

FRED FULSTONE, JR.
MARIANNE F. LEINASSAR
Phone: 775-465-2381
Fax: 775-465-1200
fimcorporation@gmail.com

F.I.M., CORP.

Farming and Livestock

P.O. BOX 12
SMITH, NEVADA 89430



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Submitted by Fred Fulstone

All the agencies are planning for management of what the Endangered Species act calls a Distinct Population Segment. As federal agencies, you are required to demonstrate that you are in compliance with the ESA by documenting that you are using the best available scientific and commercial data. You are also required to demonstrate how this bird is a DPS in accordance with the federal standards of discreteness and significance as defined by the ESA and subsequent policy. No proof of this. USFWS must do a nuclear DNA to clean this.

This bird is not endangered; there are thousands of them all over the Western United States. They are trying to make a big political deal out of this bird, just like they did by listing the Bighorn Sheep in the Sierras and removed all access to public lands. The sage grouse has already cost us four hundred million dollars and will cost us a billion or more.

Just think what good is this bird? It doesn't provide any of the basic needs of mankind.

All we have to do is to turn this sage hen situation over to the Wildlife Service, who would control the predators which would increase sage grouse numbers. It's been proven.

Please look at the Federal Register paper included here (dated August 24, 2000, third column underlined) page No. 51579. The following is what USFWS said about predators on sage grouse in the year 2000. It is still true today. Most juvenile mortality occurs during nesting and the flightless chick stage, and is due primarily to predation or severe weather conditions. Sage grouse typically lives between 1 and 4 years and have an annual mortality rate of roughly 50 to 55 percent with females generally having a higher survival rate than males. Up to 50 percent of all sage grouse mortality is caused by predation from both avian (e.g.

Hawks eagles and ravens) and ground (e.g. coyotes, badgers, and ground squirrels) predators.

A couple of days ago I was questioning a few of the people who live within a few feet of the big leks on the Desert Creek Area. They told me every spring, about hatching time the ravens and other avian predators swarm in by the hundreds for the big fiesta. They are flying over their houses morning and afternoon. Most of the people think the birds (sage grouse) are just holding their own, but need protection from predators. Some said the birds (sage grouse) come right into their patios and back yards. They think they are trying to get away from predators. They said they could hear their funny noises when they were matting on the leks. One girl said when her father lived there back in the 1970's there was thousands of sage hen. That was the time when we had good predator control, also we didn't have too many raven then.

If we list these birds it will be committing economical suicide for the west, 90 percent if public lands are located in 10 Western States.

If Ted Kock is forced to list the bird in the Bi-State area it will be destroying agriculture, mining, energy, and recreation in this area. This is discrimination and illegal. This whole thing is ridiculous, spending billions of dollars and time over a bird that gives no benefit to mankind. The Endangered Species Act must be repealed or amended or it will destroy the USA.

It was just said that Obama will have a National listing of Sage Hen of all 11 Western States.