

**UINTAH BASIN
SAGE-GROUSE
LOCAL WORKING
GROUP**

Planning/update
meeting

Date: Tuesday, March 9, 2004

Time: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Place: County Building North Conference Room

Members Present;

Todd Black (USU CCES) – Meeting Facilitator
Lanny Kay (UELS-Diamond Mtn.)
Landowners/Blue Mtn. Livestock Producers Utah-
Colorado)
Brian Maxfield (DWR)
Bill Stroh (Ashley NF)
David Allison (Consultant-UBAG Uintah Co.)
Stephanie Tomkinson (Questar)
Scott Chamberlain (SITLA)
John Busch (Oil & Gas)
Robert Specht (BLM)
Scott Chew (Rancher)
Sherel Goodrich (USDA Forest Service)
Boyd Kitchen (USU Ext.)
Jim Brown (NRCS)
Jim Spencer (NRCS)
Craig W. Collett (Daggett County)
Karen Corts (Ute Tribe F&W)
Bill Johnson (Uintah Co.-Vernal City ED)
Clayton Chidester (UBAOG)
Brad Mecham (Inland)
Mike Guinn (Inland)
Louise Sainsbury (Uintah Co.)
Laura Romin (USFWS)

Count: 22

Information Presented

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Follow up with assignments
3. Literature hand outs – review handouts
4. Overview of sage-grouse in the area
 - a. Status past & present
5. Sage-grouse management plan
 - a. Template and outline
6. Other information
 - a. Next meeting (time and location)

b. Future agenda items

Discussion Highlights

Dave Allison welcomed and introduced newcomers. He gave a brief history on what our goals and objectives are.

An attempt is being made for this to be a partnership from the federal government to the state to the local working groups. We need to combine all of the efforts forthcoming from conservation initiatives to mitigation to habitat enhancement.

Following up from the last meeting, representatives were identified:

UDWR – Brian Maxfield
BLM – Robert Specht
USFS – Bill Stroh and Sherel Goodrich
NRCS – Jim Brown and Jim Spencer
WS (ADC) – to be decided
USFWS – Renee Chi or Laura Romin
Land Owners – Scott Chew and Lanny Kay
Tribe – Karen Corts
USU – Rich Etchberger
SITLA – Scott Chamberlain
Oil & Gas Industry – John Busch and Stephanie Tomkinson, both from QEP Uinta Basin, Inc. and Brad Mecham and Mike Guinn from Inland.
Uintah County Commission – Bill Johnson or Mike McKee
Uintah County Farm Bureau – to be decided
Duchesne Cattlemen – to be decided
Duchesne County Representatives – to be decided
Book Cliffs-DeLambert-Almeida – to be decided

Others who joined to group:

Daggett County – Craig W. Collett
UBAOG – Clayton Chidester
Uintah County Consultant – Louise Sainsbury

It was suggested that we develop a mission statement to better identify our goals and objectives.

Renee Chi was going to give the group a presentation on the research that has been done on the Parker Mtn. Group Plan but had a conflict in scheduling and was not able to attend. We

will ask her to give this presentation at one of our upcoming meetings.

If anyone would like to review existing data (ie: other plans, sage-grouse studies, sage brush studies) Todd Black has access to a lot of information and would be willing to send copies or email whatever he has. Contact Todd for more information.

Boyd posed a question to the group – “What are we doing different today as opposed to 30 years ago?” Why the significant decrease in sage-grouse population?

Brian: Diamond Mountain and Blue Mountain are bright spots and are doing better than the Bookcliffs and Myton Bench area.

Lanny: Hunting and trapping coyotes has helped to increase the deer population and has probably had an impact on the sage-grouse population as well.

Each area has a different problem and requires a different solution. The first thing we need to look at is habitat, then we will look at the other problems (ie: predation) and solutions. In other words, we need to start with the basics. We will separate our areas by breeding complexes. Monitoring must be a part of our plan.

Bill Johnson advised the group that the Uintah Basin Oil and Gas Collaborative Working Group is meeting on Thursday, March 18, 2004 from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM at the Vernal City Offices (447 East Main St., Vernal) and suggested this group get on the agenda to let everyone know this group exists and what our goal and objectives are.

Stephanie Tomkinson meets with the Uintah Basin Advisory Group of IPAMS once per month and is keeping them apprised.

It was suggested that this group get on the agenda for the IPAMS Energy Days which will be held August 4th and 5th. Stephanie has contacted Grant Melvin of IPAMS and made him aware of this, he agreed it would be a good idea. Dave Allison or Todd Black to formalize.

The DWR is now conducting their annual lek count. Private

land is not surveyed adequately. DWR would appreciate any help/cooperation they could get from private land owners.

Once a lek has been mapped, it stays on the map, whether it is active or not. This is because a lek can potentially be used again.

Hunting permits are still being issued. Currently, it is a 2 bird limit.

Range wide sage-grouse Listing: 90 day finding concludes the end of this March.

Brian Maxfield, DWR, gave a presentation on sage-grouse known leks/brooding habitat and population. He also advised the group that the DWR is creating a database of all known sage-grouse info. This database will allow them to query specific information. There is a lot more info to enter and they could use some help. A student work-study or using students in some fashion was suggested. Rich Etchberger, USU, will be contacted about this.

A sportsman club in Colorado is circulating a petition to ban sage-grouse hunting for 5 years. So far, they have at least 3000 signatures. Lanny will keep us advised of their progress. We may have to consider doing something similar in one or more of our areas.

Actions Taken

Working group was established – stakeholders identified, still need reps from a few groups.

Update on sage-grouse Petition.

sage-grouse locations and populations discussed.

Other local working groups were discussed.

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 31, 2004, 1:00 PM City-County Building, south conference room.

Follow-up Needed

- Read the skeleton Conservation Plan (All) – Todd Black will attach a copy to these minutes.
- Todd Black will contact sportsman's to ask if they would like to have representative here.
- Scott Chew is waiting for someone from the Uintah County Farm Bureau to contact him.
- Reschedule with Renee Chi for presentation on Parker Mtn. Group Plan. – Todd Black.
- Get on agenda for the UB O&G Collaborative Working Group. – Dave Allison.
- Contact IPAMS regarding Energy Days presentation. (Initial contact made, Dave Allison or Todd Black to formalize in the next couple of months.)