

I am Fred Fulstone from Smith Valley, Nevada, and have operated my sheep and cattle operation for over 72 years. Our shepherders live on the range 24/7/365 with the sage hen, deer, and other wildlife. We certainly have learned all about the wildlife and range areas. As you know the Bi-State sage grouse is considered a different sage hen here in Western Nevada, and adjoining California, from the rest of the sage hen.

It has been considered to be listed without listing the rest of the Nevada sage hen population. If the sage hen is listed the livestock ranchers could lose their grazing rights. This has happened to me before with the listing of the bighorn sheep in California. If listed people could be put out of their homes if the bird gets on their property or on their patios.

Listing this sage hen would be disastrous for all of us here in the Bi-State area. Some people say the ESA protection should be as a distinct population segment of sage grouse. Others are trying to prove that the local sage grouse are a different variety. Both of these claims are made without good scientific

data to back it up. At least part of the question could be dismissed easily with appropriate Nuclear DNA comparisons. Distinct population segments are based on a population being isolated from any others. The biologist failed to explain how the sage grouse arrived in Smith Valley in the first place, if Smith Valley is so far from the other flocks that they cannot travel to Western Nevada.