



**AUGUST 20, 2014  
PUBLIC SCOPING  
Front Range 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 logo for the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management is visible. The main header reads "FEDERAL REGISTER" and "The Daily Journal of the United States Government". A blue bar with the word "Notice" is present. The title 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 title, it states "A Notice by the Land Management Bureau on 07/18/2014". A green button labeled "HOW TO COMMENT" is visible. The "ACTION" section is titled "Notice Of Intent." The "SUMMARY" section begins with "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 "LEGAL DISCLAIMER", "Font Controls", "PDF", "DEV", "PRINT", and "PUBLIC INSPECTION". 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

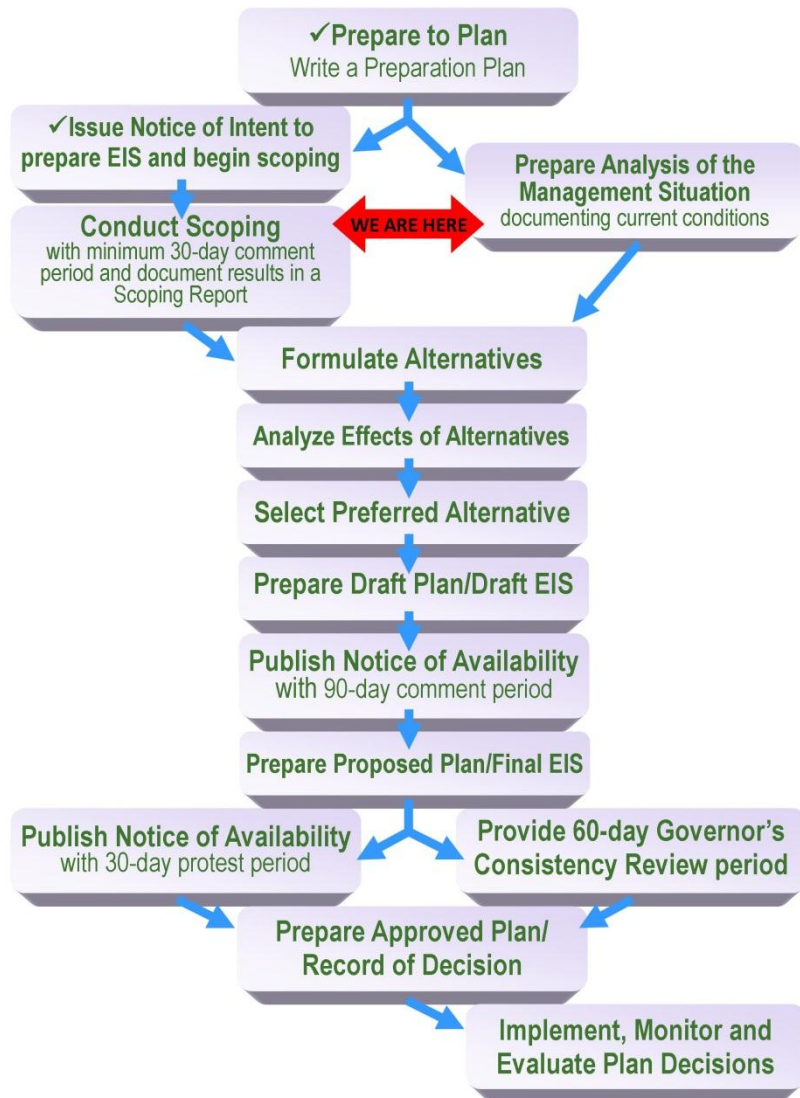
Preliminary issues identified by the BLM and FWS include:

- 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:

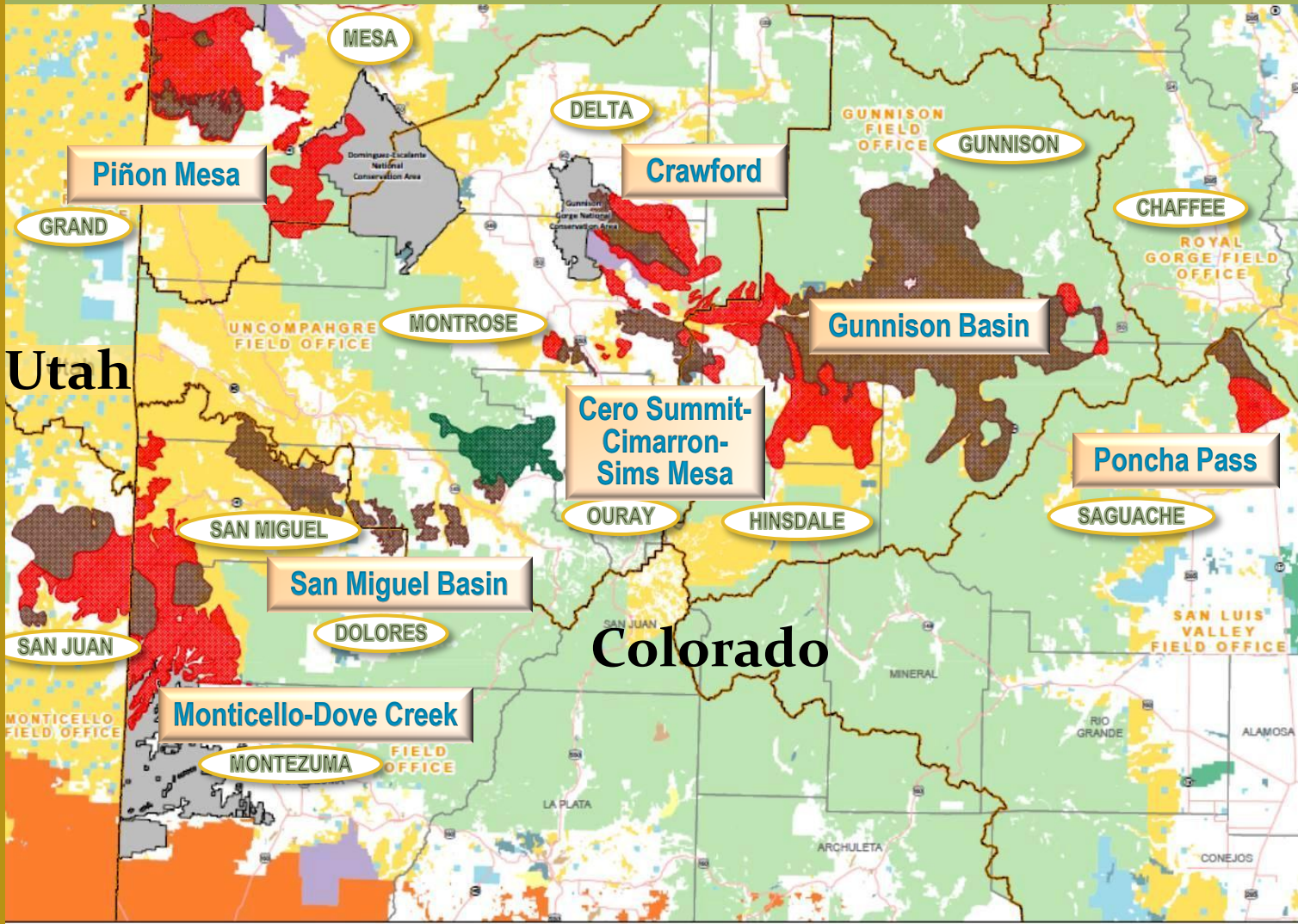
1. Issues to be resolved in the plan
2. Issues to be resolved through policy or administrative action
3. Issues beyond the scope of this plan.







# GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE RANGE



**Legend**

- BLM Field Office Boundaries
- USFWS Proposed GUGS Critical Habitat
- 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
<b>Habitat on BLM Surface</b>		
	Occupied	399,344
	Unoccupied	226,636
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>625,981</b>
<b>Habitat overlying Federal Sub-Surface Minerals</b>		
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
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,024,461</b>



# AGREEMENTS & POLICIES

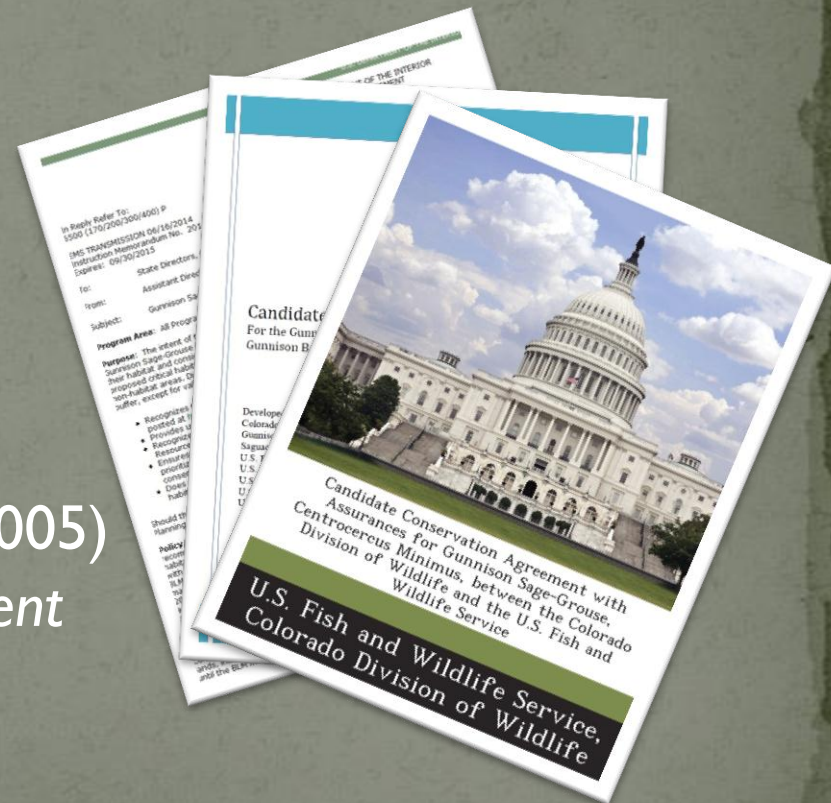
The plan amendment will be formulated in close coordination with BLM policies and partnership agreements, including:

## ○ 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](http://www.bit.ly/gusg_comments)
- **Email:** [GUSG\\_AMEND@BLM.GOV](mailto: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](http://www.bit.ly/gunnison_sage-grouse)
- FWS GUSG Information and Process  
[www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/birds/gunnisonsagegrouse/](http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/species/birds/gunnisonsagegrouse/)





THE END