



Memorandum

TO: Environment Committee
Lands Committee
Coal Policy Task Force
Minerals Policy Task Force

FROM: Katie Sweeney, Executive Vice President & COO
Dominique Christianson, Associate General Counsel

DATE: September 3, 2025

SUBJECT: BLM Revisits 2024 Sage Grouse Plans

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) today [announced](#) that it proposes to make [significant changes](#) to the greater sage-grouse rangewide proposed resource management plan amendment (RMPA) released in Nov. 2024 for lands it manages in California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. This action was foreshadowed by Secretary of the Interior Burgum's Order 3418, which directed the agency to review and revise the RMPA. The revisions are intended to better align the RMPA with state sage grouse policies and programs.

Comments on the proposed revisions are due on Oct. 3, 2025. The National Mining Association (NMA) has scheduled a Teams meeting for **Sept. 11, 2025, at 3 p.m. (Eastern)** to develop the association's comment strategy. Click [here](#) to add the meeting to your calendar.

Background

Last November, the BLM [released](#) its final environmental impact statement (FEIS) and RMPA for its sage grouse [Rangewide Planning](#) that amends 77 land use plans across 121 million acres in 10 western states. Due to unresolved protests by state governors to the rushed 2024 amendments, the Biden administration was only able to [finalize](#) plans for the states of Oregon and Colorado, which will not be impacted by the proposed revisions.

The NMA had also submitted a [protest](#) on the BLM's FEIS and RMPA outlining concerns that the preferred alternative increases protections of the sage grouse from the draft RMPA, and potentially creates additional hurdles for mining on federal lands. Ultimately, the NMA argued that the RMPA is fatally flawed because it violates the National Environmental Policy Act,

Administrative Procedure Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Mining Law of 1872, and the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920. The NMA urged the BLM to prepare a new EIS and RMPA.

Proposed Revisions

Among the major RMPA changes is the removal of the designation for "priority habitat management areas (PHMA) with limited exceptions" as a distinct subset of PHMAs to improve consistency with state and local plans. As a result, all habitat management areas that were designated as "PHMA with limited exceptions" in California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming, will largely be designated as PHMA that will be subject to the management actions and direction for PHMA.

Additionally, BLM proposes state-specific revisions to address concerns raised during protest and governor consistency review processes. Significant revisions include:

- Changes to the California, Idaho and Nevada proposed RMPA seasonal habitat benchmark for perennial grass height during nesting/early brood rearing from a quantitative standard to a qualitative standard based on recent research and to account for habitat variability across the states.
- Updates to the Utah proposed RMPA habitat management area boundaries to more closely align with the state sage grouse conservation plan and to minimize sage grouse habitat management areas outside of the state's sage grouse management areas.
- Modifications to the Nevada proposed RMPA allocation for major rights of way in general habitat management areas (GHMA) from avoidance to open to align more closely with how GHMA is managed in BLM California.

In addition to addressing state concerns, the proposed changes incorporate key research published since original plans were approved in 2015, including new information about how sage-grouse respond to drought and disturbance.

If you have any questions on the proposed RMPA revisions, please contact Katie at ksweeney@nma.org.

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