

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 4, 2021

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Chairwoman
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Joyce
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
2065 Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Pingree and Ranking Member Joyce:

As you begin crafting the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully request that you once again include language to prevent a future Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing for the Greater Sage-Grouse.

The Greater Sage Grouse is not endangered or threatened by any reasonable, legally-informed interpretation of that status. The population is far greater today thanks to the concerted efforts of several states that implemented, at their own expense, comprehensive Sage Grouse recovery plans. States have proven that they can manage these habitats and species in an effective way. Conservation of this species should be kept at the state level.

The Department of Interior under the Obama Administration found in 2015 that a listing of the sage-grouse under ESA was not warranted. However, a de facto listing was implemented through nearly 100 overly restrictive Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendments and Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) Amendments. These RMPs and LRMPs were in many cases more restrictive than a critical habitat designation under an ESA listing would have been. Further, they were inconsistent with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and Greater Sage Grouse conservation planning efforts at the state and local level.

Thankfully, the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service returned power to the states by issuing new Records of Decision (RODs) to unwind the overly restrictive Plan Amendments. Congress must act to ensure the Sage Grouse cannot remain an arbitrary regulatory cudgel in the years ahead. A provision aimed to prevent a listing of the Sage Grouse has been included in most omnibus bills since fiscal year 2015.

Accordingly, we ask that you once again include the following language this fiscal year:
***GREATER SAGE –GROUSE SEC. ____.** None of the funds made available by this or any other Act may be used by the Secretary of the Interior to write or issue pursuant to section 4 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1533) — (1) a proposed rule for greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*); (2) a proposed rule for the Columbia basin distinct population segment of greater sage-grouse.*

Sincerely,



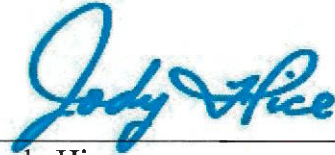
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Member of Congress



Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
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Jody Hice
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Russ Fulcher
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