



PARTNERSHIP *for the* WEST

Testimony

before the

Senate Committee on Environment
and Public Works /
Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife,
and Water

Conservation Efforts on Behalf of the Greater Sage-grouse

September 23, 2004

Testimony of Partnership for the West

Before the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Water

September 24, 2004

“Conservation Efforts on Behalf of the Greater Sage-grouse”

I. INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, my name is Greg Schnacke and I serve as Executive Vice President of the Colorado Oil & Gas Association. I am here representing the members of the Partnership for the West grassroots coalition, of which our Association is a member.

I am pleased to provide this testimony on local and regional efforts throughout the West to conserve the Greater Sage-grouse. This testimony has been specifically endorsed by a wide range of the Partnership’s members, and that list is included at the conclusion of this testimony.

By way of background, the Partnership for the West is a non-profit, broad-based alliance of people who support a clean environment and a healthy, growing economy. The membership includes more than 400 companies, associations, coalitions and group leaders who collectively employ or represent more than one million citizens across America in the following sectors: farm/ranching, coal, timber/wood products, small businesses, utilities, hard rock mining, oil & gas, construction, manufacturing, property rights advocates, education proponents, recreational access advocates, county government advocates, local, state and federal elected officials, grassroots activists and others.

Founded in 1984, the Colorado Oil & Gas Association is a non-profit organization designed to foster and promote the beneficial, efficient, responsible and environmentally sound development, production and use of Colorado oil and natural gas.

As this Subcommittee is aware, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) is currently reviewing this species for possible listing as “threatened” or “endangered” under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Our testimony makes two very important recommendations:

- 1. The USFWS should allow state and local officials to continue devising and managing locally led conservation efforts aimed at preserving and restoring the Greater Sage-grouse to biological health, and should not affect a federal**

takeover of these efforts via an Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing. Such a listing would not be in the best interests of the recovery of this species and would chill ongoing sage-grouse conservation efforts.

- 2. Private- and public-sector stakeholders across the region should continue to engage in innovative and effective sage-grouse and sage brush habitat conservation efforts, and those efforts should be coordinated as much as possible range-wide.** We applaud the Chairman's leadership in facilitating discussions across interest sectors on long-term conservation strategies for the sage-grouse. We look forward to engaging in those discussions. However, we must also note the obvious: if the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) goes in the other direction and lists this species, that will not only chill current conservation initiatives but will also discourage stakeholders from engaging in further discussions about new, range-wide strategies.

II. STATE AND LOCAL CONSERVATION EFFORTS

In support of the first recommendation, I would like to make four main points, which will be more fully developed throughout my testimony:

- 1. An unprecedented set of innovative and aggressive sage-grouse conservation efforts have been launched across the West in recent years.** It is these locally led conservation strategies that will provide conservationists and wildlife managers with the most effective tools to preserve this species. In contrast, a "threatened" or "endangered" listing under ESA will have a dramatic and chilling effect on these locally led conservation efforts and will discourage a wide range of stakeholders from continuing to engage in these efforts.
- 2. These locally led conservation efforts are already making a difference.** A recent analysis by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) indicates that population trends over the last 10-15 years in nearly every one of the 11 Western states with sage-grouse shows a stabilization of populations and, in many cases, an increase in sage-grouse numbers. We have serious concerns about the reliability of some of WAFWA's data. For example, many lek counts underrepresented sage-grouse populations because they were undertaken in poor weather conditions, during the wrong season or at the wrong time of day. The WAFWA Assessment failed to even recognize leks documented by many States simply because no individuals were counted at the same time. This clearly under-represents the number of actual leks in existence. However, this report does represent the best science thus far available on this species. And, we believe that its findings indicate that the conservation efforts that have been launched by Federal, state and local governmental and private sector stakeholders in the past decade are making a positive difference in the future of this species.

3. **Federal officials have an important role to play in sage-grouse conservation and are already actively engaged in these efforts.** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is expanding its National Sage-grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy in close cooperation with USFWS that will address sage-grouse conservation needs across more than 50 percent of sage-grouse habitat. This puts the Federal government in a key position to continue to encourage locally driven conservation efforts in coordination with state and local officials and the private sector.

4. **In spite of the best of intentions of Federal officials and wildlife managers, the ESA as currently written – and the lawsuits that drive its implementation – do not allow USFWS experts to focus on the most important goal of conservation efforts: species recovery.** The current ESA mechanism has, over its 30-year history, shown little success in species recovery. By contrast, locally led conservation efforts are far more successful in this regard. We believe that anyone who truly cares about the future of this species will not want to see its biological future constrained by the demonstrated failings of the ESA.

1. **Western States Are Mounting Aggressive and Unprecedented Conservation Efforts**

A. **State Governments are Taking a Lead Role**

The governors of all 11 Western States with sage-grouse habitat are crafting and implementing comprehensive conservation efforts aimed at preserving this species. For example:

- Of the 11 States and two Canadian Provinces with sage-grouse populations, nine have completed sage-grouse conservation plans. Montana recently completed its draft plan. Colorado and Oregon are on fast tracks to completing their plans, and North and South Dakota completed their plans recently. Idaho has a completed plan and is in the process of revising it. California has been working with the State of Nevada on a joint plan up to this point, but is developing its own work plan for its population of sage-grouse.
- Western States and Provinces are expected to have a total of more than 70 Local Working Groups (LWGs) in various phases of planning, implementing and monitoring progress by Winter 2006.
- There are 23 LWGs scheduled to have completed conservation plans by the summer of 2004. Range-wide coverage of conservation plans are expected by the Winter of 2008. In seven states, conservation efforts have begun and are taking place whether or not a statewide plan is complete: WA, UT, OR, NV, MT, ID and CA. In addition, Federal land managers in Wyoming and Colorado are working with state Game and Fish officials to develop a wide range of development stipulations aimed at helping to conserve sage-grouse populations and habitat.

B. Private Sector Leaders Are Working To Implement Conservation Programs

The innovation is not being left to state governments alone: landowners and others in the private sector are engaging in multi-party efforts on sage-grouse conservation across the West. Several of these are detailed in the Western Governor's Association's (WGA) recent report "Conserving the Greater Sage-grouse." (see <http://www.westgov.org/wga/publicat/sagegrouse-rpt.pdf>.)

Energy development companies are working range-wide to implement conservation measures both on a voluntary basis and in conjunction with state and Federal land managers.

