



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Ecological Services
Colorado Field Office
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Denver, CO 80225

IN REPLY REFER TO
ES/GJ-6-CO-13-F-005
TAILS 06E24100-2012-F-0250

December 8, 2014

Memorandum

To: Field Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Gunnison Field Office, Gunnison, Colorado

From: Colorado Supervisor, Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services, Colorado

Subject: Adoption of the Gunnison Basin Candidate Conservation Agreement Conference Opinion as the Final Biological Opinion

We have received your memorandum of December 3, 2014, in which you request that we adopt our conference opinion of July 30, 2013, for the Gunnison Basin Candidate Conservation Agreement (CCA) and effects on Gunnison sage-grouse (*Centrocercus minimus*) as our biological opinion (BO) for the CCA. The Interagency Cooperation regulations (50 CFR § 402.10(d)) permit the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), at the request of the Federal action agency, to adopt its conference opinion for a Federal action as its BO, provided that; (a) no significant new information has developed; and (b) no significant changes to the Federal action were made that would alter the content of the opinion.

In your request, you assured us that no significant changes have occurred in the proposed action as described in the conference opinion and CCA, and you are unaware of any significant changes in the information that was considered during the conference. We have reviewed the information on which the conference opinion was based.

The Service agrees that the required conditions for adoption of our conference opinion as our BO have been met. Therefore, by this memorandum the Service hereby adopts the July 30, 2013 conference opinion as our biological opinion for the subject action. In doing so, section 7 obligations of the signatory agencies relative to the subject action and the effects to the Gunnison sage-grouse have been satisfied. The effective date of the Gunnison Sage-grouse listing is December 22, 2014. The provisions of the incidental take statement shall take effect on that date, and apply to each signatory Federal agency respectively. We recommend that the action agencies review the incidental take statement, specifically the reasonable and prudent measures and the accompanying terms and conditions.

Reinitiation of formal consultation is required and shall be requested by the Federal agency or by the Service, where discretionary Federal involvement or control over the action has been retained or is authorized by law and: (a) If the amount or extent of taking specified in the incidental take statement is exceeded; (b) If new information reveals effects of the action that may affect listed species in a manner or to an extent not previously considered; (c) If the identified action is subsequently modified in a manner that causes an effect to listed species that was not considered in the BO; or (d) if a new species is listed or critical habitat designated that may be affected by the identified action.

We wish to thank the groups/agencies that are signatory to the CCA for their continued assistance in helping to conserve the Gunnison sage-grouse. We look forward to a continuing productive relationship among all parties. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this memorandum, please contact Kurt Broderdorp at (970) 628-7186.

ec: Ken Stahlnecker, National Park Service
Clay Speas, U.S. Forest Service
Elise Boeke, NRCS