Quarterly Progress Report

Project Name: Parker Mountain Sage-grouse

Utah State University Project Control Number:

Period Covered: April 1 to June 30, 2003

Project Investigators: David Dahlgren and Terry Messmer

Agency Contract Number: 020225

Submitted to: Dean Mitchell, Upland Game Coordinator, UDWR

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Narrative:

In April lek counts were taken. USU researcher performed a couple of counts. The majority were taken by Leon Bogedahl, UDWR biologist. Lek counts were down from last year. There was quite a bit of inclement weather during this time on Parker Mountain. Trapping and transplanting of hens to Strawberry Valley continued. Approximately 35 hens were transplanted off Parker Mountain.

In May researchers moved to Wayne County for the summer's field work. Teasdale Forest Service Ranger Station provided housing for investigators. Collared hens were followed to nests and then monitored every other day after nest initiation. Six collared hens died prior to nesting season. Of the remaining 19 hens, 18 nested. Approximately 50% of those nests hatched successfully. Mammalian and avian depredation of nests was about equal. Clutch size varied between 4 and 8 eggs per nest and averaged about 5-6 eggs per nest. Following hatching, nest cover was measured and broods were followed every three days. Brood locations were recorded and vegetation was measured. Some hens moved up in elevations following nesting. A few collared hens nested in higher elevation areas and had much smaller movements post-hatching.

A UDWR flight was planned, but had to be postponed.

Vegetation within the experimental pasture was measured in June for early brood use. Data was taken in the same way as previous years. Rabbit exclosure data was also taken.

For next quarter a PARM meeting is planned. Some PARM members were confused about the transplant to Strawberry Valley. Rick Baxter, BYU research assistant has been invited to report on that project. Data will continue to be taken on collared hens, experimental plot vegetation, and a bird dog count and pellet count is scheduled to take place to assess use within the experimental plots.