

## PARM Meeting Minutes

October 25, 2016

1-3pm

Loa, Courthouse (Extension Room)

- Mytoge Mtn. Project – Kurtis Robins and Joanne Stenten (USFS) reported on the project removing conifer on Mytoge Mtn. The Cat. Ex. Is being prepared for NEPA and they are hopeful the project can stay within the Cat Ex category and not be advanced. There is precedence for this from other forests. Joanne is going to send out notices to PARM members so that we as a group and individually can make comments on the project when the public comment period opens. Treatments will only occur in phase I and II conifer encroachment areas with sagebrush understory present. Conifer sites will not be targeted. ~ 15 to 20K acres will be treated. The project will likely be part of the FY2018 WRI projects. We briefly discussed monitoring of the project and GPS radios for sage-grouse to be put on birds in the project area. The BLM has already worked with the UDWR to begin project design for additional removal of conifer on the BLM side of the fence. These two projects combined offer an opportunity to conduct before and after monitoring of a population of sage-grouse as to how they respond to these treatments.
- Parker Cheatgrass – Kendall Bagley (UDWR) and David Dahlgren (USU) reported that treatment is scheduled for early November. Vegetation sampling occurred in September will be done again September 2017 to monitor the effects of the treatment on cheatgrass areas near Red Knoll. ~ 200 acres will be treated via helicopter and chemical of Plateau with an added surfactant. The project is being monitored by USU.
- Grass Valley Sage-Grouse project – Jason Wood (BYU) reported on the grouse movements in Grass Valley, Johns Valley, and up on the Dutton. Grouse are showing large movements, but seem to be confined to specific areas for those movements. There has been no movement north to south from Grass Valley to Johns Valley. Jason will continue monitoring for another year and will assess both movements and habitat selection, particularly in regards to habitat treatment completed by the BLM in sagebrush and conifer areas.
- Pronghorn Project – Eric Thacker (USU) reported on the status of a proposed project to monitor pronghorn and their spatial, temporal, and dietary overlap with livestock on Parker Mountain. Eric submitted a proposal to the UDWR last year and was not successful. Another proposal focused on livestock was submitted to the USDA and was also unsuccessful. Eric is hopeful for a different outcome this coming year with the UDWR. He will keep the group posted on the progress of the study.
- We also discussed the Sheeprock Mtn. transplant of sage-grouse. 20 hens will be captured on Parker and taken to the Sheeprock Mtns. Again this coming spring. We briefly discussed how the birds that were transplanted last spring have done and the potential to use artificial insemination in the future to aid in the success of the project.
- We also discussed briefly recent research by USU on sage-grouse habitat selection in regards to aspen during the brooding period. Preliminary data has shown a strong selection for aspen edge during the brooding period, with selection increasing as the season progresses. Essentially,

researchers are considering the idea that aspen edges are providing more mesic conditions which could be surrogate for wet meadows more commonly used in other populations. USU will continue to update the group on the progress of this research.

- BLM IMs – Quincy Bahr (BLM) reported on the IMs which are now available to aid in the implementation of the RMP amendments. The presentation focused on grazing and how plan implementation will affect grazing. As part of this discussion, we also discussed the 7inch stubble height issue and the bias association with the research that was used to establish that standard.

Attendees:

David Dahlgren (USU), Jim Lamb (UDWR), Jason Wood (BYU), Quincy Bahr (BLM), Jared Reese (BLM), John Keeler (Farm Bureau), Newell Harward (Wayne Co. Commission), Andrew Taft (Permittee and co-chair), Joanne Stenten (USFS), Kurtis Robins (USFS), Eric Thacker (USU), Trent Wilde (USU).