

Uintah Basin Adaptive Resource Management Local Working Group

The Uintah Basin Adaptive Resource Management (UBARM) sage-grouse LWG is facilitated by Lorien Belton.

Description of Area and General Population Information

The Uintah Basin sage-grouse group covers parts of Duchesne, Uintah, and Daggett counties. A large population with multiple leks inhabits the Diamond Mountain area north of Vernal. This area has mixed landownership, including private, state, and federal lands, and is used primarily for agricultural purposes. The Diamond Mountain population is one of the few populations in Utah that is robust enough to support a limited sport hunt in the fall. Additional sage-grouse populations occur south and west of Vernal in areas including Forest Service land on Anthro Mountain, and BLM land further south. The southern populations in particular are in areas that have been highly impacted by oil and gas development. Some populations also occur farther south into the Book Cliffs. Populations on Seep Ridge, Deadman Bench, Little Mountain, Anthro Mountain, and Diamond Mountain have been the subject of research studies in recent years.

UBARM Meetings and Field Tours, October 2014 – January 2016

Type	Date	Location	No.	Comments
Meeting	December 16, 2014	Vernal, UT	14	Pinyon juniper strategy, other updates
Meeting	February 17, 2015	Vernal, UT	10	Governor's Executive Order, other updates
Field Tour	May 19, 2015	Little Mountain	11	Visit to recently located lek, local sage-grouse use areas and migration corridors
Meeting	November 17, 2015	Vernal, UT	18	BLM plan amendments presentation, projects, other updates

Project and Research Highlights

The UBARM group, which functions in close partnership with the Uintah Basin Utah Partners and Conservation Development, has developed multiple habitat improvement projects for sage-grouse, including a large number of conifer-removal projects across the basin. Recently, the Ute Tribe has become more involved in project discussions and planning, sharing knowledge and ideas with others in the group. The NRCS Sage-Grouse Initiative has increased its impact on the area as well, working with private landowners, often those near existing or planned projects on public lands.

The UDWR, Forest Service, and BLM, in addition to wildlife partners in Colorado, have been working together on increased monitoring of sage-grouse in areas where bird movements were

previously unknown or only anecdotal. Many collars, including GPS-enabled transmitters, have been placed around the basin, including on Blue Mountain, the three corners area, Little Mountain, and other areas. The information provided is helping provide a more complete picture of bird movements and habitat use in the area.

The UBARM group has also been actively engaged in state plan implementation work, such as conifer removal strategy assistance, and painstaking review of the disturbance map baseline layers.