

Color Country LWG

June 17, 2009

Attending: Norm McKee, Jake Shoppe, Dustin Shaible, Jason Robinson (Upland Game Project Leader), Nicki Frey, Wally Dodds

I. Introductions

- a. Jason introduced himself to group and vice versa

II. Updates from Group

- A. Jason: update on listing. USFWS still waiting for some papers to be written. They are in the peer review process right now. Want to use the information before making the decisions. There has been an agreement that late February will be the final date on that decision.
 - a. Utah compiled the data for the projects (271) to USFWS. NRCS and UPCD projects. 243,000 acres of UPCD projects that were addressing greater sage-grouse management. Also wrote a letter to discuss things we were doing for communication, predation, development, etc.
 - b. Could be a rangewide listing, by management zone, by state, by population, by distinct population segments (WA, CA, the rest)
 - c. Gunnison sage grouse may be part of that decision in February
 - d. Main petitioner right now is the Western Watersheds Projects
 - e. Research on wind and solar energy projects needed
 - f. Statewide sage-grouse management plan; 2002 gave direction for these local working groups.
 - i. Updated and revised it for 2009. Committee of different reps met starting September 2008. Division of Wildlife management plan, but had supervisory committee; went through the RAC and was accepted down here. Wildlife Board approved the management plan. In the final draft form.
 - ii. Plan states that it wants the LWG to meet at least twice a year and then 1 field tour.

- g. UDWR will be having a random draw system for greater sage-grouse, sharptail, and sandhill crane.
- h. How to we hunt if it is petitioned for listing? There is a section in the new management plan that explains that better. Discusses the demand for grouse hunting; they are extremely conservation. Only populations with >500 birds; only allow permits for 10% of the birds. Hunting is 17 out of 19 listed threats. Only 4 areas where hunting is allow.
- i. Helicopter surveys occurred in each region. 2 days in each region.
 - i. In southern region flew Hamlin Valley, Parker Mtn, and Grass Valley.
 - 1. Found 1 potential new lek in Hamlin Valley, 2 in Parker, none in Grass.
 - 2. Central region was not successful, Northern had 1 new one found, Book Cliffs no, Fruitland maybe one.
 - ii. Will consider doing this again next year. Researchers need to keep track of places that we've been and report that back to Jason.
- j. What about possibility of translocation/augmentation?
 - i. Could consider augmentation. Probably would not do a translocation.
 - ii. Research project on Anthro mountain to see about how another augmentation will do. It will be the second one, after Strawberry Valley.
 - iii. Must have an approved augmentation list. Will have to go through the RAC process.
 - iv. This group would need to come up with a list of areas that we would want to consider for augmentation. Probably not going to be something we could do for another 2 years.
- k. What about money for research?
 - i. UDWR wants to allow for more research
 - ii. Funding may be available but they group is trying to prioritize what they want to do and where they want to focus.
 - iii. That money is available. Just come up with a well thought out and needed project/research proposal. Habitat work will go through UPCD. Other research , submit it to Jason and David Olsen.

B. Dustin:

- a. Calf creek. Starting to have some 3-4ft high trees that need to be removed. It's on SITLA up by Sweetwater ranch. Will be putting the project proposal in to UPCD . Would work to improve east side of Dutton (lek = John's Valley #2)
- b. Went to Sage Hen Hollow with Dedicated Hunters and removed small trees. Went really far with 6 guys. Will be doing it again on Sunday June 28 (check on the UDWR website to confirm the date). Heather Perry will be coordinating the effort.
- c. Will be turning in the predator management plan update; need to be setting up an objective so that the plan will have a completion goal. Will be asking them to set up some eggs to take care of the Raven population. We would need to set up a goal, such as "no ravens counted during the nesting season within 3 miles of the lek site". (This is not what we would actually say, but something to this effect is what we would need).
- d. We have no data about this for our area. **This might be a good research idea.**
- e. We had been talking about a need for water. One SITLA parcel has water, the other is choked out. Did we have an idea of where we would want to put a guzzler?
 - i. May need to go through UPCD. Put trough in the FS/BLM border at Mud Springs. Or would need to upgrade an existing pipe to something larger that is currently tapping Panguitch Municipal Water. This is between Panguitch Creek and 3-mile Creek. **LWG would need to push BLM to extend the NEPA on that.**
 1. **Wally will contact the group to put together a date to go see this area and put something together. Goal is to have a project proposal to UPCD.**

III. Research Updates

A. Alton

- a. Hoyt's Ranch
 - i. Might need to schedule a flight. Probably the most efficient.
 - ii. Division found some money and that will keep a technician for the season.

B. Sanford

- a. First year of post-treatment work completed.
- b. Seed coming up. About 8 inches high. No pellets seen but it wasn't expected.

IV. Field Tour:

- a. When Jason comes down to discuss the new plan, we should have our open house then.
 - i. Will advertise and get some of the integral people involved, like the county commissioners, planning commission, Garkane
 - ii. Possibly in August? We could set it up around the date of our next meeting.
 - iii. **Wally could help resupply our mailing list with his upper sevier watershed.** He and I could get together to pay for the costs of refreshments.