



**AUGUST 21, 2014
PUBLIC SCOPING
Northwest District
RAC Meeting**

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE
Range-wide Plan Amendment**



FWS PROPOSED RULES

On January 11, 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) issued proposed rules to:

- List the Gunnison Sage-Grouse as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act
- Designate 1.7 million acres of critical habitat for the species.

The FWS is expected to issue a final listing determination in November 2014.



FEDERAL REGISTER

Vol. 78

Friday,

No. 8

January 11, 2013

Part II

Department of the Interior

Fish and Wildlife Service

50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Status for Gunnison Sage-Grouse; Proposed Rule



Greater Sage-grouse



Photo by Gerrit Vyn

Gunnison Sage-grouse



Photo by Mike Danzenbaker

Physical Characteristics

Larger than Gunnison Sage-grouse
 Longer tarsus, culmen and carpal
 Less prominent (short and thin) filoplumes
 Less prominent banding on tail feathers
 (more dull and cryptic, less taper)

2/3 the size of Greater Sage-grouse
 Shorter tarsus, culmen and carpal
 More prominent (long and thick) filoplumes
 More prominent banding on tail feathers
 (more white, more strongly tapered)

Behavioral Characteristics

More mating displays per minute
 Pop air sacs 2 times during each display
 Do not wag tail at end of display
 Filoplumes not thrown as distinctly

Fewer mating displays per minute
 Pop airsacs 9 times during each display
 Wag tail at end of display
 Throw filoplumes in a flashy manner to display

Genetic Characteristics

More gene flow
 Higher diversity in nuclear and mitochondrial
 genomes
 Relatively high genetic diversity throughout
 range

Less gene flow
 Lower diversity in nuclear and mitochondrial
 genomes
 Relatively low genetic diversity within and
 among populations



FWS LISTING FACTORS & THREATS

Factors Affecting Survival of the Species

- Present or threatened habitat loss and fragmentation
- Overuse for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes
- Disease or predation
- Inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms
- Other natural or human-related factors

Major Threats to the Population

- Ongoing and future habitat loss and fragmentation due to residential development, roads, power lines
- Existing regulations that don't prevent habitat fragmentation
- Small population size





BLM NOTICE OF INTENT

On July 18, 2014, the BLM issued a Notice of Intent to identify and adopt clear and consistent objectives and conservation measures in order to protect Gunnison Sage-Grouse habitat across the species' range:

- Sufficient to support the long-term survival of the species.
- Compatible with objectives and conservation measures on adjacent lands not managed by the BLM.
- That are realistic and possible.

The screenshot displays the Federal Register website interface. At the top, the Federal Register logo and title are visible, along with the text "The Daily Journal of the United States Government". A blue navigation bar contains the word "Notice". The main heading of the document is "Notice of Intent To Incorporate Gunnison Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures Into the Bureau of Land Management Land Use Plans, Colorado and Utah and Prepare an Associated Environmental Impact Statement". Below the heading, it states "A Notice by the Land Management Bureau on 07/18/2014". A green button labeled "HOW TO COMMENT" is present. The "ACTION" section is titled "Notice Of Intent." The "SUMMARY" section begins with a paragraph: "In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA), and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLMPA) of 1976, as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) intends to incorporate Gunnison Sage-Grouse Conservation Measures into Resource Management Plans (RMPs) within the range of the species and prepare an associated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). By this notice, the BLM is announcing the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues." On the right side, there are links for "Back", "Previous Document", and "Next Document", a "LEGAL DISCLAIMER" button, "Font Controls" (with plus, minus, and font size icons), and a "PUBLIC INSPECTION" button. At the bottom right, the "Publication Date" is listed as "Friday, July 18, 2014" and the "Agencies" are "Department of the Interior" and "Bureau of Land Management".



