

USU Extension Awarded Grant from Yamaha for Sage-Grouse Conservation

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Utah State University Extension's Utah Community-based Conservation Program (CBCP) was recently awarded a \$12,500 grant and two ATVs from the Yamaha Motor Corporation. The grant will support field research designed to balance recreation on public lands with sage-grouse conservation, and was awarded as part of Yamaha's Outdoor Access Initiative to promote safe, responsible off-road vehicle riding and open, sustainable riding areas.

USU Extension CBCP and the Yamaha Motor Corporation, along with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Utah Public Land Policy Coordination Office, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and Cache Honda Yamaha, of Logan, Utah, partnered to create *The Sheeprock Sage-grouse Management Area Sage-grouse Conservation Initiative*.

The initiative integrates a management approach that combines social research to determine public land recreation user needs with sage-grouse translocations, habitat restoration and recreation management.

The information gathered through the partnership will be used by the BLM to develop a travel management plan to conserve sage-grouse and enhance the experience of off-road vehicle users.

"The work USU Extension is doing is a great example of institutions and agencies coming together to find ways to create and protect access to public land for all types of recreation," said Steve Nessler, Yamaha's ATV/SxS marketing manager. "With support from the Yamaha Outdoor Access grant program, the research team at USU can help the state public land managers put together a use plan that supports motorized recreation without disrupting important wildlife conservation efforts."

Terry Messmer, USU Extension wildlife specialist and CBCP director said that innovative partnerships are the future of wildlife management and conservation.

"Yamaha is a leader in the outdoor recreation industry, and with the support of the other partners, we are confident we can achieve a sustainable balance that enhances outdoor recreation and sage-grouse conservation on public lands," he said.

Through partnerships like this, Messmer said USU Extension has a long history of serving the citizens of Utah and the West by providing the best information on the management of western lands.

Richard West of Cache Honda Yamaha agreed.

"We are grateful to Yamaha Motor Corporation for their support of the Conservation Initiative," he said. "It is important to us and all the power sport dealers in Utah that all who use and recreate on public lands participate in these important decision-making processes."

For more information about USU Extension programs, visit extension.usu.edu.

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