



**JULY 18 –
AUGUST 22, 2014
PUBLIC SCOPING**

**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



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

- In its preliminary finding on the petition to list the Gunnison Sage-Grouse as an endangered species, the FWS identified the ***inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms to conserve the Gunnison Sage-Grouse and its habitat*** as a significant threat.
- The FWS has identified ***proposed conservation measures to be included in RMPs*** as the principal mechanism for ensuring adequate conservation of the Gunnison Sage-Grouse and its habitat on public lands.
- In response to the threats identified by the FWS, the BLM proposes to ***incorporate consistent objectives and conservation measures into RMPs*** by July 2016.





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 listed as "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





PUBLIC SCOPING

The BLM seeks the public's help...

- Early in a major planning effort
- To identify new and clarify existing information and issues for consideration in preparing to formulate the EIS
- To ensure that the BLM considers a full range of reasonable alternatives

...that results in an effective and widely supported plan.



BLM Gunnison Sage-Grouse Range-wide Land Use Plan Amendment Public Scoping - July 18 through August 22, 2014

GOAL: To identify and adopt clear and consistent objectives and conservation measures to protect Gunnison Sage-Grouse habitat across the species' range

PUBLIC MEETINGS 6-8 PM

Information • Resource Specialists • Q&A Sessions

- Monday, August 4 - Denver Marriott West, 1717 Denver West Blvd, Golden, CO 80401
- Tuesday, August 5 - Fred R Field Western Heritage Center Multi-Purpose Building, 275 S Spruce St, Gunnison, CO 81230
- Wednesday, August 6 - Holiday Inn Express, 1391 S Townsend Ave, Montrose, CO 81401
- Thursday, August 7 - Dove Creek High School, 525 N Main St, Dove Creek, CO 81324

Concise written information and observations submitted by August 22 will help the BLM identify significant issues and formulate reasonable alternatives to be analyzed. Provide your input at meetings or by:

EMAIL:
gusg_amend@blm.gov

FAX:
303.239.3699

USPS MAIL:
BLM Colorado State Office
ATTN: Gunnison Sage-Grouse EIS
2850 Youngfield Street
Lakewood, CO 80215

BLM Colorado State Office
ATTN: Gunnison Sage-Grouse EIS
2850 Youngfield Street
Lakewood, CO 80215

Information about the Gunnison Sage-Grouse Plan Amendment is available online at:
http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/BLM_Programs/wildlife/sage-grouse/GUSG.html





PUBLIC SCOPING

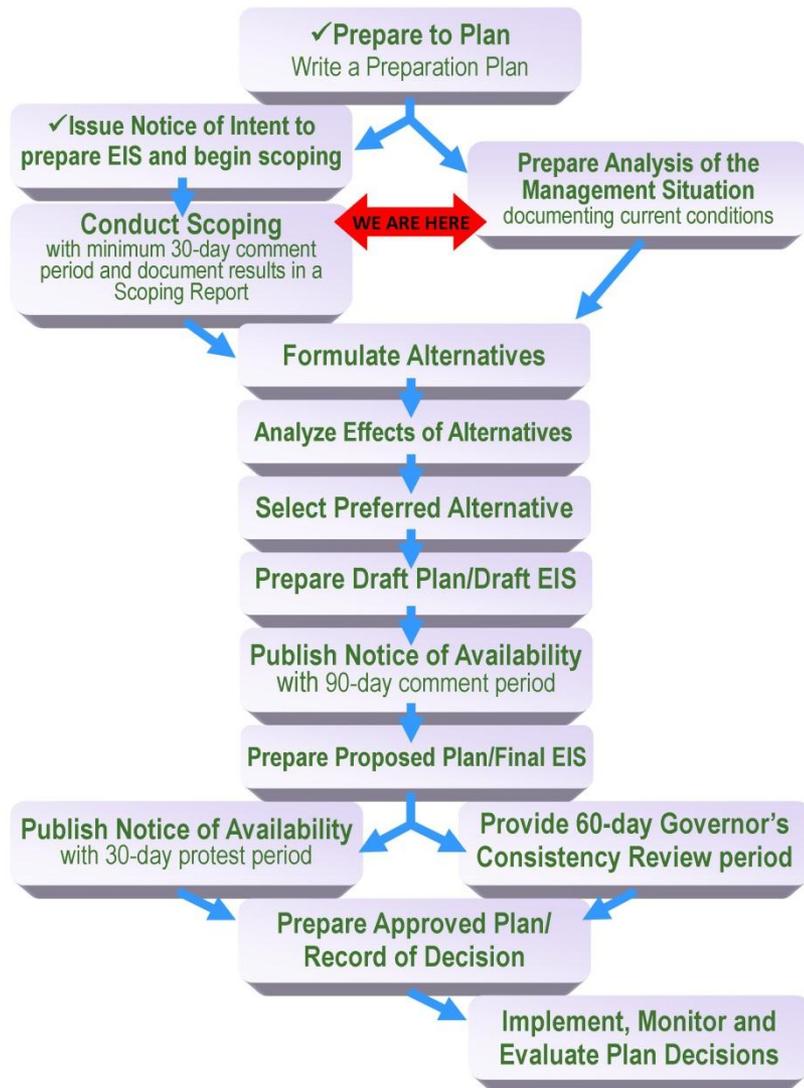
Issues identified by the public for addressing in the plan amendments will be evaluated by the BLM and placed into one of three categories:

