

RESOLUTION #15-10

A RESOLUTION URGING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO FULLY COMPLY WITH THE FEDERAL DATA QUALITY ACT AS IT CONSIDERS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS AND LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENTS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE GREATER SAGE GROUSE AND URGING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ADOPT THE STATE OF UTAH'S GREATER SAGE GROUSE MANAGEMENT PLAN

WHEREAS, Duchesne County supports management of greater-sage grouse through state, local and private conservation efforts rather than federal land-use restrictions or a federal listing under the Endangered Species Act ("ESA"); and

WHEREAS, the State of Utah has adopted a sage grouse management plans providing protection to over 90% of the total sage grouse population within Utah; and

WHEREAS, a coalition of counties, agricultural, mining and energy interests (the "Coalition") has challenged the Bureau of Land Management's ("BLM") NTT Report, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's ("USFWS") COT Report and the United States Geological Survey ("USGS") Sage Grouse Monograph (the "Reports") under the federal Data Quality Act; and

WHEREAS, these challenges detail at great length serious questions of scientific integrity and transparency with the Reports; and

WHEREAS, federal agencies are relying upon the Reports to amend some 98 land use plans across approximately 50 million acres of BLM managed land and nine million acres of National Forest land in eleven western states; and

WHEREAS, the Data Quality Act requires federal agencies to ensure and maximize the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information disseminated; and

WHEREAS, the Reports fail to meet basic standards of science, resulting in misinformed policies and restrictions; and

WHEREAS, reliance on this biased and faulty information has and will continue to harm the public, greater sage-grouse and western economies.

NOW, THEREFORE WE, THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF DUCHESNE COUNTY, UTAH, DO HEREBY DECLARE:


1. State management of wildlife is better suited to balance economic activities with robust protections for sage grouse as they were developed using a bottom-up process with input from diverse stakeholders, rather than the top-down approach taken by the federal agencies; and
2. The BLM, USFWS and USGS must retract the Reports and withdraw them from consideration in land use plan amendments and the upcoming ESA listing decision for sage grouse; and
3. The Utah legislature should adopt a similar resolution as this; and
4. Congress should take all necessary actions to delay listing sage grouse under the ESA for a period no less than 10 years to allow the duly adopted state and local sage grouse management plans to be fully implemented and the realization of the benefits of said plans; and
5. Congress should take all necessary actions to support continued local, state and private conservation efforts for sage grouse, thus avoiding serious and adverse


effects to private property rights, economic development and western communities; and

6. Congress should take all necessary actions to direct federal agencies to manage the Greater sage-grouse as a sensitive species.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED by a duly constituted quorum of the Board of County Commissioners of Duchesne County, Utah this 4th day of May, 2015.


**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DUCHESNE COUNTY, UTAH**


Ronald Winterton, Commission Chair


Ken Burdick, Commissioner


Gregory Todd, Commissioner

ATTEST:


JoAnn Evans, Clerk/Auditor