

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

The Castle Country Adaptive Resource Management Plan (CaCoARM) Sage-grouse 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 in in the Carbon 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.

### CaCoARM Meetings and Field Tours, October 2014 – January 2016

Type	Date	Location	No.	Comments
Meeting	December 9, 2014	Price, UT	15	Refine state pinyon-juniper map locally, discuss possible project proposals
Meeting	January 13, 2015	Price, UT	13	Review of WRI sage-grouse projects, discuss state plan disturbance mapping
Meeting	April 22, 2015	Price, UT	19	Population updates, BLM planning updates, state plan updates
Field Tour	July 14, 2015	Joe's Valley	9	Tour of sage-grouse areas, conifer treatments, and equipment options
Meeting	October 21, 2015	Price, UT	12	Presentation by BLM on new land use plan amendments
Meeting	January 20, 2016	Price, UT	12	Review of WRI sage-grouse projects, landowner dinner planning, and private lands initiatives

### Project and Research Highlights

The CaCOARM group has continued to develop strong relationships between key players in the local area. Group members have put substantial effort into ensuring that elements on the state sage-grouse conservation plan, such as the pinyon-juniper priority mapping and disturbance mapping, reflected local understandings of needs and realities on the ground.

There is a gradually growing conversation about pinyon juniper treatment in the area, including increased efforts by the NRCS Sage-Grouse Initiative biologist to engage local landowners in project planning, and a field tour to visit several in-progress project sites and talk with operators about the pros and cons of different types of equipment. The group has also begun regularly discussing WRI projects with potential benefit to sage-grouse before the projects are ranked by the regional UPCD teams. This gives project proponents of those projects time to learn recommendations from the LWG beyond the level of detail at which conversations are likely to

happen in the comments field. For example, CaCoARM discussed one projects' seed strategy at great length, considering the history of the area, potential drivers of the problems currently occurring in the system, and the possible effectiveness of different approaches to reseeding the area with more desirable vegetation.

The CaCoARM group also solicited BLM participation in the LWG to discuss the proposed Resource Plan Amendments. Last but not least, there are several very active private landowners who are working to improve habitat for sage-grouse in the area in ways that also support working agricultural lands and other private enterprise. The group meets regularly in the evening to accommodate the schedules of landowners who work during the day and can only attend meetings after business hours.