

## **\*\*ALERT\*\***

### **Gov. Hickenlooper, Senators Bennet and Udall and Congressman Tipton issue statements on Gunnison sage grouse listing decision**

Gov. John Hickenlooper, Senators Michael Bennet and Mark Udall and Congressman Scott Tipton today issued the following statements regarding the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decision to list the Gunnison sage grouse as threatened under the Endangered Species Act:

#### **Governor John Hickenlooper:**

"We are deeply disappointed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service chose to ignore the extraordinary efforts over the last two decades by the state, local governments, business leaders and environmentalists to protect the Gunnison sage grouse and its habitat. This sends a discouraging message to communities willing to take significant actions to protect species and complicates our good faith efforts to work with local stakeholders on locally driven approaches. In short, this is a major blow to voluntary conservation efforts and we will do everything we can, including taking the agency to court, to fight this listing and support impacted local governments, landowners and other stakeholders."

#### **Senator Mark Udall:**

"I am deeply disappointed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decision. Colorado's ranchers, conservationists, and state and local leaders have worked tirelessly together for more than 20 years to protect the Gunnison sage grouse, support local jobs and strengthen our special way of life. I have been proud to support this collaborative work, including the recent effort to request a delay of this decision so that additional conservation measures could be enacted. I will continue to champion this collaborative effort. Today's decision, however, threatens to unravel much of the grassroots and science-based progress Colorado has made preserving the Gunnison sage grouse."

#### **Senator Michael Bennet:**

"This decision is terribly disappointing. Despite a broad coalition of local governments, ranchers, farmers, environmentalists and the state of

Colorado pleading for more time and more engagement from the federal government on the ground, the Fish and Wildlife Service has pulled the rug out from under them. These Colorado communities did everything right to conserve the species and have shown a willingness to do more. With that commitment, the Service should have exercised all of its flexibility to allow these efforts to succeed. Colorado has proven that it can come together on tough issues to find solutions that work for everyone affected. We've implemented industry-supported rules regarding fugitive methane from oil and gas drilling, and are working toward compromise on the local control issue. Washington should learn from Colorado's model, not upend it. Today's decision only leaves Southwest Colorado with more uncertainty and conflict as this issue is re-litigated in the courts."

**Congressman Scott Tipton:**

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service disregarded science and the wellbeing of the Gunnison Sage Grouse today. They decided to ignore the scientific experts, and in true Washington-knows-best fashion, listen to the bureaucracy instead, jeopardizing locally-tailored species preservation efforts already successfully underway in Colorado. This is not a political issue, but an occasion where people from diverse backgrounds and all sides of the political spectrum have worked together to put into place local plans of action to preserve the species based on extensive scientific data-and they're working. In addition to implementing a wide range of voluntary conservation efforts, these stakeholders have done everything the federal government has asked to ensure the recovery of this species."