

Montana's Greater Sage- Grouse Stewardship Grants



MONTANA SAGE GROUSE
Habitat Conservation Program

Montana's Greater Sage-Grouse Stewardship Grants

- Purpose
- Eligibility
- Process

Purpose

The purpose of the Montana Greater Sage-Grouse Stewardship Act

- Provide competitive grant funding
- Voluntary, incentive-based conservation measures
- Emphasize maintaining, enhancing, restoring, expanding, and benefiting sage grouse habitat and populations
- Private lands, and public lands as needed
- Within Core Areas, General Habitat, or Connectivity Areas.

Grant Applicant Eligibility

Only “organizations” or “agencies” are eligible to receive grant funding.

- Organization: private entity registered with the Montana Secretary of State.
- Agency: a department, agency, or instrumentality of the state of Montana, a political subdivision of the state, or a Tribe

Grant Project Eligibility

- Located, at least in part, on land designated as Core Area, General Habitat, or Connectivity Area.
- Maintain, enhance, restore, expand, or benefit sage grouse habitat and populations
- May involve land owned by multiple landowners, including state and federal land

Eligible grant projects may include:

- Conifer reduction;
- Control invasive weeds;
- Maintenance, restoration, or improvement of sagebrush habitat;
- Conservation leases or permanent conservation easements;
- Reduce conversion of grazing land to cropland;
- Restoration of cropland to grazing land;
- Modification of fire management;
- Demarcation of fences;
- Reduction of raptor perching subsidies;
- Reduction of unnatural safe havens for predators;

Grant Evaluation Criteria

Grant projects should maintain, enhance, restore, expand, or benefit sage grouse habitat and populations

The evaluation criteria must give greater priority to proposed projects that:

- involve partnerships between public and private entities;
- provide matching funds;
- maximize the amount of credits generated per dollars of funds awarded.


New Conservation Side Web Application

MONTANA.GOV
OFFICIAL STATE WEBSITE

SERVICES AGENCIES SEARCH MONTANA.GOV

MT Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program ABOUT HELP MAP MITIGATION HELLO THERESE MANAGE PROJECTS NEW PROJECT

DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
CONSERVATION PROJECT



Montana Sage Grouse
Habitat Conservation Program

Two Greater Sage Grouse males duke it out. Lekking behavior is mainly found in birds, but also occurs in some mammals, pinnipeds, marine iguanas and fruit bats.

Photo Credit: Joel Maes



PROGRAM INFORMATION

Resources
[Join the Mailing List](#)
[Learn More](#)



MONTANA SAGE GROUSE OVERSIGHT TEAM

[Members](#)
[Meeting Archive](#)



GRANTS

[Grant Information](#)
[Stewardship Fund Grants](#)



PROJECTS

[Check if you are in habitat](#)
[Development Project](#)
[Quick Start Guide](#)
[Credit Project](#)

Introduction



Photo Credit: Richard Prodyers

Propose a conservation project in sage grouse habitat

1. Instructions

2. Basics

3. Activities

4. Questionnaire

5. Attachments

6. Review & Submit

Instructions

The project proposal submission process has a few parts:

Basic Information About Your Project

Describe your project involving permitted activities proposed in sage grouse habitats designated as core (blue), general (green), or connectivity (light-blue) habitats. If you're not sure which habitat zone your project is in, click the map to the right before entering Basic Information. For program details please see our FAQ.

Activities

TBD

Questionnaire: Project and Activity Description Details

Once your proposed activities are mapped and described, you will need to answer some questions based on your activity types.

Save Your Project for Later, Save and Continue, or Submit for Review

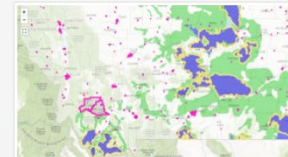
You'll have a chance to review a summary of your proposed project before you submit it for consultation. You do not need to complete your submission in one session – your work will be saved and the next time you log in, you'll be able to resume where you left off.

Help

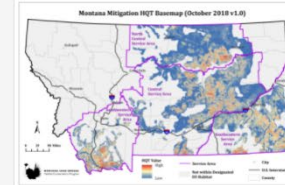
[Quick Start Guide for submitting projects](#)

[Information About the Montana Mitigation HQT Basemap](#)

If you run into any snags or have questions, please contact us.



Make sure your project is in sage grouse habitat



Mitigation HQT Basemap (October 2018 v1.0)

Basics

MT Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program ABOUT ▾ HELP ▾ MAP MITIGATION HELLO THERESE ▾ MANAGE ▾ PROJECTS ▾ NEW PROJECT ▾

Photo Credit: Richard Producers

Propose a conservation project in sage grouse habitat

- 1. Instructions
- 2. Basics**
- 3. Activities
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Project Information

Project Name:

Description:

Describe your complete project, not just portions of the project on federal or state land.

Project Contact Information

Name: Hartman, Therese

Email: Phone:

Mailing Address:

Additional Contact Info:

Describe and provide phone/email for people other than yourself that we might need to coordinate with while reviewing your project.

Additional Information

Why are you submitting a credit project to the Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program?
Please choose one:

- Select a statement below--
- My project is located in sage grouse habitat but its primary purpose is not sage grouse mitigation
- I want to offset the impacts of development projects
- I want to apply for a Stewardship Account grant**
- I want to apply for a Stewardship Account grant

Enter Spatial Data

- 1. Instructions
- 2. Basics
- 3. Activities
- 4. Questionnaire
- 5. Attachments
- 6. Review & Submit

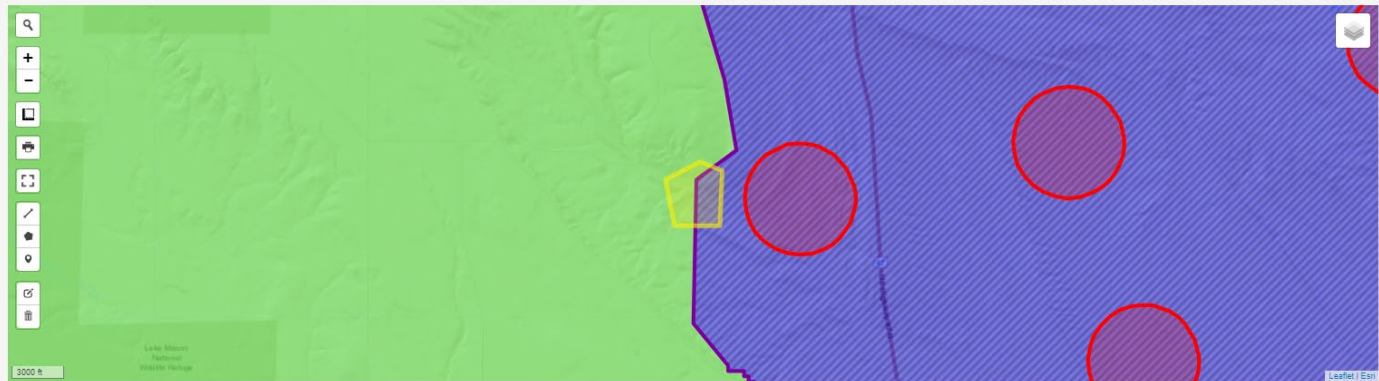
Activities for this project

If your project's activities are already mapped in GIS, you may upload a File Geodatabase (GDB, Shape, KMZ). Otherwise, you can create a drawing of your project's activities here:

- Zoom to your project area by holding down the Shift key and dragging a rectangle.
- To measure distances on the map, hover over the square ruler symbol below the zoom buttons and click Create a new measurement.
 - Click on the map to start the measurement and again to continue.
 - Click finish measurement and the line you have measured will remain until the page is refreshed.
 - The shaded area represents the area that your current measurement points (red dots) would encompass.
- Use the line tool for activities such as pipelines, communication lines, power lines, fence marking, etc.
- Use the polygon tool for activities such as leases, easements, building envelopes, mine sites, towers, wells, etc.
- Use the points tool for Perching and Nesting Deterrents
- Give each activity a name and description in the table below.

