

## **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 shoreline 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. See [http://utahcbcp.org/files/uploads/BARMSAGRPlan\\_Final.pdf](http://utahcbcp.org/files/uploads/BARMSAGRPlan_Final.pdf) for maps and figures.

Although our knowledge of sage-grouse populations in the area is incomplete, 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**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b># attending</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Meeting	16 Feb 2016	Park Valley, UT	33	Annual Schedule and Committee updates
Meeting	19 Apr 2016	Park Valley, UT	24	Hot Topics Meeting
Field Tour	7 Jun 2016	West BE County	85	Combined with WRI tour
Meeting	15 Nov 2016	Park Valley, UT	33	WRI Project Presentations

**Current Projects by the West Box Elder CRM:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Treatment Type</b>	<b>Proposed Date</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Sagebrush Ecosystem Alliance	NA	Summer 2017	NRCS, USU Ext, GIP, IJV, BLM	Start a coordinator to work with permittees and BLM
Dry Basin Project	Pinyon-Juniper removal and fire break	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 2017	BLM, UDWR, USU Ext.	Proposed WRI Project for 2017
Multiple SGI PJ Removal on Private Lands	Pinyon-Juniper Removal	Fall 2017	NRCS-SGI, GIP, Cons. District	This includes various PJ projects across West Box Elder

**Project and Research Highlights**

The conifer removal and effects on sage-grouse study is continuing. C. Sandford (MS graduate student advised by Dr. Messmer) was able to finish his Thesis and has a significant paper accepted in *Rangeland Ecology & Management*, which was published in 2017 (Sandford et al. 2017). This paper demonstrates not only a selection for conifer treatment, but an increase in nest and brood survival rates for sage-grouse. Justin Small continues to monitor radio-marked sage-grouse in the area and has employed GPS radios attached to grouse to evaluate management actions, including conifer removal.

The West Box Elder CRM group is an active and self-sufficient group, with a local facilitator (i.e., Diane Tanner, local landowner). Quarterly meetings are held during the year, including a summer field tour. 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 projects are implemented that will benefit sage-grouse and the entire sagebrush ecosystem. Of particular note, USU Extension will be hiring a coordinator for the Sagebrush Ecosystem Alliance (SEA) project. This coordinator will work with private and agency partners, specifically permittees and the BLM, to help build more

capacity for the management and conservation of sagebrush systems. The SEA is currently set for a three-year effort.