IPAMS in the News

March 5-8, 2010

IPAMS received an unprecedented amount of news coverage this weekend regarding a statement by Director of Government Affairs Kathleen Sgamma released immediately following the announcement by the Department of Interior (DOI) concerning the sage grouse.

Below is a special edition of IPAMS Daily Newsbrief which contains a link to regional and national news coverage about this topic.

Sage Grouse Endangered, but not Going on List

published in: *KCFR Colorado Public Radio* **on:** 03/08/2010 **by:** Anna Panoka and Megan Verlee

The greater sage grouse does qualify as an endangered species according to an Interior Department ruling Friday. But it isn't endangered enough earn a place on the list.

Department of Interior classifies sage grouse as candidate species, not endangered or threatened

published in: *Rawlins Daily Times* **on:** 03/08/2010 **by:** Nicholas DeMarino

The Department of the Interior classified the sage grouse as a candidate species for federal protection Friday. While the bird wasn't listed as an endangered or threatened species, protection under the Endangered Species Act is warranted but precluded by the need to address higher priority species first, said Interior Secretary Ken Salazar in a press release. According to the DOI, states would continue to be responsible for the management of sage grouse, although Salazar added, "Voluntary conservation agreements, federal financial and technical assistance and other partnership incentives" could play a role.

Sage Grouse 'Candidate' Finding Creates Uncertainty for West E&P

published in: *Energy Intelligence* **on:** 03/08/2010 **by:** Lauren O'Neil

The US Interior Department said Friday that the greater sage grouse will remain on the "candidate" list for endangered species act protection, listed as neither "endangered" nor "threatened" -- sending mixed signals to the countless natural gas producers across the Intermountain West whose operations overlap the imperiled bird's habitat. Producers have long-feared that an Endangered Species Act listing -- or a "threatened" status under the act -- could hold far-reaching economic consequences for gas and oil production sharing the same land as sage grouse in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and Idaho. The birds can be found in a total of 10 western states, in addition to Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Did we dodge a bullet?

published in: *Gillette News Record* **on:** 03/07/2010 **by:** Steve McManamen

The oil and gas industry dodged a listing of the sage grouse on the endangered species list Friday, but energy companies that want to work around them still will face “additional measures to conserve sage grouse habitat.” Industry workers have said in recent weeks they already face strict Bureau of Land Management regulations and environmental stipulations. More regulations will cause serious problems.

Grouse Listing: ‘Waranted but Precluded’; BLM Promises ‘Closer Scrutiny’

published in: *Wyofile/E&E News* **on:** 03/06/2010 **by:** Allison Winter

The Bureau of Land Management will examine oil and gas drilling permits with “closer scrutiny” to determine if they might affect the imperiled greater sage grouse in light of the new protected status for the iconic Western bird, BLM Director Bob Abbey said today. The Interior Department today said it would add the bird to a list of “candidates” for protection under the Endangered Species Act. The candidate list is a sort of waiting room for plants and animals that warrant federal protection but are excluded because of other priorities.

Mixed decision for grouse

published in: *Billings Gazette/Casper Star-Tribune* **on:** 03/06/2010 **by:** Dustin Bleizeffer

Wildlife conservationists and energy developers alike found some encouragement in Friday’s announcement that the sage grouse won’t be listed as a threatened or endangered species. Many agreed that such a listing would have had a chilling effect on the agriculture and minerals industries, which are the foundation of Wyoming’s economy.

Feds offer monitoring, not protection, for sage grouse

published in: *Denver Post* **on:** 03/06/2010 **by:** Bruce Finley

The federal government Friday picked a compromise path to protect the imperiled sage grouse, declaring it needs help to prevent extinction but giving Westerners a chance to save it voluntarily before Endangered Species Act restrictions are imposed. Sage grouse became "a candidate species," in line along with 249 other candidates deemed deserving of federal protection.

