



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Jon Hanian

(208) 334-2100

GOVERNOR OTTER PUTS LEGAL AUTHORITY BEHIND HIS SAGE-GROUSE PROTECTION PLANS

(BOISE) – Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter signed an executive order today putting the full force and effect of State law behind his greater sage-grouse conservation plan, uniting Idaho's efforts to conserve the bird and its habitat in order to avoid a federal Endangered Species Act listing.

Executive Order 2015-04 can be found [here](#).

"This Executive Order further demonstrates Idaho's commitment to maintaining a viable and healthy population of greater sage-grouse and the habitat they need to thrive in a balanced and sustainable way while maintaining predictable levels of use on our public lands," Governor Otter said. "Our fish and wildlife belong to the people of Idaho. We're not waiting for a federal designation to do the right thing by the species, but at the same time I have an obligation to protect Idaho's sovereignty and self-determination."

The Governor assembled a sage-grouse task force in 2012 to help develop a statewide plan for sage-grouse conservation. The task force worked diligently to help write a plan aimed at balancing sage-grouse conservation on federal lands with the customs, culture and economic viability of Idaho individuals and communities.

The Idaho plan proposes conservation actions on approximately 15 million acres across southern Idaho, and includes an innovative three-tiered habitat approach designed to provide varying levels of conservation to the species depending upon the quality of the habitat and density of birds.

The plan was incorporated as an alternative into the federal land-use plan amendment process in the fall of 2012. Many elements of the Governor's plan have been supported by the federal government.

Earlier this spring, the State Land Board – of which the Governor is the presiding member – and the Idaho Oil and Gas Commission approved a plan to conserve greater sage-grouse on State endowment lands. That plan complements the Governor's broader plan for conservation on federal lands.

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