BLM NOTICE OF INTENT

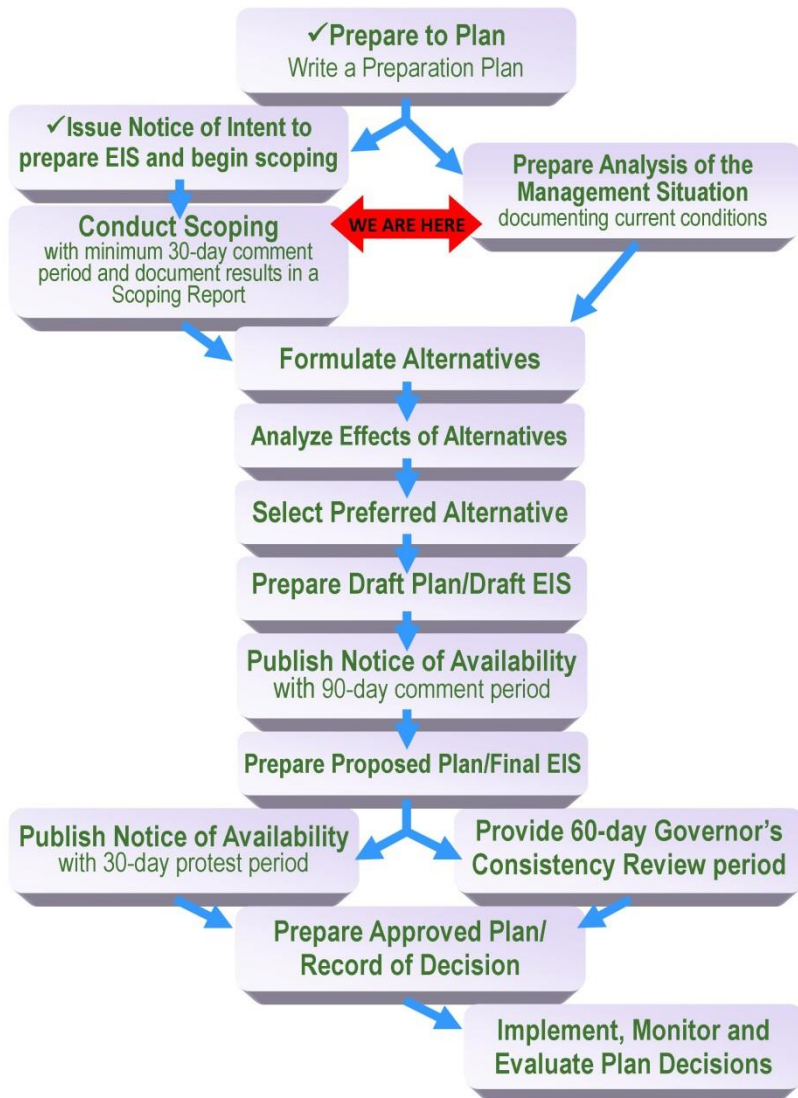
Preliminary issues identified by the BLM and FWS include:

- Sagebrush habitat management practices
- Science directly applicable to protection of the Gunnison Sage-Grouse
- Effects of sagebrush habitat management on other public land resources





BLM PLANNING PROCESS



The Gunnison
Sage-Grouse Plan
Amendment will
conform to
standard BLM
land use planning
processes.



PUBLIC SCOPING

Issues identified by the public for addressing in the plan amendments will be evaluated by the BLM and placed into one of three categories:

1. Issues to be resolved in the plan
2. Issues to be resolved through policy or administrative action
3. Issues beyond the scope of this plan.

