



STATE OF NEVADA

Brian Sandoval, *Governor*

Bradley Crowell, *Director*

James R. Lawrence, *Deputy Director*

Dominique Etchegoyhen, *Deputy Director*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** July 18, 2018

**CONTACT:** JoAnn Kittrell, 775-684-2712, [jkittrell@dcnr.nv.gov](mailto:jkittrell@dcnr.nv.gov)

## **New agreement between Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Newmont Mining Corporation will protect Sage-grouse habitat and repair habitat lost in wildfire**

CARSON CITY, Nev. – Even before the Martin Fire burned more than 430,000 acres in northeast Nevada, many of which contained prime sage-grouse habitat near Paradise Valley, a project to enhance this critical sage-grouse habitat was already in the works. This week, Nevada Department of Conservation & Natural Resources’ Director, Bradley Crowell, signed an agreement with Newmont Mining Corporation to protect sage-grouse habitat at Newmont’s West IL Ranch.

Under the agreement, Newmont will utilize Nevada’s new Conservation Credit System (CCS). The CCS is designed as a debit and credit system to mitigate disturbances to the sagebrush ecosystem that serves as habitat for the imperiled sage-grouse. The Nevada CCS is a first effort of its kind in the Western United States to help protect sage-grouse habitat and avoid a future listing of the sage-grouse under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

The announcement by Newmont Mining and the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources represents the second “transaction” under Nevada’s groundbreaking CCS.

Under the agreement, the West IL Ranch project will enhance irrigation to increase and improve the quality and function of meadow habitat for late brood-rearing and expand habitat along the Owyhee River. Enhancements will consist of repairing and replacing degraded irrigation ditches and damaged head gate infrastructure to increase perennial grass cover, increase forb diversity, and decrease annual grass density.

According to Newmont’s rangeland ecologist, Chris Jasmine, “Most of Newmont’s ranch operations are within Nevada’s sagebrush ecosystem and provide a wide range of habitat and biological diversity. This CCS transaction allows improvements to habitat, while improving ranch operations.”

The project meets commitments Newmont made under a first of a kind Conservation Framework Agreement (CFA) in August 2016. The CFA, signed by Newmont, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the State of Nevada, is a collaborative commitment to conserve and enhance sagebrush habitats in Nevada.

As part of the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program is actively working with numerous landowners, land users, and land managers to finalize additional transactions using the CCS. The innovative CCS program was created by the State of Nevada to preserve and enhance sage-grouse habitats through land exchanges that will offset environmental impacts from significant development, and aims to maintain the multiple-use concept on public land, and to improve habitats on private and public lands.

The CCS is a significant component of a proactive plan developed by the State of Nevada, in conjunction with various stakeholders, to conserve sage-grouse and their habitats, while responsibly maintaining the economic viability of industry and protecting other responsible uses of Nevada's natural resources.

To learn more about the Nevada Sagebrush Ecosystem Program, visit [www.sagebrusheco.nv.gov](http://www.sagebrusheco.nv.gov).

### **About the Sagebrush Ecosystem Program**

The Nevada Sagebrush Ecosystem Program is a collaborative, multi-disciplinary program established to protect and enhance the sagebrush landscape. The sagebrush ecosystem, in addition to being home for much of the state's plants and wildlife, is an integral part of Nevada's culture and economy. The ecosystem program is focused on providing solutions and actions to the myriad of threats challenging the condition of the ecosystem and the plants, animals, and people dependent upon the health and resiliency of this landscape.

For more information contact:

Kelly McGowan, Program Manager, 775-684-8600, [kmcgowan@sagebrusheco.nv.gov](mailto:kmcgowan@sagebrusheco.nv.gov)