



News from Seney National Wildlife Refuge

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2015 Sharp-tailed Grouse Survey

At Seney National Wildlife Refuge

April 1st to May 14th

The sight and sound of sharp-tailed grouse dancing on a lek (dancing/breeding ground) is one of nature's true spectacles. Males stomp their feet as fast as they can, causing their tails to rattle. At the same time they inflate purple neck sacks, called gular, which produce a unique sound. Meanwhile the females sit back and watch carefully to select their mate. The romance is fleeting and the hen will be left to raise the young on her own. Couple this show with the early morning light of dawn and you have the backdrop for a wonderful and unforgettable morning.

As a citizen scientist you will be asked to hike one mile at first light to make it to the blind by dawn. Like the saying goes "The early bird gets the ..." well in the grouse world we are going to have to say hen. After reaching the blind you will take weather readings then rest for a bit before you begin to count. For one hour you will count the dancing grouse and the non-dancing grouse for one minute every ten minutes. The rest of the time is yours to watch, photograph, or video tape the grouse. Stay as long as you like before you hike out again.

Participants are required to watch a video and pass a short quiz prior to participating in the survey. Several dates are still available! Because of the nature of the study, we will try to pair people up into teams if you do not have a partner. However, a partner is not required to participate. For more information visit http://www.fws.gov/refuge/seney/events/STGR_survey.html or to sign up contact Sara Giles by email: Sara_Giles@fws.gov or call (906) 586-9851 x10.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information about Seney National Wildlife Refuge, visit www.fws.gov/refuge/seney/ or connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/seneyrefuge.