

CCARM Meeting Minutes

1. Introductions

2. Project Presentation in advance of the Watershed Restoration Initiative Deadline

1. BLM - These will all be presented separately in WRI by Stan and Vicki
 1. Upper Kanab Creek: Glendale Bench on BLM and State, mostly funded with NRCS funds. 1200 acres, bullhog work. In the states' layer of habitat.
 2. Arch clearance on Burnt Cedar Point, Merlin Esplin's property. Listed as priority and opportunity habitat.
 3. Broad Hollow - Sink Valley , Called Spaniard Spring is going to be a chaining; McAllister's might partner in with them. This is property that used to belong to Trevor Leech. This will help to connect Sink Valley to Ford Pasture.
 - 1.
 4. Sean - continuation of the South Canyon project. Will move to the east side of the Highway to Rollermill. Just passed the landfill. This is UPD project that will also benefit Greater sage-grouse
2. UDWR - Curtis Roundy
 1. Alton Coal Mitigation Project - willow and rabbitbrush mowing project. About 50% done with the willow. Second mowing has also started on another area. Also 80 acres of rabbitbrush mowing. Birch Canyon, northeast in the town of Alton.
 2. Elbow Springs is in the process of implementation. Some acres needed retreatment/chemicals because snow was too deep and rabbitbrush grew back.
 3. New signup in Dog Valley, with the Morgans in Paiute County. Dual purpose water treatment as well as tree removal. Right now they have an easement with the FS to run the water down a ditch, but they are working to re-route it. Working on the Archeological aspects of the reroute.
 4. Acquired some fence markers. Looking for private landowners that would be willing to put the markers on their fences. The UDWR can help with dedicated hunters for the labor to put them up. If they have an NRCS contract that involves

fence marking, will need to work within that contract. Otherwise the landowner can simply be given the markers.

3. BLM - Presentation regarding the National Plan (in Utah) and its status. "Implementing the Instructional Memoranda". Presented by Jarrod Reese and Alan Bass.

1. Instructional Memoranda (IM) Concepts: Used 7 IM to provide guidance for implementation of the sagegrouse management areas. Structured around 4 core concepts:
 1. Provide for consistency in implementation
 2. Retain flexibility at local level
 3. Gather monitoring data to support decision making
 4. Continue to coordinate with stakeholders
2. IM-2016-139 For RMP effectiveness monitoring
 1. This is more than just grouse. Handle all monitoring efforts. Health of the landscape.
 2. Across field offices
 3. You can use this information to help determine areas where you would want to do projects and treatments
 4. Tools:
 1. Eplanning: plan implementation
 2. Assessment, Inventory, and Monitoring (AIM) - consistent process for data collection. This is a monitoring protocol. Landscape level.
 3. Habitat Assessment Framework (HAF) assessing indicators of if an area provides needed components. Focuses in on local scale.
 4. AIM and HAF will be compiled into a Habitat Assessment Summary Report.
 1. Multiple Scales of Assessment. Based on Johnson (1980) discussion of order of decision making.

2. First order - species distribution
 3. Second order - population areas, dispersal among populations
 4. Third order - fine scale. home range of small populations, lek cluster, movement among seasonal ranges
 5. Fourth order - site scale. season habitats, movement between daily use areas.
3. IM-2016-140 Adaptive Management Trigger Processes
 1. This is procedural again, not grouse specific.
 2. Helps identifies quick responses to ecological triggers. creates a process.
 4. IM-2016-141: Setting priorities for review and processing of grazing authorizations in GRSB Habitat.
 1. Highest priority areas are in the sagegrouse Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA), then General Habitat (GHMA).
 2. Areas where an evaluation indicates a need for a change to grazing management
 3. Areas without a completed land health evaluation
 4. Basically stating that the permittee renewal time period will not be the driver anymore. Resource need and condition will.
 5. This could help identify areas where GIP could focus.
 6. Sets priorities for effectiveness monitoring and compliance monitoring that includes the first year of implementing a new grazing system, riparian areas, areas where thresholds and responses have been set and areas THAT MAY be an issue:
 1. Spring grazing in breeding habitat
 2. riparian areas in summer brood-rearing habitat
 3. Grazing in nesting habitat
 5. IM-2016-142: Incorporating thresholds and responses into Grazing Permits and Leases.

