

Color Country Local Working Group

Meeting Minutes October 21, 2009

Started at 10:15 am

1. Members present:

Nicki Frey, USU EXT
Dustin Schaible, UDWR
Norman McKee
Clair Baldwin, RC&D
Nile Sorenson, NRCS/UDWR
Kevin Williams, RC&D/NRCS
Kevin Heaton, USU EXT
Lisa Church, BLM
Wally Dodds, Upper Sevier Watershed

2. Research Update

Nicki reported on Hoyt's Ranch project. She had a technician following birds all summer. Not very many left on the air right now. Scheduled a flight to find any birds in the area.

3. Displays

- Displays are ready to get printed. EXT will buy one; UFBF will pay for \$200 worth. Upper Sevier will also donate some money.
- We might call Chris McCourt to see if Alton Coal would like to buy one to put at the turnoff to Alton from 89.
- 1 for behind the hospital – county owned kiosk – Upper Sevier
- John's Valley pullout – needs a set up – UFBF -- need permission from FS
- Sage Hen Hollow at the Y – needs a set up –USU EXT
- East of Alton at junction of 89 – needs a set up – Alton Coal?

4. Water Developments

- Do we have a comprehensive idea of the water in the area? In conjunction with our proposed projects?
- We need to be considering natural and man made sources of water. We need to then be identifying ways that we might be improving it.
 - Make this an agenda item for the next meeting to look at proposed projects –please bring the appropriate maps
 - Dustin will have a map of grouse habitat, guzzler layer, and water layer to next meeting.

5. Decision date for grouse listing is February 2010.

A. Coal

- a. Off-site mitigation proposed
 - b. Carl has already done much of this work, thinning the trees north of Alton; Kevin suggests that water developments would also help.
 - c. Dustin: could we improve the area between Hoyt's and Hatch? As part of mitigation. Norm saw some birds up there this spring.
- B. Dustin Schaible project ideas: proposing at UPCD and would like CCARM support.
- a. Cow Creek, north end of leks. 700 acres of hand thinning. \$40,000. This will help multiple species. Daryl Spencer is land manager.
Group supports this project
 - b. SITLA Graveyard Hollow. This area choked by P-J; clearing would expand sage grouse habitat. This would also tie in to BLM South Canyon. Joe Dekker is the permittee and is in support of it. The area is hilly. Would need to go on the land and flag the area to be treated.
Group supports this project.
 - c. Private Land of John Bramell, south of Alton. 450 acres of tree removal to benefit grouse and others. Adjacent to BLM and will tie into their project. There are grouse there now. **Group supports this project.**
 - d. Mike Tebbs property at Butler Creek. There is a lek there. There is a great wet meadow right next to the lek. But needs improvements to save his road from a beaver dam, but would then be willing to keep the beaver dam there. Need work fence installed to exclude grazing along the riparian area. **The Group supports this project.**
- C. Predator Management Plans
- a. Dustin asked by SLC to update the Wildlife Service contract. They wanted a specific measurable objective. Suggested to increase grouse in John's Valley by 50% over the next 3 years. If there is a continued decline over the next 5 years, they WS will end the contract. Gave WS specific lek sites to concentrate efforts. Also put a clause to allow for control around UPD sites if problems are seen.
 - i. Nile wonders where the proposal stands among the state's priority list
 - ii. Jake was going to write a letter to request landfill cleanup. We need to follow up with him.
- D. Dog Valley is overgrown with sagebrush with no understory. Is there anyway to get some work done in there?
- a. It would probably need to be seeded.
 - b. FWS working on NEPA to get some treatments in the area to open it up for UPD. But it will have multiple species benefit.

6. Next meeting date: December 16th, at USFS/NRCS office in Panguitch, Utah.
10am -12 pm