

**MSARM
LOCAL
WORKING
GROUP**

Date: January 7, 2013

Place: Wanship, Utah (Fire station)

Attendees: Mike Welch (QRM), Amy Vande Voort (UDWR), Ashley Hansen (UDAF-GIP), Adam Brewerton (UDWR), Patti Barney (NRCS), Buzz Nelson (UACD), Jake Powell (UACD), Tammy Koldyke (NCRS/SGI), Thomas Hoskins (NRCS), Craig McKnight (NRCS), Arlin Judd (rancher), Don Ashby (NRCS), JoAnne and Samuel Thackeray (ranchers), Jeff Young (rancher), John Barton (rancher), Colby Pace (rancher), Ed and Dixie Ercanbrack (ranchers), Brad Peacock, Daniel Gunnell (UACD), John Blazzard (rancher), Chris Nelson, Shane Green (NRCS), Renee Chi (BLM), Heidi Hammel, Lorien Belton (USU Extension; MSARM facilitator)

Discussion and Updates

The MSARM group sponsored a lasagna dinner and open house to share information about the Sage-Grouse Initiative; BLM, USFS, and State of Utah planning efforts; and several other topics.

NRCS Sage-Grouse Initiative

Tammy Koldyke presented the Sage-grouse Initiative, which has a sign-up deadline of January 18th to qualify for funding for this current year (2013) project implementation. The project has \$2.8 million this year in Utah. Landowners who sign up for the sage-grouse initiative will be given “regulatory predictability” for practices in their SGI-NRCS plan, in the event that the species were listed. A wide range of practices is available for funding, including pinyon-juniper removal, grazing management plans, fence markers, and many others. Landowners can sign up at any NRCS office. Tammy Koldyke is the primary contact for the SGI program in the Morgan-Summit area (and most other counties in northern Utah as well.) Anyone signing up after the January 18 deadline will be placed in consideration for projects in 2014.

Planning Updates

Lorien provided a review of the current BLM/USFS and State of Utah planning processes. She explained the processes over the last year, and explained that the BLM/USFS EIS will be out for public comment later this spring, according to the BLM schedule. At that time, the MSARM group will review the plan and likely make comments. The state of Utah plan will be one of the alternatives in the plan, but a final draft of that state plan is not currently publicly available.

Additional Presentations

Two additional brief presentations were made to the group. Thomas Hoskins reviewed the importance and value of photo point monitoring, particularly for gauging range condition. It can be both a planning tool and a good way to gather long-term data in a simple, repeatable way.

Shane Green, also from NRCS, explained several key management rules for grazing that can help encourage better grazing on the range and can help improve habitat for sage-grouse as well as increasing forage availability and range health for livestock. Lorien Belton briefly reviewed some information provided to ranchers at a similar workshop in Roosevelt, by a USU County Extension agent, on the topic of winter nutrition for cattle during severe temperatures.

Follow-up Needed

- Lorien will continue to keep the group updated about opportunities to provide comments on BLM, USFS, and state planning processes so the group has an opportunity to comment on the EIS at the appropriate time.
- Lorien will work to involve Wildlife Services in the area.

Next Meeting

No upcoming meeting date was set; this will be determined soon.