



**GUNNISON
COUNTY**

**Gunnison County, CO Community
Development Office**

221 N. Wisconsin St. Ste. D, Gunnison, CO 81230

Phone: (970) 641-0360

Website: www.gunnisoncounty.org

Email: mcastillo@gunnisoncounty.org

To: Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee Members

From: Misty Castillo

Date: 03/20/2026

**Included in your packet for the Gunnison Basin Sage-Grouse
Strategic Committee Meeting:**

March 25 Agenda

February 18 Draft Minutes

2026 Committee Member Contact Info

GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

DATE: Wednesday, March 25, 2026

PLACE: Planning Commission Meeting Room, Blackstock Government Center OR via Zoom meeting, Meeting ID: 859 9849 7601 (see Teleconference Information below)

1. 10:00am
 - Call Regular Meeting to Order; Determination of Quorum; Verify Public Notice of Meeting
 - Approval of February 18, 2026 Meeting Minutes
 - Agenda Approval for March 25, 2026 Agenda

2. 10:15am
 - Committee Member Reports/Updates
 - 2027 GUSG Summit Discussion

2. 11:00am
 - Lunch/Award

4. 12:00pm
 - Public Comments

5. 12:05
 - Future Meeting

6. 12:10
 - Adjourn

NOTE: This agenda is subject to change, including the addition of items up to 24 hours in advance or the deletion of items at any time. All times are approximate. Regular Meetings, Public Hearings, and Special Meetings are recorded and **ACTION MAY BE TAKEN ON ANY ITEM**. Work Sessions are not recorded and formal action cannot be taken. Two or more Gunnison County Commissioners may attend this meeting. For further information, contact the County Administration at 641-0248. If special accommodations are necessary per ADA, contact 641-0248 or TTY 641-3061 prior to the meeting.

Topic: Gunnison Basin Sage-Grouse Strategic Committee

Time: 10:00 PM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Every month on the Third Wed, 36 occurrence(s)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Monthly: https://gunnisoncounty-org.zoom.us/meeting/tZAtf-6gpjkoGdWcguOfh1cjS_doa-q84cv0/ics?icsToken=DA1QYn8CQXR0UjQ-rgAALAAAAJsDPUFKSIsWXD4kkXAKNqdjntwhrAqWJlpvSyweAE_KxYlvtA0HRVTgVMzXpi1jJF6s_kD-bdzS3PmyOoTAWMDAwMQ&meetingMasterEventId=1DPVqcVxTLe3SViBks83aQ

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://gunnisoncounty-org.zoom.us/j/84087882231?pwd=rBGFOFB7BTnneb6OwENCYul0OB1hfV.1>

View meeting insights with Zoom AI Companion

<https://gunnisoncounty-org.zoom.us/launch/edl?muid=af94b2d5-ed3d-4b5e-b6cc-fe715af16006>

Meeting ID: 840 8788 2231

Passcode: 100277

One tap mobile

+17193594580,,84087882231#,,,,*100277# US

+14086380968,,84087882231#,,,,*100277# US (San Jose)

Join instructions

<https://gunnisoncounty-org.zoom.us/join/84087882231?signature=LFptSlGtoTEncN7np-p0pEBdgUvcUi6c4U6MZKogucY>

**GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 18, 2026**

The February 18, 2026 Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee meeting was conducted in the Gunnison County Blackstock Government Center, 2nd floor meeting room, located at 221 N. Wisconsin #D, Gunnison, CO, 81230. The meeting was also available on Zoom.

Committee Members Present:

Voting Members:

Liz Smith, Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)
Sue Navy, High County Conservation Advocates (HCCA)
Matthew Vasquez, U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
Sarah Elzay, Gunnison County Cheatgrass Coordinator
Jessica Frey, alternate, National Park Service (NPS)
Nathan Darnall, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
John Scott, Private Consultant
Peter Caloger, Public At-Large

Non-Voting Members

Angela Trnka, USFWS
Jon Hare, HCCA

Others in the Audience:

Aleshia Rummel, NPS
Marcella Tarantino, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (BCR)

Staff Members Present:

Misty Castillo, Gunnison County Community and Economic Development Department
Ben Prior, Gunnison Conservation District
Others present as listed in text.

