

Dear ID Chapter leaders,

Over the past several weeks, folks from across the West were given the opportunity to have their voices heard when it comes to the future of the Greater Sage-grouse federal land management plans. The message was clear: let the collaborative plans work and support the common ground established in the 2015 plans.

Three public meetings were hosted by the BLM in ID – 11/2 (Twin Falls), 11/6 (Idaho Falls), and 11/7 (Marsing). Thank you to those that attended one of these!

**SECRETARY ZINKE/BLM IS ACCEPTING COMMENTS UNTIL DECEMBER 1 ... and I'm personally asking you to leverage you and your chapter's voice.** Please weigh in on this issue that affects not only sage-grouse but 350+ other species, including other sagebrush dependent avian species that aren't doing well like Sage Thrashers.

### **TWO IMPORTANT WAYS YOU CAN HELP**

1. Please share this **action alert** link with your members – <http://action.audubon.org/sagegrouse> (note: there is no “www” in this address) ... 17,000+ people from across the U.S. have taken action already – we need ID voices to get it over 20,000!
  - Taking part in these alerts REALLY does make a difference: (1) lets BLM know that real people out West are watching and care! And (2) it builds our credibility in DC as we fight political interference and submit extensive comments.
  - And if folks personalize the proposed letter in the email, it strengthens it!!!
2. Have your **chapter submit a formal comment letter to BLM.**
  - Send your comments to: [BLM\\_sagegrouseplanning@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_sagegrouseplanning@blm.gov) AND Ammon Wilhelm – the ID BLM Lead – [awilhelm.gov](mailto:awilhelm.gov)
  - If you aren't quite sure what to see, **see attached** for an example letter that your chapter can use to help craft yours!

## **WHAT WE HEARD FROM CHAPTERS AND MEMBERS THAT ATTENDED THE BLM MEETINGS**

The majority of stakeholders who attended the 15 BLM-hosted public meetings across 8 western states, sportsmen and women, ranchers, energy developers, and conservationist all voiced their support for the collaborative work that has gone into sage-grouse over the past decade. While some folks articulated interest in minor changes to the plans, the input received by BLM at these meetings made it clear that almost no one wants to see Secretary Zinke implement significant changes that would undermine years of hard work, trust-building and collaboration.

Agency representatives at the meetings were generally unable to articulate any changed circumstances or new scientific findings that would justify Secretary Zinke's radical changes to the plans. The BLM staff present could not provide a clear answer when asked if Secretary Zinke's radical changes could lead to the sage-grouse being listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), something no one wants. Without any peer-reviewed science or popular support to backup these changes, Secretary Zinke's proposed changes to the plans would only cause great uncertainties for sportsmen and women and businesses across the West and imperil the 350+ species that depend on the sage-steppe ecosystem.

These public meetings made it perfectly clear that the majority of Western stakeholders agree with the vocal western Governors that major changes to the plans are not needed. In addition to the public meetings thousands of westerners have submitted comments in favor of keep the original plans intact. It is time for Secretary Zinke to finally listen to the Western Governors and the thousands of stakeholders who have made it abundantly clear that they want work on the ground to continue and for the original plans to be fully implemented.

Thank you for continuing to be champions for our birds!!!

Warmest regards,  
Daly