

Team ready to champion sage grouse conservation

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CARSON CITY, Nev. (AP) — A new technical committee has been named in Nevada to implement a state plan to protect sage grouse.

It's the next step in an ongoing effort in Nevada to prevent a listing of the bird on the Endangered Species List, something officials fear could be devastating to rural economies.

The Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team meets for the first time Feb. 21.

Multiple state agencies and the Sagebrush Ecosystem Council, established by Gov. Brian Sandoval earlier this year, will guide the team along the way.

The team's initial costs are fully covered by the general fund because the Interim Finance Committee appropriated \$280,000 for the initiative in December. The governor's budget for the next biennium proposes using the general fund for about 25 percent of the team's approximately \$910,000 overhead.