



# North American Grouse Partnership

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## ***Grouse Partnership Sees Opportunity in the 'Not Warranted' Decision for Sage Grouse***

Williamsport, Md. – The decision announced today by Secretary of Interior Norton to not list the Sage Grouse under the Endangered Species Act is welcomed by the N. A. Grouse Partnership (Partnership). Considerable support for this decision is contained in the recent Conservation Assessment completed by the Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies. The Partnership supported a ‘not warranted’ decision at this time in its comments submitted to the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service on the petition to list the sage grouse.

The Conservation Assessment provided 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 critical time for sage grouse and other grassland and sagebrush species,” observed Mosher. “It is important to note that little of value will be accomplished for sage grouse without implementation of the many plans being developed. We have an opportunity now to show that species conservation and recovery can be accomplished effectively without invoking the regulatory protections of the ESA.”

“We will continue working with federal land management agencies and other conservation partners to assure a viable future for sage grouse” said Jim Mosher, executive director of the Partnership. “Our support of a ‘not warranted’ decision at this time simply reflects our views on how best to conserve sage grouse and accomplish much needed restoration work.”

State wildlife agencies, federal land management agencies, private land owners, energy producers and other conservationists are contributing to protection and restoration of grouse habitat through dozens of local working groups and in other ways. All recognize the difficult conservation challenge ahead and the vulnerable position of this species.

We are encouraged by the commitment of the western Governors to follow through with support of conservation efforts for sage grouse irrespective of the final listing decision. Their commitment was articulated clearly at the Endangered Species Summit in San Diego last December. It will take that level of commitment, determination and cooperation of all stakeholders to assure that sage grouse remain an important part 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.*