View list of [Activity Types and their associated Sub-Types](#).

Upload GIS File



Name	Feature	Type	*Width (ft)	Length (ft)	Area (acres)	EO Habitat Classes	Counties	TRS	Ownership	Notes
Jones CE	Polygon	Perpetual			220.588	EO-Core Area, EO-General Habitat	Musselshell	Township 11 North, Range 24 East, Sectio... More	Montana State Trust Lands	

Application Questions

Questions:

Implementation dates:
How long will the implementation of the activity take? Enter the date the implementation begins and the date implementation ends.

Start: End:

Maintenance dates:
How long will the project be on the landscape or how long will the activity occur? Enter the date the activities begin and the date regular operations or activities will stop.

Start: End:

Will you be restoring or enhancing any acres?
 Yes No

Easement holder:

Are there any existing surface use agreements?
 Yes No

Grant Request Amount:

Easement or Lease Duration:
For easements or leases, number of years or state perpetuity.

Do you need to reserve the right to develop on any other land aside from the building envelope?
 Yes No

Does this project include a habitat restoration or habitat enhancement component?
Please include spatial data for location or restoration or enhancement area, if applicable.
 Yes No

If the participating private landowners do not own the mineral rights, are the mineral right owners known?
 Yes No

Are there any existing mineral leases?
 Yes No

Is any portion of the project area enrolled in NRCS Farm Bill Programs?
 Yes No

Are there State Trust and/or BLM parcels within the boundary of the proposed project?
 Yes No

Please attach an estimated request and draft budget.
Grant funds may not be used to replace or supplement grantee operating budget unless the budget items directly relate to sage grouse conservation. If grant funds would be used to replace or supplement grantee operating budget, provide and explain.

Have matching funds been secured?
 Yes No

Have in-kind contributions been secured?
 Yes No

Estimated implementation timeline and project readiness:
Please describe when the easement or lease is expected to be initiated and completed.

Please list all project partners and/or cooperators:
Contact information and role for all persons, organizations, and agencies who (a) are involved in the project; (b) own lands in the project location; (c) own lands for which the grant applicant is claiming project benefits.

Upload Document Attachments

Attachments

Please upload documents pertinent to your proposed project, including Stewardship Plan, EAs, or other documentation identifying original boundaries. Multiple attachments can be uploaded at a time.

New Attachments

Attachment No file chosen

Use CTRL + Click (PC) or Command + Click (Mac) to select multiple files at once. You must select a type. Click Save at the bottom of the page to upload all files.

Type

Additional attachment types have been added.

Title

Description

The Grant Process

- MSGOT initiates a new Grant Cycle
- The Program sends out public notice

Grant Projects - Process

Pre-Application
Proposal &
Preliminary
Review Report

Obtain preliminary information to help decide whether to submit a Complete Application

- Submit the Pre-Application Proposal and spatial data using the web application
- The Program will apply the Habitat Quantification Tool (HQT) and determine other ecological metrics
- The Program provides a Preliminary Review Report to the potential applicant
- Would-be applicants decide whether to submit Complete Application

Formal Request
for Complete
Applications

Program issues formal request for Complete Applications

- Complete Applications, supporting information, final spatial data prepared and submitted to Program

Written Public
Scoping
Comments
Accepted

Accept initial public scoping comments on grant applications for MSGOT's consideration and initiate preparation of an environmental assessment if the project is selected for funding

- Program publishes all Complete Applications received and the Program's Preliminary Review Report on the Grants webpage
- Submit electronic comments through the web or postal mail

Application
Review and
Program's
Report

Review Complete Applications, obtain independent peer review and prepare Grant Recommendation Report for MSGOT

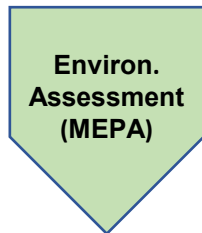
- Program calculates final HQT scores, determines projected number of credits created, other relevant ecological and situational metrics
- Independent Peer Review of Complete Applications, HQT results, and other metrics
- Program prepares Grant Recommendations Report for MSGOT

Grant Projects – Process continued



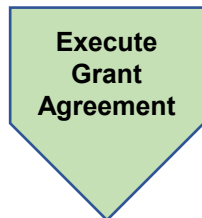
MSGOT meeting to select projects for funding and award amounts

- **MSGOT Meeting: presentations by grant applicants, review Complete Applications, supporting materials, HQT results and peer review, public scoping comments, and the Program's Grant Recommendations Report / Recommendations**
- **MSGOT discussion, additional public comment, and MSGOT selects recipients and award amounts**



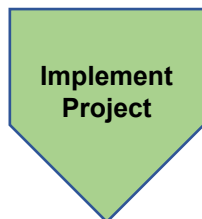
Complete MEPA environmental assessment and decision notice

- **Program completes environmental assessment, solicits public comment**
- **MSGOT chair reviews proposed record of decision so long as no significant issues raised by the public and no material changes to the project or award amount**
- **MSGOT reviews anew if significant issues raised by the public or material changes to the project**



Parties sign the grant agreement

- **Program, MSGOT and grant recipients execute grant agreements**
- **Administrative, fiscal, and legal support from host agency Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation as needed**



- **Grant recipient implements the project as soon as proposed decision notice is signed by MSGOT Chair and the Grant Agreement is executed**
- **Grant Recipient works with the Habitat Conservation Program and DNRC as necessary to implement project**
- **Program updates the mitigation credit registry**

Sagegrouse.mt.gov



MONTANA SAGE GROUSE
Habitat Conservation Program

Montana's Compensatory Mitigation Strategy for Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation:

