



US Fish and Wildlife Service Photo

Above is a photo of a Lesser-prairie chicken, which is being considered for a "Threatened" designation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The grouse can be found in portions of Gaines County, as well as may other South Plains counties within the Texas and eastern New Mexico region.

Public Comment Period Reopened for Lesser Prairie Chicken Designation

DALLAS (AP) — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reopened to public comment the potential listing of the lesser prairie chicken on the federal protected list. U.S. Rep. Michael Conaway of Texas announced the move after he and seven other prairie House Republicans requested a delay of at least 90 days in the decision on designating the grouse as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. Republican senators, including U.S. Sens. John Cornyn and Ted Cruz of Texas, also asked for the delay. They say protecting the fowl would impair oil and gas development, agriculture and other sectors that drive local economies.

Experts say the lesser prairie chicken population has declined in part due to expanded farms, ranches and oil and gas operations across the Southwest and other states.

US District 19 Congressman Randy Neugebauer (R-Lubbock) responded to the letter from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Director Daniel Ashe regarding the potential listing of the Lesser Prairie-Chicken as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

"The Fish and Wildlife Service took a step in the right direction on the lesser prairie-chicken listing, but unfortunately, they didn't go far

enough," Neugebauer stated. Director Ashe agreed to re-open the comment period so stakeholders could review the widely supported conservation plan proposed by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA). However, he declined to extend the final listing deadline.

"Allowing stakeholders to comment on the range-wide conservation plan is critical, and I'm glad Director Ashe recognized this," Neugebauer said. "But I let him know that I was disappointed that he didn't choose to extend the final deadline for making a decision on whether or not to list the species. That creates a shortened review period that doesn't account for the complexity of this proposal. And it means the Service is still following arbitrary deadlines based on litigation, rather than examining what makes the most sense for local conservation efforts."

Listing the lesser prairie-chicken as threatened will have sweeping consequences for landowners in West Texas and neighboring states.

Neugebauer thanked residents of West Texas for their active involvement in this issue, and urged them to stay engaged. "Farmers, ranchers, landowners, and energy producers have all come together to take part in this process," Neugebauer stated. "Thanks to their efforts, we're making progress."

The Lesser Prairie Chicken (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*) is a species in the grouse family, is slightly smaller and paler than its near relative the Greater Prairie Chicken.

About half of its current population lives in western Kansas, and the other half in the sandhills and prairies of western Oklahoma, the Texas Panhandle, the Llano Estacado region of Texas and eastern New Mexico, and southeastern Colorado.

Texas counties which are home to the lesser prairie chicken habitat include: Ochiltree, Lipscomb, Roberts, Hemphill, Gray, Wheeler, Donley, Deaf Smith, Bailey, Lamb, Cochran, Hockley, Yoakum, Terry,

Andrews, and Gaines.

Recent Study Findings

Through a multi-state collaborative effort, the first statistically-valid, range-wide population estimate for the lesser prairie chicken is an estimated 37,170 birds, according to a report released by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies' (WAFWA) Grassland Initiative and the Lesser Prairie Chicken Interstate Working Group.

Aerial surveys this spring detected several previously unknown breeding areas, known as leks, despite severe drought conditions across the region last year. They also discovered leks in Kansas beyond what was thought to be the northern limit of the historic range of the species.

Lesser prairie chicken numbers have been largely increasing in Kansas for the last 15 years, while populations have declined in parts of the southern portion of the range, including Texas. Biologists believe this expansion may represent a northward shift in the population of the species caused by climatic conditions associated with changing precipitation patterns.

To help restore habitat for the bird, state and federal experts developed a tool called Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) to work with private landowners and managers in the geographic range of the lesser prairie-chicken.

This voluntary program was designed to help reverse declining bird numbers by promoting habitat conservation and restoration through practices such as prescribed grazing, upland wildlife habitat management, brush management, prescribed burning, range planting and restoration and management of rare or declining habitats.

The program also provides assurances to landowners that, beyond what is detailed in the CCAA agreement, they will not be required to meet any new regulations if the bird is listed under the Endangered Species Act.

To date, close to 315,000 acres of Texas ranch land have enrolled in CCAAs.

Gaines Co. Public Records

Marriage Licenses

Peter T. Knelsen, 28, and Susana Loewen, 23, both of Seminole.

Robert L. Marin, 32, and Diana Castorena-Melendez, 23, both of Odessa.

Derick Rivas, 19, and Maria V. Villareal, 23, both of Seminole.

Heinrich Neufeld, 58, and Elisa Dyck, 50, both of Seminole.

Florentino C. Cobos, 47, of Eunice, N.M. and Rafaela Nunez, 52, of Hobbs, N.M.

Rick W. Giesbrecht, 20, of Seminole and Maria K. Siemens, 20, of Denver City.

Jacinto Menchaca, 41, and Angelica R. Santana, 24, both of Seminole.

Charles D. Cunningham, 41, and Tammie M. Cunningham, 41, both of Hobbs, N.M.

Emilio J. Romero, 23, and Janet N. Allison, 32, both of Hobbs, N.M.

Valenzuela, Jr., possession of marijuana (under two ounces), plea of guilty, sentenced to one day served in Gaines Co. Jail, \$300 fine and court costs.

State of Texas vs. Calvin Damell Fugett, driving while license suspended/invalid, plea of guilty, sentenced to one day served in Gaines Co. jail, \$300 fine and court costs.

State of Texas vs. Juan Grado, theft by check, order of dismissal, the defendant has paid restitution in full.

106th Dist. Court Filings

No filings to report this week.