Also, in recent years, Resource Management Plans developed as part of energy development on federal lands are increasingly focused on factors such as noise restrictions near leks, as well as noxious weed management, outreach and education, recreational disturbance of sage-grouse, etc. These plans provide for lek surveying and clearances, as well as conservation efforts including lek avoidance, seasonal prohibitions and project "visiting hours" to limit or eliminate disturbance to the bird.

A recent scientific analysis, submitted to the USFWS by the Western Governors' Association, outlines a powerful array of sage-grouse conservation efforts that have been undertaken by oil and gas companies as part of the lease stipulations and conditions of approval on mineral development on Bureau of Land Management lands. We have attached this analysis and request that it be entered into the record as part of our testimony.

Many natural resource companies are undertaking a wide array of sage-grouse conservation initiatives. For example:

- In Wyoming, the Bill Barrett Corporation (BBC), an oil and gas development company, has begun coordinating with state and Federal officials to improve sage-grouse habitat. In one project, BBC instituted a pinyon and juniper pine tree clearing program to enhance Sage-Grouse habitat. In another, Barrett installed a series of sediment check dams in eroding wet meadows to improve sagebrush habitat for grouse and other species.
- Western Gas Resources has been instituting practices to minimize impacts on the sagebrush environment in its operations, such as the use of mowing, rather than clearing, sagebrush for roads wherever possible to minimize damage to soils and sagebrush under story. The company has also instituted an education program for employees and contractors regarding procedures to minimize impacts to sage-grouse and other wildlife species.

- Utilities have also been heavily involved in sage-grouse protection efforts. For example, several utility companies, including Xcel Energy, are involved with the Eagle/Southern Routt Greater Sage-grouse Working Group in Colorado. One of the results of this involvement has been that the utilities actively consult with the Colorado Division of Wildlife on electricity transmission line siting to minimize impacts on sage-grouse populations.
- Hagenbarth Livestock Company in Idaho has cooperated in several projects to conserve sage-grouse habitat, including the Spencer Complex project. The Spencer Complex project seeks to enhance over 5,000 acres of sage-grouse habitat across private property and state and Federal lands.
- The Gordon Cattle Company is involved in a significant sagebrush habitat conservation project in Montana, cooperating with the State to establish an uninterrupted expanse across private property, state, and BLM lands. The resulting conservation corridor will provide more than 24,000 acres of prime sage-grouse habitat.
- The Powder River Coal Company voluntarily instituted “The Prairie Project” in 2001, which had four main goals: to identify key sage-grouse habitats on its North Antelope Rochelle Mine; to collect data on habitat quality and on sage-grouse reproductive data in the Mine area; and to monitor the sage-grouse’s use of reclaimed mine land. This landmark effort has resulted in several awards, including a 2002 Mine Reclamation and Wildlife Stewardship Award from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and the 2004 “Corporation of the Year” award from the Wyoming Wildlife Federation.
- Newmont Mining Company has been working with the BLM and Nevada Division of Wildlife to develop and implement habitat improvement plans on Newmont’s lands in the Battle Mountain Range. These planning efforts will ultimately result in both improved habitat and additional sage-grouse habitat, throughout a significant area in Nevada.
- Also in Nevada, the Round Mountain Gold Corporation has been aggressively involved with sage-grouse protection at its Smoky Valley Common Operation. Round Mountain Gold has been working to incorporate sage-grouse considerations into all its work, from mining operations through reclamation.

These are just a few of the hundreds of individual Sage-Grouse conservation efforts being led by private-sector companies in the energy and natural resource sectors.

2. These Local Conservation Efforts are Paying Dividends

The WAFWA assessment noted that if trends characteristic of the 1960s through the mid-1980s continued, the sage-grouse had a relatively high likelihood of being extirpated.

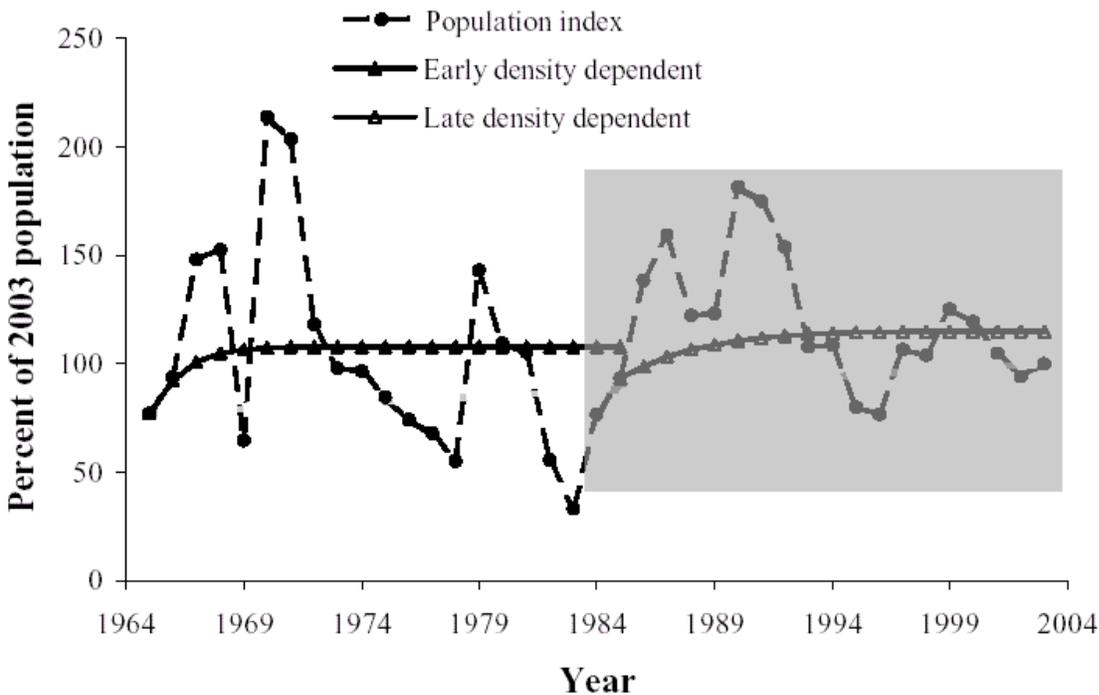
However, the report found that for many populations, “those trends have not continued.” It goes further to state: “...data suggest sage-grouse populations in many areas have been relatively stable for the last 15-20 years and some areas could be considered populations strongholds.”

