The **Healthy Lands Initiative** represents a new concept for meeting emerging challenges in managing natural resources with flexible, landscape-level approaches for continued multiple use.

The Initiative is characterized by the broad scale of the acreage it will seek to restore and conserve, and the accelerated pace at which results are expected.

The Initiative will enable and encourage local BLM managers to set priorities and manage across landscapes and mitigate impacts to an array of resources in ways not previously available to them.

Demands on Public Lands

Demand for a variety of public land uses and products in the U.S. is at an all-time high because of the country's changing demographics and needs.

Last year, BLM-managed lands recorded 56.3 million recreation visits. During the same period, the BLM processed a record 8,800 applications for oil and gas drilling permits.

Land health is being affected by pressures such as community expansion, increasingly catastrophic wildfires, unmatched demand for energy resources, ever-expanding recreation uses, and weed invasion. These pressures often interact among themselves to affect large landscapes and ecosystems, particularly those in the growing wildlife-energy interface.

A different management approach is urgently needed to meet these challenges. Taking aggressive steps now will help avoid imposed restrictions on uses of public land that would directly affect the nation's security and quality of life.

Landscape Approaches

The landscape-level approach is the first step, and will be focused so as to realize results in one to three years.

The key is keeping resources healthy. Healthy lands yield healthy economies at every level, from local to national. The Initiative recognizes that conserving wildlife and habitat is also good for local communities, particularly those whose economies are tied to fish, wildlife and healthy watersheds.

The Initiative gives managers flexibility to identify lands where a particular resource might be emphasized in order to encourage sustained health and balance across a broader landscape or ecosystem.

Role of Partnerships

Partnerships are an integral part of the Initiative. Public-private cooperation, incentives for landowners and private industry, and other non-traditional approaches will engage stakeholders while leveraging additional funds and resources.

Two of the BLM's sister Federal agencies, the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, are also partners in the Initiative.

The President's 2008 budget requests a substantial increase of $15 million in funding for the BLM to begin implementing the Initiative in six specific geographic areas to demonstrate the new approach. Projects will be located in Wyoming ($4.5 million), New Mexico ($3.5 million), Utah ($2.0 million), Oregon/Idaho/Nevada ($1.9 million), southern Idaho ($1.8 million) and Colorado ($1.3 million).

By the Numbers
BUDGET REQUEST

Wyoming
Green River Basin ..... $4.5 million

New Mexico
Landscape Restoration..... $3.5 million

Utah Watershed
Restoration Initiative..... $2.0 million

Oregon-Idaho-Nevada
Shrub Steppe Restoration.. $1.9 million

Southern Idaho
Snake River Plain ..... $1.8 million

Colorado
Landscape Conservation ... $1.3 million

BLM Total ..... $15 million
USGS .....$5 million
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service ...$2 million
TOTAL..... $22 million

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Secretary Dirk Kempthorne
February 5, 2007

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A Variety of Approaches

Each of the Initiative projects will address unique problems and issues. Here are some examples of the projects and the partners involved.

Wyoming – Green River Basin

Vegetation treatments (sagebrush, aspen) and water projects, e.g. building or restoring water sources for wildlife, and improving riparian areas; facilitate best reclamation and mitigation practices for areas affected by current natural gas development; integrate existing data with new knowledge and technologies to forecast future development of energy resources and assist in habitat conservation planning; conduct habitat enhancement in all habitat types with a special focus on sagebrush, mountain shrub, aspen, and riparian communities.

Partners

U. S. Geological Survey
U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U. S. Forest Service
Non-Governmental Organizations
Wyoming Game & Fish Department
Landowners
Energy Industry

New Mexico Landscape Restoration

Reclaim orphaned and abandoned well pads and roads; control invasive brush species using chemical treatments, prescribed burns and mechanical treatments; and improve riparian habitat, primarily by removing salt cedar and planting native vegetation. The primary focus of this effort will be to enhance wildlife habitat.

