

**SVARM
WASATCH
COUNTY**

Date: Tuesday, March 8, 2005

Time: 10:00 AM

Place: County Building Extension Office

Members Present;

Rick Baxter (BYU)

Todd Black (USU Ext.)

Craig Clyde (UDWR)

Bob Mathis (Wasatch County)

Mark Farmer (UDWR)

Mike Tamllos (USDA WS)

Jeff Walters (USFS)

Sarah Lupis (USU Ext.)

John Rice (UMC)

Al Mickelsen (Wasatch County Planning Dept.)

**Planning/update
meeting**

Information Presented

Todd gave all group members a binder.

Todd presented the MOU to the group.

Mike T. presented information on red fox control efforts this year. Thus far, Wildlife Services has eliminated 28 adults and 11 dens. WS will be doing 6 hours of fixed wing in May. Mike will be ground trapping around the lek soon. Mike feels like fox control efforts are improved over last year and that they will continue to improve over the next few years; hopefully there will be a corresponding increase in chick survival.

No new news on the Land Sale. Bob has talked to a couple members of the council who were not initially supportive. He hopes that they will change their minds.

Rick is tentatively planning to trap Diamond Mountain the 3rd week of March. He is still waiting for some approvals to come through. He hopes to transfer roughly 70 hens (30 from Parker, 30 Diamond).

Discussion Highlights

Group discussed the MOU. Cooperators list was reviewed. Craig, Bob, and Al suggested that Sorensen's, Fitzgerald's, H. Christensen, Victory Ranch, Wolf Creek Ranch, and "area C" should be included or, at least, contacted regarding their potential participation in SVARM. Bob suggested that companies with energy leases in the Strawberry Valley area be invited to join the group. Group made other, additional changes and provided comments on the MOU which will be incorporated into the next Draft.

Jeff looked into range trend studies. He doesn't feel they will be helpful because there haven't been studies recently and not in the appropriate area. Rick and Mark will try to establish DWR range trend sites in the area. This will be done sometime in June. Jeff has inventory data that covers the project area regarding grass cover. This was a high intensity effort but could be revisited and redone as part of a long-term monitoring effort. How often would range trends be monitored?? Terry and UPCD seem to feel that monitoring needs to occur every year. The detail and intensity of that effort are undetermined, however, monitoring needs to be ongoing. The area has good base data that Rick has collected; the range crew will be monitoring every 5 years. Monitoring details may become better flushed out as the Conservation Plan is developed, treatments are proposed, and objectives are determined. For now, the range crew will be a sufficient effort. High Schools, 4H, junior colleges, etc. could be used to do low-effort monitoring with some training.

The Group discussed predator control efforts in Strawberry Valley. Coyotes seem to be less of a threat to sage-grouse in this area because the area is not winter habitat for them. Coyotes seem to follow the deer. The red fox population increased several years ago because WS was not able to hunt them in the Valley. There is not likely a problem here of increasing fox populations because of coyote control. Coyote control in the Valley is done for livestock. WS tries to coordinate DWR money for deer with sage-grouse because of the cost. When up in the chopper, Mike was impressed by the number of snowmobile trails in the Valley. He doesn't see the snowmobiles changing fox movement patterns. Snowmobiles do not seem to have penetrated the lek area. The Group discussed the potential for snowmobiles to disturb the birds on the leks if snow lasts into the strutting season. Mike pointed out that each year snowmobile use increases.

Actions Taken

Group confirmed that meeting minutes will be sent out 2 weeks in advance. Also, the Group confirmed that meetings will be held on the 2nd Tuesday of every other month.

Follow-up Needed

USU Extension will put notices in the county newsletter and local newspaper and send a letter to make people more aware of SVARM, SVARM's activities in the community, and upcoming meetings. Todd will call Randall to find out who to include from Duchesne.

★Group will provide USU Extension with a list (and contact information if available) of property owners, HOAs, energy leases, organizations, etc. who should be notified regarding SVARM, SVARM's activities, and invited to participate in the group.★

Rick B. to provide USU Extension with a summary of current and historic sage-grouse population information for the MOU.

Group to provide comments on the MOU and return those via mail or email to USU Extension.

Group to identify signatories to the MOU from their group/organization.

Craig, Todd, and Bob will send a letter in support of the land sale to Rick who will forward those letters to Byron.

USU Extension will send MOU, PECE standards, and Section 1.0 Introduction of the Conservation

Minutes

Plan to the group. Please make comments on all and return to USU Extension by May 1, 2005.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 10th, 10:00 AM, County Extension Building.