



Executive Order 2012-19

ESTABLISHING THE SAGEBRUSH ECOSYSTEM COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the State of Nevada is known as the Sagebrush State;

WHEREAS, restoration and maintenance of the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem is essential to Nevada's sagebrush obligate species, wildlife and domestic animals, watersheds, biodiversity and productivity;

WHEREAS, the Greater Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) is an important species that inhabits much of the sagebrush-steppe habitat in Nevada;

WHEREAS, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service ("USFWS") has determined that the Greater Sage-grouse species is warranted for listing as a threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but is precluded by other higher priority species;

WHEREAS, the United States District Court for the District of Idaho ruled on February 2, 2012 that the USFWS must re-evaluate the status of the Greater Sage-grouse by September 30, 2015;

WHEREAS, the United States Secretary of the Interior has invited the eleven western states, including Nevada, impacted by the potential listing of the Greater Sage-grouse to develop state-specific regulatory mechanisms to conserve the species and preclude the need to list it under the ESA;

WHEREAS, the development and implementation of a state-specific strategy in Nevada is critical in demonstrating to the USFWS that the species does not warrant federal protection under the ESA;

WHEREAS, the State of Nevada under the leadership of Governor Kenny Guinn's Sage-grouse Conservation Team developed the First Edition of the Greater Sage-grouse Conservation Plan for Nevada and Eastern California in 2004;

WHEREAS, further recommendations for the development of a state-specific strategy were presented on July 31, 2012 by the Greater Sage-grouse Advisory Committee formed by Executive Order 2012-09;

WHEREAS, the State of Nevada has management authority over all non-endangered wildlife populations in Nevada;

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of this State to bring stakeholders and experts together on an on-going basis to guide the implementation of conservation measures sufficient to preclude the need to list the Greater Sage-grouse, Bi-state Sage-grouse and other potential species;

WHEREAS, the listing of the Greater Sage-grouse would have a significant adverse affect on the custom, culture, and economy of the State of Nevada; and

WHEREAS, Article 5, Section 1 of the Nevada Constitution provides that, "The Supreme Executive Power of this State shall be vested in a Chief Magistrate who shall be Governor of the State of Nevada."

NOW, THEREFORE, by the authority vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and laws of the State of Nevada, I hereby direct and order as follows:

1. The Sagebrush Ecosystem Council ("Council") is hereby created.
2. The Council shall be composed of nine voting members, each of whom shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor.
3. The Council shall include one representative of each of the following groups:
 - a. Agriculture
 - b. Conservation and Environmental
 - c. Energy
 - d. Local Government
 - e. Mining
 - f. Sportsmen
 - g. Ranching
 - h. Tribal Nations
 - i. General public
4. The following officers groups may be designated by the Governor, in addition to the nine voting members, as non-voting Ex Officio members of the Council:
 - a. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service – State Supervisor
 - b. Bureau of Land Management – State Supervisor
 - c. U.S. Forest Service – Humboldt Toiyabe Forest Supervisor
5. It shall be the responsibility of the Council to:
 - a. Implement a conservation strategy for the Greater Sage-grouse based on the recommendations of the Greater Sage-grouse Advisory Committee;
 - b. Provide direction to State and Federal agencies and private parties as to the State's conservation policy of the Greater Sage-grouse species and its habitat, including the fact that the State's policy is to maintain predictable and multiple uses of private, state and public lands;
 - c. Establish management policies attuned to the importance of the habitat and the interests of the State;
 - d. Identify a long-term adaptive management structure for the sage brush ecosystems that engages local groups and ensures the effective implementation of management strategies;
 - e. Oversee the work of the Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team, Division of State Lands, Department of Conservation & Natural Resources ("Technical Team");
 - f. Establish a mitigation banking & credit program for sagebrush ecosystems, tailored specifically to the needs of the Greater Sage-grouse, utilizing existing State funding sources and private sector contributions;
 - g. Prioritize landscape-scale restoration and conservation projects identified by the Technical Team and the public;
 - h. Coordinate the consolidation of funding to accomplish landscape-scale restoration and conservation;
 - i. Provide a forum for coordination, discussion and participation by the federal agencies and all state and local entities involved in sagebrush ecosystem and sage-grouse matters;
 - j. Resolve conflicts among entities where there is disagreement on sage-grouse management approaches;

6. The Council may establish procedural bylaws to aid it in the performance of its duties, and it may establish subcommittees comprised of members of the Council to aid it in the performance of its duties.
7. The Council shall deliver a report to the Governor on or before June 30 and December 31 each year, except 2012, detailing the activities of the Council. All records documenting the Council's activities shall be retained and transferred to the State Archives for permanent retention in accordance with the State record retention policy.
8. The Council shall cease to exist upon passage of legislation forming a substantially similar body with statutory authority for the duties imparted to the Council in this order.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Nevada to be affixed at the State Capitol in Carson City, this 19th day of November, in the year two thousand twelve.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "S. S. Johnson", written over a horizontal line.

Governor of the State of Nevada

By the Governor:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "P. Ross Miller", written over a horizontal line.

Secretary of State of Nevada

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "B. B.", written over a horizontal line.

Deputy