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Contact: Kathy Opp  
Executive Director, WSLCA  
208-870-7407  
[kathyjopp@gmail.com](mailto:kathyjopp@gmail.com)

## Western State Land Commissioners Hail Sage-Grouse Decision—Urge Continued State Management of Species

(Washington DC) The Western State Land Commissioners Association hails the decision of the Department of Interior not to list the greater sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act. State trust land managers make up the second largest managers of sage-grouse habitat across the West and state efforts to plan, conserve, and protect sage grouse have proven successful. States have invested millions to prepare and implement state conservation plans and WSLCA supports the continued management of this species at the state level. State management of sage grouse will insure state trust land managers will continue to generate revenues to support public education and other critical state functions.

WSLCA is however very concerned that the Department of Interior, in an unprecedented manner, will continue to manage greater sage-grouse as a federal species through the land management process by withdrawing 10 million acres of oil, gas, and minerals from the energy and mineral markets. Due to the checkerboard nature of state trust lands and the intermingling of state trust lands within federal ownership, this massive energy and mineral withdrawal will severely impact state's ability to support school children in sage grouse states. When a state school trust section of land is surrounded by federal land which is off limits to energy or mineral development, the trust land becomes stranded and will not be pursued for development. Responsible and reasonable management of sage-grouse by state wildlife managers has proven successful. WSLCA urges the Secretary of Interior to respect the role of states to manage wildlife within their borders. WSLCA urges the Secretary of Interior to withdraw the land use plan amendments, stop the withdrawal of 10 million acres of minerals, allow state conservation plans to continue their success in protecting sage-grouse, and allow trust land managers to support our school children.