Energy groups relieved sage grouse won't be listed

published in: *Associated Press* **on:** 03/06/2010 **by:** Mead Gruver

An Interior Department announcement Friday that it won't list sage grouse as an endangered or threatened species opens the way for continued development of the West's wind energy and oil

and gas industries. Those industries will still face scrutiny in sage grouse habitat but much less so than if the bird were listed.

Protection delayed for greater sage grouse

published in: *Los Angeles Times* **on:** 03/06/2010 **by:** Jim Tankersley

The greater sage grouse, a symbol of the West's dwindling sagebrush landscapes, should be protected under the Endangered Species Act but won't be for at least another year, Interior Department officials announced Friday. Instead, the department issued a "warranted but precluded" designation for the bird, meaning that it meets scientific criteria for protection but that other species are a higher priority. Its status will be reviewed annually.

Sage grouse heads toward 'candidate' status

published in: *E&E News (Subscription Required)* **on:** 03/05/2010 **by:** Allison Winter, Patrick Reis and Noelle Straub

The Obama administration today is expected to recognize the greater sage grouse -- a bird whose protection would conflict with Western energy development -- as needing federal protection, but to delay its entry to the Endangered Species List while devoting attention to higher-priority species. Interior Department Secretary Ken Salazar is scheduled to make a formal announcement this afternoon of what sources in Congress and elsewhere say will be a delay in a formal Endangered Species Act listing.

Sage grouse in peril, but won't be listed; energy groups relieved

published in: *Seattle Times* **on:** 03/05/2010 **by:** Craig Welch

Despite making clear that sage grouse in the American West warrant listing under the Endangered Species Act, the Obama administration declined to actually do so Friday. The turkey-sized birds with the regal white chest and booming hiccuplike mating call have declined 90 percent in the last century. But with hundreds of thousands of creatures still making their home among the bunch grass and tumble weeds in 11 western states, the administration ruled that listing the birds was less a priority than protecting more imperiled species.

Sage grouse stays off endangered list

published in: *Denver Business Journal* **on:** 03/05/2010 **by:** Mark Harden

The sage grouse — a bird found in prime energy-development and ranching areas of Colorado and other western states — won’t be listed as endangered or threatened, but eventually it could get a greater degree of federal protection, the U.S. Interior Department said Friday. The ruling appears to diminish a threat to the region’s energy and ranching industries, which faced potentially severe cutbacks in their operations if the sage grouse had been added to the endangered species list and its habitat barred from commercial use.

Sage Grouse Protections Warranted, But Listing Not

published in: *KUNC Radio* **on:** 03/05/2010 **by:** Kirk Siegler

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar says his department will not list the sage grouse as a threatened or endangered species but the rare bird found in Rocky Mountain states will be included as a candidate for federal protection. The decision is being cheered by many in the region, because an endangered species listing could have stonewalled oil and gas development and proposed wind power projects on western lands. Those projects will still face some extra scrutiny though, says Interior Secretary Ken Salazar.

Sage grouse decision buys time for state's conservation efforts

published in: *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel* **on:** 03/05/2010 **by:** Dennis Webb

A federal decision announced Friday confirms the future of a showy western bird is in doubt, but also buys time to try to save it in a way that moderates impacts on western industries such as energy development and agriculture. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar cited a sharp drop in the population of the greater sage grouse in saying Friday that it warrants federal protection. "We have seen a 90 percent decline in the population of the sage grouse from a century ago," Salazar said during a media teleconference.

Grouse decision could dampen oil drilling

published in: *Deseret News* **on:** 03/05/2010 **by:** Lee Davidson

In a move that critics worry could restrict oil drilling and grazing on public lands in Utah and other Western states, the federal government decided Friday that the sage grouse is worthy of protection under the Endangered Species Act. However, it delayed actually listing the desert-dwelling bird as endangered or threatened. For now, the sage grouse will merely be a "candidate" for listing while officials plan to focus their limited staff and resources on other species that face even higher risk of extinction.