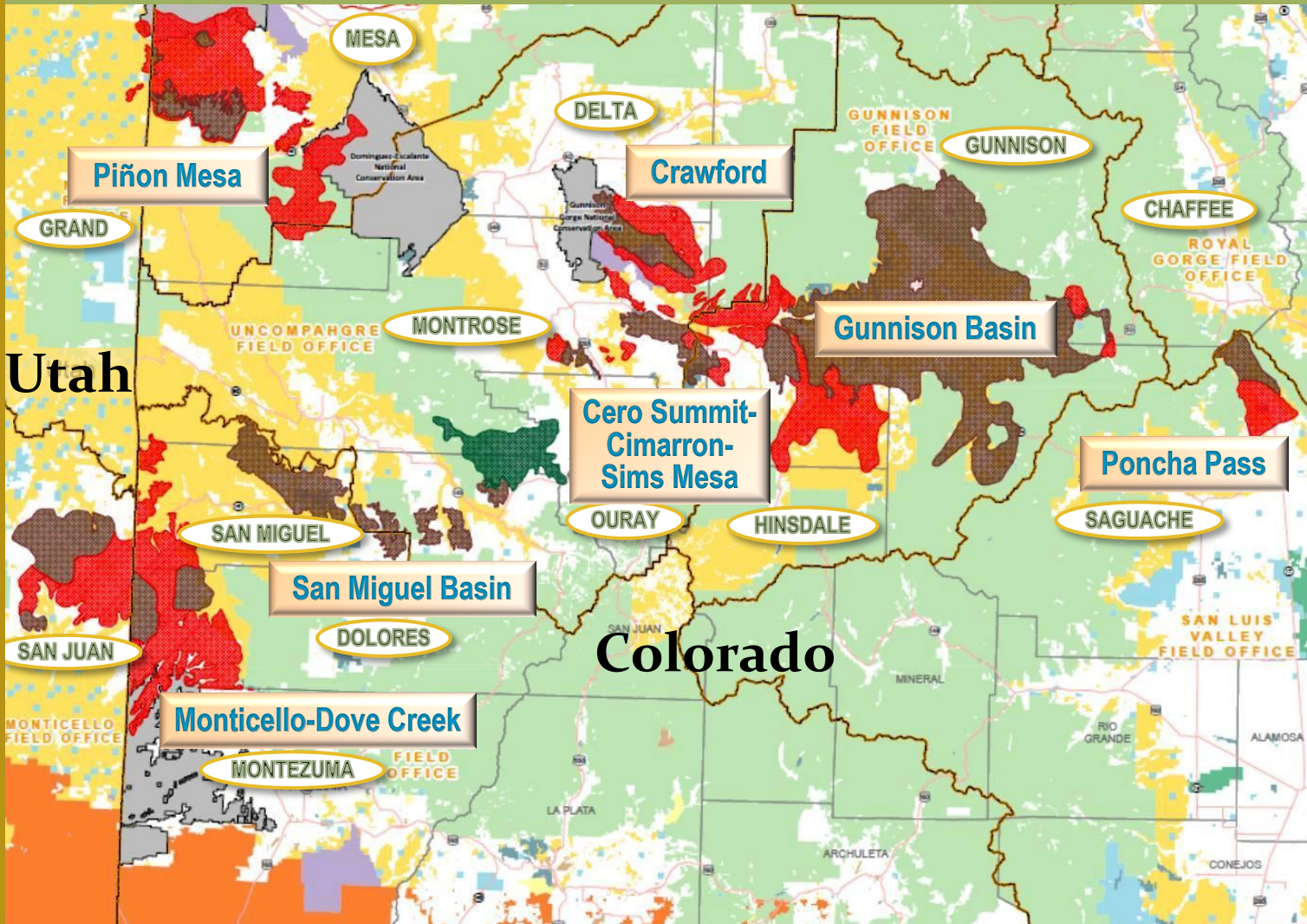




GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE RANGE

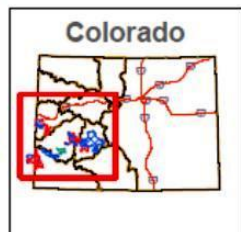
Gunnison Sage Grouse Range Draft

7/8/2014



Legend

- BLM Field Office Boundaries
- USFWS Proposed GUGS Critical Habitat
- Status
 - Occupied
 - Potential
 - Vacant/Unknown
- National Monuments and NCAs
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Indian Reservation
- Military Reservation
- National Grasslands
- National Park Service
- Other Federal
- Private
- State
- State, County, City, Areas
- Bankhead-Jones Land Use Lands
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Forest Service
- County Boundaries
- Major Highways
- Interstate Highways
- State and Local Highways