Partners

U.S. Geological Survey
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts
Energy and Utility Industry
Landowners / Ranchers
New Mexico State Land Office
New Mexico Dept of Game & Fish
Quail Unlimited

Utah Watershed Restoration Initiative

Increase the number of land treatments that can be completed in each geographic area; facilitate best-management practices for all land uses; conduct efficient science-based monitoring; maintain and update habitat management plans based on new information and technologies.

Partners

U.S. Geological Survey
Utah Partners for Conservation & Development (Federal and State agencies, private land owners, University Extension Service, Trout Unlimited, and private organizations)

Oregon-Idaho-Nevada Shrub Steppe Restoration

Accelerate implementation of habitat restoration projects identified in State and local sage-grouse conservation plans; select and implement land treatments to maintain and restore the upland and riparian components of these shrub lands.

Partners

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U..S. Geological Survey

Healthy Lands Initiative projects will encompass lands in seven Western States.

Southern Idaho Snake River Plain

Identify and carry out high-priority projects to sustain the health of the sagebrush steppe; seeding native plants to increase the abundance of desirable shrubs, forbs and grasses; controlling noxious and invasive species to reduce the threat and frequency of wildfire; and modifying fences and other rangeland facilities to help improve riparian areas depended upon by sage-grouse and other wildlife species.

Partners

U.S. Geological Survey
Idaho Fish & Game
Local Sage-grouse working groups

Colorado Landscape Conservation

Implement effective weed management efforts across the area; expand the native-seed program through the Uncompahgre Plateau Project to facilitate the development and use of native seed in reclamation efforts across the landscape; pool resources to investigate and/or pursue conservation easements or opportunities to protect key habitat across the landscape.

Partners

U.S. Geological Survey
USDA Forest Service,
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
National Park Service
U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service Habitat Partnership Program
Colorado Division of Wildlife

For more information, please contact:
Bureau of Land Management
Public Affairs Office
1849 C Street N.W. 406-LS
Washington, DC 20240
202-452-5125

For detailed fact sheets on each of the projects, please visit www.blm.gov

By the Numbers

Green River Basin, Southwest Wyoming

- Number of acres in the basin: **15 million** (The size of Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire combined)
- Number of homes that could be heated annually by natural gas production: **4 million**
- Estimated volume of recoverable natural gas in cubic feet: **83 trillion:**
- World-class wildlife: Estimated 100,000 deer and 100,000 pronghorn antelope; 40,000 elk; 8,000 moose; 1,400 big horn sheep; and 151 non-game species of greatest conservation need

Wyoming encompasses some of the highest-quality wildlife habitat in the Intermountain West. Sagebrush, mountain shrub, aspen, and riparian communities offer crucial habitat for deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, greater sage-grouse, and a variety of non-game species. Lands and waters in Southwest Wyoming also offer some of the country's most sought-after recreational opportunities, providing an important asset that attracts anglers, hunters, and other visitors seeking open spaces, majestic scenery, and outdoor recreation in pristine settings. For many small rural communities, money spent by anglers and hunters is essential for long-term economic stability.

At the same time, this region is an active source of natural gas. Encompassing 15 million acres—roughly the size of Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire combined—the Green River Basin of Southwest Wyoming produces enough natural gas annually to heat 4 million homes. With approximately 23 trillion cubic feet of natural gas used annually in the U.S., the estimated 83 trillion cubic feet of recoverable natural gas in Southwest Wyoming will continue to account for one of the largest sources of natural gas in the U.S.

To ensure Southwest Wyoming's wildlife and habitat remain viable in areas facing development pressure, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department have proposed the Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative (WLCI).

Landscape Approach

The greatest wildlife conservation value is achieved when wildlife enhancement is conducted at a landscape scale. Landscapes are land areas composed of diverse habitat types that include winter range and migration corridors.

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Secretary Dirk Kempthorne
February 5, 2007

What is the Healthy Lands Initiative?

