As Adopted by BOCC 9/6/05
And amended by BOCC on 4/18/06
And amended by BOCC on 12/4/07
And amended by BOCC on 2/17/09
And amended by BOCC on 6/14/11

GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
GUNNISON COUNTY, COLORADO
ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

Section 1: Organization

This organization is the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee for the County of Gunnison, Colorado. This Committee is created by the Board of County Commissioners to work with the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator to implement programs and steps which will aid in the preservation of the Gunnison Sage-grouse.

This organization is being referred to herein as "the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee".

The Gunnison Board of County Commissioners is referred to herein as "the Board".

Actions of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee shall be governed by the Action Plan and Goals adopted by the Board and attached to these Organizational Procedures and Guidelines as Exhibit A.

Section II: Duration

The creation of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee will be reviewed annually by the Board and will be reappointed until such time it is determined that the need no longer exists.

Section III: Purpose

The purpose of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee is to work with the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator in implementing the following action steps.

1) To work with the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator in an advisory capacity in developing a Strategic Plan for the recovery of the Gunnison Sage-grouse.
2) To implement programs and strategies which will aid in the preservation of the Gunnison Sage-grouse. This will involve coordination with the Sage-grouse Mitigation Committee, the Sage-grouse Working Group, the Bureau of Land Management, U. S. Forest Service, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Range Wide Conservation Committee and private land owners.

3) To assist in the review of the Gunnison County Land Use Resolution to advise as to what revisions need to be made to further protect Sage-grouse Habitat.
4) To work with the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator in assisting Gunnison County in negotiating multiple Certificate of Inclusions with the DOW's CCAA for all appropriate County property.
5) To assist the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator in negotiating uniformity of requirements that are consistent and predictable among the various regulatory agencies.
6) To assist the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator to ensure there is a coordinated review process of permits and projects which will occur on federal property.
7) To assist the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator in implementing a communications and education program which will provide accurate and current information regarding the potential listing of the Gunnison Sage-grouse under the Endangered Species Act.

Section IV: Membership and Responsibilities

1) The Sage-grouse Strategic Committee shall be comprised of thirteen regular members. Twelve members shall be appointed by the Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners and one member shall be appointed by the Saguache County Board of County Commissioners. Applicants to the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee will be drawn from: three at large of which one shall represent the public at-large, one shall represent the development community and one shall represent the recreation community; one appointed by the Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners to represent Gunnison County; one appointed by the Saguache County Board of County Commissioners to represent Saguache County; one nominated by High Country Citizens' Alliance; one nominated by the Bureau of Land Management; one nominated by the Gunnison County Stockgrowers; one nominated by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife service; one nominated by the Division of Wildlife; one nominated by Natural Resources Conservation Service; one nominated by the Forest Service; and one nominated by the National Park Service. The Wildlife Conservation Coordinator shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the committee. The Gunnison County Board of Commissioners shall appoint one alternate for each at-large position. The other nominating entities shall recommend one member and one alternate for a two-year term. The alternates may only vote on issues before the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee if the member is absent.
2) Each nominating entity shall empower their nominee to represent their organization or agency and to make decisions and recommendations on behalf of their agency.
3) Members appointed must have the authority to the maximum extent feasible to vote on issues before the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee without having to seek counsel from the appointing entity.
4) The Sage-grouse Strategic Committee will work with the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator to develop a Strategic Plan which will aid in the habitat conservation of the Gunnison Sage-grouse with a goal of establishing a sustainable population.

5) A vacancy created by the resignation or termination of a member's term is filled by nomination by the appropriate body and appointment by the Board of County Commissioners for the length of time remaining in the vacated term.
6) A Sage-grouse Strategic Committee member can be removed, with or without cause, by the appropriate nominating jurisdiction, no sooner than ten (10) days after written notice is provided to such member by that nominating entity.
7) Any member may resign from the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee by giving written notice to the appropriate appointing jurisdiction.
8) A Sage-grouse Strategic Committee member is responsible for the following:
    - Reviewing all material received prior to meetings.
    - Attends all meetings, insofar as possible, and notifies the Alternate and Chairperson of absences at least five days in advance of the meeting(s) to be missed.
    - Makes every effort to raise questions and concerns about a proposal as soon in the process as they become apparent.
    - Reviews recommendations and makes decisions on issues before the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee.
    - The Sage-grouse Strategic Committee will, as far as possible, seek to further the understanding of Sage-grouse preservation techniques and the benefits throughout the Gunnison Watershed.
    - Assists new members of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee as needed.
    - The Sage-grouse Strategic Committee will establish goals, measurable objectives and an evaluation process in order to assure the success of projects and coordination efforts with various agencies. These goals will be in keeping with the overall goals developed in the Strategic Plan.
    - The Wildlife Conservation Coordinator will send minutes of all meetings of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to each appointed representative.

