



United States Congress

NEWS RELEASE

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WITHDRAWING PEPPERGRASS LISTING WILL SPUR COOPERATIVE SPECIES RECOVERY IN IDAHO

Idaho Delegation, Governor Otter note success of cooperative conservation agreements

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The decision by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to withdraw the listing of slickspot peppergrass as an endangered species in Idaho could greatly increase cooperative conservation efforts that will aid other species, according to members of Idaho's Congressional Delegation and Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter. The governor and delegation members reacted today to the withdrawal of a peppergrass listing, which is being credited to voluntary landowner conservation efforts.

"It speaks well of the state's conservation efforts, as well as the collaborative efforts of landowners, that the plant has been found to be out of danger," Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter said. "I stand ready to defend the Fish and Wildlife's sound conclusion, as well as our state's ability and determination to protect our resources on our own terms."

Senator Mike Crapo, who has introduced federal legislation to offer tax credits to landowners supporting recovery efforts, said, "The conservation agreements reached in Idaho on slickspot peppergrass have proven to be a faster model to recovery than the federal listing process alone. This kind of forward-thinking conservation must continue to be encouraged. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decision will hopefully create additional good will, encourage more collaborative efforts at recovery, and result in renewed efforts to protect other species."

Senator Larry Craig, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, said, "This is a victory for those of us who want to recover species in a collaborative way, but will be a disappointment for those who simply want to use slickspot peppergrass as a tool to shut down grazing. The announcement sheds light on an example of how the Endangered Species Act should work."

"The decision today is testament to the value of the conservation efforts already in place and underway in southern Idaho," said Congressman Mike Simpson. "I've long believed the best approach to recovering and protecting endangered species is a cooperative one that provides incentives for sound management. I'm pleased with this decision and commend the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for recognizing that ongoing conservation efforts are working."

"I applaud the common sense solution to a difficult issue," said Congressman Bill Sali. "The collaborative work of the State of Idaho and BLM, along with land users and other interested parties has led to a workable solution for management of the slickspot peppergrass. I am extremely pleased with the action of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services to withdraw the application to list slickspot peppergrass as an endangered species."