CREDIT BALANCE REVIEW – 2021



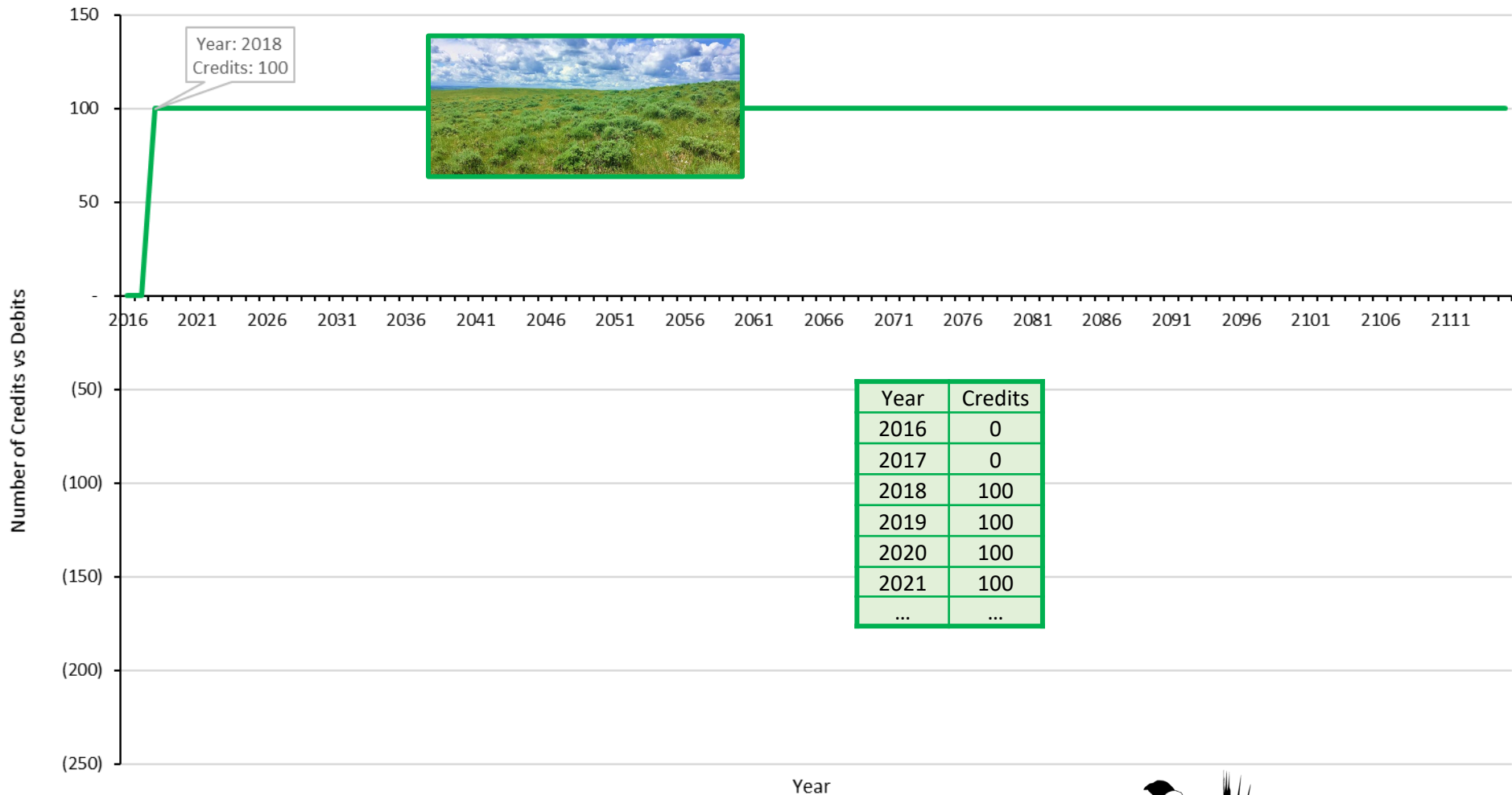
Montana Sage Grouse Oversight Team Meeting
11 February 2022



MONTANA SAGE GROUSE
Habitat Conservation Program

Credit Balance Review:

