy issues at local, state and Congressional levels; maintain communication with state and Congressional levels and with state and district Congressional offices in the region; coordinate Congressional outreach activities with field stations; provide policy analysis and recommendations to the Regional Directorate; and serve as the regional point-of-contact for the Service's Headquarters of Congressional and Legislative Affairs.

#### *Accomplishments for 2014:*

- Communicated monthly with nearly 50 state and Congressional staffers regarding species listing decisions, constituent concerns and proposed legislation.
- Led Congressional outreach on a number of listing decisions, including lesser prairie-chicken, Gunnison prairie dog, and Coral Pink Sand Dunes tiger beetle.
- Managed Congressional operations

for controversial/high-profile issues such as: Ouray NWR oil and gas development, Wyoming Toad Recovery Plan, Ivory Crush, Chokecherry-Sierra Madre, wolverine, and those issues pertaining to communications rollouts.

- Answered multiple Congressional inquiries including Prebles Meadow Jumping Mouse, Colorado flood recovery and greenback cutthroat trout recovery.
- Developed monthly Congressional e-newsletter and communications strategy.

### **Tribal Affairs:**

External Affairs serves as a communications connection point to the 39 federally-recognized Tribes in the region. We support Service program areas in their conservation outreach work with Tribes. We monitor Tribal natural resources and conservation issues within the Tribes. We offer financial, technical, outreach and education for Tribal efforts to protect, preserve and conserve fish and wildlife resources on Tribal lands.

#### *Accomplishments for 2014:*

- Developed regional Tribal Strategic Plan.
- Hosted regional Tribal Roundtable.
- Hosted Eagle Summit.
- Funded 3 Tribal Wildlife Grants (TWG) valued at \$600K.
- Released 4 issues of Tracks Tribal newsletter with approximately 100 articles.
- National Eagle Repository Tribal consultations.
- Increased Tribal organization partnership efforts.
- Sponsored Tribal Law Enforcement Officer Training.
- Developed Tribal Sagebrush Outreach Plan.
- Dedicated 120K in reprogram funds to on-the-ground conservation projects.
- Worked with National Eagle Repository to develop online processes to improve Native American access to eagle feathers.

### **Digital Communications:**

External Affairs provides digital communications for the Region as it pertains to web design, content development and maintenance; social media (Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, Tumblr, blogs, etc.); graphic design for publications and informational materials; video production; and partnership campaign development.

### **Web:**

- Launched new greater sage-grouse website.
- Trained greater-sage lead on how to operate and update content on the website.
- Developed and tracked new webpages with Google Analytics.
- Designed, created, coded, and tested new webpages, style sheets, and PHP scripts.
- Nearly completed development of new R6 website.

### **Social Media:**

- Managed and supervised management of 39 social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, Instagram).
- Interacted 597,900 times with 190,100 individuals, resulting in 125,000,000 media impressions.
- Received 569,800 messages from the public.
- Gained 14,600 new Twitter followers.
- Gained 17,900 Facebook fans.
- Generated 285,900 website visits.
- Received 28,936 retweets.
- Posted 1,375 photos.
- Received more than 5 million views on Flickr.



*Golden eagle / USFWS*



125th Anniversary Leadville NFH design



Prairie potholes/USFWS

- Grew to a total of 9,283,321 Flickr photo views.
- Grew to a total of 61,512 followers (Facebook and Twitter).
- Completed over 24 social media posts for greater sage-grouse.
- Created national hashtag #WildlifeWins during the Superbowl, creating 1,984,940 media impressions.
- Awarded Blue Pencil & Gold Screen award for co-organizing digital communications workshop.

**Graphics:**

- Created two infographics and several other graphics in support of regional campaigns (Prairies Conservation, Greater sage-grouse).
- Distributed 3 issues of quarterly online regional newsletter.
- Produced 10 factsheets for outreach.
- Designed and produced a regional pop-up exhibit for events.
- Designed poster and logo for the Leadville 125th Anniversary event.
- Developed and designed several graphic documents including Tribal Strategic Plan, Crisis Comms Operation Plan, Standard Operating Procedures, Annual Work Plan, and the Year in Review annual report.

**Partnerships/Campaigns:**

- External Affairs works with federal, state, NGOs and other partners to work on and deliver national and regional campaigns.
- Worked with Sage Grouse Initiative, Institutes for Journalism and

- Natural Resources planning a 2015 journalism field tour.
- Assisted Colorado Parks and Wildlife, University of Colorado and the U.S. Forest Service with media on greenback cutthroat trout reintroduction at Zimmerman Lake in northern Colorado.
- Co-led Prairies Conservation Campaign (strategy, messaging, funding opportunities, etc.) and led the digital implementation, which to date has resulted in over 1 million online impressions.
- Rolled out black-footed ferret social media campaign with partners.
- Coordinated Ivory Crush Event with Headquarters and International Affairs.
- Provided support to Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program (through March 2014).
- Deployed over a 1,000 “Get Your Goose On” replica towel placards to every region.

**Administrative:**

- External Affairs provides administrative support to the region on programs and activities.
- Distributed weekly report of high priority issues to Headquarters from all regional programs.
  - Sent daily news clips via Cision with relevant Service articles and information.
  - Organized and gathered briefing materials for WAFWA, AFWA, North American.

- Supported Regional Director’s office as main administrative back-up.
- Managed Data Tracking System for EA and RD.

**Operations:**

- Updated EA strategic plan.
- Developed EA annual work plan.
- Developed new SOPs.
- Hired two new FTEs.
- Held EA staff retreat.
- Hired fellow through the Director’s Fellowship Program to support Tribal Affairs.

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