

# 2009 SHARP-TAILED GROUSE SURVEY PROTOCOL

*Adapted from the 2007 Greater Prairie-Chicken Survey Protocol (WDNR, Skuldt 2007) & 2009 Sharp-tailed Grouse Survey Protocol (WDNR, Hull 2008)*

*For the success of the survey it is very important that these instructions are adhered to.*

## SHARP-TAILED GROUSE DANCING GROUND SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Conduct surveys during peak breeding activity, which may vary annually due to weather conditions. Historically, peak has been identified between ~ **10 April- 25 April**.
2. Conduct surveys during clear, calm mornings (preferably temperatures 25-40°F, winds <10 mph, little to no precipitation). Record the weather conditions on each survey form (sky condition, wind code and direction, and temperature) at the start and end of surveys.  
**Note:** *It can be difficult to hear vocalizations upwind.*
3. Conduct surveys during highest activity: **45 minutes before sunrise to 1-2 hours after sunrise**.
  - a. Counts should be conducted with the aid of a blind.
  - b. Arrive prior to cock arrival on dancing ground (~ 1 hour before sunrise).  
**Do NOT** get out of a blind until **all hens** have left the dancing ground.
  - c. If this is not possible, or when dancing behavior is not occurring, you may attempt a flush count to get a count estimate, although birds will have to be recorded as unknown sex. Flush counts should **ALWAYS** be a last resort.

**These measures are in place to minimize disturbance of the birds.**

4. Count the number of males from one side to the other several times until the count of males is consistent. Count hens only after obtaining an accurate count of cocks. **Record total (maximum) number of cocks, hens, and unknown sex.**
5. **Record count method** (binoculars, spotting scope, flush count) and other observations, such as number of birds of unknown sex, presence of predators, competitors (e.g. pheasants), and flushing behavior.
6. Complete all survey materials and return them to the Washburn Ranger District Office. Survey materials can be dropped off in person or mailed **within 2 days** of completing the survey.

If mailing, submit to: USFS – Washburn Ranger District  
Attn: Brian Heeringa  
PO BOX 578  
Washburn, WI. 54891

**\*\*Remember to bring your binoculars, cameras and something to sit on. Dress appropriately for the weather in order to sit comfortably for several hours. Morning temperatures can easily stay at or near freezing during the survey period. Warm winter clothing and an extra blanket are recommended.**

Travel time to the blind from the city of Washburn is approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. If time allows before your scheduled survey date, we recommend traveling to the blind during daylight hours to become acquainted with the roads. Please do this in the late morning or afternoon to avoid disturbing any grouse that may be using the lek and/or anyone that may be in the blind. Be aware that roads and road shoulders are wet/soft during the spring break up period. Consider using a 4-wheel drive vehicle if one is available to you.