EXAMPLE

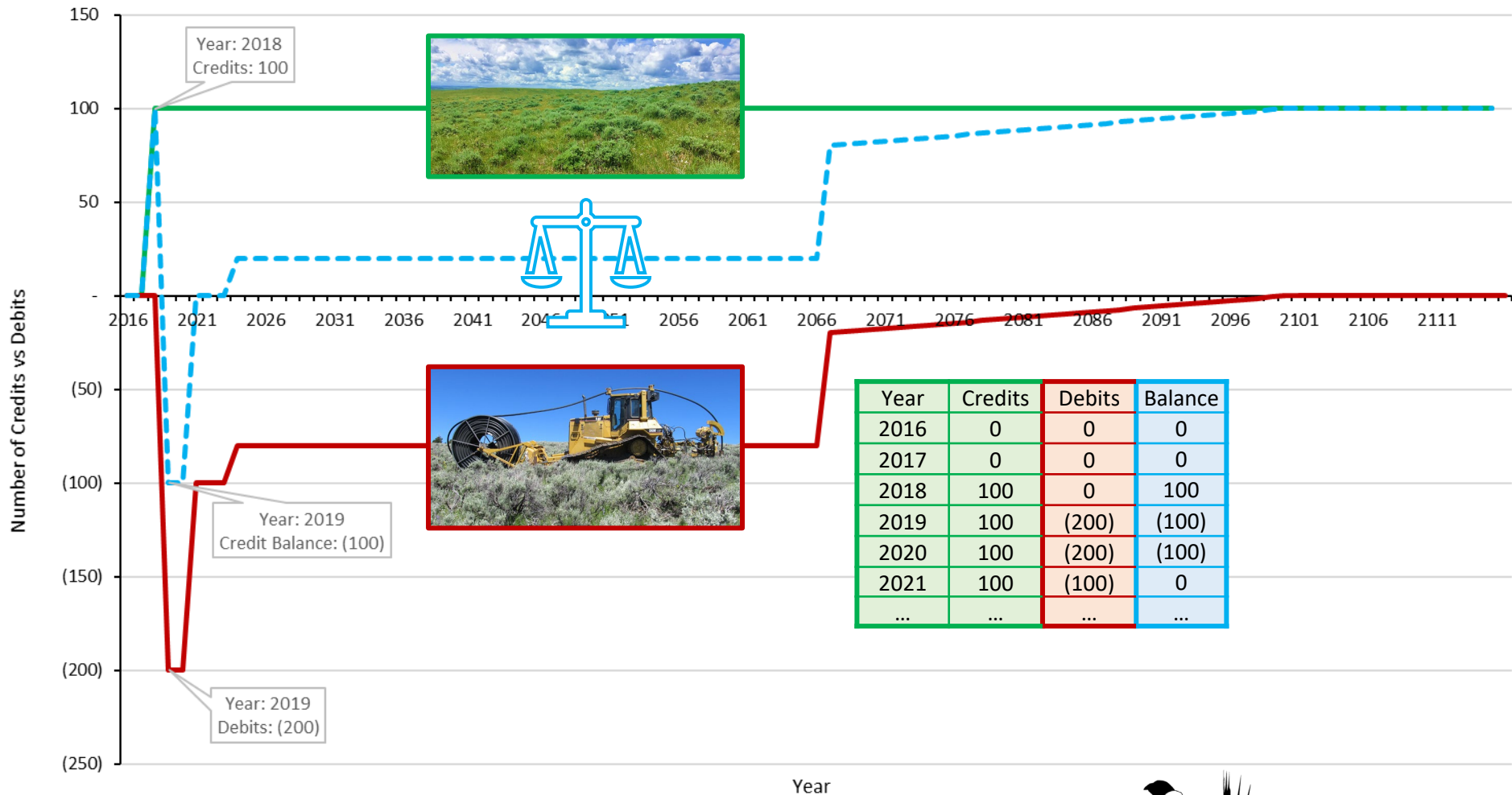


Credit Balance Review: EXAMPLE



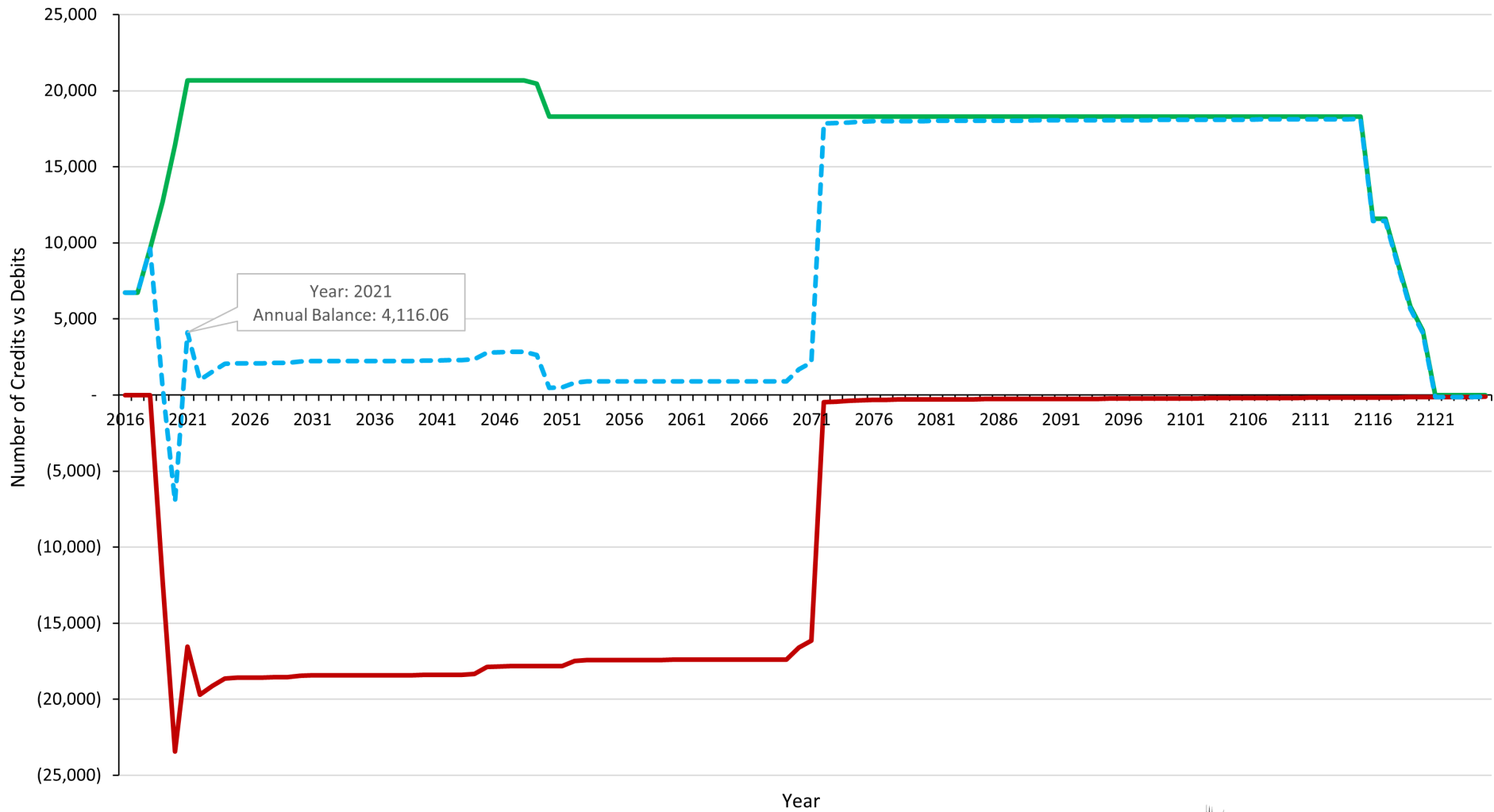
Credit Balance Review:

