Wyoming Mining Natural Resource Foundation

Summary Description

Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances/Candidate Conservation Agreement

Wyoming Mining Natural Resource Foundation (WMNRF) is developing a voluntary conservation strategy with an objective of achieving durable net conservation benefit for the Greater sage-grouse and the habitat on which it depends in the landscape context of mining and processing operations in southwestern Wyoming. Implementation of the conservation strategy will be directed by an Agreement between WMNRF, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. The Agreement incorporates a combined Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) applicable to non-federal property and an integrated Candidate Conservation Agreement (CCA) applicable to federal property.

Major goals and objectives include:

Goal 1 Species Conservation

* Objectives
  + Implement conservation measures developed to avoid and minimize potential key threats to the Greater sage-grouse and other sagebrush species that may be associated with mining-related activities.
  + Form enduring partnerships with federal, state, and private entities to develop and implement conservation actions to offset any residual impacts that cannot be avoided.
  + Develop and implement a Habitat Quantification Tool (HQT) model for purposes of quantifying the loss of functional habitat and habitat use associated with potential key mining-related threats as well as the benefit of conservation measures and offset conservation actions for the Greater sage-grouse and its habitat.
  + Form and engage the expertise of a Conservation Advisory Committee comprising local, state, and regional experts to help guide and advise offset conservation actions
  + Use an adaptive, outcome-based approach based on monitoring and assessment to guide decisions regarding the efficacy of the conservation measures, habitat response, and, ultimately, abundance of Greater sage-grouse.
  + Coordinate with federal and state agencies and landowners to track Greater sage-grouse populations and trends within the Landscape Conservation Area.
  + Acknowledge the Wyoming Governor’s Greater sage-grouse Executive Order and associated core habitat areas and local BLM Resource Management Plans current when the CCAA/CCA is approved as representing the minimum regulatory requirements applicable to the defined Covered Activities.

Goal 2 Certainty for and Sustainability of Mining Operations

* Objectives
* Obtain an Enhancement of Survival Permit (ESP) and Incidental Take Statement (ITS) for mining-related Covered Activities with an initial permit term of 30 years, an opportunity to amend within the initial 30-year term; and renew at the end of the 30-year term.
  + Uphold the CCAA/CCA commitments, requirements, and assurances that satisfy the ESP and ITS issuance criteria as outlined in the Agreement.