

Sage grouse policy heading back to square one

By Scott Sonner, AP

Federal scientists and land managers who've been crafting strategies to protect a ground-dwelling bird's habitat across the American West for nearly two decades are going back to the drawing board under a new Trump administration edict to reassess existing plans condemned by ranchers, miners and energy developers.

Federal officials are wrapping up a series of public meetings with three sessions starting Tuesday in Utah ahead of a Nov. 27 cutoff for comment on Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's order last month to consider revisions to land management amendments for the greater sage grouse that were adopted under the Obama administration.

Zinke says he wants to make sure the amendments don't harm local economies in 11 western states and allow the states to have maximum control over the efforts within their borders.

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