

Conservation Agreement

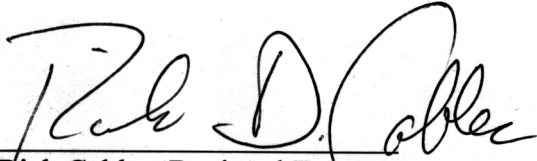
The U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region (Forest Service), hereby states its intent and commitment to assist and participate in the implementation of the *Greater Sage-grouse Colorado Conservation Plan* (the CCP). All projects or management actions implemented in accordance with the RCP will be subject to all laws, regulations, policies and procedures in effect at the time the action is implemented. Authorities for the Forest Service to manage Greater Sage-grouse habitat and to enter into this voluntary Conservation Agreement derives from the Sikes Act of 1960, as amended; the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960; the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended; and the National Forest Management Act of 1976. Specific commitments made hereby are as follows:

1. To manage, as outlined in the CCP, all Greater Sage-grouse habitats (as mapped by the Colorado Division of Wildlife in the CCP (Figure 4), as a desirable objective of land management activities, consistent with the overall management direction contained within the Forest Plans on the affected forests: Arapaho-Roosevelt NF, Routt NF, and White River NF.
2. To review and consider the information and recommendations provided by the CCP prior to making any new decision to undertake actions in Greater Sage-grouse habitat. The CCP and other appropriate local information will be used in project design and implementation to reduce negative impacts and identify opportunities for habitat improvement.
3. To exercise authority for maintenance of biological diversity, and the conservation and management of the Regional Forester's identified Sensitive Species, which includes the Greater Sage-grouse, as provided in the Forest Service Manual 2630 and 2670. A "Biological Evaluation" will be prepared for each proposed Forest Service program or activity to ensure that Forest Service actions do not contribute to loss of viability of the Greater sage-grouse or cause this species to move toward federal listing under the ESA.
4. To continue Forest Service participation and support of state-wide and local working groups, as appropriate.

Performance of all activities described above is contingent on adequate funds being made available and allocated to the Forest Service. This agreement is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligating document. All other parties and their respective agencies or organizations will handle their own activities and utilize their own resources in pursuing these objectives. This agreement shall not prohibit the Forest Service or the other cooperators in the plan from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, or private citizens. This agreement shall not prohibit the Forest Service from engaging in management actions regarding Greater Sage-grouse conservation beyond those described in this conservation plan. Such management actions should be coordinated with the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

This agreement shall become effective on the date of signature by the participating parties and shall remain in effect until signatory chooses to terminate the agreement.

Exceptions or amendments to this agreement may be jointly agreed to by the signatories on a case-by-case basis, where such deviations would better provide for the conservation of the species or its habitat, conflicts must be resolved, or new scientific information becomes available.



Rick Cables, Regional Forester
Rocky Mountain Region, U.S. Forest Service

3-17-08

Date