Sprague's pipit (*Anthus spragueii*)—The following summary is based on information contained in our files and in the petition we received on October 15, 2008. The Sprague's pipit is a small grassland bird characterized by its high flight display and otherwise very secretive behavior. Sprague's pipits are strongly tied to native prairie (land which has never been plowed) throughout their life cycle. Its breeding range includes portions of Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Canada. The Sprague's pipit's wintering range includes south-central and southeast Arizona, southern New Mexico, Texas, southern Oklahoma, southern Arkansas, northwest Mississippi, southern Louisiana, and northern Mexico. The vast majority of the U.S. winter sightings have been in Texas but there have been migration sightings in Michigan, western Ontario, Ohio, Massachusetts, and Gulf and Atlantic States from Mississippi east and north to South Carolina. Sprague's pipits also have been sighted in California during fall migration.

Threats to this species include: Habitat loss and conversion, habitat fragmentation on the breeding grounds, energy development, roads, and inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms. Due to prairie habitat loss and fragmentation, only 15 to 18 percent of the historical breeding habitat in the United States remains in patches of sufficient size for males to establish territories. The Breeding Bird Survey and Christmas Bird Count both show a 40-year decline of 73 to 79 percent (3.23 to 4.1 percent annually), although the population seems to have stabilized in recent years. We anticipate that prairie habitat will continue to be converted and fragmented. Most of the breeding range, including those areas where grassland habitat still remains, has been identified as a prime area for wind energy development, and an oil and gas boom is occurring in the central part of the breeding range in the United States and Canada. On the wintering range, conversion of grassland to agriculture and other uses appears to be accelerating. While habitat loss has occurred and will likely to continue to occur, as noted above, approximately 15 to18 percent of the breeding range remains in suitable habitat cover and in large enough patch sizes to support nesting, and population decline seems to have slowed in recent years. Thus, the threats are moderate in magnitude. The threats are imminent because the species is currently facing them in many portions of its range. Therefore, we have assigned the Sprague's pipit an LPN of 8.

Lesser prairie-chicken (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*)—We continue to find that listing this species is warranted, but precluded as of the date of publication of this notice. However, we are working on a proposed listing rule that we expect to publish prior to making the next annual resubmitted petition 12-month finding. In the course of preparing the proposed listing rule, we are continuing to monitor new information about this species' status so that we can make prompt use of our authority under Section 4(b)(7) in the case of an emergency posing a significant risk to the species.

Gunnison sage-grouse (*Centrocercus minimus*)—We continue to find that listing this species is warranted, but precluded as of the date of publication of this notice. However, we are working on a proposed listing rule that we expect to publish prior to making the next annual resubmitted petition 12-month finding. In the course of preparing the proposed listing rule, we are continuing to monitor new information about this species' status so that we can make prompt use of our authority under Section 4(b)(7) in the case of an emergency posing a significant risk to the species.

Greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*)—The following summary is based on information in our files and in the petition we received on January 30, 2002. Currently, greater sage-grouse occur in 11 States (Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, South Dakota, and North Dakota), and 2 Canadian provinces (Alberta and Saskatchewan), occupying approximately 56 percent of their historical range. Greater sage-grouse depend on a variety of shrub-steppe habitats throughout their life cycle, and are considered obligate users of several species of sagebrush.

The primary threat to greater sage-grouse is ongoing fragmentation and loss of shrub-steppe habitats through a variety of mechanisms. Most importantly, increasing fire cycles and invasive plants (and the interaction between them) in more westerly parts of the range, along with energy development and related infrastructure in more easterly areas, are negatively affecting species. In addition, direct loss of habitat and fragmentation is occurring due to agriculture, urbanization, and infrastructure such as roads and power lines built in support of several activities. We also have determined that existing regulatory mechanisms are inadequate to protect the species from these ongoing threats. However, many of these habitat impacts are being actively addressed through conservation actions taken by local working groups, and State and Federal agencies. Notably, the National Resource Conservation Service has committed significant financial and technical resources to address threats to this species on private lands through their Sage-grouse Initiative. These efforts, when fully implemented, will potentially provide important conservation benefits to the greater sage-grouse and its habitats. We consider the threats to the greater sage-grouse to be of moderate magnitude, because the threats are not occurring with uniform intensity or distribution across the wide range of the species at this time, and substantial habitat still remains to support the species in many areas. The threats are imminent because the species is currently facing them in many portions of its range. Therefore, we assigned the greater sage-grouse an LPN of 8.

Greater sage-grouse, Bi-State DPS (*Centrocercus urophasianus*)—We continue to find that listing this species is warranted, but precluded as of the date of publication of this notice. However, we are working on a proposed listing rule that we expect to publish prior to making the next annual resubmitted petition 12-month finding. In the course of preparing the proposed listing rule, we are continuing to monitor new information about this species' status so that we can make prompt use of our authority under Section 4(b)(7) in the case of an emergency posing a significant risk to the species.

Greater sage-grouse, Columbia Basin DPS (*Centrocercus urophasianus*)—The following summary is based on information in our files and a petition, dated May 14, 1999, requesting the listing of the Washington population of the western sage-grouse (*C. u. phaios*). On May 7, 2001, we concluded that listing the Columbia Basin DPS of the western sage-grouse was warranted, but precluded by higher priority listing actions (66 FR 22984); this population was historically found in northern Oregon and central Washington. Following our May 7, 2001, finding, the Service received additional petitions requesting listing actions for various other greater sage-grouse populations, including one for the nominal western subspecies, dated January 24, 2002, and three for the entire species, dated June 18, 2002, and March 19 and December 22, 2003. The Service subsequently found that the petition for the western subspecies did not present substantial