



PROJECTS IN FOCUS – *What's new with our International Partners and "Sustainability in Prisons Project"*

"Inmates help restore sage grouse habitat, sage grouse remains off endangered list due to prisoners' efforts".....

Over the past couple of years we've highlighted several excellent projects in the Sustainability in Prisons Project (SPP) in Washington State, US; and we thought we would look at their most recent project, which is based on growing sage brush seedlings to support the declining Sage grouse (Fig 1).

The "sagebrush in prisons" project is a collaborative effort between the Nevada Department of Corrections, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Institute for Applied Ecology (IEA), a private, non-profit wildlife and habitat conservation group based in Oregon.

The sagebrush project is "jump starting" sage grouse habitat recovery. Otherwise, native sagebrush (there are more than 350 species of it) normally takes 30 to 50 years to re-establish itself in burned areas according to the IAE.

Prison inmates are currently growing 160,000 sagebrush (Fig 2) for restoring burned areas and to support the greater sage grouse. This model program, supported by the BLM, is designed to be transferable to correctional facilities throughout the West."

In 2016, IAE coordinated the Great Basin Sagebrush Project with inmates in seven states including Nevada growing 390,000 sagebrush and other native plants to restore habitat for sage grouse.

We can certainly see the similarities with our own "Acorns to Ancients" project which we run in collaboration with the Woodland Trust. Again we wish the SPP all the best, and hope that we can all learn from each others good practice; not just for future learning and skills for offenders, but to secure a future for our native wildlife.■



Want to know more about SPP or our own Ecology projects in prisons, then call Phil on: **0203 545 8548** or email: phil.thomas@justice.gsi.gov.uk