



## **PRESS RELEASE**

*For immediate release*

### ***Forum to examine the Endangered Species Act of the future***

**Oak Brook, IL Oct. 29, 2015:** Since it was signed into law in 1973, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) has offered protection to more than 1,500 species of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and amphibians. It has also generated frustration for land owners who feel the restrictions generated by the ESA outweigh the benefits of the protections provided. The balance of productivity and preservation has long been a point of debate.

Many people believe a new direction for the preservation of endangered species has been set by a recent decision of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service not to list the Greater Sage-Grouse. Key to the success of the Greater Sage-Grouse effort is a collaboration of private landowners, environmentalists, and state and federal agencies.

The Farm Foundation® Forum on Tuesday, Nov. 10, will examine how key elements of the Greater Sage-Grouse efforts, as well as similar collaborative efforts to preserve other species, may reshape preservation work and the ESA in the future.

For this Forum, the panel will include:

- Jason Weller, Chief of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service;
- Michael Bean, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Parks and Wildlife, U.S. Department of the Interior;
- Dave Willms, Policy Advisor to Wyoming Governor Matthew Mead;
- Brian Rutledge, Vice President of the National Audubon Society, Conservation and Policy Advisory Central Flyway;
- Patrick O'Toole, Ladder Ranch; and
- Alex Echols of the Sand County Foundation.

John Larson of American Farmland Trust, will moderate the Forum, which will be 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. EST at the National Press Club, 529 14th St. NW, Washington, D.C. After discussion by the panelists, the floor will be opened for questions. For those unable to attend in person, a [live audiocast](#) is available free of charge.

There is no charge to participate in the Nov. 10 Forum, but registration is requested. [REGISTER HERE](#) if you plan to attend the Forum in person at the National Press Club. [REGISTER HERE](#) to participate in the live audiocast. Audiocasting is made possible by a grant from Farm Credit.

After the event, an audio file is posted to the [Farm Foundation website](#) for those unable to be part of the live event.

***Who should participate in the Forum:*** People with an interest in agricultural, food and rural policy, including members of Congress, congressional staff, executive branch officials, industry representatives, NGO representatives, academics and members of the media.

***The Forum:*** Farm Foundation, NFP organizes these public forums to engage all stakeholders in informed dialogue on food, agricultural and rural policies. Participants examine current policies, explore and analyze alternative policy proposals, and give voice to new proposals.

***Audio from the session*** will be posted on the Farm Foundation [website](#). Presentations and audio files from past Forum sessions are also available at the website.

***For more information:***

[Mary Thompson](#), Farm Foundation, NFP

*Farm Foundation, NFP works as a catalyst for sound public policy by providing objective information to foster a deeper understanding of issues shaping the future for agriculture, food systems and rural regions. The Foundation does not advocate or lobby. Since its founding in 1933, Farm Foundation has been committed to objectivity, fostering the constructive debate that is essential to sound public policy development in a democracy.*

