

# **NEWS RELEASE**

## **GOVERNOR STEVE BULLOCK**

### **STATE OF MONTANA**

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#### **Governor Creates Advisory Council to Plan for Sage-grouse Habitat**

HELENA – Governor Steve Bullock this week established an advisory council tasked with creating a statewide plan to conserve the sage-brush grasslands that support Montana’s sage-grouse population.

“Montana has more sage-grouse than any other western state but for Wyoming. That’s something worth preserving,” Bullock said. “And I believe Montanans can figure out how to do that better than anybody. This new council brings together diverse groups that will develop practical steps to protect sage-grouse habitat while providing predictable and multiple uses of private, state and public lands.”

According to the Governor, taking steps now to protect the sage-grouse will help to preclude action under the Endangered Species Act to list the species, ensuring that Montanans continue to lead the management of this important game species. The United States Bureau of Land Management has asked Montana to use its expertise to develop a comprehensive strategy for protecting sage grouse.

The Governor charged the council with using the latest science to provide key recommendations for conserving the iconic birds and their habitat, identifying opportunities for conservation projects, and developing a long-term management framework to engage local landowners and working groups.

The council, which may include between eight and 12 members, will include representatives of:

- agriculture and ranching
- conservation and sportsmen
- energy, mining and power transmission
- tribal government
- local government
- the legislature

The Governor will appoint the members of the council, who will serve until January 31, 2014, when the council is set to expire. Individuals interested in serving on the council can apply at [www.governor.mt.gov](http://www.governor.mt.gov) and select “Boards & Commissions.”

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