



# News Release

BLM Colorado

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## **BLM releases proposed plan amendment supporting Gunnison sage-grouse recovery**

**LAKESWOOD, Colo.** – Today the Bureau of Land Management is taking an important step to conserve the federally protected Gunnison sage-grouse by proposing amendments to 11 resource management plans in Colorado and Utah.

“This next step in the planning process will help ensure that Gunnison sage-grouse remain viable,” **said BLM Colorado State Director Doug Vilsack.** “We appreciate the efforts of the public and local and state governments to help inform this planning effort to provide functioning Gunnison sage-grouse habitat in their historic ranges in Colorado and Utah.”

The Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement analyzes the management of habitat for eight Gunnison sage-grouse populations on BLM-managed public lands across southwest Colorado and southeast Utah. In December 2014, the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#) listed the [Gunnison sage-grouse](#) (*Centrocercus minimus*) as a federally threatened species under the [Endangered Species Act](#).

The BLM evaluated 11 plans covering 7.6 million acres of public land and 18 million acres of federal mineral estate to identify management actions with potential to impact Gunnison sage-grouse populations and habitat. The proposed amendment lays out a potential approach for addressing the habitat and conservation needs of the Gunnison sage-grouse, with actions such as limiting disturbance at leks or during mating season.

The proposed plan amendment would provide a one-mile buffer around Gunnison sage-grouse habitat, link connectivity areas, and prevent increased surface disturbance. The plan would designate a new backcountry conservation area and three new [areas of critical environmental concern](#), and update direction for two existing areas of critical environmental concern.

The Gunnison sage-grouse is a distinct species from the greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*). The BLM is also completing a [planning process for the greater sage-grouse](#) and accepted public comments on its draft resource management plan amendment from March to June 2024. The BLM is now addressing those

comments and intends to issue a proposed resource management plan amendment and final environmental impact statement in 2024.

A [Notice of Availability](#) for the Gunnison sage-grouse proposed plan amendment will publish in Friday's *Federal Register*, beginning a 60-day Governor's Consistency Review for the states of Colorado and Utah and a 30-day protest period for anyone who participated in the planning process and has an interest that may be adversely affected by the proposed plan. Please visit the BLM [Filing a Plan Protest](#) page for more information. Protests must be received by August 5, 2024.

Documents, maps, and the protest filing link are available on the [BLM National NEPA Register](#). For questions related to the plan Amendment, contact Gina Phillips, BLM Project Manager, at (970) 589-9852 or [BLM\\_CO\\_GUSG\\_RMPA@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_CO_GUSG_RMPA@blm.gov).

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*The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 western states, including Alaska, on behalf of the American people. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. Our mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.*