

# SAGE GROUSE FENCE MARKERS

## A HOW-TO GUIDE



### Fence Markers: Why and How

Fences are essential for agriculture, but they can also present a hazard to wildlife. Each year hundreds of low-flying sage grouse are injured or killed as a result of fence collisions. Fence strikes occur most commonly near sage grouse breeding grounds (known as 'leks'), particularly in areas with flat or gently rolling terrain (Paige 2014). Research has found that 93% of sage grouse fence strikes occur within one mile of an active lek (Stevens 2012).

But there's a solution: inexpensive and easy-to-assemble fence markers allow wildlife, including sage grouse, to detect and avoid potentially hazardous fences. Research shows that increasing the visibility of wire fence through marking can reduce sage grouse collisions by 70-83% (Paige 2012; Christiansen 2009; Stevens 2012). At a time when sage grouse populations are imperiled, effective conservation strategies are needed. Fortunately, this low-tech solution can go a long way toward reducing this important source of sage grouse mortality.

### Fence Markers: What are they?

These fence markers are constructed of small (1.5 x 3") sections of vinyl undersill trim siding with reflective tape to increase visibility/contrast, particularly in snow-covered areas. The fence markers are large enough to alert sage-grouse of the fence hazard, yet are small enough to not be visually intrusive.



### Making your own fence markers

#### Materials

- Vinyl undersill typically used for house siding (found at most hardware and home improvement stores)
- Reflective tape

#### Tools and safety equipment

- Large plastic bags (or other receptacle)
- Boxes (for packaging and transport)
- Dust mask
- Earplugs
- Package sealer
- Pen or marker
- Protective gloves
- Miter saw
- Locking c-clamps
- Tin snips
- Scissors
- Safety glasses



### Construction

These fence markers are inexpensive and easy to make. Here we provide a simple step-by-step guide on how to make your own fence markers.

Apply reflective tape to vinyl undersill.



You may choose to bundle 5-10 lengths of the undersill using c-clamps as shown to increase efficiency.



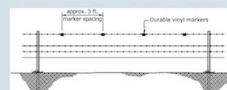
Once the tape is applied to the vinyl undersill, use a miter saw to cut the undersill into 3" sections.



Package the fence markers in a manner you see fit.

### Installation

The NRCS recommends that fence markers be placed between barbs across the top wire of the fence in approximately three-foot intervals. To install the fence marker, simply snap the molded lip of the undersill siding onto the barbed wire fence in the desired location.



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### References

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