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.





BLM PLANNING PROCESS



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

BACKGROUND

The Gunnison Sage-Grouse (*Centrocercus minimus*) is a ground-dwelling bird species found south of the Colorado River. Approximately 5,000 breeding Gunnison Sage-Grouse occur within seven separate populations on approximately 455,557 acres of BLM-administered public land in southwest Colorado and 3,233 acres in southeast Utah.

Gunnison Sage-Grouse require a variety of habitats, including:

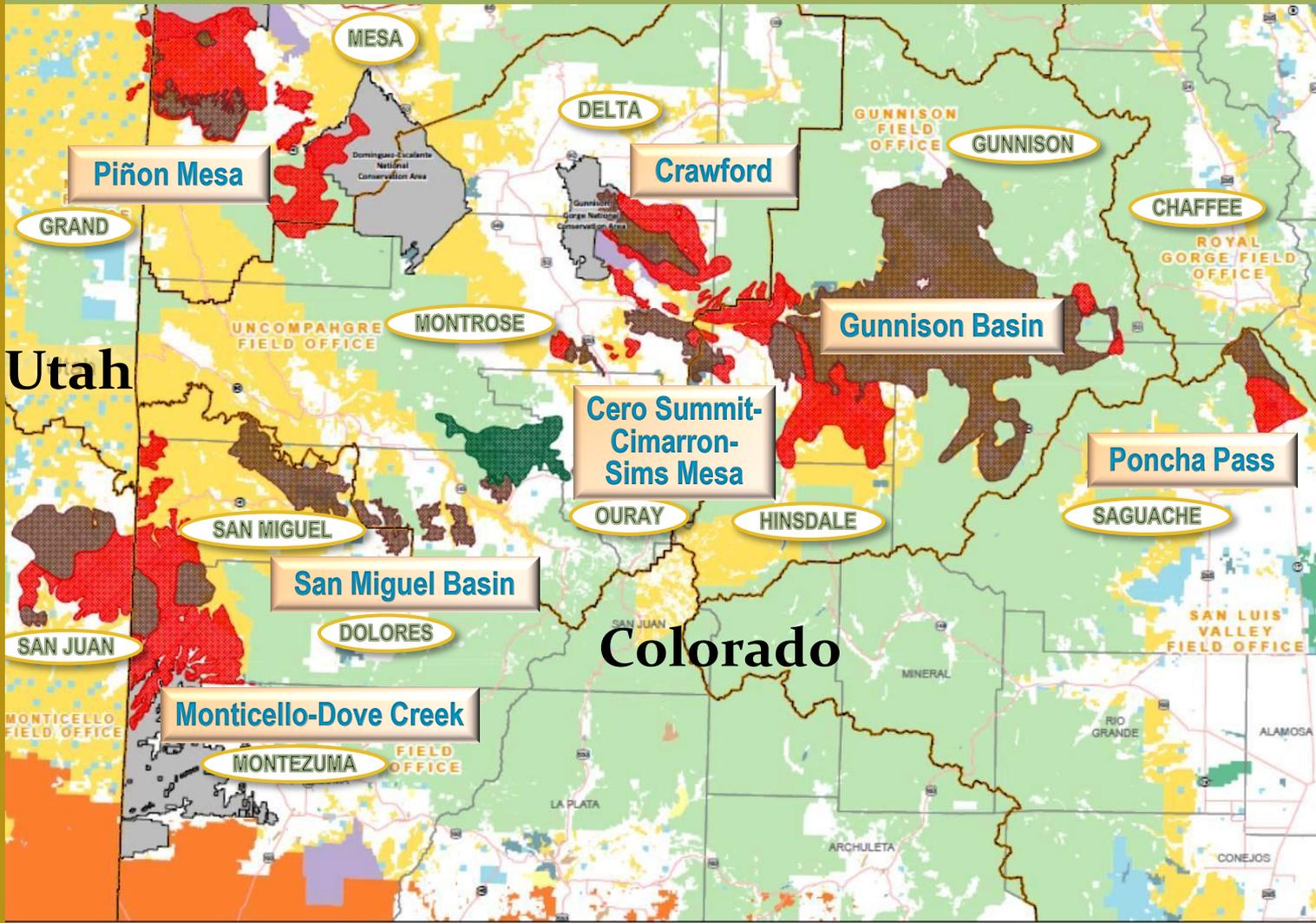
- large expanses of sagebrush
- a diversity of grasses and forbs
- healthy wetland and riparian ecosystems

