

Sage grouse taken off endangered list

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The rare sage-grouse is fighting for survival in Colorado, but because of a recent spurt in numbers the birds will not be listed as an endangered species.

The sage-grouse live on one of the only sagebrush reservations left in Colorado, the Denver post reported Monday.

"A single species becomes a symbol for a much larger issue about the degradation of land," said Jessica Young, a biology professor at Western State College in Gunnison, Colo.

Even though the Gunnison grouse is considered one of the country's most endangered birds and has been a six-year candidate for federal protection, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has removed it from consideration for the endangered-species list.

But the decision actually relieved ranchers as well as outraged conservationists.

The conservation project being run by volunteers in the city has donated more than \$11 million to preserve 17,000 acres and enhance the bird's habitat.

The government also paid for aerial seeding to provide food for the grouse, mowed open heavy sage stands for the bird and closed roads during breeding and nesting seasons.

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