The Healthy Lands Initiative represents a new concept for meeting emerging challenges in managing natural resources for continued multiple use with flexible, landscape-level approaches.

The President's Fiscal Year 2008 Department of the Interior budget includes $22 million for the Initiatave. $15 million will be spent through the BLM budget on a variety of landscape enhancement activities in 7 western states. An increase of $5 million will enable the U.S. Geological Survey to provide the BLM with the science support needed for adaptive management of energy projects to ensure that we achieve habitat conservation and restoration goals. A $2 million increase will enable the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to increase assistance to private landowners to improve habitat and protect species on private lands and to enhance planning and consultation to ensure energy development impacts to wildlife and habitat are effectively mitigated and listing of species is avoided.

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Access to a variety of habitat types and seasonal ranges within a landscape is essential for wildlife to find food, shelter, and raise their young.

What We Know

The high demand for energy resources has caused an **unprecedented surge in the intensity of natural gas development.**

The combination of energy development and industrial and residential expansion, with associated road building, drilling, pipelines, utility lines, and other human-generated activities, is **occurring in wildlife habitat areas.**

Although impact mitigation is required in energy development areas, **a landscape-scale conservation action will better address** natural resources issues in this vast area.

Initiative partners will...

- **Conduct efficient, science-based species monitoring and habitat enhancement.**
- **Facilitate best reclamation and mitigation practices** for areas affected by current natural gas development.
- **Integrate existing data with new knowledge and technologies** to forecast future development of energy resources and assist in habitat conservation planning.
- **Conduct habitat enhancement** in all habitat types with a special focus on sagebrush, mountain shrub, aspen, and riparian communities.

The WLCI will...

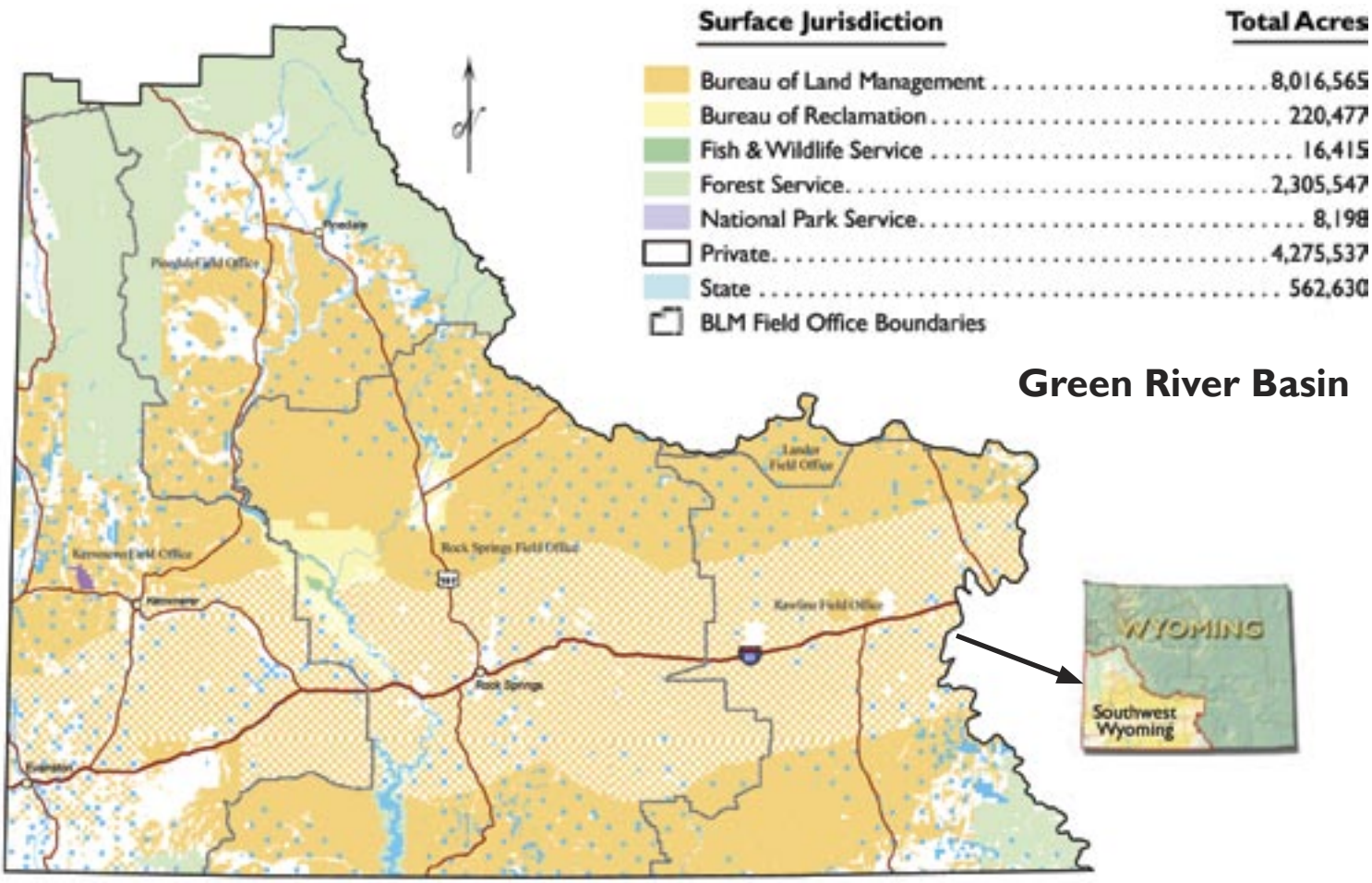
- Exchange information, data, and research findings among partners, industry, and stakeholders to improve habitat conditions and long-term viability of species at a landscape scale.
- Complement existing habitat reclamation and mitigation efforts.
- Broaden the understanding of the valuable Green River Basin ecosystem.