CALL TO ORDER: Vice chairperson Smith called the February 18, 2026, meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to order at 10:00 AM.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM: Smith confirmed that a quorum was present.

AGENDA APPROVAL: Moved: by Navy and seconded by Smith to approve the, February 18, 2026 agenda as provided. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: Moved: by Smith and seconded by Navy to approve January 21, 2026, meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

NOTE: Full meeting video recordings are available at the Gunnison Basin Sage-Grouse Strategic Committee webpage ([LINK](#)).

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS / REPORTS

Scott, told the committee that the one-mile lek radius was not referenced in the USFWS Gunnison sage grouse (GUSG) recovery plan. He confirmed this with USFWS.

Navy asked if the GUSG recovery plan could be updated to include language about the one-mile lek buffer/radius. Darnall and Trnka explained that the recovery plan is amendable and that the current recovery plan references several buffers, including a four-mile lek buffer. Recovery plan updates would be applied to all GUSG populations.

USFWS: The annual GUSG satellite population local working groups meetings will be starting soon. There will be six in total. All are open to the public and can be virtually attended. The Dove Creek and Monticello local working group meeting is on March 5th. The Delta local working group meeting is on March 11th. The Pinon Mesa local working group meeting is on March 31st. The San Miguel local working group meeting will occur in April. The Poncha Pass local working group meeting will also occur in April.

Scott counted 44 GUSG behind his house up Ohio Creek. His neighbors started seeing GUSG in January.

Elzay: A small grant from the Colorado Department of Agriculture was received to treat cheatgrass in the Parlin area and list b species noxious weeds in the Crested Butte area. A seed collective group discussion has started. The goal of this group is to coordinate efforts to collect, store, and grow out native plants (seeds will be collected locally). This is still in the early stages of development, but the end goal is to have locally sourced seeds/plants to use for local restoration projects. A Gunnison Basin wildfire mitigation workshop will be occurring on April 25th.

Smith: County is working on updating the IGA for the Cheatgrass Coordinator position. Getting the HPT update recommendation to the BOCC has been a complicated process. Smith will keep everyone posted as to when the update will be brought to the BOCC.

NPS: Summer operation planning is underway. Several youth groups will be coming to do invasive plant removal work, low tech work and wildlife friendly fence work on NPS land. A wastewater treatment project is being planned for the Elk Creek, Lake Fork, and lola areas. This will be a replacement of an old system and will occur in 2027 and 2028. This will open up for a public comment period on February 28th.

USFS: Working with Pat Magee to get a Western graduate student to help USFS with GUSG habitat monitoring. GMUG has been approved to hire 20 seasonal employees (recreation and timber).

RIS WORKSHOP LOGOISTICS

Trnka doesn't believe a separate RIS workshop is needed for the Gunnison Basin. The RIS update can be added to a future GUSG strategic committee meeting. May might be a good time to include a RIS update. By May all other satellite population RIS meetings would occur so Trnka could fill in the Gunnison Basin about how the other GUSG populations are doing. Trnka could also provide a brief presentation on the Conservation Efforts Database.

GUSG 2027 SUMMIT

The last GUSG summit was held in 2022. These summits typically occur every 5 years, so 2027 would be a good time to have one. Establishing a core group to plan this summit will be the first step.

GUNNISON COUNTY GUSG 2022 ACTION PLAN OVERVIEW

Smith suggests that for future meetings everyone should review the 2022 action plan and identify things within the plan to be discussed further, updated, etc. This could help guide future GUSG related actions.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

FUTURE MEETINGS: Future meetings will occur in the Gunnison County Blackstock Government Center, 2nd floor meeting room and by Zoom online meetings, unless changed for a specific reason.

