



COLORADO

Department of Natural Resources

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CO Dept of Natural Resources Sends Protest Letter on BLM Uncompahgre Plan

The Colorado Department of Natural Resources, submitted a formal protest letter today to the U.S Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on its Final Uncompahgre Field Office Resource Management Plan which covers federal land in Mesa, Delta, Montrose, Gunnison, Ouray, and San Miguel counties.

In the protest letter, the State focused on the Uncompahgre Plan's potential impact on big game habitat and wildlife corridors and protection of the Gunnison Sage-grouse, a threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act.

“Protecting Colorado’s wildlife and environment is a core value of Coloradans and a key mission of the Department of Natural Resources and Colorado Parks and Wildlife. We are concerned that the Plan released by the BLM does not adequately protect important wildlife corridors nor safeguard the Gunnison Sage-Grouse, a threatened species,” said Dan Gibbs, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Natural Resources.

The protest letter outlines the importance of wildlife to Colorado and, in particular, big game habitat and hunting to local economies. The letter requests that the BLM incorporate its own guidance on protecting important wildlife corridors and include those protections in the Uncompahgre Plan, as it has done in other Colorado Field Office plans.

The letter also expresses the State’s concern that the Uncompahgre Plan does not adequately protect fragile populations and critical habitat for the Gunnison Sage-grouse, and needs to do more, including habitat restoration and more prescriptive stipulations, to sustain and restore the federally listed threatened species.

Finally, the letter raises questions about the lack of time cooperating agencies had to evaluate the Final Plan, which diverged significantly from earlier alternatives considered at the Field Office level.

“We value our relationship with BLM staff and appreciate the State priorities and other requested changes that were incorporated into the plan,” said Gibbs. “Colorado looks forward to providing additional comments in it’s Consistency Review and other communications with the BLM around the Uncompahgre Plan.”

The State of Colorado will have until August 28, to conduct a Consistency Review of the Uncompahgre Plan to ensure the Plan is consistent with State policy and plans.

The [Protest Letter is available here](#):

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