Funding Plans

In Wyoming, funding would be used for projects including vegetation treatments (sagebrush, aspen trees), water projects such as building or restoring water sources for wildlife, and improving riparian areas. Additional funding for the WLCI needs to be long-term and may include state and Federal appropriations, special mitigation accounts, trust funds, non-governmental organization and industry contributions, other independent donations, and an endowment

For additional information contact:
Bureau of Land Management
Wyoming State Office
Steven Hall 307-775-6015
Steven_Hall@blm.gov

Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative
Renee Dana, Rock Springs Field Office
307-352-0227
Renee_Dana@blm.gov



Revised 11-07-06

Healthy Lands Initiative

IDAHO

Snake River Plain

The Southern Idaho-Snake River Plain Healthy Lands Initiative is a coordinated, landscape-level effort to maintain, improve, and restore the sagebrush-steppe rangelands of southern Idaho.

This initiative will accelerate implementation of the Idaho State Sage-grouse Conservation Plan and will expand ongoing partnerships among Idaho citizens, private landowners, and local, State and Federal governments.

Southern Idaho contains millions of acres of sagebrush-steppe rangelands that are vital habitat for sage-grouse and other wildlife and plant species. These species include pygmy rabbit, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, black-tailed jackrabbit and numerous sagebrush dependent non-game species. Their future is directly connected to the long-term integrity and health of Idaho's sagebrush-steppe.

This spacious landscape is also greatly valued by Idaho citizens. The lands of the sagebrush steppe are highly sought after for hunting, camping, fishing, and other recreational opportunities that constitute a key aspect of Idaho's quality of life.

This area is also important to the livelihood of local communities and the economic future of Idaho.

Livestock grazing and minerals production are important uses of these lands, while energy transmission lines form a critical link in the Nation's energy supply system. Idaho also possesses abundant renewable energy resources—especially wind—that are essential to building a sustainable-energy future.