In fact, many States in the West have seen population increases in recent years. And, many of these population increases coincide with the onset of state and locally led sage-grouse habitat conservation efforts.

While the WAFWA assessment is widely recognized as the best and most comprehensive science that has been compiled yet about the sage-grouse, we have serious concerns about the validity of some of its data. Nonetheless, if the USFWS ends up relying on the WAFWA assessment in its status review for this species, we believe that it is impossible to ignore the positive population trends for the Greater Sage-grouse over the last 15-20 years across much of the West and the fact that these trends coincide with the onset of increased sage-grouse conservation efforts.

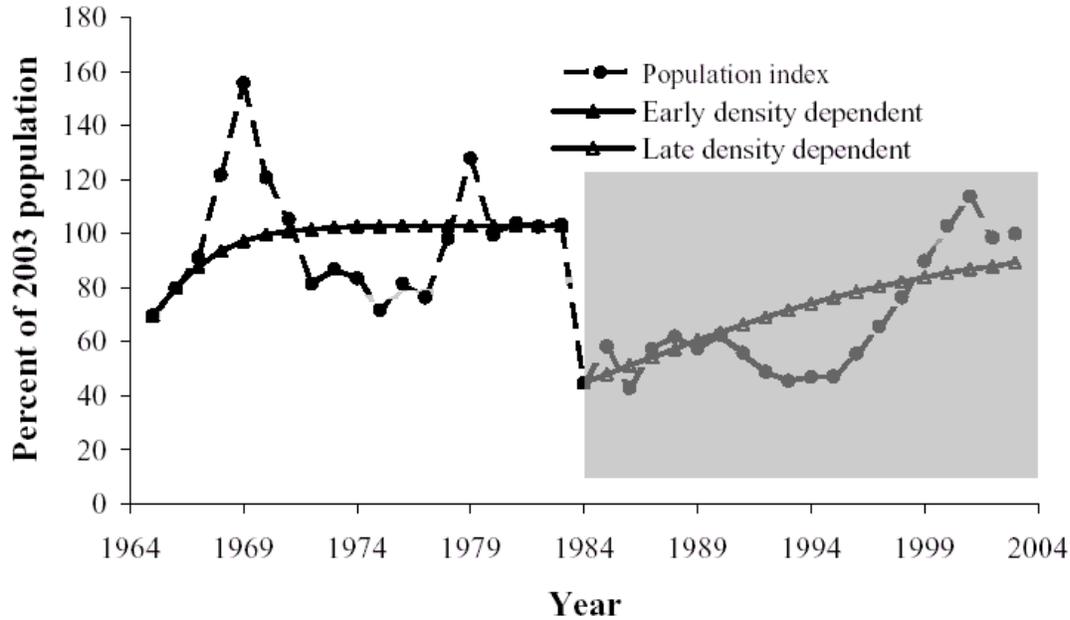
California

- Annual rates of change standardized on 2003 populations indicated a relatively stable to increasing population trend (Fig. 6.5). Sage-grouse populations increased at an overall rate of 0.7% per year from 1965 to 2003. (p. 6-25)
- The proportion of active leks remained relatively stable and high throughout the assessment period, with five-year averages varying from 77% to 90% between 1965 and 2003 (Table 6.4).
- Although lek size class varied over the assessment period no obvious patterns could be documented, further suggesting a relatively stable population (Fig. 6.4).



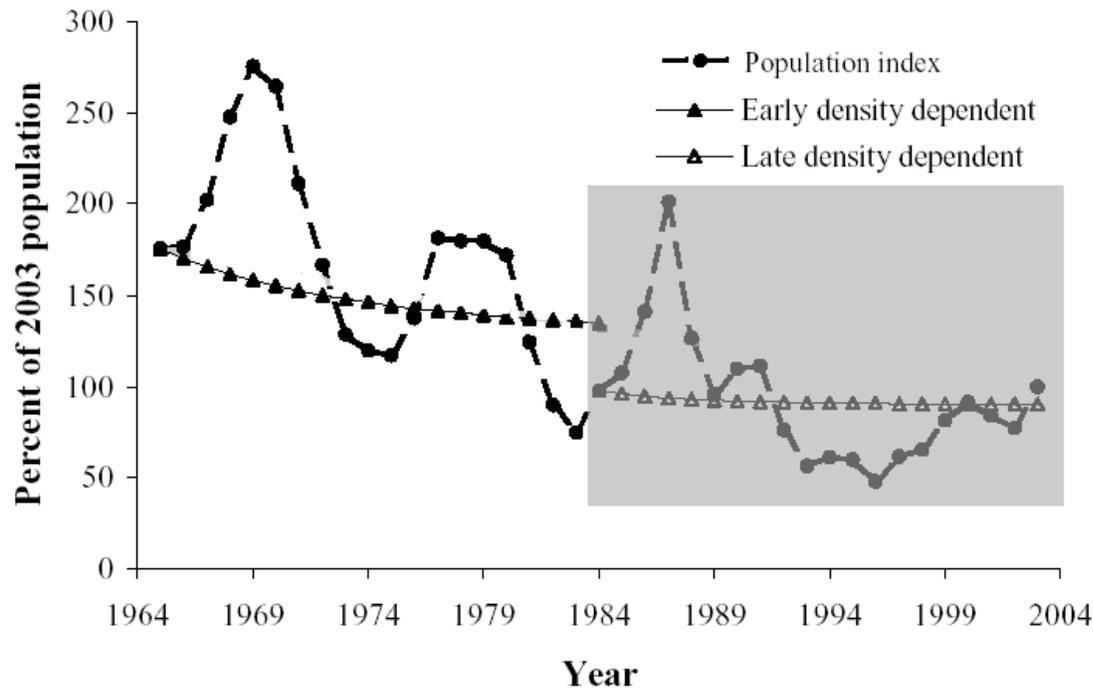
Colorado

- Annual rates of change standardized on 2003 populations indicated a relatively stable to increasing population trend (Fig. 6.8). Sage-grouse populations increased at an overall rate of 1.0% per year from 1965 to 2003.
- The average number of leks censused per-five-year period increased by 159% from 1965 to 2003. The number of active leks censused was similarly high, ranging from 35 to 114 and increasing by 124% over these same periods.
- Greater Sage-grouse in Colorado have been generally increasing for about the last 17 years and available information does not suggest a dramatic overall decline in breeding populations over the last 39 years.



