

SWARM Meeting Minutes

December 8, 2020

1. Attendance

Derek Christensen, Lara Kitchen, Martin Esplin, Sean Petersen, Danielle ? Bureau of Land Management – Cedar City field office; Mark Nelsen – Beaver County USU Extension; Randal Violett – Iron County USU Extension; Nicki Frey, USU Extension; Stan Gurley, Farm Bill, Natural Resource Conservation Service; Avery Cook, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources; CJ Butters – Wildlife Services

2. Research Updates

a. Derek – Pinyon Jays. Objective: effect of treatment type on Pinyon Jay recruitment and nesting. The first step is to simply locate nesting colonies. Also, to determine distribution and foraging range. Will be trapping and color banding with collaborative with Rachel Bolus, SUU.

b. Nicki – Greater sage-grouse regional habitat use modeling. Aidan is finishing up data analysis now. He is looking at 'place-based' models that consider treatment, and local landscape features , to explain local movements. Also collecting ground temperature data to determine if that have any bearing on where we find grouse in the summer. This effort will complement the Utah state mapping. Will consider all GPS telemetry data collected since 2013.

3. Watershed Restoration Initiative Projects

(those projects that would benefit grouse or would need consideration to not negatively impact sage grouse)

a. Jackrabbit – Martin Esplin / Lara Kitchen

- hand thin in the NW and SW of the project areas. Archeology clearances for Kane Springs.
- Will provide winter and fall habitat and connectivity from leks to spring and summer habitat. NRCS application for green polygons. Kane Spring rehabilitation will collaborate with the permittee as well.

b. Lost Spring – Jeremy Cox / Lara Kitchen

- 2000 acres, west of Minersville highway. Mixture of phase 2&3 pinyon and juniper.
- Ties into a project in the south. Creates winter habitat and increased connectivity.
- Has multiple producers but no NRCS funds are tied to this.
- There are some concerns from the sportsmen's groups. They have been working with those groups to identify areas where pinyon junipers should be left.
- This area burns the most frequently compared to others areas in this region. We need to address this to save it from possible fire that will lead to cheatgrass.
- Important area for wildlife all around.

c. Bear Creek – Steve Barker / Dan Fletcher

- a. North Little Valley – Dan Fletcher
- b. Buckhorn – Dan Fletcher

c. Hamlin Valley – Dan Fletcher / Mitch Bayles / Erica Shotwell