



Release Date: 12/26/13

Contacts: Beverly Gorny, BLM, 307-775-6015
 Pam Bode, Forest Service, 307-739-5513

BLM and Forest Service Release Draft Wyoming Sage-Grouse Management Land Use Plan Amendment/Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service today released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Wyoming Sage-Grouse Resource Management Plan/Land Use Plan Amendments for the Rawlins, Rock Springs, Kemmerer, Pinedale, Casper and Newcastle RMPs; as well as the Thunder Basin National Grassland and Bridger-Teton and Medicine Bow National Forests Land Use Plans. This release opens a 90-day public comment period that will close March 24, 2014.

The Draft Land Use Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement (LUP/DEIS) considers four possible management alternatives for maintaining and increasing habitat for Greater Sage-Grouse on BLM and Bridger-Teton and Medicine Bow National Forest and the Thunder Basin National Grassland in Wyoming. The BLM and the Forest Service have been working closely with cooperating agencies to incorporate local expertise and information. Public involvement in reviewing this draft is the next important step.

Five public comment open house meetings will be held in February to present information on key issues, the planning process and the public comment process. Attendees will learn about the LUP amendment comment process, ask questions, and provide comments in electronic and written formats. Dates and locations will be announced in January.

More than 16 million acres of Wyoming's Greater Sage-Grouse habitat are on BLM and National Forest System Lands in the project area, encompassing 57% of the entire Greater Sage-Grouse habitat in Wyoming.

Comments on the Wyoming Greater Sage-Grouse LUP/DEIS may be submitted by any of the following methods:

- Web site: www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/amendments/sage-grouse.html
- email: Sagegrouse_Amendment_WY@blm.gov
- fax: (307) 775-6129
- mail: BLM Wyoming State Office
 Attn: Sage-Grouse Nine Plan
 5353 Yellowstone Road
 Cheyenne, WY 82009

Copies of the Wyoming Greater Sage-Grouse Draft LUP/EIS are available for review at the BLM offices in Cheyenne, Rawlins, Rock Springs, Kemmerer, Pinedale, Casper and Newcastle after Jan. 2, 2014. The document is available now on the BLM project website at www.blm.gov/wy/st/en/programs/Planning/amendments/sage-grouse.html.

The BLM and the Forest Service will issue separate Records of Decision by Sept. 30, 2014.

In March 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service determined that listing the Greater Sage-Grouse as a threatened or endangered species was "warranted, but precluded." The FWS determined that current and potential threats to Greater Sage-Grouse habitat and inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms pose "a significant threat to the Greater Sage-Grouse now and in the foreseeable future."

The Wyoming Greater Sage-Grouse Draft LUP/EIS is one of 15 separate EISs that are being prepared as part of the BLM's and the Forest Service's west-wide national Greater Sage-Grouse planning effort. This effort is being undertaken to provide additional measures to maintain and increase Greater Sage-Grouse habitat on public lands in order to preclude listing the bird.

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 may 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.

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land, the most of any Federal agency. This land, known as the National System of Public Lands, is primarily located in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. In Fiscal Year 2012, activities on public lands generated \$4.6 billion in revenue, much of which was shared with the States where the activities occurred. In addition, public lands contributed more than \$112 billion to the U.S.

economy and helped support more than 500,000 jobs.

--BLM--

Wyoming State Office 5353 Yellowstone Road Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009

Last updated: 12-31-2013

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