



U.S. Forest Service

Sage-Grouse Bulletin #8

October 3, 2018

Summary: Sage-Grouse Bulletin #8 provides an update on plan amendment timelines and release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

Potential Plan Amendments – Summary of Scoping Comments

The official scoping period for the supplemental Notice of Intent to propose changes to Forest Service greater sage-grouse plans ended on August 15, 2018 and over 8700 comments were received. The majority of the comments received were form letters and approximately 400 comments were considered “unique”.

A Forest Service contractor has completed compiling and coding the responses received during scoping. An Executive Summary of the comments received has been posted to the Intermountain website:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r4/home/?cid=stelprd3843381>

Plan Amendments –NEPA Timelines

The Forest Service has produced one multi-region DEIS, but the scale of one, or multiple (e.g., state-by-state) Records of Decisions (RODs) has yet to be determined. The completion of the DEIS has been delayed from the initial estimated date and is now scheduled to be released on October 5, 2018. The DEIS will be available on the Intermountain Region website:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r4/home/?cid=stelprd3843381>. The release of the DEIS will initiate a 90 day comment period. A final EIS and draft Record of Decision is expected to be completed in mid-February, 2019 which will begin a 60 day objection period. After the objection period, the final ROD(s) will be signed as early as May or as late as July, 2019, depending on the complexity of objections received.

Public and Cooperator Meetings

Cooperating Agency meetings have been held in several states leading up to the release of the DEIS. The Interdisciplinary Team received comments from Cooperators and was able to incorporate that feedback into the DEIS prior to its release. The Forest Service is considering plans to hold public meetings and open houses during the official comment period, and will continue to receive feedback on the DEIS.