

Castle Country Adaptive Resources Management (CaCoARM) Sage-grouse Local Working Group

The Castle Country Adaptive Resource Management Plan (CaCoARM) Sage-grouse Local Working Group (LWG) was organized in 2004 by Terry Messmer. Lorien Belton is the group facilitator.

Description of Area and General Population Information

The CaCoARM conservation area encompasses occupied sage-grouse habitats primarily in Carbon County, with portions of Utah and Sanpete County. Sage-grouse habitat in this area is naturally fragmented by both geology and topography. Although the sage-grouse habitat locally is in the Carbon Sage-grouse Management Area (SGMA) boundary, the Tavaputs Plateau is outside the SGMA. The LWG continues to work with landowners in the Tavaputs area and watch the population dynamics there in addition to the primary focus on the birds within the SGMA.



Members of the CaCoARM group stand on sediment captured by a beaver-dam analogue (BDA) while looking at pictures of the area before the project. The BDAs are helping to create new sage-grouse brood-rearing habitats. The group visited the private land project on the summer field tour. Photo by Lorien Belton.

Table 1. Meetings and Tours held by CaCoARM LWG during 2017.

Meeting and Tours	Date	Location	# attending	Topics
LWG evening meeting	April 19, 2017	Price DNR	15	Utah’s draft compensatory mitigation program, population updates, field tour planning, staffing changes
Evening field tour	June 21, 2017	Price area public and private lands	18	Sagebrush planting project and a private lands beaver-dam-analogue project
LWG afternoon meeting	September 20, 2017	Price DNR	17	New BLM IMs, project presentations and review, BLM planning updates, BLM PEIS scoping period

Project and Research Highlights

The Castle Country group has become increasingly engaged in habitat project work over the past several years. Private landowners on the Tavaputs Plateau are actively engaged in habitat improvement and monitoring. The group has also gotten more engaged in habitat work on public lands as well. Project proponents bring ideas, questions, and project results to the CaCoARM group for discussion and feedback. Federal agency participation in the group increased in 2017, providing more opportunities to learn from one another and work together on projects. The group is also interested in engaging with local mitigation opportunities once the state sage-grouse mitigation rule is finalized. The field tour this year emphasized how riparian area rehabilitations and improvements could be done at relatively low cost.



Terry Messmer stands near a deeply eroded gully in sage-grouse habitat in the Emma Park area. The group is working to understand how to restore wet meadow areas and prevent erosion to benefit sage-grouse and other species. Photo by Lorien Belton.

Upcoming Year Work Plan

The CaCoARM group will work on revising its local plan during 2018. Additionally, the group plans to learn more about grazing and sage-grouse interactions generally and the local sage-grouse populations specifically. Habitat improvement projects, including those which address weed and wet meadow areas, will be a focus of work at and between meetings.