



**RESOLUTION 2017-12  
CONCERNING THE IMPACT ON STATE TRUST LANDS  
FROM FEDERAL GREATER SAGE-GROUSE LAND MANAGEMENT RESTRICTIONS**

**Whereas**, the Western States Land Commissioners Association ("WSLCA") and its member states manage over 515 million acres of trust lands, minerals, and waterways that are interspersed with federal lands; and

**Whereas**, members of WSLCA have state constitutional mandates to manage millions of acres of lands for economic development, public education, conservation, recreation, and other public purposes provided by state law; and

**Whereas**, the ability of member states to fulfill their constitutional mandates is severely hindered when trust lands are surrounded by federal lands and federal wildlife management mandates; and

**Whereas**, the habitat of Greater Sage-Grouse covers more than 173 million acres of land in the western United States and millions of acres of State Trust assets are intermingled within this habitat; and

**Whereas**, in September of 2015, the Department of Interior through the Bureau of Land Management issued Records of Decisions amending 98 land use plans mandating specific management criteria for Greater Sage-Grouse on federal lands within the 173 million acres of habitat; and

**Whereas**, Federal Greater Sage-Grouse land management restrictions significantly impair the ability of WSLCA member states to generate income from state trust lands and assets that are intermingled with federal land ownership within Sage-Grouse habitat; and

**Whereas**, litigation in several states has been initiated by Governors and stakeholders resulting in a court order (Case No. 3:15-cv-00491-mmd-vpc) requiring preparation of a supplemental National Environmental Policy Act process; and

**Whereas**, Secretary Zinke signed Secretarial Order 3353 on June 7, 2017 to enhance cooperation between the Department of Interior and the eleven Greater Sage-Grouse states, support a partnership with clearly defined objectives and roles for Federal and State entities responsible for Sage-Grouse management and conservation in order to sustain healthy populations of the species; and establish a team to review the Federal land management agencies' Sage-Grouse plan amendments and revisions completed on or before September 2015; and

**Whereas**, States have primary jurisdiction for the management of wildlife within their own borders.

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:**

1. The WSLCA urges the Department of Interior to work with the Governors of Greater Sage-Grouse states to review current data and actions carried out by states to manage and improve Sage-Grouse habitat, curtail predator impacts, protect against wildfire, and manage and increase species populations within their borders under state management; and
2. The WSLCA urges the Department of Interior to initiate supplemental National Environmental Policy Act processes to determine the appropriate role of the Federal Government in the management of Sage-Grouse within WSLCA member states; and
3. The WSLCA urges the Department of Interior to consider the impacts of federal land management restrictions on adjacent state lands and minerals and the economic impacts on education funding within WSLCA member states.

Adopted this 12<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2017.



Harry Birdwell, President  
WSLCA



Linda Fisher, Secretary  
WSLCA