

Status Update on BLM Land Use Plans for Greater Sage-Grouse

Internal Working Document

January 29

Talking Points for use by State Directors

State Directors should be the point on communication with media within the state. Please pass these talking points on to your district and field managers to ensure they have consistent communication. .

Talking Points

- The BLM's multiple use and sustained yield mission requires us to find a balance between the full range of resources, including the conservation of crucial wildlife habitat, and resource uses. These principles have driven the development of BLMs conservation planning strategy for greater sage-grouse and its habitat.
- Our planning process has been complex and highly collaborative with meaningful coordination with the public serving as the cornerstone. Throughout the process, we have worked closely with a broad range of stakeholders, including Governors, State Fish and Game agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Forest Service and many others.
- Working with our partners, as we move from draft plans to final, the BLM and USFS are resolving key issues (like disturbance limits and mitigation approaches) and are moving to complete our proposed land use plans/final EISs by late spring, and the records of decision by late summer.
- We have confidence these plans when final will help ensure the long-term viability of the greater sage-grouse and other iconic wildlife species on public lands and the continued economic vitality of the West.
- Strong Federal land use plans (BLM and USFS), however, will only get us part of the way in ensuring the long-term conservation of greater sage-grouse and avoid the need to list under the Endangered Species Act.
- One third of sage-grouse habitat is administered by the states or is privately-owned. For this reason, strong State plans as well as an effective strategy to reduce the risk of fire to greater sage-grouse habitat are key components of the range-wide strategy. We are continuing our collaboration with our state and federal partners as well as private landowners to ensure all components of a range-wide strategy are in place.
- Together we can ensure listing of the greater sage-grouse is no longer warranted while preserving traditional Western economic activity that is also dependent on a healthy sagebrush range.

Key Elements to Land Use Plans:

- We are implementing key elements of the planning effort, which will enable us to achieve greater clarity and consistency across the range while honoring specific local approaches and conditions.
- Key elements addressed include:
 - Limiting or eliminating new surface disturbance in sage-grouse priority habitat and minimizing additional disturbance in general habitat.
 - Improving greater sage-grouse habitat condition
 - Reducing the threat of rangeland fire to greater sage-grouse in the Great Basin by placing added priority prevention, suppression and restoration of sagebrush landscapes threatened by rangeland fire through improved federal-state-local collaboration and coordination.