The Southern Idaho Healthy Lands Initiative is focused on ensuring that the wildlife, recreational, and traditional values provided by the sagebrush steppe can be restored and sustained in the face of increasing demand for energy and economic development. The health of the environment and our long-term quality

By the Numbers

The Southern Idaho-Snake River Plain Emphasis Area

- Percentage of population growth between 2000 and 2005: **10.6**
- Number of acres of vital sagebrush habitat in the Emphasis Area: **5.8 million**
- Number of acres burned by wildfire since 2001: **525,000**
- Estimated potential for increased wind energy production in southern Idaho by 2015: **125-635 megawatts.**
- Estimated potential for increased geothermal energy production in southern Idaho by 2015: **860 megawatts**

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of life depend on meeting this critical challenge.

Landscape Approach

With so much at stake, the BLM is proposing to implement a new model for land management in important wildlife areas. Instead of continuing a management approach that results in fragmented protection of species and habitat, the BLM will focus on habitat conservation on a landscape scale and emphasize cooperative conservation to maximize benefits to large areas of Federal, State, and private lands.

What We Know

- Southern Idaho is experiencing large, catastrophic wildfires, due in part to flammable invasive species such as cheatgrass. Increasing wildfire is resulting in the loss of large areas of sagebrush and native grasses.
- Catastrophic wildfire will continue to occur without appropriate fuels management practices, control of invasive species, and habitat restoration efforts.
- Population increases and growing energy development will further strain the ecological health of native plant communities and wildlife.
- It is more effective and cost efficient to be proactive—to maintain healthy landscapes—than to restore depleted areas.

Collaborative Effort

Wildfire, invasive species, drought, and other threats to the land operate on a vast scale and ignore land ownership boundaries. No single owner, jurisdiction or agency can tackle these threats on their own. The BLM and its partners in southern Idaho recognize this and have formed seven local working groups that are taking a broad-scale, collaborative approach to improving and restoring the land

This initiative will expand these partnerships to:

