

# Governor believes State's Future Tied to Conservation of the Sage Grouse

By [Dahl Erickson](#) on Jun 30, 2010

CEYENNE, Wyo. – Maintaining a vibrant economy in Wyoming is directly tied to the conservation of the sage grouse, according to the chairman of the Sage Grouse Implementation Team which made its final recommendations to Governor Dave Freudenthal today.



Bob Budd presented his team's report to the governor, who observed that he received it on the same day that several environmental groups filed a federal lawsuit over the bird's status.

"They're suing while we're doing the work," Freudenthal said. "We're doing what they should be doing – conserving – but they'd rather litigate than fix anything," he said.

Budd said that if the sage grouse is declared an endangered species, the impact of its listing will reach across the entire state. "If the sage grouse is listed, roughly 80% of the state's surface area is in its historic range and it will have an impact on everything from ranching to oil and gas to uranium," Budd said.

"This is an effort and a policy that is peculiarly dependent on whoever is governor, in that it is underlain by an executive order by the governor," Freudenthal said. "This policy's in place, it is underway, the sage grouse working group created their recommendations. We hope that these recommendations will be the guide for the next five years, which is what they figure it's going to take to get things stabilized in the core areas as well as get some other research done. That may or may not be true, frankly, depending on who's governor and it is dependent on the legislative and executive branch support going forward," Freudenthal said.