EXAMPLE



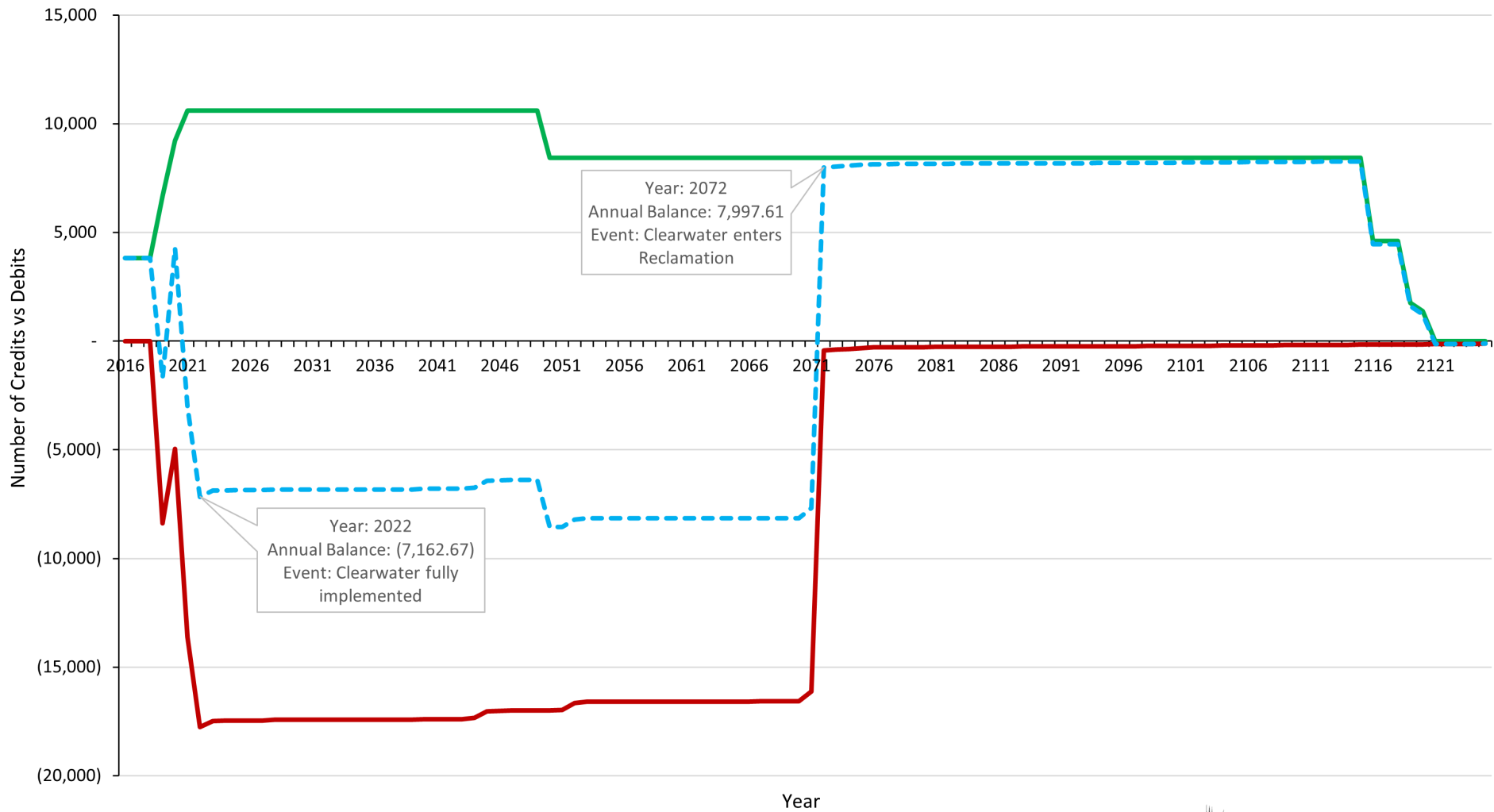
Credit Balance Review: *STATEWIDE*

- Credits
- Debits
- - - Credit Balance



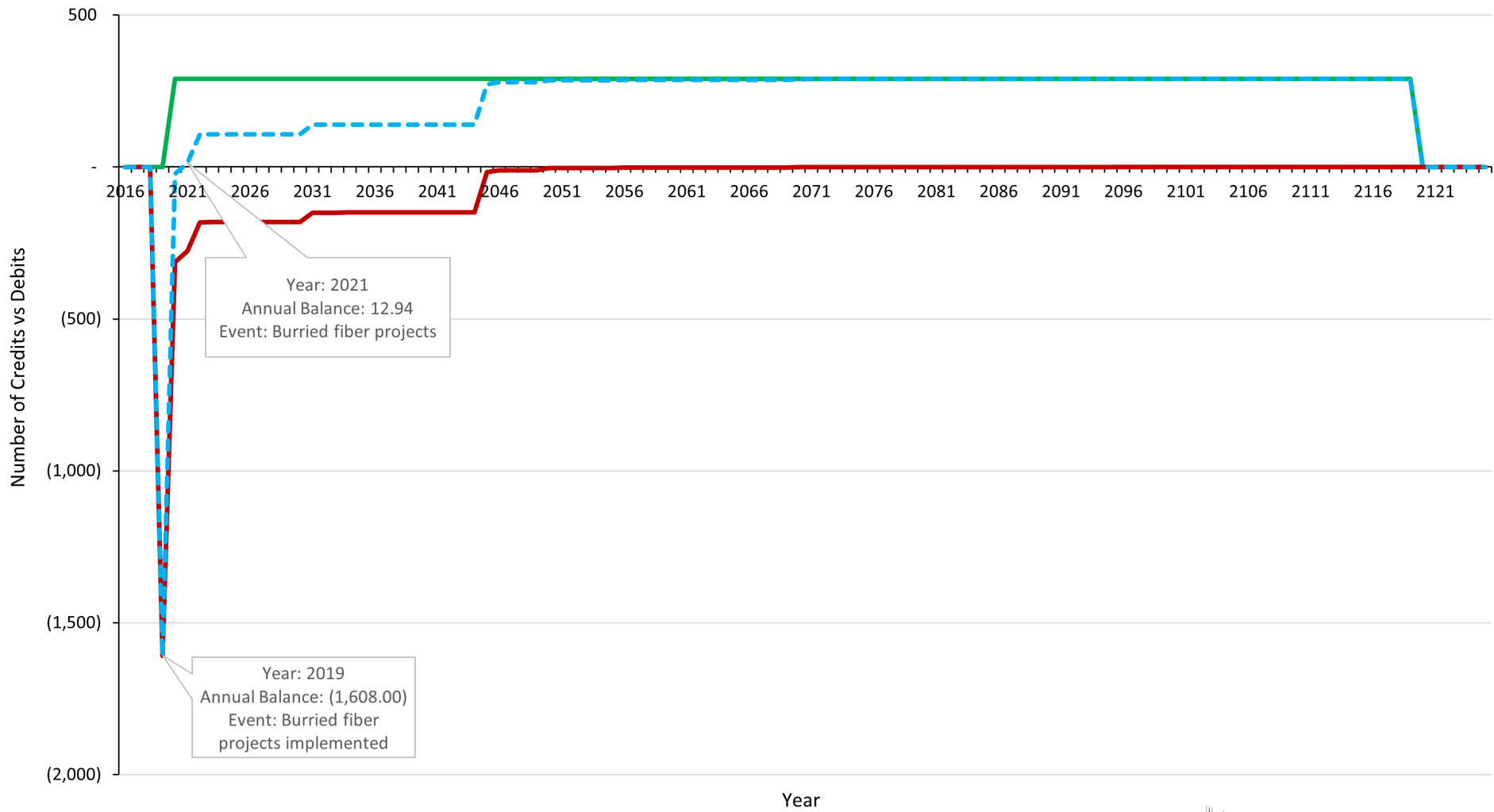
Credit Balance Review: *CENTRAL SERVICE AREA*

- Credits
- Debits
- Credit Balance



Credit Balance Review: *NORTH CENTRAL SERVICE AREA*

- Credits
- Debits
- - - Credit Balance



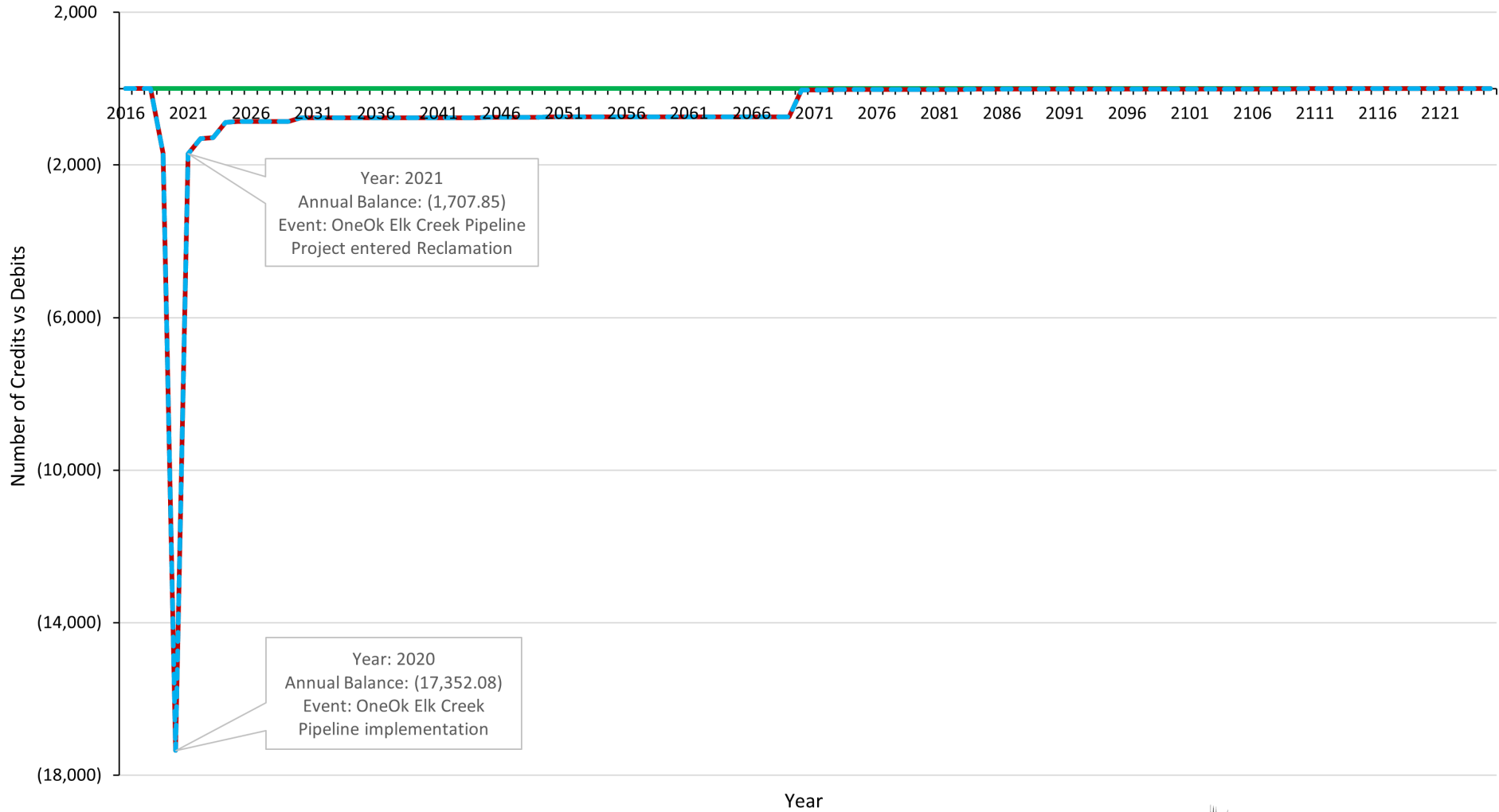
Year: 2021
Annual Balance: 12.94
Event: Burried fiber projects