106th Dist. Court Dispositions

Bobby King Jr. Pump Service vs. Sherry Peterson, suit on account, default judgement issued.

Guadalupe Gonzales Pena vs. State of Texas, writ of habeas corpus, order of dismissal.

State of Texas vs. Kimberly D. Flanagan, application for writ of habeas corpus, bond reduced to \$7,500 per case, UA must be submitted at the request of community supervision officer and must report weekly to officer if bond is made.

IMOMO: Irlanda Lizette Espinoza and Benjamin Paul Espinoza, suit of divorce, divorce granted.

IMOMO: Kayla Flores Lee and Timothy Patrick Lee, suit of divorce, divorce granted.

IMOMO: Zachary Lee Cain and Deanna Lee Cain, suit of divorce, divorce granted.

State of Texas vs. Pedro Castillo, Jr., forgery, order of dismissal.

State of Texas vs. Pedro Castillo, Jr., unauthorized use of a motor vehicle, order of dismissal.

State of Texas vs. Eleacer Huerta, Jr., burglary of a habitation, plea of guilty, sentenced to eight years in Texas Dept. of Criminal Justice system, \$1,300 fine, court costs and restitution, 741 days of jail credit.

State of Texas vs. Shaniece

Caballero, possession of a controlled substance -- cocaine, plea of guilty, sentenced to four years deferred adjudication, \$1,000 fine, court costs, \$140 restitution to DPS, 150 hours of community service.

State of Texas vs. Frederick Bryant, possession of a controlled substance -- methamphetamine/possession of a controlled substance -- cocaine, plea of guilty, sentenced to five years TDCJ for count 1, \$1,000 fine, court costs and \$140 restitution to Texas DPS.

State of Texas vs. Henry DeLeon, burglary of a habitation/engaging in organized criminal activity, plea of guilty, sentenced to 20 years in TDCJ.

State of Texas vs. Eddie Lee Duvall, possession of a controlled substance -- methamphetamine/possession of a controlled substance -- cocaine, revocation of probation, sentenced to five years TDCJ, original \$1,500 fine, old and new court costs, \$140 restitution to Texas DPS.

State of Texas vs. Marcos Abel Delgado, possession of a controlled substance -- cocaine, plea of guilty, sentenced to 10 years TDCJ, but suspended and placed on 10 years community supervision, \$1,500 fine, court costs, 150 hours community service and \$140 restitution to DPS.

State of Texas vs. Jose Alfredo Jimenez, driving while intoxicated with child passenger, plea of guilty, sentenced to 18 months state jail, but suspended and placed on five years community supervision, \$1,500 fine, court costs, 300 hours community service, 180 days driver's license suspension.

State of Texas vs. Jose Angel Resendez, driving while intoxicated with child passenger, plea of guilty, sentenced to two years state jail, but suspended and placed on five years community supervision, \$1,500 fine, court costs, 300 hours community service, \$60 restitution to Texas DPS, one year driver's license suspension.

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With that in mind, there will be certain times that there will be limitations to news stories, letters to the editor and briefs, and their appearance in our publication to you.

The *Sentinel* does reserve the right to edit and restrict pre-produced stories and information for space limitations, editorial purposes, and time restrictions.

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AUCTION

TUESDAY, MARCH 5...10:30 A.M.

LOCATION: Morton, TX (Cochran Co.) From Intersection of Texas 114 and 214, west 15 miles on Texas 114.

ROGER GATTIS - OWNER
(806) 266-0030

"Roger is moving and changing occupations. The following will be sold at public auction."

TRACTORS/HARVEST: 2006 JD 8130 MDWD, 2002 JD 8120 MFW, F-20 Antique Farmall Tractor, 1991 JD 7445 Stripper, Big 12 Module Builder, BH Module Builder, 2-RTK Guiding Systems, Duals, Spacers.

EQUIPMENT: 12 R JD #1720 Max Emerge Plus Planter, 12 R Case Int. #900 Panter, 8 R Case Int. #900 Planter for Parts, Great Plains #2700 Grain Drill, Various Tool Bars, Tandem Disc, Stalk Cutters, Shredders, Listers, Sandfighter, Switch Plow, Krause #5630 Cultivator (Like New), Hi Clearance Bed Knifer, (Like New) and more

PLUS: Spray equipment, Tanks, Trailers, Misc.

NOTE: This is a list of VERY HIGH QUALITY equipment that is 1 to 3 years old. Be on time. CONTACT: Quality Auctioneers (806) 866-4646. Charles Macha, Auctioneer #6911, (806) 893-7151. See pictures/description: www.qualityauctioneers.com.

AUCTION

THURSDAY, MARCH 7...10:00 A.M.

LOCATION: Ropesville, TX. From Intersection of US 62/82 and FM 41, northeast 3.3 miles on US 62/82, then west 4 miles on Foster Road. OR from Smyer, TX, 10 miles south on FM 168 and then 1 mile west on Foster Road.

DEBBIE BORLAND dba BORLAND FARMS - OWNER
(806) 893-6845

TRACTORS/GUIDING SYSTEMS/HARVEST/VEHICLES: 2005 JD 8320 MFW, 2003 JD 8420 MFW, 1971 JD 4620, 1971 JD 4020, 2-JD Green Star 2 ProSF2 Guiding Systems, 1995 JD 7450 Stripper, SS Boll Buggy, Crustbuster Speed King Module Builder, 1977 Chev. 1500 Silverado Z-71 PU, 1984 Chev. C-10 Silverado PU, 1963 Ford Truck w/ Bed/Lift.

PLUS: 40+ Pieces of Assorted Equipment, Spray Equipment Tanks, Irrigation, Misc..... and more.

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