Sagebrush provides both cover and fall and winter food for the birds.





GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE RANGE

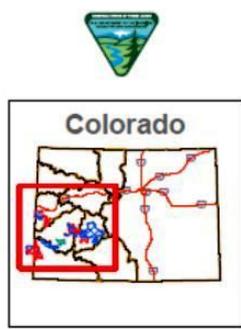
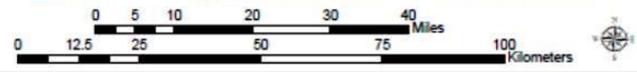


Legend

- 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

Utah

Colorado





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

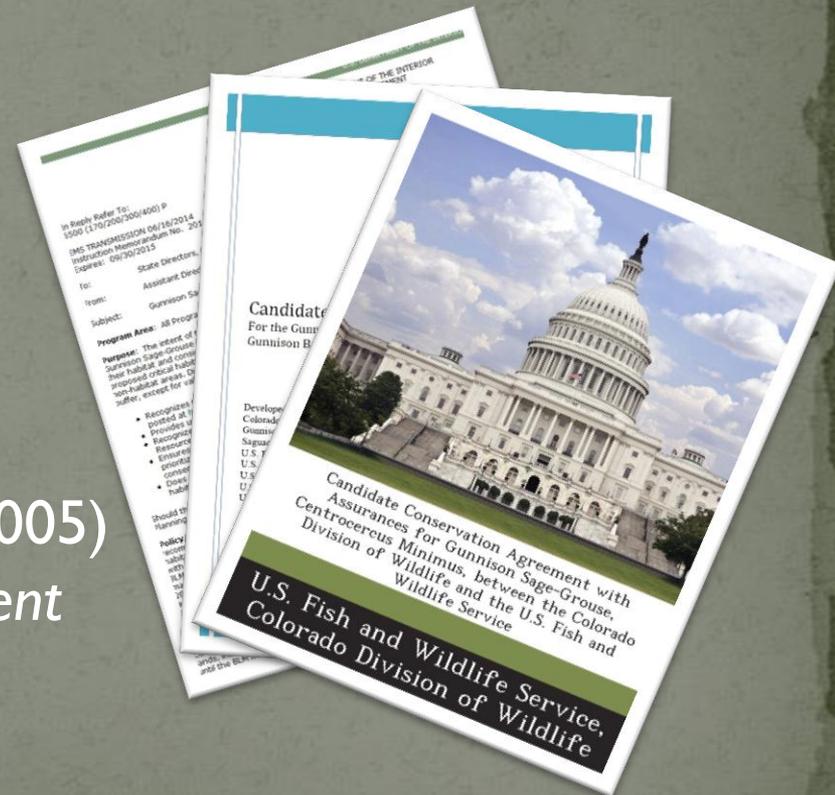
The plan amendment will be formulated in close coordination with BLM policies and partnership agreements, including:

○ 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



OPPORTUNITIES TO PARTICIPATE

- Comment Periods
Scoping & Draft

- Public meetings

- Resource Advisory
Council meetings

- Protest Period



PROVIDING COMMENTS

○ WHERE?

- **Hand Deliver:** At Scoping Meetings
- **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

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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

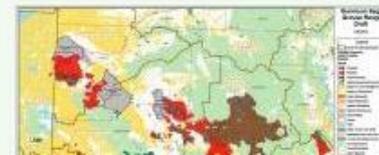
ePlanning - Check this site frequently for opportunities to comment

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



**AUGUST 4, 2014
PUBLIC SCOPING
Golden, Colorado**

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



**AUGUST 5, 2014
PUBLIC SCOPING
Gunnison, Colorado**

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



**AUGUST 6, 2014
PUBLIC SCOPING
Montrose, Colorado**

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



**AUGUST 7, 2014
PUBLIC SCOPING
Dove Creek, Colorado**

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