

Resolution No. 15 - 37

Resolution on Scientific Integrity and Greater Sage-Grouse

Whereas, Yellowstone 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");

Whereas, a coalition of counties, agricultural, mining and energy interests (the "Coalition") has challenged BLM's NTT Report, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's COT Report and the USGS sage grouse Monograph (the "Reports") under the federal Data Quality Act;

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

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 Forests in eleven western states;

Whereas, the DQA requires federal agencies to ensure and maximize the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information disseminated.

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

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

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that Yellowstone County:

- believes 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;
- urges the BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and USGS to emphasize local comments in their report; and
- supports the Sage Grouse Bill already introduced in the legislature; and
- urges Congress to carefully oversee the sage grouse process under the ESA, and to keep pressure on the US Fish and Wildlife Service to recognize and support continuing local, state and private conservation efforts for sage grouse, protecting private property rights, economic development, and western communities, as well as sage grouse.

Passed and Adopted by the Board of Commissioners, Yellowstone County, Montana on this 21st day of April, 2015.

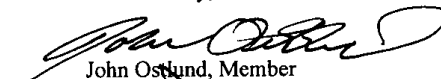
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
YELLOWSTONE COUNTY, MONTANA


Bill Kennedy, Chairman

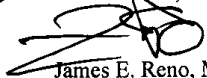
ATTEST:



Jeff Martin
Clerk and Recorder



John Ostlund, Member



James E. Reno, Member