



MEDIA RELEASE

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AGNC TO HOLD PRESS CONFERENCE WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND STAKEHOLDERS TO OPPOSE FEDERAL APPROACH TO SAGE GROUSE

PARACHUTE, CO– The Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado, in conjunction with representatives from various northwest Colorado communities, counties, and other stakeholder groups, will hold a press conference on Thursday, October 31, 2013, 11:00 AM at the Visitor Center in Rifle, CO. to express their disappointment at the BLM’s approach to drafting management plans for lands deemed to be Greater Sage Grouse habitat, and to call on Governor Hickenlooper and the Colorado Department of Natural Resources to put pressure on the federal agency to cooperate with local entities and develop an alternative that protects the region’s economy along with the sage grouse habitat.

According to the National Environmental Protection Act, federal agencies which set out to complete or amend management plans, environmental Impact Statements, and other actions on public lands are required to elicit the input of local “cooperating agencies” in the development of a defined range of management alternatives. However, several of these local cooperating agencies, including Garfield, Moffat, and Rio Blanco Counties, and a number of municipalities, say that their input has been ignored by the BLM in the process of formulating an EIS regarding the management of Greater Sage Grouse habitat in northwest Colorado, despite the grave importance of EIS to their communities.

“The provisions in this draft Land Use Plan and EIS will have an enormous impact on the people and economy of the region,” said AGNC Executive Director Scott McInnis. “It is unconscionable that the work and concerns of the people who will be most affected were not taken properly into account by our BLM.”

“Therefore, we are joining with our members, and other local stakeholders, to voice our objections to being shut out of the process, and to ask Governor Hickenlooper and the Colorado

DNR, to stand with the people of rural northwest Colorado and demand that the BLM listen to these cooperating agencies, and help develop an alternative that will ensure conservation of the Greater Sage Grouse habitat, without needlessly crippling the economy of the region.”

For more information, or to schedule an interview, please contact AGNC Executive Director Scott McInnis at 970-285-7630

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AGNC is a council of governments representing cities and counties in northwest Colorado including Mesa, Garfield, Rio Blanco, Moffat and Routt.