



# Financial Assistance Available for Juniper Removal in Sage-Grouse Habitat



Since the late 1800's, juniper has subtly been invading vast acreages of rangeland in eastern Oregon that were once dominated by grasses, wildflowers and shrubs. Although juniper is a native plant, fire suppression has allowed this tree to expand to sites it never occupied historically. As juniper invades rangelands, it gradually results in a number of resource problems, such as reduced forage production, increased soil erosion, altered wildlife habitat, and reduced stream and spring flows.

### Sage-Grouse and Trees Don't Mix

Besides affecting your bottom line by reducing forage production, juniper invasion is severely impacting rangeland wildlife like mule deer and sage-grouse. These wildlife species depend primarily upon the shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers that are lost when trees move in. Sage-grouse, in particular, are sensitive to juniper invasion and their populations have declined dramatically due to the loss of habitat to trees.

### Early Intervention Is the Key

Once junipers become dense and mature, the understory grasses and shrubs die out and it becomes much more difficult and expensive to restore forage production and reverse other resource problems. However, areas that are still in the early phases of juniper invasion often retain a large component of grasses and shrubs. This provides an opportunity to reverse resource degradation relatively inexpensively through the removal of young trees.

### Financial Assistance

NRCS has several voluntary conservation programs that provide financial assistance to landowners who want to treat juniper on their ranch. Participants in the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and Environmental

Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) receive payments up to 75 percent of the average cost to implement conservation practices according to approved specifications. Program participants may choose to do the work themselves or hire it out. NRCS reimburses participants the set rate upon successful completion of the practice.

### Example Conservation Practice Payment

- Mechanical juniper removal ~ \$141 per acre

Interested landowners can apply for these and other programs at the local NRCS office. Eligible applications are ranked and compete against other projects for funding. Generally, higher preference for juniper management is given for projects located in high priority sage-grouse habitat.

NRCS Field Office Phone Numbers for Counties with High Priority Sage-Grouse Habitat:

<b>Deschutes &amp; Crook Counties.....</b>	<b>541-923-4358</b>
<b>Lake County.....</b>	<b>541-947-2367</b>
<b>Harney County.....</b>	<b>541-573-6446</b>
<b>Malheur County.....</b>	<b>541-889-7637</b>
<b>Baker County.....</b>	<b>541-523-7121</b>



