



# U.S. Forest Service

## Sage-Grouse Bulletin #10

### February 2019

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**Summary:** Sage-Grouse Bulletin #10 provides a status update on Forest Service greater sage-grouse planning immediately after the January 2019 furlough. The 90-day comment period on the draft EIS for amending forest plans was completed on January 3, 2019. The expected timeline is being extended and final Record(s) of Decision will be delayed somewhat due to the January shutdown.

#### **Open House Meetings during the DEIS Comment Period**

A series of open house meetings were held to provide an opportunity for the public to learn more about the proposed amendments to Forest Service land management plans for greater sage-grouse and to ask questions and provide comments on the actions being considered. Meetings were held on the following dates:

**Wyoming:** All meetings were held from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

October 22, 2018, *Cheyenne*, Laramie County Community College

October 23, 2018, *Pinedale*, Pinedale Public Library

**Nevada:** All meetings were held from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

November 7, 2018, *Sparks*, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Supervisor's Office

November 8, 2018, *Elko*, Elko Convention Center

**Idaho:** All meetings were held from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

November 26, 2018, *Boise*, Idaho Fish and Game Headquarters

November 29, 2018, *Jerome*, Idaho Fish and Game Office

December 17, 2018, *Challis*, Challis Community Center

December 18, 2018, *Idaho Falls*, Caribou-Targhee Forest Headquarters Office

**Utah:** All meetings were held from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

December 11, *Cedar City*, Festival Hall

December 12, *Vernal*, Utah State University-Uintah Basin

December 13, *Tooele*, Utah State University Extension Office

#### **DEIS Comment Period**

The 90 day DEIS Comment Period concluded on January 3, 2019. Approximately 28,000 comments were received; the majority of comments were duplicate form letters with just over 600 "unique" letters. The Interdisciplinary Team expects to have comments summarized by mid-February 2019.

#### **Updated Timelines for Final Decision**

Mail and electronic submission infrastructure were functioning during the furlough, so currently there is no plan to extend the DEIS comment period. The shutdown did impact planning timelines, however. The final EIS (FEIS) and draft Records of Decision (ROD) are expected to be completed in mid-April, 2019, followed by a 60 day objection period. After the objection period, the final ROD(s) will be signed as early as July or as late as September 2019, depending on the number and complexity of objections received.

#### **Next steps**

The Interdisciplinary Team is especially focused on clarifying differences in mapping layers between the 2015 and 2019 amendments. Other important activities include forming responses to comments and making revisions to create the final EIS and draft ROD(s).

February 4, 2019