03-25-26	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2 nd floor meeting room
04-15-26	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2 nd floor meeting room
05-20-26	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2 nd floor meeting room
06-17-26	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2 nd floor meeting room
07-15-26	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2 nd floor meeting room

08-19-26	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2 nd floor meeting room
09-16-26	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2 nd floor meeting room
10-21-26	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2 nd floor meeting room
11-18-26	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2 nd floor meeting room
12-16-26	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2 nd floor meeting room

ADJOURN: February 18, 2026, meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee adjourned at 11:34 AM.

Minutes Prepared By: Ben Prior, Gunnison Conservation District

DRAFT

	First	Last	Descriptor	Term	Appointments	Term End	Email	Phone
1	Peter	Caloger	Public At-Large Regular	2 yrs	Jan-25	2/1/2028	pcaloger@earthlink.net	970-641-6443
2	Steffanie	Chain	Public At-Large Alternate	2 yrs	Mar-26	2/1/2028	steffaniechain@yahoo.com	970-209-3953
3			Development At-Large, Regular	2 yrs				
4			Development At-Large, Alternate	2 yrs				
5	Tim	Kugler	Recreation At-Large Regular, Director	2 yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	tim@gunnisontrails.org	703-599-1873
6			Recreation At-Large Alternate	2 yrs				
7	Sarah	Elzay	Research & Education At-Large Regular	2 yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	selzay@western.edu	
8	Pat	Magee	Research & Education At-Large Alternate	2 yrs	Feb-26	2/1/2028	pmagee@western.edu	970-641-3959
9	Jon	Kaminsky	BLM Regular	2 yrs	Feb-26	2/1/2028	jkaminsky@blm.gov	970-642-4941
10	Brian	Brown	BLM Alternate	2 yrs	Feb-26	2/1/2028	astokes@blm.gov	970-642-4944
11	Kathy	Griffin	CPW Regular CHAIR	2 yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	kathy.griffin@state.co.us	970-255-6146
12	Miranda	Middleton	CPW Alternate	2 yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	miranda.middleton@state.co.us	
13	Liz	Smith	GC BOCC Regular VICE-CHAIR	2 yrs		2/1/2026	EKSmith@gunnisoncounty.org	970-975-0708
14	Jonathan	Houck	GC BOCC Alternate	2 yrs		2/1/2026	jhouck@gunnisoncounty.org	970-275-9625
15	John	Scott	GCSA Regular	2 yrs	Feb-26	2/1/2028		
16	Paul	Mowery	GCSA Alternate	2 yrs	Feb-26	2/1/2028	pkmowery75@gmail.com	
17	Sue	Navy	HCCA Regular	2 yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	suenavy@gmail.com	
18	Jon	Hare	HCCA Alternate	2 yrs	6-Jan	2/1/2028	jon@hccacb.org	
19	Tom	McCracken	Saguache County Regular	2 yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	tmccracken@saguachecounty-co.gov	
20	Wendi	Maez	Saguache County Alternate	2 yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	wmaez@saguachecounty-co.gov	
21	Brinnen	Carter	NPS Regular	2 yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	Brinnen_Carter@nps.gov	
22	Jessica	Frey	NPS Alternate	2yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	jessica_frey@nps.gov	970-641-2337
23			NRCS Regular	2yrs				
24			NRCS Alternate	2yrs				
25	Nathan	Darnall	USFWS Regular	2yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	nathan_darnall@fws.gov	970-819-0541
26	Angela	Trnka	USFWS Alternate	2yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	angela_trnka@fws.gov	970-238-7435
27	Matt	Vasquez	USFS Regular	2yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	matthew.vasquez@usda.gov	970-642-4401
28	Dayle	Funka	USFS Alternate	2yrs	Jan-26	2/1/2028	dayle.funka@usda.gov	970-642-4404