Year: 2019
Annual Balance: (1,608.00)
Event: Burried fiber projects implemented



Credit Balance Review: *SOUTHEASTERN SERVICE AREA*

- Credits
- Debits
- - - Credit Balance



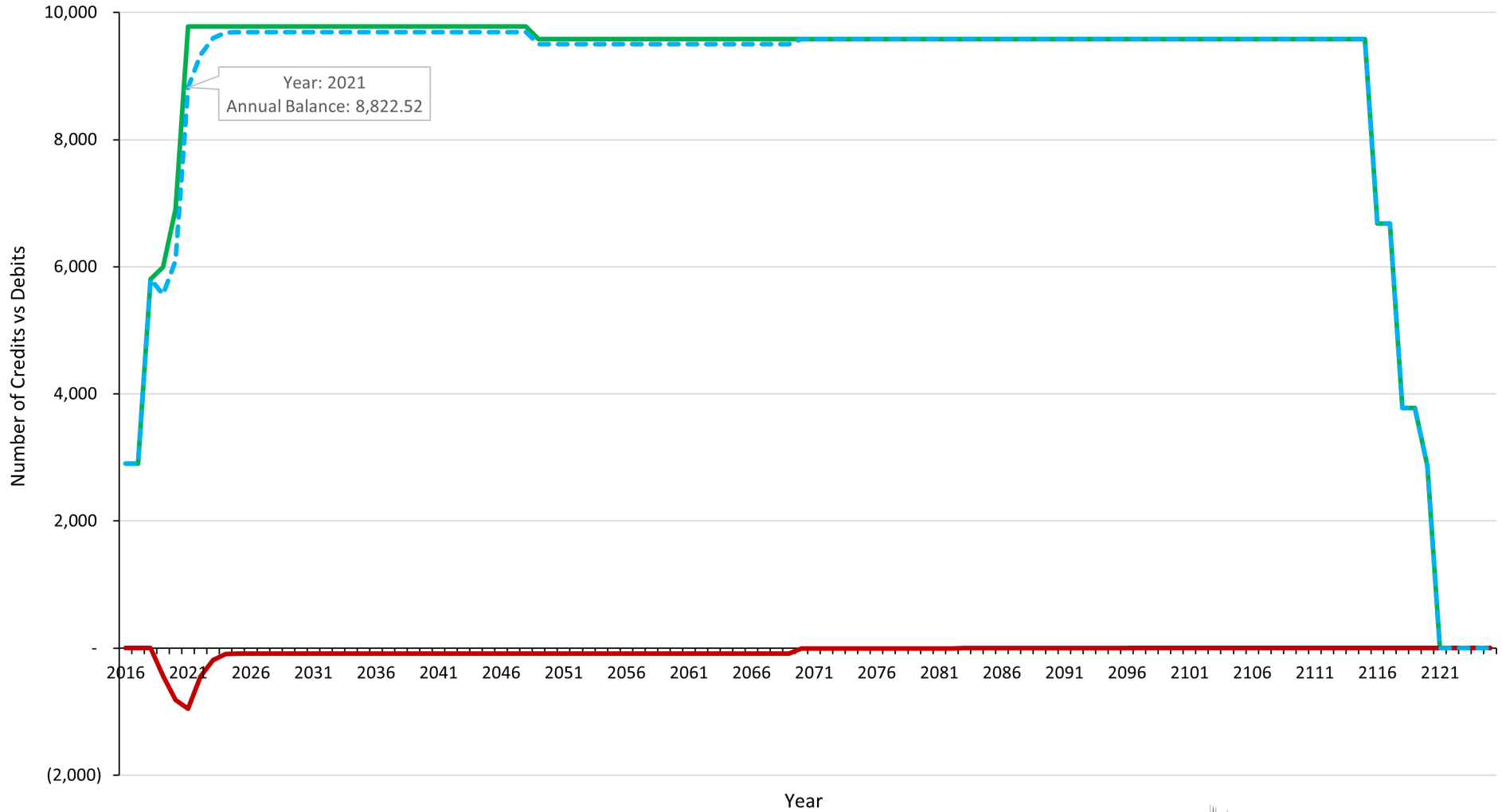
Year: 2021
Annual Balance: (1,707.85)
Event: OneOk Elk Creek Pipeline Project entered Reclamation

Year: 2020
Annual Balance: (17,352.08)
Event: OneOk Elk Creek Pipeline implementation