## Survey Timeframe

Each day includes times for arrival to the blind, official survey start, and sunrise.  
Green shading indicates days that the Unit 5 observation blind is open to the public.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>APRIL 2009</b>			1 Arrive: 5:43am Begin: 5:58am Sunrise: 6:43am	2 Arrive: 5:41am Begin: 5:56am Sunrise: 6:41am	3 Arrive: 5:39am Begin: 5:54am Sunrise: 6:39am	4 Arrive: 5:37am Begin: 5:52am Sunrise: 6:37am
5 Arrive: 5:35am Begin: 5:50am Sunrise: 6:35am	6 Arrive: 5:33am Begin: 5:48am Sunrise: 6:33am	7 Arrive: 5:31am Begin: 5:46am Sunrise: 6:31am	8 Arrive: 5:29am Begin: 5:44am Sunrise: 6:29am	9 Arrive: 5:28am Begin: 5:43am Sunrise: 6:28am	10 Arrive: 5:26am Begin: 5:41am Sunrise: 6:26am	11 Arrive: 5:24am Begin: 5:39am Sunrise: 6:24am
12 Arrive: 5:22am Begin: 5:37am Sunrise: 6:22am	13 Arrive: 5:20am Begin: 5:35am Sunrise: 6:20am	14 Arrive: 5:18am Begin: 5:33am Sunrise: 6:18am	15 Arrive: 5:16am Begin: 5:31am Sunrise: 6:16am	16 Arrive: 5:14am Begin: 5:29am Sunrise: 6:14am	17 Arrive: 5:13am Begin: 5:28am Sunrise: 6:13am	18 Arrive: 5:11am Begin: 5:26am Sunrise: 6:11am
19 Arrive: 5:09am Begin: 5:24am Sunrise: 6:09am	20 Arrive: 5:07am Begin: 5:22am Sunrise: 6:07am	21 Arrive: 5:05am Begin: 5:20am Sunrise: 6:05am	22 Arrive: 5:04am Begin: 5:19am Sunrise: 6:04am	23 Arrive: 5:02am Begin: 5:17am Sunrise: 6:02am	24 Arrive: 5:00am Begin: 5:15am Sunrise: 6:00am	25 Arrive: 4:58am Begin: 5:13am Sunrise: 5:58am
26 Arrive: 4:57am Begin: 5:12am Sunrise: 5:57am	27 Arrive: 4:55am Begin: 5:10am Sunrise: 5:55am	28 Arrive: 4:53am Begin: 5:08am Sunrise: 5:53am	29 Arrive: 4:52am Begin: 5:07am Sunrise: 5:52am	30 Arrive: 4:50am Begin: 5:05am Sunrise: 5:50am		

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>MAY 2009</b>					1 Arrive: 4:49am Begin: 5:04am Sunrise: 5:49am	2 Arrive: 4:47am Begin: 5:02am Sunrise: 5:47am
3 Arrive: 4:46am Begin: 5:01am Sunrise: 5:46am	4 Arrive: 4:44am Begin: 4:59am Sunrise: 5:44am	5 Arrive: 4:43am Begin: 4:58am Sunrise: 5:43am	6 Arrive: 4:41am Begin: 4:56am Sunrise: 5:41am	7 Arrive: 4:40am Begin: 4:55am Sunrise: 5:40am	8 Arrive: 4:38am Begin: 4:53am Sunrise: 5:38am	9 Arrive: 4:37am Begin: 4:52am Sunrise: 5:37am
10 Arrive: 4:35am Begin: 4:50am Sunrise: 5:35am	11 Arrive: 4:34am Begin: 4:49am Sunrise: 5:34am	12 Arrive: 4:33am Begin: 4:48am Sunrise: 5:33am	13 Arrive: 4:31am Begin: 4:46am Sunrise: 5:31am	14 Arrive: 4:30am Begin: 4:45am Sunrise: 5:30am	15 Arrive: 4:29am Begin: 4:44am Sunrise: 5:29am	16 Arrive: 4:28am Begin: 4:43am Sunrise: 5:28am
17 Arrive: 4:27am Begin: 4:42am Sunrise: 5:27am	18 Arrive: 4:25am Begin: 4:40am Sunrise: 5:25am	19 Arrive: 4:24am Begin: 4:39am Sunrise: 5:24am	20 Arrive: 4:23am Begin: 4:38am Sunrise: 5:23am	21 Arrive: 4:22am Begin: 4:37am Sunrise: 5:22am	22 Arrive: 4:21am Begin: 4:36am Sunrise: 5:21am	23 Arrive: 4:20am Begin: 4:35am Sunrise: 5:20am
24 Arrive: 4:19am Begin: 4:34am Sunrise: 5:19am	25 Arrive: 4:18am Begin: 4:33am Sunrise: 5:18am	26 Arrive: 4:18am Begin: 4:33am Sunrise: 5:18am	27 Arrive: 4:17am Begin: 4:32am Sunrise: 5:17am	28 Arrive: 4:16am Begin: 4:31am Sunrise: 5:16am	29 Arrive: 4:15am Begin: 4:30am Sunrise: 5:15am	30 Arrive: 4:15am Begin: 4:30am Sunrise: 5:15am
31 Arrive: 4:14am Begin: 4:29am Sunrise: 5:14am						