

November 25, 2009

Dear Participant,

Welcome to the Climate Change Adaptation Workshop for Natural Resource Managers in the Gunnison Basin! Thank you for participating in this two-day workshop to identify management strategies to help native species and ecosystems adapt to a changing climate and to lay the groundwork for implementation. This workshop is a pilot project of the Southwest Climate Change Initiative, a collaboration between private, state, federal and academic partners, that provides information and tools for climate change adaptation planning, implementation and conservation across New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Colorado.

We are excited to work with all of you to identify effective on-the-ground conservation actions that can be taken to address the impacts of climate change in three specific areas of concern in the basin: alpine ecosystem, Gunnison sage-grouse and headwaters. By the end of the workshop, we hope to have a shared understanding of the potential future effects of climate change, strategic actions to promote resilience and realignment of the species and ecosystems, opportunities to facilitate successful implementation, set of research and monitoring needs for climate adaptation, and commitment among partners to take collaborative action.

The most important aspect of this workshop has in many ways already been achieved: partners coming together to collectively plan for an uncertain future. Changes in the climate, and the consequent impact to species and habitats, will pose challenges we will not be able to identify today. Our best hope of responding to these challenges will be in continuously seeking the best available information and sharing ideas and strategies across jurisdictional boundaries. In that regard, we hope this workshop can become a model for how to work together in other landscapes in Colorado, across the entire Southwest, and the country as a whole.

So, I extend my welcome and thanks to all the participants, and look forward to a productive workshop. And, just as important, to continued collaborations in the future.

Sincerely,



Tim Sullivan
Acting Colorado State Director