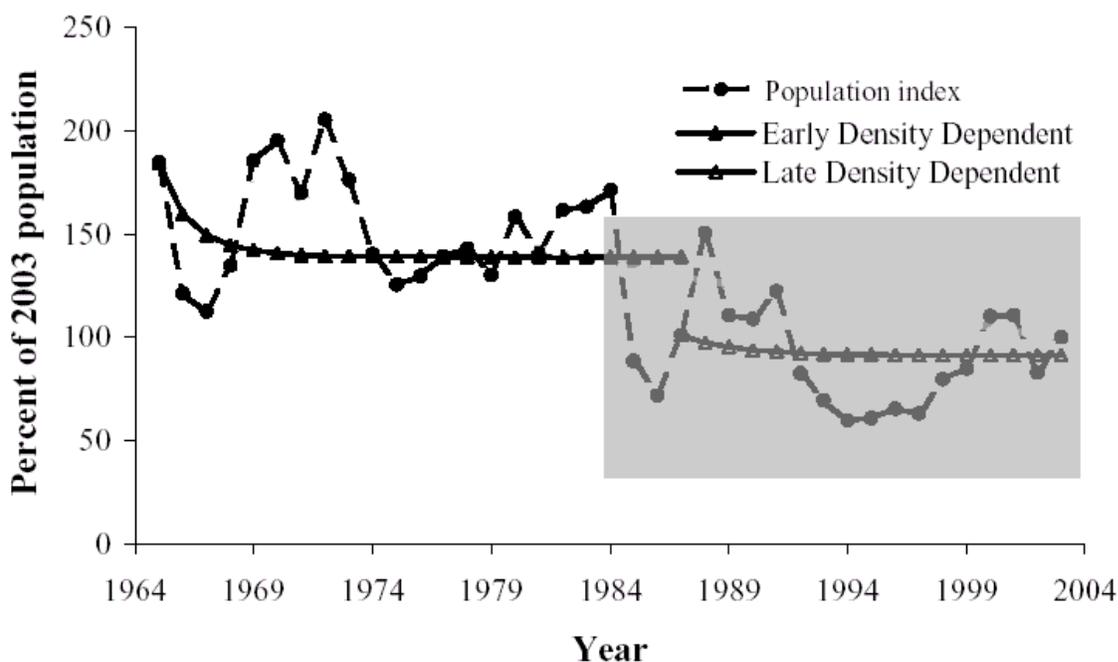
Idaho

- From 1985 to 2003, the population fluctuated around a level that was approximately 7% below the 2003 population and had an average change of 0.12% per year. Populations in the late 1960s and early 1970s were approximately 2 to 3 times higher than current populations (Fig. 6.11). The population reached a low in the mid-1990s and then has increased since that time.
- An average of 74 to 319 leks were censused in five-year periods from 1965-69 through 2000-03. From 1965 to 2003, the average number of leks censused in five-year periods increased by 331%. The number of active leks censused was similarly high, ranging from 69 to 245 and increasing by 255% over these same periods.



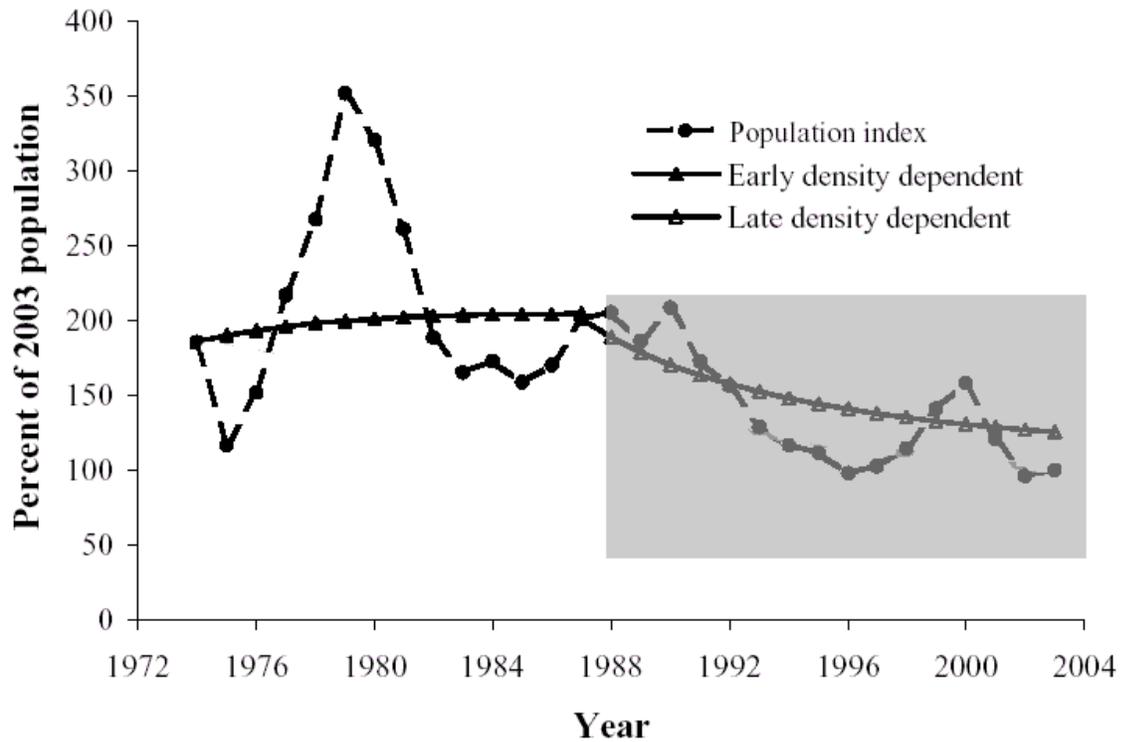
Montana

- From 1987 to 2003, the population fluctuated around a level that was approximately 9% below the 2003 population and had an average change of -0.07% per year. Populations in the late 1960s and early 1970s were approximately two times higher than current populations (Fig. 6.14). The population reached a low in the mid-1990s and then has increased since that time.
- The number of leks counted increased and then remained relatively stable until the late 1990s (Table 6.8). By 2000, monitoring efforts increased substantially when the average number of leks counted during 2000-03 increased by 146% over the average number of leks counted in 1995-99 (Table 6.8). Overall, the number of active leks monitored followed the same increasing pattern as total number of leks (Table 6.8).



