

Box Elder County Adaptive Resources Management (BARM) Sage-Grouse Local Working Group

The Box Elder Adaptive Resource Management Plan (BARM) Sage-grouse LWG was organized in 2001 by Terry Messmer. In 2011 the West Box Elder Coordinated Resource Management (WBECRM) was organized and the effect of the LWG combined into the WBECRM plan. The CRM provides overall direction and guidance for habitat projects within the conservation area and SGMA. The CRM established a sage-grouse subcommittee as part of the plan. The committee meets throughout the year to address and discuss sage-grouse specific issues of concern, management actions, and strategies. The subcommittee reports these to the WBECRM. Diane Tanner is the facilitator for the group. David Dahlgren is the CRM sage-grouse committee chairperson.

Description of Area and General Population Information

The WBECRM encompasses western Box Elder County, from the Snowville area west to the UT/NV border and south to the shore line of the Great Salt Lake. Sage-grouse habitat in this area is broken down into 3 sub regions, the Grouse Creek, Pilot, and Raft River range. Although our knowledge of sage-grouse populations in the area was incomplete in 2001, research efforts in the area continue to map sage-grouse movements and habitat-use patterns in the Grouse Creek and Raft River Mountains. These research efforts have identified important brooding and winter areas.

CRM Meetings

Type	Date	Location	No.	Comments
Face to Face	February 4, 2015	Park Valley School, UT	78	Landowner appreciation dinner and presentation
Face to Face	February 17, 2015	Park Valley School, UT	31	The CRM is the clearing house for all projects in West Box Elder, Grouse Creek Bullhog phase III project update, other conifer removal project updates, firebreaks, Utah Plan for Wildfire and Threat Reduction Analysis
Face to Face	April 21, 2015	Park Valley School, UT	27	Covered hot topics for the CRM group, Beaver Project Proposal, BLM updates, IWJV grant process, Cell coverage in Grouse Creek, Milk Vetch update, Sage-Grouse Research Plans
Field Tour	June 2, 2015	West Box Elder County	60	toured projects across the county, mostly conifer treatment areas
Field Tour	June 11, 2015	Park Valley, UT	25	looked at sagebrush treatments to determine management in Utah
Face to Face	September 15, 2015	Park Valley School	28	Sub Committee Reports, PJ Committee 5-year Plan, Invasive Weed projects, Wildlife future projects, Beaver project, Urban Deer

				Translocation, Raven Control, Sage-Grouse Research update
Field Tour	October 21, 2015	Grouse Creek, UT	18	Conducted a field tour for SGI biologists and modelers on PJ Treatments throughout West Box Elder
Face to Face	November 17, 2015	School, Park Valley, UT	20	Fuel mitigation, conservation mapping, transplants from Box Elder to Sheeprocks, IWJV grants for Cons. District, Raven Control, PJ treatment and burning, Dry Basin Project Update

Current Projects by the West Box Elder CRM:

Name	Treatment Type	Proposed Date	Partners	Comments
Dry Basin Project	Pinyon-Juniper removal and fire break	Fall 2015-Spring 2016	Cons. District, GIP, UDWR, USFWS, BLM	Near a large sage-grouse lek, fire breaks evaluated by GIP and USU Ext.
Warm Springs Project	Pinyon-Juniper Removal	Fall 2016	BLM, UDWR, USU Ext.	Being evaluated by BLM and USU Ext.
Multiple SGI PJ Removal on Private Lands	Pinyon-Juniper Removal	Fall 2016	NRCS-SGI, GIP, Cons. District	This includes various PJ projects across West Box Elder

Project and Research Highlights

Recent research completed by graduate student Charles Sandford, under Terry Messmer’s guidance, has confirmed the positive impacts that management within the CRM area is having. We confirmed immediate sage-grouse use of active conifer treatments. A radio-marked female was documented nesting in a treatment area with active mastication. A field note was published in *The Prairie Naturalist Journal* in December 2015. Our research has evaluated nest and brood resource selection and the effects on nest and brood success. We confirmed that nest and brood success were higher with female sage-grouse that selected for areas near or within conifer treatments compared to females that did not. This is the first research connecting conifer removal treatments to sage-grouse vital rates. This work is currently under review in a peer-reviewed journal.

The CRM group is an active and self-sufficient group, with a local facilitator (i.e., Diane Tanner, local landowner). They have been meeting regularly to discuss project in support of the Utah Plan implementation. Additionally, the sub-committees are meeting regularly and many projects are moving forward, specifically PJ treatment projects. The landscape is clearly changing across West Box Elder where PJ has encroached into sagebrush communities. West Box Elder

continues to be the place where significant amounts of NRCS-SGI funds are being spent on PJ removal, not only within the state but across sage-grouse range.