

Uintah Basin Adaptive Resource Management Local Working Group

The Uintah Basin Adaptive Resource Management (UBARM) sage-grouse LWG is facilitated by Lorien Belton. It is closely tied to the Uintah Basin Partners for Conservation and Development, often coordinating meeting scheduling between the two groups.

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

Type	Date	Location	# attending	Comments
Meeting	February 16, 2016	Vernal	24	Policy implementation updates, bird tracking, hydrology
Meeting	April 6, 2016	Vernal	17	New fire management systems, policy updates, population tracking
Meeting	December 6, 2016	Vernal	25	Population movements, BLM update, mitigation policy plans

Project and Research Highlights

The group in the Uintah Basin this year has focused on understanding upcoming and newly implemented policy on a range of topics. Extensive conversations have happened within the groups on BLM RMP amendments implementation, fire policy changes to improve habitat protection, and the upcoming state habitat mitigation rule.

The group also works very closely with the regional UPCD team on projects. Many of the proposed projects in the WRI project proposal database for this region are related to sage-grouse habitat objectives and are derived from the joint efforts of many partners on both of the groups.

Research has expanded into several new areas, where birds are being fitted with GPS collars to learn more about the sage-grouse movements in the northeastern-most area of the state. USFS and BLM have both purchased GPS collars, and UDWR is doing the tracking and data

management. Because there is a much more data analysis that could be done beyond simply tracking movements, BYU will be helping to analyze the data. In the Three Corners area, Goslin Mountain, Antelope Flat, and Bear Top are the areas of focus. Little Mountain, Diamond Mountain, Blue Mountain, and Anthro Mountain birds are getting collars and being tracked.