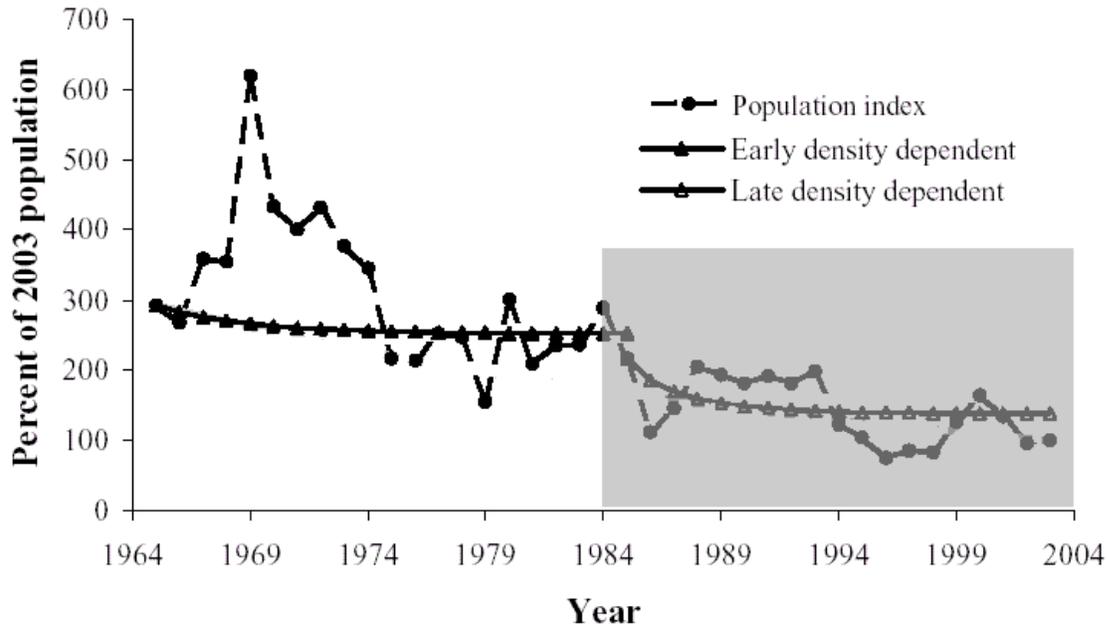
Nevada

- From 1986 to 2003, the population fluctuated around a level that was approximately 1.1% above the 2003 population and had an average change of -2.53% per year. Populations in the mid to late 1970s were approximately 1.2 to 3.5 times higher than 2003 populations (Fig. 6.17). Populations in the late 1960s and late 1970s fluctuated widely (Fig. 6.17) and there is no way of assessing whether these were actual changes in the populations or artifacts of sampling effort. The population reached a low in the mid-1990s and has not changed substantially since that time.
- By 2000, monitoring efforts increased substantially when the average number of leks counted during 2000-03 increased by 146% over the average number of leks counted in 1995-99 (Table 6.8). Overall, the number of active leks monitored followed the same increasing pattern as total number of leks (Table 6.8).



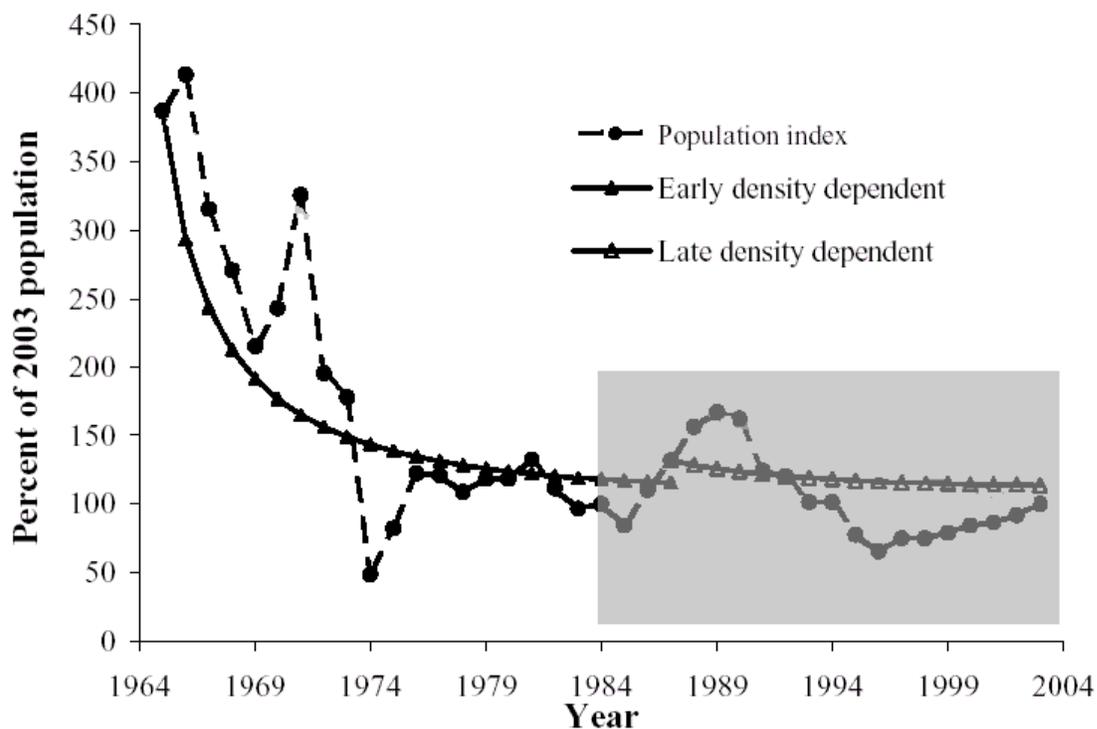
North Dakota

- From 1986 to 2003, the population fluctuated around a level that was approximately 1.4% above the 2003 population and had an average change of -0.66% per year.
- The average number of leks counted per five-year period increased by 42% from 1965 to 2003. Over these same five-year periods, effective monitoring was relatively stable with an average of 14 to 21 active leks censused (Table 6.9).
- North Dakota did not employ a standard monitoring scheme of multiple counts spread over a four-six week period. Instead, all counts were conducted in about a one-week period during mid-April and observers attempted to count all leks > 2 times (Sith 2003). However, this approach was consistently applied over the last 40 years.



