



# Our Public Lands

BLM Nevada and Northeastern California  
**2018-2019 Greater Sage-Grouse  
Planning Effort Discussion**

March 2018

# Desired Outcomes for this Discussion

Provide a status update on:

- A. What progress BLM has made since the end of public scoping on December 1, 2017 for the Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Planning Effort
- B. Purpose and Need for this Planning Effort
- C. Discussion of Issues
- D. Parameters for this Planning Effort
- E. Tentative Planning Schedule (Opportunities for Engagement)

# Progress Since December 1, 2018

- **Scoping** ended on December 1, 2018 and all comment letters received were parsed and categorized at a range-wide level. BLM (range-wide) received over 175,000 submissions from NGOs, federal/state/local governments, private industry, and members of the public.
- December 27, 2018 – BLM (range-wide) released revised/new sage grouse **implementation policies** regarding: Habitat Assessments, Adaptive Management, Grazing Thresholds and Responses, Grazing Permit Prioritizations, Habitat Objectives, and Oil and Gas Prioritizations.
- March 2, 2018 - BLM's **Scoping Report** was published and the Department of Interior's Deputy Secretary recommended to Secretary Ryan Zinke that BLM will move forward with **state-by-state targeted amendments**.
- **Range-wide Purpose and Need** was formulated to respond to Secretarial Order 3353: *Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation and Cooperation with Western States*.
- BLM Nevada developed draft agreements to establish formal cooperating agency status with partners and scheduled its first **cooperating agency meeting** for March 21, 2018.

# Purpose and Need

*The BLM is preparing this land use plan amendment in response to SOs 3353 [Greater Sage Grouse Conservation and Cooperation with Western States] and in accordance with 3349 [American Energy Independence]. The purpose of this action is to continue conserving, enhancing, and restoring greater sage-grouse and their habitat while improving coordination with state management strategies for greater sage-grouse. Using its discretion and authority under FLPMA, BLM proposes modifying greater sage-grouse habitat management within existing land-use plans to improve alignment with individual state plans or management strategies while balancing BLM's multiple-use and sustained yield mission.*

*On March 31, 2017, the United States District Court for the District of Nevada held that the BLM violated the NEPA by failing to prepare a supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the designation of Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFAs) in the Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendment in Nevada. This action will respond to the court's request to analyze the inclusion of SFAs.*

# Issues

## Issues to be Addressed through Plan Amendment Alternatives

- Modifying Habitat Boundary Designations
  - Removing Sagebrush Focal Areas
  - Adopting the most recent 2016 USGS maps the State is currently using
  - Flexibility Associated with Adopting New Habitat Maps
- Adaptive Management
- Exception Process (for all land use plan allocation decisions)
- Seasonal Timing Restrictions

## Issues to be Addressed through Plan Decision Clarification or Policy

- Application of:
  - Habitat Objectives
  - Lek Buffers
  - Design Features
- Compensatory Mitigation
- Fire and Invasive Grasses and Weeds
- Outcome Based Grazing

# Parameters for this Planning Effort

- Final Environmental Impact Statement and Proposed Amendment must be completed by February 2019 (no schedule extensions).
- BLM Nevada and Northeastern California will be part of one planning area (similar to the last effort).
- Targeted amendment with no more than three alternatives (no action alternative, management alignment with the State alternative, and a potential third alternative to further address planning issues).
- Will “incorporate by reference” as much analysis as possible from past efforts to comply with Secretarial Order 3355 (Streamlining NEPA).

# Tentative Planning Schedule

<b>Key Planning Milestone</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
Public Scoping	November – December 2017
Develop Alternatives	March – April 2018
Develop and Review Impact Analysis	April – May 2018
Publish Notice of Availability for Draft Amendment/EIS 90-day Public Comment Period and Public Meetings	July – October 2018
Develop and Review Preliminary Proposed Amendment/Final EIS	January 2019
Publish Notice of Availability for Proposed Amendment/Final EIS Public Protest Period (30 days) Governor’s Consistency Review (60 days)	February 2019



**Thank you!**

The image features a central landscape photograph of rolling hills at sunset. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a warm orange and yellow near the horizon. The foreground is filled with low-lying, scrubby vegetation. The top and bottom of the image are framed by a dark grey background with white contour lines, resembling a topographic map. Two horizontal green lines are positioned near the top and bottom edges of the map pattern.