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

1. Incorporates thresholds and responses into terms and conditions of renewing a grazing permit.
 2. Use ARMPA Table 2-2 to develop thresholds for seasonal habitats, but not held to the specifics of Table 2-2.
 3. Use ecological site potential to guide thresholds of environmental conditions
 4. Based on multi-year trends NOT one year.
 5. Site specific analysis -- e.g. If the issue is in riparian summer brood-rearing habitat, we will analyze this habitat, this location, during this time of year.
 6. Creates a strategy to shorten the response time.
 7. Identify a broad range of options and the flexibility to the officer to make decisions.
6. IM-2016-143: O&G Leasing/Development Prioritization
 7. IM-2016-144: Sage-grouse Habitat Assessment Policy
 8. IM-2016-145: Tracking and Reporting Disturbance
 1. Existing disturbance input into SDARTT (tracking tool) from locally available data and by digitizing disturbances using high resolution imagery.
 2. Proposed disturbances in PHMA will determine if disturbance and density thresholds are exceeded.
 3. Proponents will provide the actual final footprint of the activity.
 4. Reclamation will be tracked and identified as reclaimed by the ID Team.
 1. If the birds are using the reclaimed areas, then it will most likely be considered "reclaimed".
 2. Table 2.2 will be used to help guide decisions about if vegetation has been recovered in a way that is useful to grouse.
4. Alton Coal Development's BLM Lease Application. Presented by Keith Rigtrup

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

1. CCARM helped develop mitigation plan for Supplemental EIS that went out in summer 2015.
2. Since then the signed BLM land use plan amendment came out.
3. Then adjusted the Supplemental EIS to reflect that plan.
4. In January 2015, Secretary of Interior put a moratorium on new leases. If you had record of decision, you were grandfathered in. Can still work on the EIS and getting things ready to go, but cannot issue a lease.
5. So, technically the plan is in limbo at this point. Gave the BLM some time to make sure the mitigation plan is in compliance with the new RMP and Instructional Memoranda (tracking, surface disturbance, reclamation, etc.). It did allow application under the emergency leasing regulations.
6. Alton Coal is currently working with BLM to submit a successful emergency application; needing to wait to see what the new Administration will be.
7. Allows for exemption to the buffer regulations with consultation with BLM and UDWR. Have met with UDWR, BLM and PLPCO in June 2016 and have edited the document accordingly. Proposing a 0.5 mile lek buffer.
8. **Look for an email from SWCA that has the electronic copy for the group to look at. Please make comments January 13th using the comment form. Left it in track changes so that readers can see how the document has changed with consultations.**
9. *Disturbance cap will be really tight for this area because there is already surface disturbance in the area. But at the same time, monitoring data shows that birds are using some of the reclaimed areas, so that needs to be considered to reduce the % of disturbance in the area.*
10. Reclamation is not tied to the bond being released. But we don't have a set criteria yet. Will most likely involve looking at Table 2.2 of the RMP, Divisions' discussions, and data. Will also need to consider past land use and if it is returned to THAT condition, not necessarily sagebrush steppe habitat.
11. There are seasonal restrictions to activities in the state plan. Again, this will be difficult to assess within the mine proposal, because the birds use the area year-round. This may be modified with consultation with UDWR.

5. Committee Updates

A. NRCS - \$410,000 available in CCARM region for private land work to benefit Greater sage-grouse.

B. The Upper Kanab Creek Skutumpah Terrace GSENM proposal needs comments in the scoping process. Vicki Tyler will send out an electronic copy of this proposal and how to comment.

6. Research Update presented by Nicki Frey

1. We deployed 10 transmitters in Dog Valley Research this past March to continue our connectivity study by looking at birds north of Panguitch. They did not move to Buckskin or Bear. Instead, most movements out of the valley were to the south east toward East Bench, north of Panguitch.
2. ACD - 3 new transmitters put out this fall. 2 hens staying in Sink Valley, 1 hen has already moved south of Glendale Bench road. We had lost the male that we were tracking but still have the female that we had deployed 2 Octobers ago.
 1. Steve Peterson has used some of the location data as well as his survey data to write a publication regarding the Sink Valley grouse in response to mining activity. This paper has been published in the Human Wildlife Interactions journal. co-authored by Kirk Nicholes, Kevin Heaton and Nicki Frey.

NEXT MEETING: MARCH 8TH, 11 OCLOCK AT THE GARFIELD COUNTY OFFICES, PANGUITCH, UTAH.