

RESOLUTION NO. 2015- 13  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF RIO BLANCO COUNTY, COLORADO

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
OF RIO BLANCO COUNTY, COLORADO, REGARDING SCIENTIFIC  
INTEGRITY IN GREATER SAGE-GROUSE PROTECTION**

**Whereas**, Rio Blanco County supports management of greater sage-grouse through state, local and private conservation efforts rather than federal land-use restrictions or a federal listing under the Endangered Species Act (“ESA”); and

**Whereas**, a coalition of counties, agricultural, mining and energy interests (the “Coalition”) has challenged BLM’s NTT Report, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s COT Report and the USGS sage grouse Monograph (the “Reports”) under the federal Data Quality Act (DQA);

**Whereas**, these challenges detail at great length serious questions of scientific integrity and transparency with the Reports;

**Whereas**, federal agencies are relying upon the Reports to amend some 98 land use plans across approximately 50 million acres of BLM managed land and nine million acres of National Forests in eleven western states;

**Whereas**, the DQA requires federal agencies to ensure and maximize the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information disseminated.

**Whereas**, the Reports fail to meet basic standards of science, resulting in misinformed policies and restrictions;

**Whereas**, reliance on this biased and faulty information has and will continue to harm the public, greater sage-grouse and western economies.

**Now Therefore be it Resolved** by the Board of County Commissioners of Rio Blanco County:

1. State management of wildlife is better suited to balance economic activities with robust protections for sage grouse as they were developed using a bottom-up process with input from diverse stakeholders, rather than the top-down approach taken by the federal agencies;
2. The BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and USGS to retract the Reports and withdraw them from consideration in land use plan amendments and the upcoming ESA listing decision for sage grouse;
3. The state legislature is urged to adopt a similar resolution as this;

4. Congress is urged to delay listing sage grouse under the ESA for a period no less than 10 years to support continued local, state and private conservation efforts for sage grouse without serious and adverse effects to private property rights, economic development and western communities.


DULY MOVED, SECONDED, AND PASSED ON A VOTE OF 3 FOR AND 0 AGAINST, THIS 8<sup>th</sup> DAY OF MAY 2015.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF  
RIO BLANCO COUNTY, COLORADO

ATTEST:

  
Boots M. Campbell  
Clerk to the Board

By:   
Jeffrey D. Eskelson, Chairman

  
Shawn J. Bolton Commissioner

  
Jon D. Hill, Commissioner

