



# North American Grouse Partnership

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## *Grouse Partnership Urges No Listing for Sage Grouse*

Williamsport, Md. –The N. A. Grouse Partnership (Partnership) supported a ‘not warranted’ decision at this time in its comments submitted today to the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service on the petition to list the sage grouse under the Endangered Species Act. “The Partnership is determined to continue working with federal land management agencies and all other conservation partners to assure a viable future for sage grouse” said Jim Mosher, NAGP executive director. “Our position on the proposed listing simply reflects our view of how best to conserve sage grouse and accomplish much needed restoration work. We do not underestimate the conservation challenge ahead or the vulnerable position of these populations.”

The Partnership’s comments noted, in part, that “It is clear from the ‘Conservation Assessment of Sage Grouse and Sagebrush Habitat’ recently released by the Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies that sage grouse have declined markedly from historic population levels. Essential habitat has diminished in extent and quality, and many land use activities have potential to negatively impact the viability of sage grouse populations. The Assessment provides both a warning of imminent and growing challenges for sage grouse as well as a basis for implementing positive conservation actions to reverse the historic trend.”

“This is certainly a very difficult time for sage grouse and other grassland and sagebrush species,” observed Mosher. “In our comments, we urged considerable caution, noting that however positive all the strategic planning may be, little of value will be accomplished for sage grouse without implementation of those plans.”

Failure to stem the loss of sage grouse would signal associated losses of many other species that share the same habitat. This doesn’t have to be the outcome. Success in avoiding the profound consequences that could follow a decision to list the sage grouse can be achieved through the collective action of all stakeholders including the energy industry, ranchers, federal and state agencies and conservationists. It will take that level of cooperation and determination by all interests to assure that sage grouse remain an important feature of the western landscape well into the future.

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*Our mission is to promote the conservation of grouse and the habitats necessary for their survival and reproduction.*