

CCARM Working Group Meeting
February 13, 2008
USFS Panguitch
10:00 – 12:00 noon

Attending:

Wally Dodds
Jake Schoppe
Terry Tolbert
Norm McKee
Hal Stout
Vicki Tyler
Nicki Frey
Kevin Heaton

Updates

Hal will be taking a position as a law enforcement investigator, and will no longer be the biologist for this area. A replacement will be announced/advertised after his position is finalized.

Alton Project – 8 sagegrouse out there w/collars. Research assistant, Andrew, is tracking them weekly.

Alton Mine - Frey-Peterson – working on getting some other things going. They have purchased a backpack generator and 25 collars. Nicki will be working with them on putting together a research proposal. Collars will be utilized this summer – Nicki will be working with Chris (Alton Mine) to get additional research funding for the next 3 years. Hal will check into getting a trailer to be used for a researcher to save on travel (May-October).

Nicki is working with 2 students to look at the GIS model used to predict where sage grouse would most likely be found. Data should be completed by next summer.

USU Extension Update – because of the recent decision to re-look at sage grouse for listing, the different folks involved with sage grouse working groups, etc., are trying to get as much data together and updated as possible.

Alton Mine update – still moving forward on private lands. Draft EIS is currently being completed by BLM/contractor. Nicki has provided sage grouse data to them as requested.

Jake (USFS) – has a proposal from Garkane Energy to put a new powerline in that would come across Cedar Mountain, Hatch, Hillsdale Canyon, Johnson Bench, to Bryce Canyon. As proposed it would go over the John L. Swell Lek. There is already a predation issue in this area. Jake will keep us posted on this effort, comment periods, etc.

Norm McKee – Some discussion regarding moving grouse into historic areas. There has been some success around the state in moving them. He will be working with the BLM (Kanab and Monument) to look at the feasibility of this. Lisa (BLM) is looking for ways to exploit some of the vegetation treatment work that has been done in Garfield and Kane counties and ways to better benefit sage grouse.

Jake requested that when groups come to the Division for COR's for research/take, etc. that our working group be notified. For example, would the group support the movement of grouse from Hoyt's Ranch to Alton area? Con – would be stressed from movement, and then mining development follows. Pro – grouse would most likely move back to original site, improving corridor of movement. Comment: Birds may be moving on their own – why would we want to move and stress them. Makes better sense to move birds from outside areas. Regardless – group needs to know when COR's are registered and have opportunity to comment.

Really need to focus on improvements on federal lands – there are a lot of acres that could be improved, and in the overall perspective, the majority of lands are federal, and we can better influence what happens here.

Hal – Wildlife Management Area near Panguitch Creek – This project was presented to UPCD for project funding. Vicki reviewed the project rankings through UPCD and will send out a list of the final regional rankings. This is still subject to the State UPCD committee. But likely the first 10 projects will be funded, and then the state UPCD committee will get creative from there to fund other projects.

Terry Tolbert – Spent time going over the final sage grouse “sign.” The group made a couple of corrections and we are excited to move it forward and get it printed. Terry will work on getting a pdf to the group for other uses (handouts).

SGWG looked at the strategies and actions that have already been completed by the group. Nicki will compile the work that has been completed and put together a list.

Other

- **Widtsoe** – has been monitored since 1979. Still quite a few birds there.
- Flew Showalter Bench last week– sage grouse right in the Dixie Harrow Project Area.

Wildlife Services – can we get some predator control around the dump in Panguitch. Ravens are causing a problem and may be impacting sage grouse. Nicki will call Ron Torgerson and the state APHIS director to see if something can be done.

Next Meeting Date

April 23, Wednesday – 10:00 a.m. Forest Service Office.