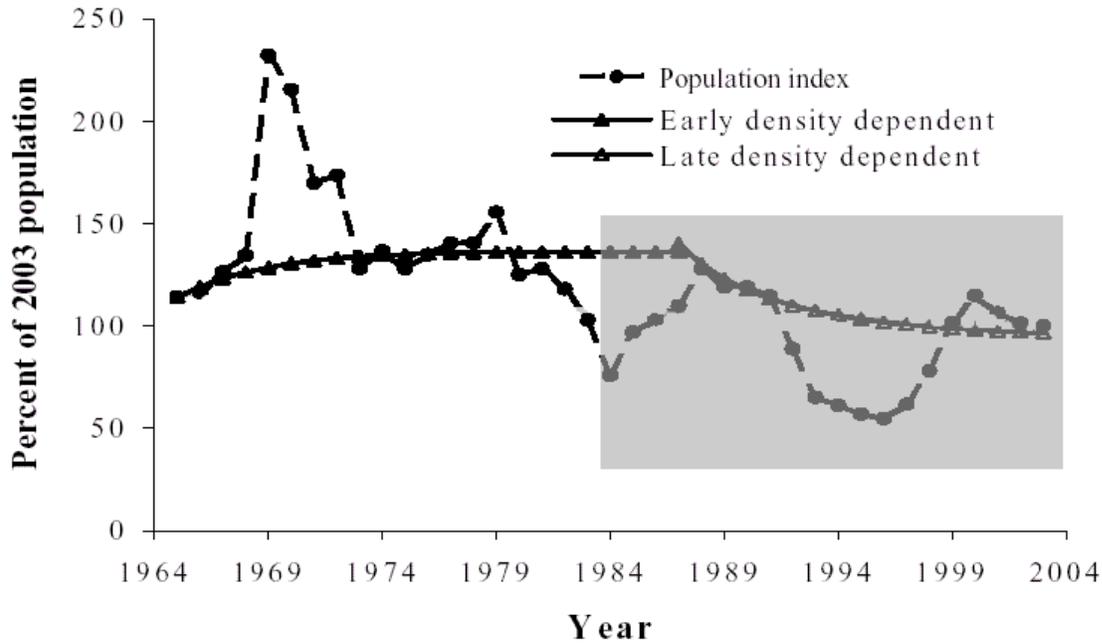
Oregon

- From 1986 to 2003, the population fluctuated around a level that was approximately 13% above the 2003 population and had an average change of 0.95% per year. Populations in the late 1960s and early 1970s were approximately two to two times higher than current populations (Fig. 6.23). The population reached lows in the mid 1970s and mid 1990s and then has increased somewhat since that time.
- Oregon has had a long-term extensive monitoring program for sage-grouse and has identified 377 leks in the state. The years 1965-2003 were used as the assessment period. The average number of leks counted per five-year period increased by 750% from 1965 to 2003 (Table 6.10).
- However, recent brood survey data from Oregon indicates that average production from 1985 to 2003 has steadily increased (average = 1.55 chicks per hen), and indicates a 37% reduction in production from the long-term average.



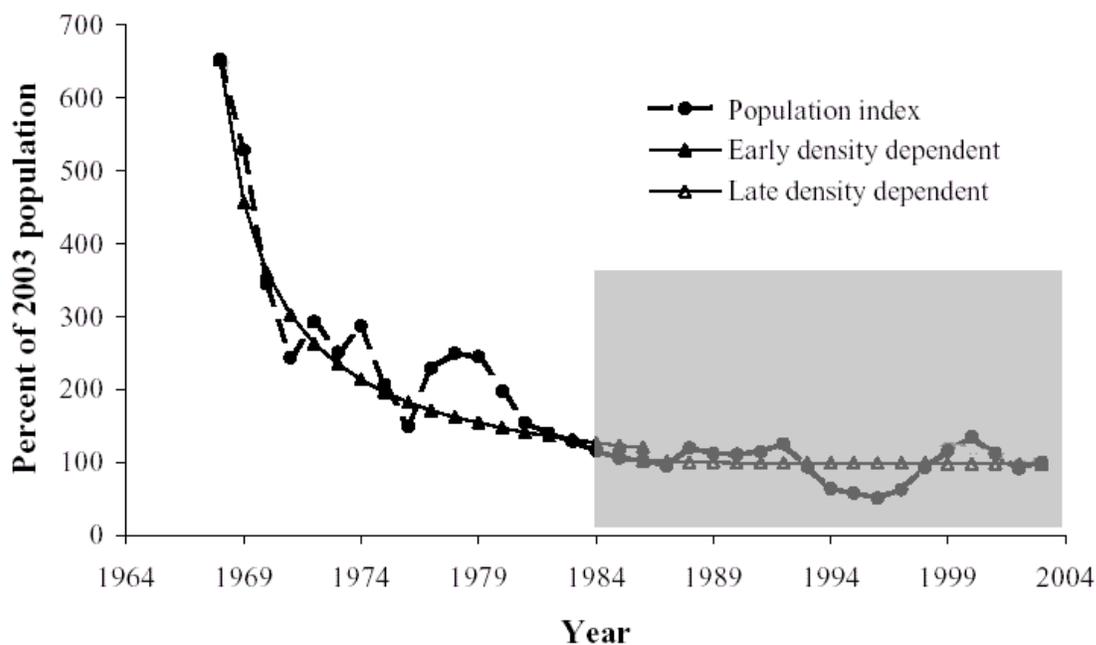
Utah

- From 1965-85, the population declined at an average rate of 0.83% and fluctuated around a level that was approximately 1.4 times higher than the 2003 population. From 1986 to 2003, the population fluctuated around a level that was approximately 5% below the 2003 population and increased at an average rate of 0.18% per year. Populations in the early 1970s were approximately two times higher than current populations (Fig. 6.30). The population reached a low in the mid-1990s and then has increased considerably since that time.
- Utah has had a long-term extensive monitoring program for sage-grouse and has identified 254 leks in the state. Although the average number of leks monitored in the 1970-75 period increased by >160% over the average number censused in 1965-70, we were still able to use 1965-2003 as our assessment period. The average number of leks counted per five-year period increased by 289% from 1965-70 to 2000-03 (Table 6.13). The number of active leks monitored followed the same increasing pattern as total number of leks (Table 6.13).