<u>Section V: Officers and Duties</u>

1) Officers of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee are a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson who are members, and any other officers, as the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee deems necessary.
2) Officers are elected annually by members at the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee's first meeting after the Board appointments to the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee, and shall be elected by a majority vote.
3) Each officer holds office for one calendar year after his/her election, and may succeed him\herself.
4) The Chairperson presides at all meetings of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee. The Vice-Chairperson serves in the absence or incapacity of the Chairperson, including in any event in which a conflict of interest prevents participation and vote by the Chairperson; and completes all such duties as are defined herein which are normally performed by the Chairperson.
5) All officers are voting members of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee including the Chairperson.

6) All records of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee will be maintained by the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator in the County Administration Office.
7) When a member resigns, is terminated or their term expires they are to turn any records in their possession over to the new member or the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator within 15 days of their effective termination date.
8) The office of the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator will provide support services to the committee.

Section VI: Meetings

1) The Sage-grouse Strategic Committee shall meet quarterly, or more often as necessary, to determine matters brought before it.
2) All Sage-grouse Strategic Committee meetings, special meetings and work sessions must be preceded by at least 24 hours posting and published notice and held regularly and at the noticed times, are public meetings and open to the public at all times. By majority consent of members who are present, the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee may go into executive session in accordance with and as is allowed statutorily by the State of Colorado (C.R.S. 24-6-402(4)). No final decisions or any formal action shall be rendered at any executive session.
3) Special meetings may be conducted at any time when called by the Chairperson or at the request of five or more Sage-grouse Strategic Committee members. All members must be notified at least 48 hours in advance of a special meeting. Only items on the announced agenda are considered at a special meeting. Special meetings may be called in order to expedite action on projects, or any other subject, which requires review and action by the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee, but in no case shall a meeting be conducted without the appropriate public notice.
4) Work\study sessions may be scheduled as needed by the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee Chairperson at least 48 hours in advance of any session, or as part of a regular meeting, to review an application prior to a regular meeting or a public hearing, and to encourage unstructured discussion of specific applications and special projects. No official action takes place at these sessions, which must be preceded by notice and which are open to the public.
5) A quorum of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee consists of seven members. Action shall be by consensus of the members. On failure to reach consensus, action shall be by a majority vote of those present.
6) The Sage-grouse Strategic Committee shall keep a permanent, public record of all proceedings as recorded in the usual form of minutes. Minutes shall not be construed to mean a transcript of a meeting. All meetings involving financial decision shall be recorded, except for executive sessions.
7) Robert's Rules of Order shall otherwise govern the procedures of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee.
8) The order of business for each regular meeting of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee may include the following, so far as is applicable, and not necessarily in the order listed:

- Call to order; verify public notice of meetings and determination of quorum.
- Minutes of previous meetings(s) for action.
- Review and approval of financial report.
- New Business.
- Old Business.
- Work sessions.
- Reports by staff\Board members and others.
- Adjournment.

9) At least five business days prior to a meeting, the Wildlife Conservation Coordinator or designee will have available in the office or mail to each Sage-grouse Strategic Committee member, copies of reports, correspondence and\or any other materials related to agenda items scheduled for that meeting.

Section VII: Public Hearings

1) Public hearings shall be noticed within a minimum of 15 days of the scheduled public hearing date. The order of business for each public hearing conducted by the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee includes, in order, the following:
    - Open public hearing.
    - Confirmation of adequate public notice.
    - Presentation of proposal.
    - Questions\comments by public.
    - Questions\comments by Sage-grouse Strategic Committee members.
    - Closing comments by applicant, public.
    - Close public hearing.

Section VIII: Conflicts of Interest

1) In addition to the provisions of C.R.S. 24-18-101 et seq. as they may be amended, any member of the Board is considered in a position of conflict of interest if any of the following situations is evident relative to a specific matter scheduled for discussion:
    - The member will be directly and substantially affected to his/her economic benefit or detriment by the action proposed to be taken on the subject matter.
    - There is no conflict if a member of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee is solely a member of a general group, which has an interest in the Sage-grouse issue.
2) Any member who considers him\herself to be in a position of conflict of interest as defined above must declare such conflict as soon as it becomes evident and shall not participate in any discussion of the proposal and shall not vote on the proposal and shall excuse him\herself from the part of a meeting during which discussions of the subject matter are taking place and leave the meeting room.

