**Gunnison Sage-grouse**
*Centrocercus minimus*

**ABOUT THIS SPECIES**
The Gunnison sage-grouse was not recognized as a separate species from the larger greater sage-grouse until 2000. Its historical range included southwest Colorado, northern New Mexico, eastern Utah and northeastern Arizona. That range has since been reduced by an estimated 93%, and the species is now restricted to a core population in the Gunnison Basin population in west-central Colorado, plus seven disconnected and fragmented satellite populations. Each of these populations depends on high-quality sagebrush habitat for protection from predators, thermal cover in cooler months and a reliable winter food source. Highly vulnerable to the loss and fragmentation of this habitat and the impacts of climate change, the Gunnison sage-grouse was listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in 2014.

**DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT**
Loss of high-quality sagebrush habitat is the biggest threat to Gunnison sage-grouse. Development, infrastructure construction, agriculture and grazing, and other human-driven activities have sharply reduced the extent and quality of sagebrush-steppe ecosystems. Climate change is contributing to that loss. Drier and hotter conditions are reducing the wetter areas critical to sage-grouse survival, while also contributing to invasive species spread and intensifying wildfires that further degrade this important habitat. As a result, the remaining Gunnison sage-grouse populations may be starting to disappear. **The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Department has not counted any birds in the Dove Creek satellite population in the past six years and none in the Cerro Summit/ Cimarron/ Sims Mesa satellite populations for the last two years.**

**References**


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