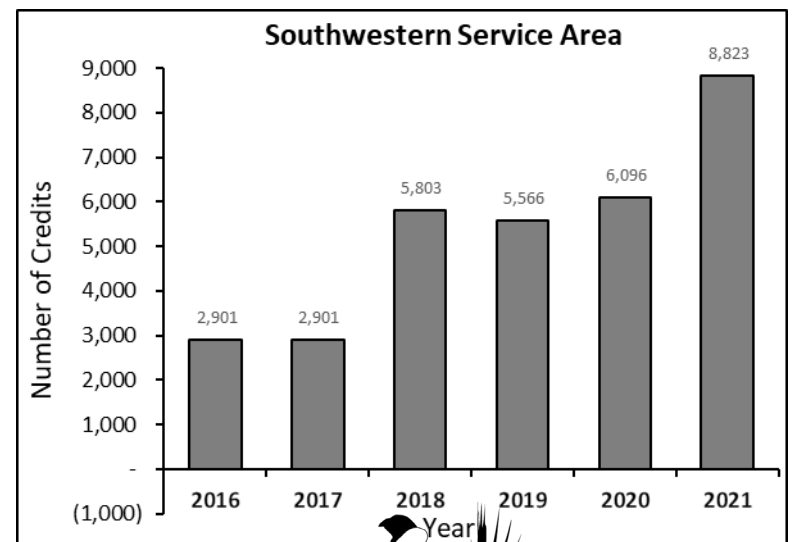
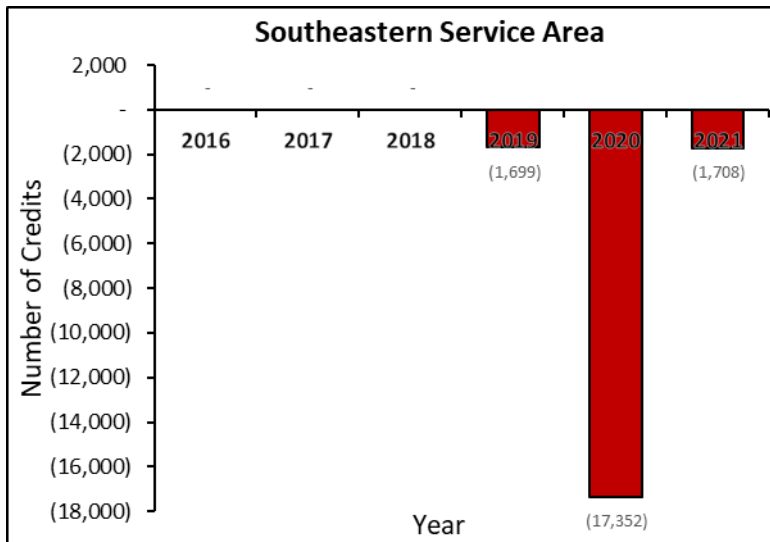
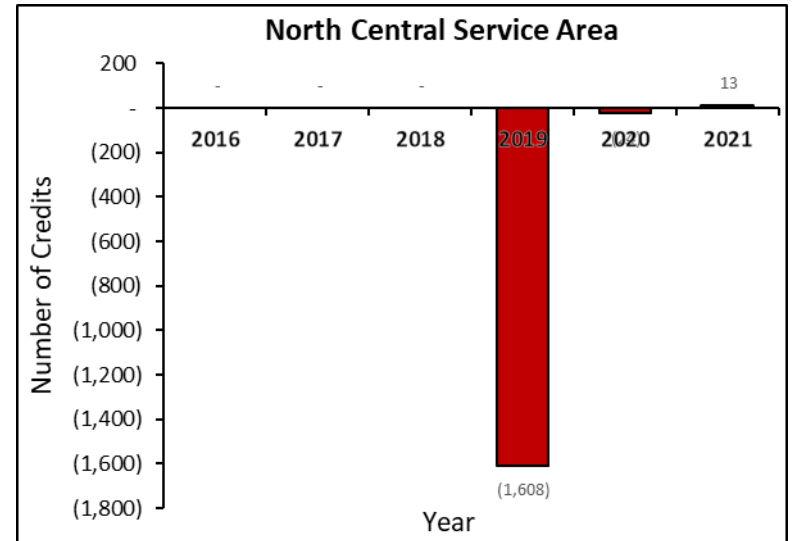
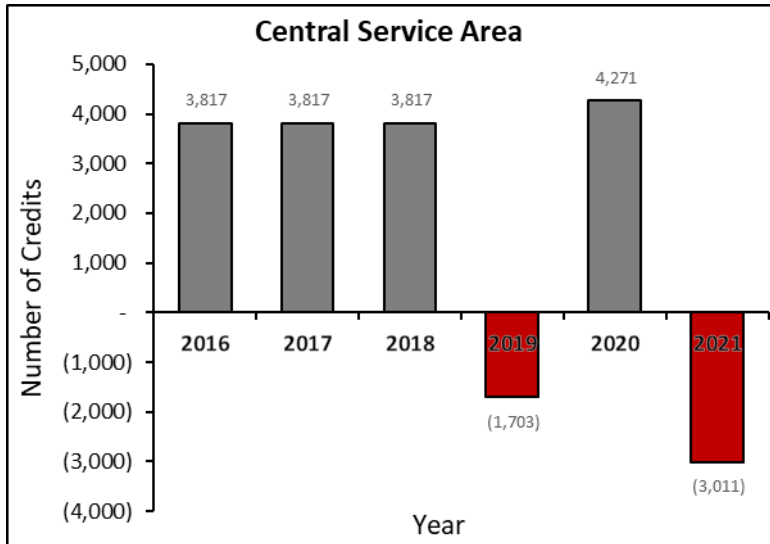
Credit Balance Review: *SOUTHWESTERN SERVICE AREA*

- Credits
- Debits
- Credit Balance



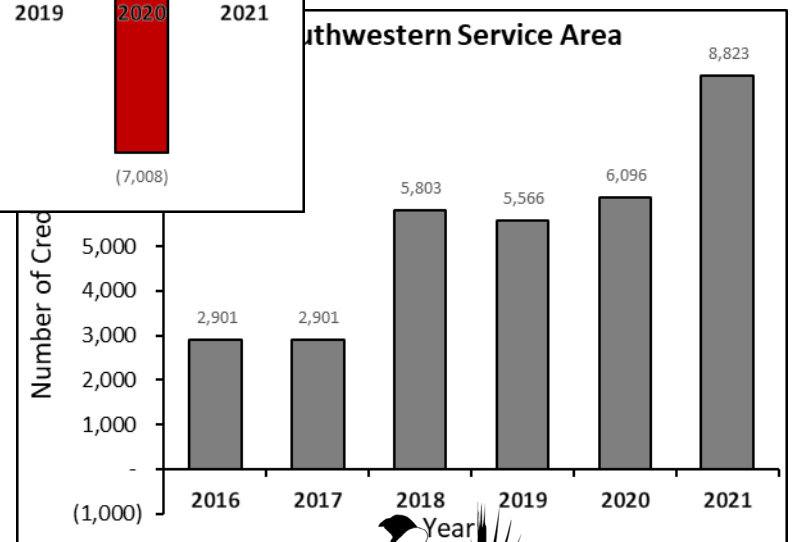
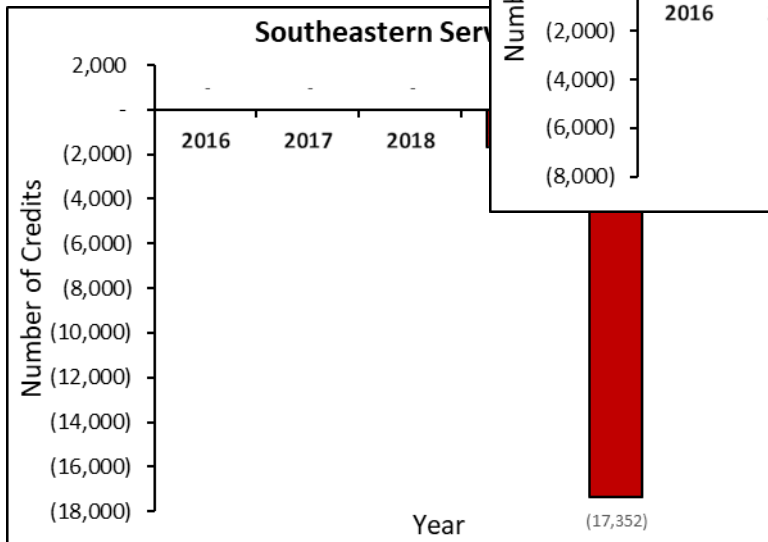
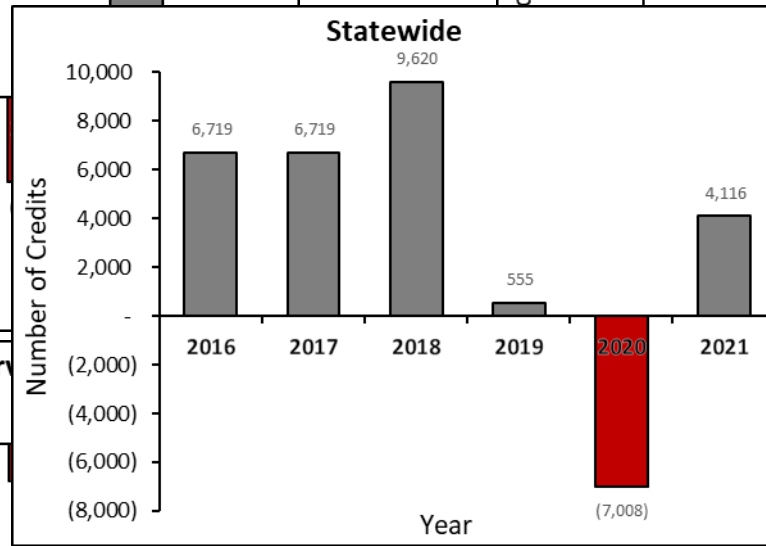
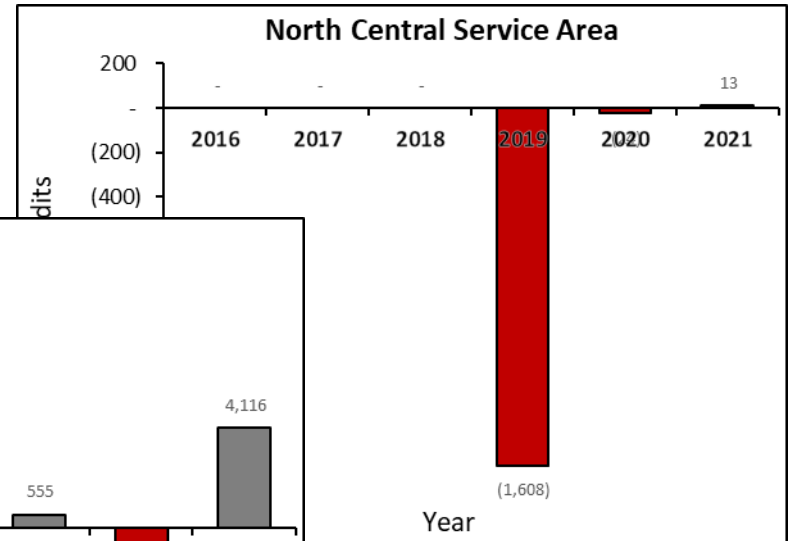
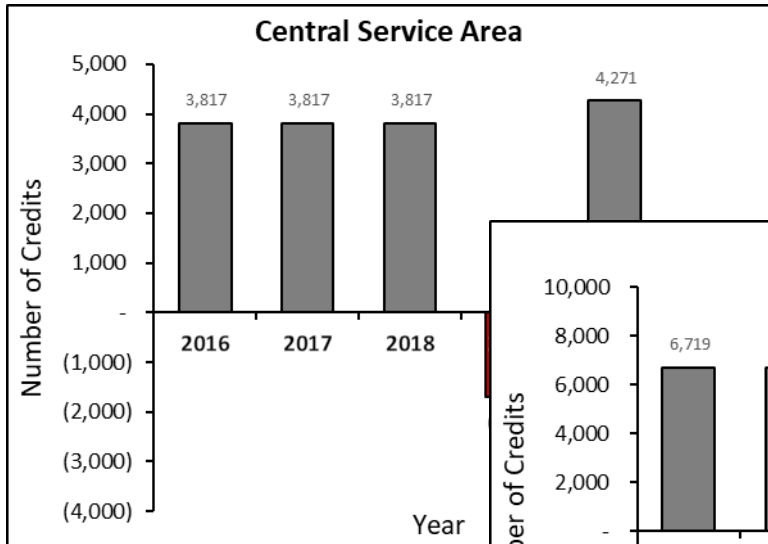
Credit Balance Review:

OVERVIEW

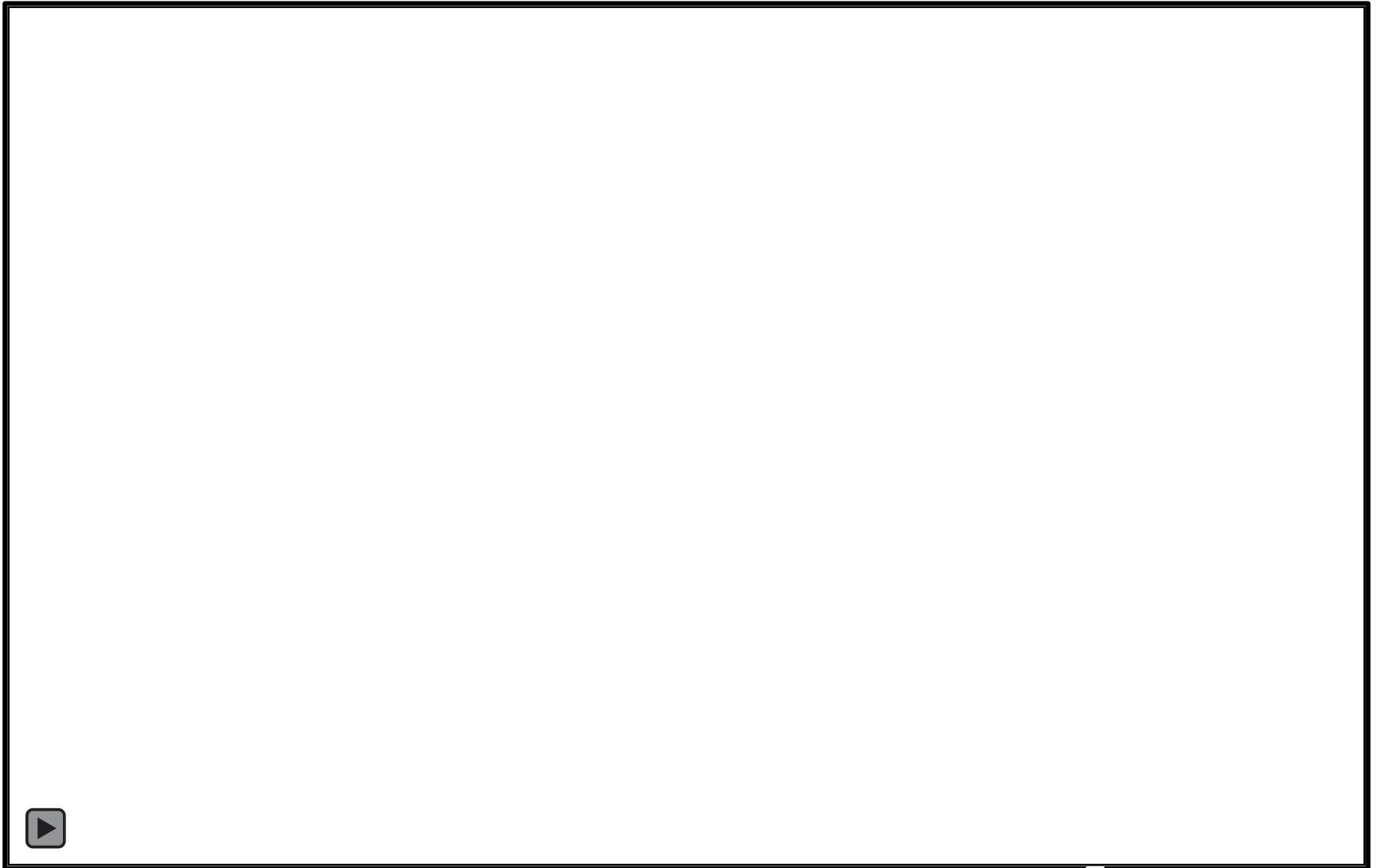


Credit Balance Review:

OVERVIEW



Credit Balance and Stewardship Grants through Time





MONTANA SAGE GROUSE
Habitat Conservation Program

Conservation Lease Background

Permanent Conservation Easements:

- Informed by a preliminary [market] appraisal, sometimes by a final appraisal.
- Grant sponsor requests a specified dollar amount for the grant based on the easement appraisal.
- The cost the state pays for credits is calculated by dividing the full appraised value by number of credits created
- 40% of the value of a Perpetual Conservation Easement goes to market

Conservation Lease:

- The dollar value of a conservation lease is determined by the total number of credits that are calculated using the Habitat Quantification Tool.
- The total number of credits were multiplied by \$13 to arrive at a dollar amount.

The cost of credits at \$13 was informed by the value and the parameters for 2016 perpetual easements that MSGOT funded.

- Should we apply the 3% to the credit side just like is applied to the debit side?

Restoration or Enhancement Projects:

- Restoration or enhancements project receive a 5% or 10% policy multiplier for newly produced functional acres



Stewardship Grants