3) Questions of conflict of interest which fall outside the above-cited categories shall be referred to the County Attorney for evaluation; no action will be taken on the subject item, and any Sage-grouse Strategic Committee member whose relationship to the subject or application is in question, must remove him\herself from any related discussion until a finding from the County Attorney is received by the Chairperson.

Section IX: Amendments

These Guidelines and Procedures may be altered and amended and new ones recommended by a concurring vote of seven or more members of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee at a regular meeting subsequent to notification of the proposed change.

By such vote of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee, the amended Guidelines and Procedures will be submitted to the Board for consideration and approval.

Section X: Approval

The above and foregoing Guidelines and Procedures were passed and adopted by the Board on September 7, 2005 and amended on April 18, 2006 to reflect the addition of Saguache County participation and changing all references to "Sage Grouse" to the correct title of "Sage-grouse". They were amended on December 4, 2007 for language clarification and grammar corrections at the recommendation of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee and County Staff. They were amended on February 17, 2009 to reflect the title change of "Sage-grouse Conservation Coordinator" to "Wildlife Conservation Coordinator", the term change of "Guiding Principles" to "Guidelines", and other language clarification and grammar corrections at the recommendation of the Sage-grouse Strategic Committee. They were amended on June 14, 2011 to increase the membership from twelve to thirteen; to add an at-large recreation community seat (regular and alternate); to change the meeting quorum from six to seven; and to accomplish a number of ministerial (cleanup) changes that did not impact the functional content or intent of the guidelines; at the recommendation of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee and County staff

EXHIBIT A

Gunnison County
Gunnison Sage-grouse
ACTION PLAN AND GOALS

It is the policy of Gunnison County that the following goals and action steps be adopted and implemented in regards to the potential listing of the Gunnison Sage-grouse as an endangered species.

The first goal of Gunnison County is to implement steps which will aid in the preservation of the Gunnison Sage-grouse. In order to accomplish this goal the following actions steps will be implemented:

1) The Board recognizes and understands that the original intent of the Sage-grouse Mitigation Fund was to mitigate the effect of the Landfill on the Sage-grouse. However, the US Fish and Wildlife Service has taken the position that only projects implemented on non federal land can be counted towards this mitigation. The Board has taken the position that the preservation and improvement of habitat irrespective of location is more important than specific mitigation of the effects of the landfill. Therefore the Board directs the Sage-grouse Mitigation Committee to implement the work plan in the Organizational Procedures and Guidelines in terms of looking at funding of quality projects irrespective of location.

2) The Board has decided a complete review of the LUR needs to be conducted to determine what revisions need to be made to further protect Sage-grouse Habitat. Further the Board directs staff to move forward with the process to develop a special area as part of the LUR, in particular researching the potential for the development of a Habitat Conservation Plan. This approach may result in the establishment of special rules for sub areas of the County where Sage-grouse habitat exist. The Board has determined that the "Gunnison Sage-Grouse Conservation Priority Regions in the Gunnison Basin" which was developed by the Gunnison Basin Working Group Research Sub-Committee, would be a reasonable starting place.

3) Negotiate multiple Certificates of Inclusions with the DOW's CCAA for all appropriate County property.

The second goal of Gunnison County is to minimize disruption to current activities. In order to accomplish this goal the following action steps will be implemented:

1) Work with the regulatory agencies to develop uniformity of requirements that are consistent and predictable.

2) Convene a meeting of the Sage-grouse Working Group to discuss formalizing the membership, adding additional members for broader representation, developing procedures and discussing flexibility in the local plan.

3) Work with the BLM, Forest Service, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to insure a coordinated review process for review of permits and projects.

4) Work with the BLM, Forest Service, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to insure that all grazing permits which will expire in the next 18 to 24 months are reviewed and renewed in a timely manner.

5) Schedule a meeting with the US Fish and Wildlife service to discuss the renewal of permits and obtain clear information on the implication of the proposed listing as well as the process for review. In particular a clear understanding of the regulations is desired.

The third goal of Gunnison County is to further collaboration and communication and in particular to develop mechanisms to effectively deal with rumors and misinformation. In that

regard the Board adopts the following action steps:

1) Work with the BLM's public relations department to develop press releases which contain factual information.

2) Develop a sub page on the County's WEB site to respond to the most frequently asked questions with links to the DOW, BLM, Forest Service, NRC and HCCA.

The fourth goal of Gunnison County is to implement an effective strategy and programs which will which will preclude the need to list the Gunnison Sage-grouse or at a minimum demonstrate the willingness of the Gunnison Community to preserve and protect habitat which will lessen the impact if listing does occur.

In order to accomplish the above goals and strategies the Board of County Commissioners will create the position of Sage-grouse Coordinator which will have the primary responsibility to implement the identified programs.