

Morgan-Summit Adaptive Resources Management (MSARM) Local Sage-grouse Working Group

The Morgan-Summit Adaptive Resource Management (MSARM) focuses on southern half of the Rich-Morgan-Summit Sage-Grouse Management Area (SMGA). This group is facilitated by Lorien Belton.

Description of Area and General Population Information

The LWG area falls in Morgan and Summit Counties. The two counties consist largely of privately-owned land, particularly where sage-grouse are found. Sage-grouse habitat in these areas occurs at higher elevations and is usually more mesic than some of Utah’s other sage-grouse areas. Although our knowledge of sage-grouse populations in the area is incomplete, the UDWR believes the birds in this area are connected to populations in Rich County and southwestern Wyoming. During the development of the Utah Plan, maps of the MSARM area were combined with the Rich County area to reflect this population connectivity.

MSARM Meetings and Field Tours, October 2014 – January 2016

Type	Date	Location	# attending	Comments
Meeting	April 11, 2016	Coalville	9	Research updates, field tour planning, other updates
Field tour	July 14, 2016	Henefer Divide	15	Visits to several private ranches to track grouse and discuss seasonal use
Meeting	October 25, 2016	Coalville	10	Review of first year’s research findings, other research questions, and the draft state mitigation rule
Dinner meeting	February 8, 2016	Wanship	22	Landowner appreciation and research presentation and Q&A

Project and Research Highlights

During 2016, the group focused substantial time and effort on the ongoing research in the area. As the group has not previously done research studies to understand local sage-grouse seasonal movements and population connectivity, each new piece of information was of great interest. Preliminary information was provided to landowners in January 2016 (as noted in the previous annual report) and additional conversations were had at meetings throughout the year. The research has raised considerable other questions that would require additional funding and effort to answer. The group is very interested in making sure that the momentum from this initial work is kept alive.

Other key topics addressed during the year included the draft mitigation rule in development by the state of Utah, and the need for easements. The easements subteam works to ensure that the multiple private and public entities working with landowners on easements in sage-grouse habitat are working with similar information and are coordinating with regard to priorities and strategies that will benefit the local sage-grouse populations.