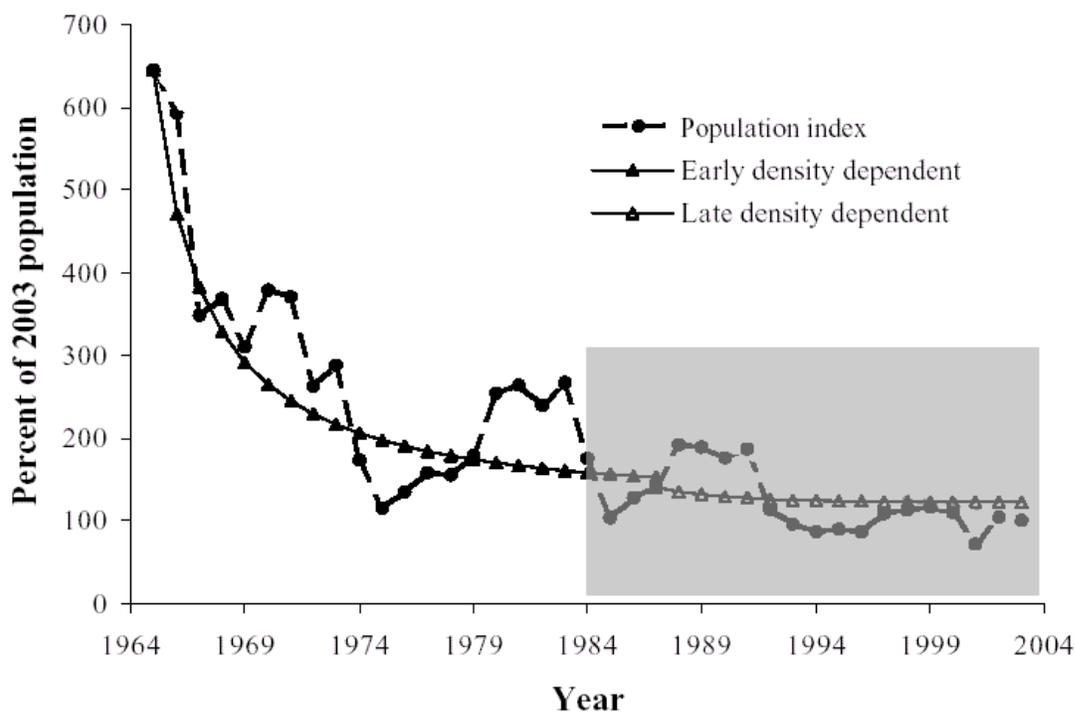
Wyoming

- From 1968-86, the population declined at an average rate of 9.66% and fluctuated around a level that was approximately 19% below the 2003 population. From 1987 to 2003, the population fluctuated around a level that was approximately 2% below the 2003 population and had an average change of 0.33% per year. Lows were reached in the mid-1990s and there has been some gradual increase in numbers since that time.
- The proportion of active leks remained relatively stable over the assessment period, ranging from 63% to 78% from 1965 to 2003 (Table 6.15).



Washington

- From 1965-85, the population declined at an average rate of 8.73% and fluctuated around a level that was approximately 1.4 times higher than the 2003 population. From 1986 to 2003, the population fluctuated around a level that was approximately 1.2% above the 2003 population and had an average change of – 0.20% per year.
- Washington has identified 62 leks and has had a long-term monitoring program in place. Thus 1965-2003 was used as the assessment period. The average number of leks counted per five-year period increased substantially over the assessment period (Table 6.14). In 1965-69, an average of three leks per year were censused but by 2000-03, an average of 47 leks per year were counted, an increase of >1400%. The average number of active leks counted per five-year period also increased by >500%.



3. Federal Land Managers Are Already Strongly Involved in Sage-grouse Conservation Efforts

BLM, which manages approximately 52 percent of sagebrush habitat, has also been very active and has released a draft National Sage-grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy to serve as a framework to address the conservation of sage-grouse habitats on BLM-managed lands.

As noted recently by the WGA in its report to USFWS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) private-lands conservation programs provide many opportunities for accomplishing the goals developed for Sage-grouse conservation. The programs provide incentives for private landowners to develop or set aside lands that can be utilized to create or enhance Sage-grouse habitat. These programs include the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), and the Farmland Protection Program (FPP). In the West, CRP lands are locally important to Greater Sage-grouse and Sharp-Tailed Grouse conservation.

A variety of funding sources exist to implement the conservation efforts of the state and federal governments. BLM maintains a lengthy document on its Sage-grouse web pages entitled "Funding Availability for Partners in Sage-grouse Conservation Efforts." (see http://www.blm.gov/nhp/spotlight/sage_grouse/Sage_Grouse_Funding_Availability_for_Partners.pdf). This describes just some of the funding that may be available to protect Sage-

grouse from such sources as USFWS, BLM, USDA, the Forest Service, Department of Defense, Department of Energy, State Fish and Game Agencies, and nongovernmental organizations.

In addition to partnering with government at various levels, Westerners including farmers, ranchers, miners, drillers and others who live and work on the land continue to fund ongoing research as well as conservation efforts. Without them, many of the studies, lek rehabilitation projects, lek mapping, disease control programs and other efforts critical to the sustainability of the Sage-grouse would end, imperiling the Sage-grouse and losing an opportunity to know vastly more about this hallmark of the West and the sagebrush sea it inhabits.

Existing federal or regional conservation initiatives undertaken by BLM and other agencies which affect the Sage-grouse and sagebrush biome, as described in the BLM's Draft Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy (BLM, 2003, pgs. 3 to 4) include:

- **Plant Conservation Alliance (PCA) (1994).** PCA is a public/private partnership among 10 federal agencies and more than 195 non-federal cooperators. In complying with Congressional direction, the PCA (through BLM) is leading an interagency native plant material development program for use in restoration and rehabilitation efforts on federal lands. Funds have been provided for the development of appropriate native plant materials within the sagebrush ecosystems (BLM, 2004a).
- **Great Basin Restoration Initiative (GBRI) (1999).** The GBRI was initiated by the BLM in response to widespread habitat losses from wildfires and other causes in the Great Basin. Concern over the loss of Sage-grouse and other sagebrush dependent species' habitats was a significant and important factor that influenced how GBRI evolved. The BLM proposed Sage-grouse conservation strategy is consistent with and supports these efforts. The GBRI seeks to restore areas of high value, reduce the effects of invasive grasses and noxious weeds, and reverse the cycle of destructive wildland fires and weeds. The GBRI team provides technical assistance and meets about three times annually (BLM, 2004)
- **Sage-grouse and Sagebrush Habitat Conference (1999).** Convened by BLM in Reno, Nevada in November 1999, the conference hosted 150 attendees. Representatives from states affected by a possible listing of the species under ESA shared information regarding possible cooperative conservation efforts among the states and federal agencies (BLM, 2001).
- **Interagency Cooperative Agreement (2000).** In July 2000, WAFWA completed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between itself and the USFS, the USFWS and the BLM. This MOU established state wildlife agencies as the lead for state and local conservation planning efforts for sage-grouse. In July 2002, WAFWA approved a proposal to develop a range-wide Conservation Assessment (CA) for sage-grouse and

sage-grouse habitat to be completed in 2004. It was intended that the CA would form the basis for development of future conservation measures.

