

BLM National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy

What is the BLM National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy?

The BLM National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy is a planning approach that provides the framework and structure for transparent interagency and stakeholder collaboration on long-term greater sage-grouse conservation and habitat restoration.



Under the planning strategy, the BLM will review its principal, existing regulatory framework for sage-grouse conservation—the land use planning process—to determine the development and implementation of new or revised regulatory mechanisms.

The focus will be on incorporating regionally-appropriate, science-based conservation measures into BLM land use planning efforts through coordinated, cooperative stakeholder engagement.

Greater sage-grouse benefit from and make use of suitable habitat—regardless of land ownership and management responsibility, so the BLM planning strategy uses an open and collaborative approach to foster cooperative conservation efforts across the regions and states that make up the greater sage-grouse range.

The planning strategy illustrates the Bureau’s continued commitment to long-term, rangewide sage-grouse conservation and habitat restoration and acknowledges the added value of engaging all stakeholders in cooperative conservation efforts.

Why was a new planning approach developed?

In April 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) found that the greater sage-grouse warrants the protection of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) but that listing the species was precluded by the need to address other, higher-priority species first. One reason for the FWS decision was an identified need for more adequate regulatory mechanisms to ensure species conservation.

The FWS greater sage-grouse decision placed the species on the candidate list for future action, which provided stakeholders such as Federal agencies, states, and private landowners with additional opportunities to continue working cooperatively to conserve the species and restore its habitat.

The BLM also used this opportunity to develop the new planning strategy, which is directed toward long-term conservation and habitat restoration on BLM-administered lands rangewide.



BLM National Greater Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy Highlights

- ◆ Creates a rangewide approach that allows for improved collaboration and coordination and addresses ecoregional differences by dividing sage-grouse range into an Eastern Region and a Western Region.
- ◆ Eastern Region will include Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, northeastern Utah, and Wyoming where major sage-grouse threats include habitat loss and fragmentation due to energy development—both oil and gas and renewables.
- ◆ Western Region will include California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, and most of Utah, with a small portion of southwestern Montana where major sage-grouse threats include habitat loss and fragmentation due to invasive plant species and wildfire impacts.
- ◆ Creates several governance teams to ensure ongoing coordination and oversight, both regionally and nationally, using an interagency and multi-state approach that engages all stakeholders.
 - A National Policy Team will provide national policy guidance on sage-grouse conservation and consistent planning objectives.
 - A National Technical Team (NTT) will use the best science available to derive recommended conservation measures.
 - Two Regional Management Teams (RMTs) will coordinate planning and strategy implementation efforts across the states and provide direction at specific points to ensure consistency.
 - Two Regional Interdisciplinary Teams (RIDTs) will coordinate the development of EISs and RMP amendments using policy guidance provided by the National Policy Team.
 - State-level Interdisciplinary Teams (SIDTs) will conduct the required environmental analyses to transform goals and objectives into regulatory mechanisms for greater sage-grouse conservation.

