

April 15, 2014 CRM Notes

Attendees: Ken Spackman, Troy Forest, Clint Hill, Blain Hamp, Dave Dahlgren, Jeff Schick, Scott Bell, Beth Burritt, Kimberly Burr, Eric Spencer, Jay Tanner, Charles Sandford, Mike Linnell, Jay Carter, Alan Kunzler, Diane Tanner. Distance attendees: Scott Nannenga, Nate Lancaster, Jim Commissioner Tingey, Adam Brewerton, Anthony Von Niederhousern, Scott Chamberlain, Jim Christianson, Karl Fuelling.

Meeting started at 6:05. Scott Bell, Regional Biomass Coordinator for the Forest Service, talked about different Pinyon/Juniper wood utilization. He explained that in the past 150 years, efforts to suppress fire has caused the Pinyon/Juniper to expand and encroach over the landscape. This expansion into surrounding grasslands and sagebrush habitat is a concern for a variety of reasons. Several thousand acres of chained P/J is waiting either to be burned or turned into an economic benefit for the county. Mr. Bell told of several ideas that might bring dollars back into the community and help wildlife habitat and livestock grazing, reduce carbon and help reduce greenhouse gasses, help air quality and provide jobs. In the studies that have been done about utilizing the P/J, one idea is making Biochar which is a soil restorative and a charcoal-like substance. As a soil amendment, Biochar acts like a sponge which will take in water, fungi and nutrients and help plants grow better. The process involves cooking the wood in an oxygen free heat. Besides the char, it produces gas which can be used to help the cooking process and oil which can be used in petroleum products. Nevada has been using biochar for some time and is sponsoring a conference on July 15-17 at John Ascuaga's Nugget in Sparks, Nevada.

Dave Dahlgren led a discussion to clarify the CRM and BARM role with sage grouse. It was decided that the whole CRM was to be the driver for the Sage Grouse decisions. They wanted more people to be involved in the decision making process. The Special Status Species sub-committee would focus on other wildlife.

Dave also wanted to see if there was interest for landowners and others to join in a Lek count every year to cover more area for better data collection. There were several who were interested in helping next year. There was also interest in having those who make the listing decisions participate and watch a sage grouse strut.

Dave said that the BLM will submit their recommendation about the sage grouse soon. It will be broken down into regions with Utah leading this region. Different regulations and policies could be in place for each region. He said that Grouse in Utah move less from lek to nesting areas.

Clint Hill gave a report about the Cooperative Spray Days. 48 gallons of chemical were distributed, 22 landowners participated, 6 ATV weed sprayers were given away, 6 weed books were also given out and equipment was fixed for landowners and instruction for maximum benefit of spraying taught.

There was some concern about the gravel from Bothwell which carried Medusa Head seed in it. Some was brought out to our area. Landowners would like to see that local gravel be used to avoid introducing weed seed into our area. Discussion ensued about starting up a Weed Prevention Area here with a few targeted weeds. Also it was suggested that the county hire a full time weed supervisor so he can be writing grants and preparing treatment projects in the winter time. Commissioner Tingey said he would look into it.

Mike Linnell: Federal Program Director for Wildlife Services explained some of the obstacles they've been facing in their efforts with the Raven problem. He gave an account of the eggs placed in West Box Elder. He expressed the desire to use some other methods and starting earlier in the next years.

8:20 meeting adjourned