



Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval

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SANDOVAL RELEASES 'WIN-WIN' SOLUTION TO PRESERVE MINING INDUSTRY AND PROTECT THE SAGE-GROUSE

CARSON CITY, NV – Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval today announced he has submitted the state's formal scoping comments to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in response to the proposed mineral withdrawal Environmental Impact Statement. Sandoval directed the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Nevada Department of Wildlife, and the Nevada Division of Minerals to work cooperatively with private stakeholders to analyze the proposed Sagebrush Focal Areas in order to identify both areas of mineral potential and activity and high value Greater Sage-grouse habitat.

"The proposal detailed in the state's response delivers a 'win-win' solution in an effort to achieve the mutual goals of preserving our thriving mining industry, protecting the sage-grouse and enhancing its habitat and maintaining our state's vast potential for future economic development opportunities. With the correct plan and management Nevada's mining industry, the sage-grouse, and future economic development can all coexist and flourish in the Silver State. Last fall, I asked my state resources agencies to analyze the BLM proposal. These on-the-ground experts worked with the mining industry, economic development professionals, and other stakeholders and together they have come up with this comprehensive and collaborative alternative," **said Governor Brian Sandoval.**

"Since 2011, I have been committed to working with the Department of the Interior on this important issue. The state's primary goal has always been to avoid an Endangered Species listing which, among other things, would have given the federal government the authority to regulate the species and its habitat and potentially infringe on the rights of private land owners. The 'not warranted' designation maintains the responsibility and management of the sage-grouse with the Nevada Department of Wildlife. Avoiding the listing was great news for Nevada but creating an environment where mining and economic development cannot succeed in our state is not something I am willing to pursue or negotiate. I sincerely hope the Interior Secretary, the BLM, and the US Forest Service will take these comments and our plan seriously because time is running out. I have always taken the Secretary at her word but if her agencies refuse to implement her publicly stated policies, the state cannot assume our negotiations are happening in good faith and my administration will consider the other legal options we have identified in the past," **concluded Sandoval.**

In September of 2015, United States Department of the Interior (DOI) Secretary Sally Jewell announced that the Greater Sage-grouse did not warrant Endangered Species Act protection across Nevada and 10 other western states. At the same time, the BLM and United States Forest Service (USFS) began implementing new regulations that restrict development with an emphasis on Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFA), areas where the Greater Sage-grouse are able to thrive and grow in population.

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