COUNTIES IN PLANNING AREA

Colorado:

- Chaffee
- Delta
- Dolores
- Gunnison
- Hinsdale
- Mesa
- Montrose
- Ouray
- Saguache
- San Miguel

Utah:

- Grand
- San Juan



GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE POPULATIONS

- Monticello-Dove Creek extends into southeast Utah
- Piñon Mesa
- San Miguel Basin
- Cerro Summit-Cimarron-Sims Mesa
- Crawford
- Gunnison Basin largest population (with approximately 4,000 birds)
- Poncha Pass



CRITICAL HABITAT ACREAGE

MINERALS	HABITAT STATUS	ACRES
Habitat on BLM Surface		
	Occupied	399,344
	Unoccupied	226,636
	TOTAL	625,981
Habitat overlying Federal Sub-Surface Minerals		
All Minerals	Occupied	602,257
All Minerals	Unoccupied	377,328
Oil and Gas	Occupied	8,212
Oil and Gas	Unoccupied	17,727
Coal	Occupied	3,706
Oil, Gas, and Coal	Occupied	137
Other	Occupied	5,546
Other	Unoccupied	9,494
	TOTAL	1,024,461



AGREEMENTS & POLICIES

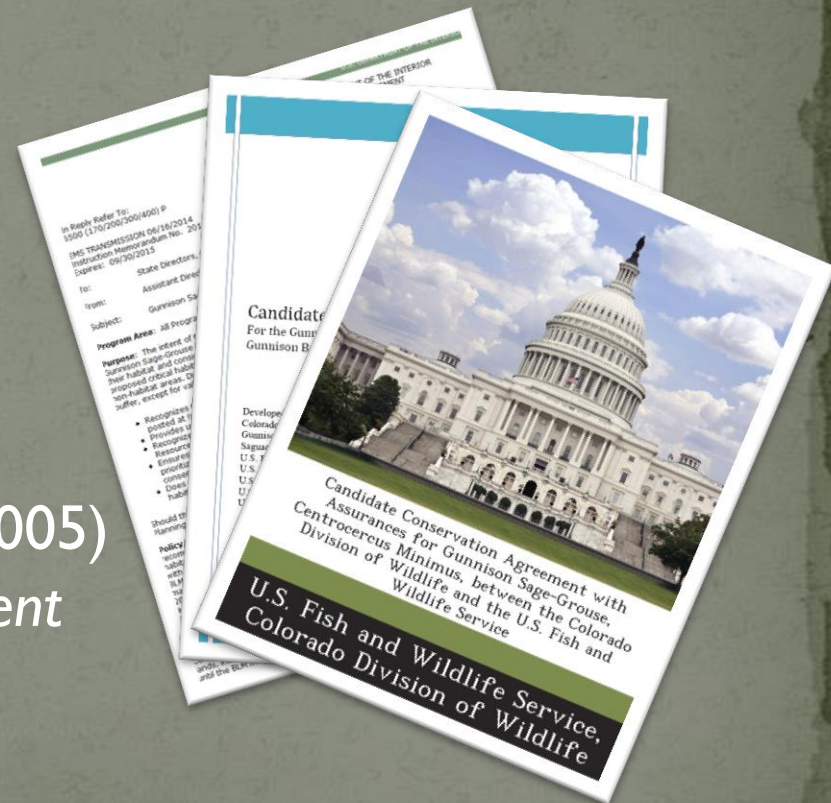
The plan amendment will be formulated in close coordination with BLM policies and partnership agreements, including:

○ BLM Policies

- CO-IM-2013-033 (2013)
- WO-IM-2014-100 (2014)

○ Partnership Agreements

- *Rangewide Conservation Plan (2005)*
- *Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (2006)*
- *Gunnison Basin Candidate Conservation Agreement (2013)*





PLAN AMENDMENTS

BLM resource management plans (RMPs) potentially affected:

