



**Stephanie Garcia
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COMMISSIONER**

State of New Mexico
Commissioner of Public Lands

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**COMMISSIONER'S
OFFICE**

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March 8, 2023

RE: Federal Listing of the Lesser Prairie-Chicken as an Endangered Species and the deadline to enroll in the CCAA is March 26, 2023.

Dear members of our agriculture community,

The New Mexico State Land Office (NMSLO) sent a letter in December 2022 alerting agriculture leaseholders to the listing of the Lesser Prairie-Chicken (LPC) as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) and enrollment deadlines for the Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA). We have been asked to provide a mapping tool to assist state lessees and producers in viewing state leases in proximity to the boundaries of the LPC area to help them decide if they want to enroll in this voluntary conservation program. In collaboration with NM Cattle Growers' Association, USFWS, and Center for Excellence (CEHMM), we have delivered!

Below is a link to the NMSLO's website and a map viewer that shows the LPC Historic Range and the Current Management Area. When using this viewer, you can look up NMSLO agricultural leases by name or NMSLO ID number, or you can simply zoom in to a particular area based on roads or section, township and range. The Current Management Area is the focus for LPC conservation in New Mexico, and only state leases that fall within or partially within the Current Management Area are included in the list of leases. Leases that are located in the Historic Range are also eligible to be enrolled in the CCAA but are less likely to be affected by the listing. The State Land Office encourages, *but does not require*, agricultural lessees to enroll in the CCAA, as this agreement provides important protections for lessees in the case there is an incidental harm to the species.

Interactive Map: <https://tinyurl.com/lpc-viewer>

The deadline to voluntarily enroll in the CCAA has been extended, but is quickly approaching on **March 26, 2023**. Please contact CEHMM directly for details about enrollment:

CEHMM Main Office: (575) 885-3700

CEHMM District 1 (South of Tatum)
Ryan Schmidt
ryan.schmidt@cehmm.org
(575) 607-5253

CEHMM District 2 (North of Tatum)
Kyle Dillard
kyle.dillard@cehmm.org
(575) 760-2111

Agricultural participants do not pay any fees to participate in the CCAA. Participants from the oil and gas, midstream, electric power distribution, and utility industries pay habitat conservation fees that are used to fund on-the-ground conservation projects to benefit the species. Past projects have included construction or replacement of wildlife-friendly fencing to assist ranchers with grazing management, installation of solar drinkers, and mesquite removal.

Thank you for helping the NMLSO protect these species while ensuring that your important economic activities on state trust land continue to benefit New Mexico.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Stephanie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Stephanie Garcia Richard
Commissioner of Public Lands