WESTERN LEADERS NETWORK STATEMENT ON U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR’S INTENT TO CHANGE SAGE-GROUSE PLANS

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“The New York Times reported today that the Interior Department intends to publish a formal notice of intent this week to amend 98 sage-grouse habitat management plans. This is a dismissal of years of collaborative work by Western stakeholders as well as a threat to Western livelihoods, economies, sagebrush lands and hundreds of species.

“The existing plans had bipartisan buy-in and prevented the listing of the greater sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act. While specific amendments to the plans are yet unknown, Westerners, unlike those in Washington, will have to live with the consequences of the changes.

“By moving forward with amendments to the plans, Secretary Ryan Zinke ignores his own promise to listen to Western governors and leaders, state wildlife agencies and citizens who live, work and play throughout the sage-grouse habitat.”

– Gwen Lachelt, Executive Director, Western Leaders Network

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