COLORADO PLANS

- San Luis RMP (1991)
- Gunnison RMP (1993)
- San Juan/San Miguel RMP (1985)
Currently under revision in Tres Rios and Uncompahgre RMPs
- Uncompahgre Basin RMP (1989)
Currently under revision in Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area (NCA) and Uncompahgre RMPs





PLAN AMENDMENTS

COLORADO PLANS (continued)

- Grand Junction RMP (1987)
Currently under revision in Grand Junction and Dominguez-Escalante NCA RMPs
- Gunnison Gorge NCA RMP (2004)
- Canyons of the Ancients National Monument RMP (2010)

UTAH PLANS

- Moab RMP (2008)
- Monticello RMP (2008)





RESOURCES & PROGRAM AREAS

The BLM will use an interdisciplinary approach to develop the plan amendments in order to consider the full range of resource issues and concerns identified. Specialists with expertise in the following disciplines will be involved in the process:

- Grazing
- Invasive Species
- Land Tenure
- Recreation
- Rights-of-Way
- Minerals Development
 - Oil and Gas
 - Coal
 - Other
- Fire Prevention and Suppression
- Travel Management





DRAFT SCHEDULE

DATE	ACTION
July 18, 2014	Notice of Intent published in the Federal Register
July 18 - August 22, 2014	Conduct Public Scoping
Fall & Winter 2014-2015	Develop and Analyze Alternatives
Spring 2015	Release Draft Amendment and Draft EIS for 90-day Public Comment Period
Spring 2016	Release Proposed Amendment and Final EIS for 30-day Protest Period
Summer 2016	Release Record of Decision



PROVIDING COMMENTS

○ WHERE?

- **Online:** www.bit.ly/gusg_comments
- **Email:** GUSG_AMEND@BLM.GOV
- **U.S. Mail:** GUSG Amendment
BLM Colorado State Office
2850 Youngfield St
Lakewood, CO 80215
- **FAX:** (303) 239-3699

PROVIDING COMMENTS

Colorado

- + What We Do
- + Visit Us
- + Information Center
- + Field Offices
- + Get Involved
- + Contact Us

BLM > Colorado > Programs > Sage-grouse > Gunnison Sage-Grouse

Print Page

GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE CONSERVATION MEASURES

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the BLM is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and associated amendment to adopt consistent objectives and conservation measures in order to protect Gunnison Sage-Grouse habitat across the species' range. The EIS is slated for completion by July 2016.



The range-wide planning area will consist of more than 625,000 acres of BLM surface estate in Chaffee, Delta, Dolores, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Mesa, Montrose, Ouray, Saguache, and San Miguel counties in Colorado and Grand and San Juan counties in Utah. BLM Colorado will lead the effort to evaluate existing and potential measures for protecting occupied and potential Gunnison Sage-Grouse critical habitat on behalf of BLM Colorado and BLM Utah. These conservation measures will be incorporated into applicable BLM land use plans.

BACKGROUND

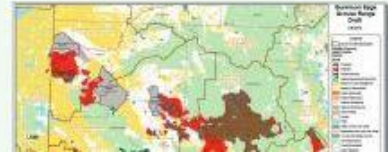
The Gunnison Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus minimus*) is a ground-dwelling bird requiring large expanses of sagebrush, along with a diversity of grasses

COMMENT HERE

PUBLIC SCOPING
July 18 - August 22
Federal Register Notice of Intent

DOCUMENTS & RESOURCES

- ePlanning** - Check this site frequently for opportunities to comment
- BLM Washington Office IM 2014-100** - Interim Measures
- Fish and Wildlife Service Fact Sheet**
- Gunnison Basin Candidate Conservation Agreement**
- Critical Habitat Acreage Table**





ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For current information on efforts to conserve the Gunnison Sage-Grouse and its critical habitat, visit:

- BLM GUSG Plan Amendment
www.bit.ly/gunnison_sage-grouse
- FWS GUSG Information and Process
www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/birds/gunnisonsagegrouse/





THE END