- **Interagency Committee (2002).** With increasing numbers of at-risk species in the West, the BLM, USFS, USFWS, and state wildlife agencies began addressing the need to coordinate more effectively for the conservation of at-risk species. In 2002, an interagency committee was formed to coordinate planning and restoration information for species within sagebrush ecosystems, including the sage-grouse, and develop or coordinate processes to integrate such information into federal land management plans.
- **Development of Cooperative Habitat Assessment Procedures (2002).** In 2002 the BLM, in cooperation with the USFS Pacific Northwest Research Station and the USGS Biological Resources Division Snake River Field Station, developed science-based procedures that use existing information to conduct regional sagebrush habitat assessments for species of concern. Development of the procedures was completed in 2003 (Wisdom, et al, 2003). The procedures were used to develop the prototype Great Basin assessment. Information from that assessment will be used in support of sage-grouse conservation planning, in development of the CA, and the Great Basin Restoration Initiative. They will also be used to conduct, or support, prototype assessments for the other geographic regions.
- **Sagebrush And Grassland Ecosystem Map Assessment Project (SAGEMAP) (2003).** The SAGEMAP project, conducted by the Snake River Field Station of the USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center and cooperatively supported by numerous federal and state agencies, universities, and organizations, is identifying and collecting spatial data layers needed for research and management of sage-grouse and shrub steppe systems. The datasets, which can be queried, viewed, and downloaded from the SAGEMAP FTP site, are important for understanding and management of shrub steppe lands and associated wildlife. The data can be used to identify factors causing the declines of wildlife and shrub steppe habitats.
- **BLM Draft National Sage-Grouse Conservation Strategy (2003).** The plan includes goals to guide BLM's implementation of a national strategy for management of sage-grouse, including a consistent management framework to address sage-grouse conservation needs, increased understanding of sagebrush habitats, and the development of partnerships to enhance effective sage-grouse habitat management.

This rather lengthy list indicates that the sage-grouse already receives a significant amount of management attention from the Federal government.

4. **The Endangered Species Act is a Flawed Statute, Driven by a Flawed Petition Seeking A Listing for the Sage-grouse**

The Partnership strongly believes that there are significant problems with the way the current statute addresses threatened and endangered species protection, and we hope to get into this important policy matter in more detail over the next several months. To take just one example: the scientific rigor employed by many federal agencies in their decision-making, such as in EPA's FIFRA program, is simply not required under the ESA for the Fish & Wildlife Service.

Looking at the Greater Sage-grouse specifically, it is clear that there is a great cloud of professional skepticism surrounding the petition for listing the grouse under the ESA. An independent review of the listing petition conducted by the Petroleum Association of Wyoming found the petition is filled with "gross overstatements," "blatant speculation," "theoretical rambling," and "misstatement of fact." They concluded: "[Our] overall reaction to the petition is that the review of literature is not objective and so clearly is driven by an agenda that it damages the credibility of the entire document."

To review a summary of this critical analysis, go here:

http://www.partnershipforthewest.org/sage_grouse_science_critique.pdf

III. Conclusion

It is our sincere hope that the USFWS allows state and local efforts to continue and does not list this species. We believe this outcome is the best outcome for the future of the Greater Sage-grouse. It also will encourage stakeholders – both public and private – to continue to engage in collaborative efforts on future conservation efforts.

In that regard, we want to offer our praise and thanks to the Chairman for his efforts and commitment to facilitate such a collaborative dialogue. We look forward to engaging with him and others in those discussions. We hope, however, that this collaboration can occur in the absence of a federal takeover of sage-grouse conservation via ESA.

Thank you very much, Members of the Subcommittee, for considering the views of the Partnership for the West.

Individual Partnership Members Who Have Endorsed This Testimony:

American Gas Association
American Loggers Council
Arch Coal, Inc.
Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado
Berco Resources, LLC
Bill Barrett Corporation
BlueRibbon Coalition
Bob Balunda
CH 4 Energy
Colorado Rural Electric Assn.
Colorado Snowmobile Association
Colorado State Rep. Diane Hoppe
Colorado Timber Industry Association
David Haase
DDX Corp.
Devon Energy
EnCana Oil & Gas (USA) Inc.
EOG Resources
Evergreen Resources
Gerhard and Associates
Greenwood & Company
Harvard Petroleum Company, LLC
Helding Construction LLC
ICMJ's Prospecting and Mining Journal
Independent Petroleum Association of America
Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States
Jackson County, Colorado
Julander Energy Company
Kennecott Energy Company
Kennedy Oil
Lance Oil & Gas
Lander County Public Lands Adv. Board
MDU Resources Group, Inc
Mountain States Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association
National Park Adventures
New Mexico Oil and Gas Association
North Dakota Farm Bureau
North Park Sage Grouse Working Group
Northwest Mining Association
Off-Road Business Association (ORBA)
Orion Energy Partners
Ozarks (MO) Chapter, Property Rights Congress
Peabody Energy Corp.

Ponderosa Resources Corp.
Resource Roundup
Southwest Chapter New Mexico People for the U.S.A.
Southwest Gas Corporation
Sunlight Massage/Bodyworks
Synergy Operating, LLC
The Paladin Group
Top of Utah Snowmobile Association
Twentymile Coal Company
United Four Wheel Drive Associations
Warrior's Society Mountain Bike Club
Washington County
Western Business Roundtable
Western Gas Resources
White Eagle Exploration, Inc.
Williams RMT
Williams RMT Production
Wyoming Ag-Business Association
Wyoming Mining Association
Wyoming Stock Growers Association