

News Release

BLM Colorado

For Immediate Release: Aug. 11, 2016

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BLM seeks comments on draft Gunnison Sage-Grouse rangewide plan amendment

LAKEWOOD, Colo. – Today the Bureau of Land Management announced the release of the Gunnison Sage-Grouse Rangewide Draft Resource Management Plan Amendment and Draft Environmental Impact Statement for a 90-day public comment period, which will start on Friday August 12, 2016.

In the Draft Plan, the BLM is examining the adequacy of current conservation measures for Gunnison Sage-Grouse and considering additional measures on a landscape scale. The plan could amend up to 11 existing Resource Management Plans in Colorado and Utah to create a single, consistent strategy for managing public lands across the range of the species. This strategy will build upon and solidify actions the BLM has already outlined through national and local agreements, policies and planning efforts.

“We are considering a wide range of alternatives designed to ensure consistent conservation of important sagebrush habitat on BLM-managed lands in order to facilitate the de-listing of Gunnison Sage-Grouse as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act,” said Ruth Welch, BLM Colorado State Director. “We have been working with our cooperating agencies to incorporate local expertise and information. Public input in reviewing this draft is the next important step.”

The draft considers four potential management alternatives that range from leaving management of Gunnison Sage-Grouse habitat as it is currently under the applicable RMPs to creating a standardized, rangewide management approach that focuses primarily on conservation of Gunnison Sage-Grouse habitat and recovery of the species. The Preferred Alternative reflects a combination of strategies to balance Gunnison Sage-Grouse protection, resource uses and mitigation. It is broken down into sub-alternatives with management objectives tailored to individual sage-grouse populations.

The BLM manages about 623,000 acres, or 37 percent, of Gunnison Sage-Grouse habitat across the range of the species.

Based on a January 2013 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposal to list the Gunnison Sage-Grouse as endangered, the BLM began to analyze current conservation measures and consider additional protections for the bird on public lands in southwestern Colorado and southeastern Utah. In November 2014, the Fish and Wildlife Service listed the Gunnison Sage-Grouse as threatened.

To review the documents, go to www.bit.ly/gunnison_sage-grouse. Comments related to the Gunnison Sage-Grouse Rangewide Draft RMP Amendment/Draft EIS should be submitted by Nov. 12, 2016, using the comment form at: <http://1.usa.gov/1Uusw8C>, via email to gusg_amend@blm.gov, via fax at [303-239-3699](tel:303-239-3699) or via mail to Gunnison Sage-Grouse EIS, Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield St., Lakewood, CO 80215.

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

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