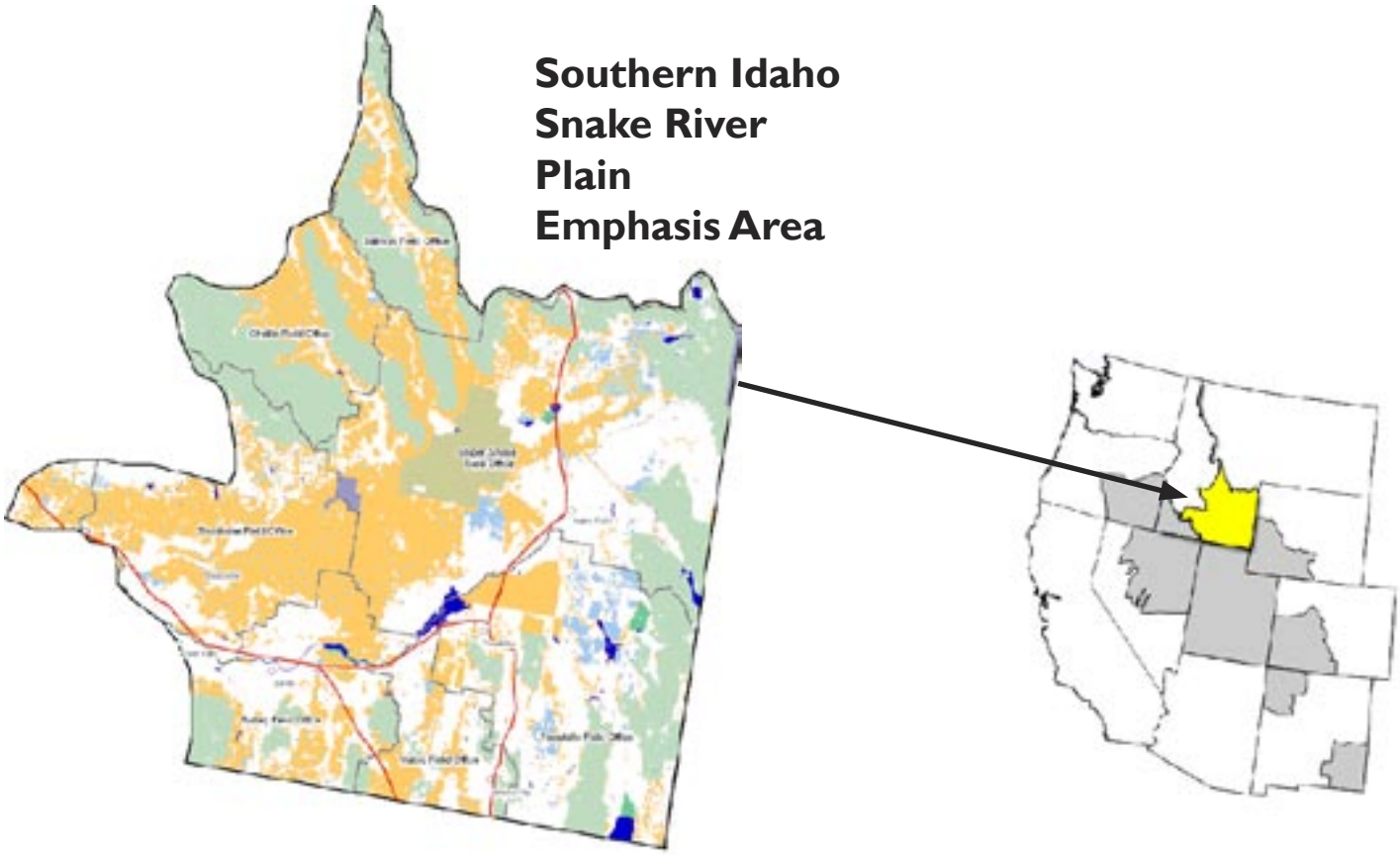
- Increase the amount of land treatments that can be completed in each geographic area.
- Facilitate best-management practices for all land uses.
- Conduct efficient science-based monitoring.
- Maintain and update habitat management plans based on new information and technologies.

Current Successes

- The 7,600-acre **Carmen Creek project** near Salmon, Idaho maintained and enhanced sage-grouse habitat by using chemical treatments to reduce non-native plants and then seeding with native species.
- The 1,400-acre **Medicine Lodge project** near Idaho Falls, Idaho used chemical treatments and biological control to improve sagebrush cover in a key habitat area for sage-grouse.
- The **East Star Lake project** near Shoshone, Idaho used prescribed fire, chemical treatments, and aerial seeding to re-establish sagebrush on 4200 acres after large wildfires reduced habitat quality and connectivity.
- The **Cottonwood Basin Project** targeted 1,200 acres of juniper encroachment near Burley, Idaho. Juniper trees were thinned mechanically to reduce their competition with native shrubs, grasses and flowering plants.

For additional information contact:
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho State Office
Cheryle Zwang
208-373-4016
Cheryle_Zwang@blm.gov

Southern Idaho Snake River Plain Emphasis Area



Healthy Lands Initiative UTAH

In Utah, a consortium of agencies other groups, and individuals have formed the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development (UPCD). Seven Federal agencies, eight State agencies, many private landowners, a university extension service, and non-profit organizations—such as the Mule Deer Foundation—are planning to restore sagebrush habitat in focus areas selected for their wildlife value, particularly focusing on sage-grouse. The partners have committed more than $25 million to restore 500,000 acres of public and private land. The State of Utah has committed $4 million to this effort.

What are the goals of Utah's Watershed Restoration Initiative?

- Increased water quality and quantity
- Quality habitats and maximum biodiversity
- Sustainable working farms and ranches
- Social-economic uses and opportunities

What has Utah already done toward this effort?

BLM funding is leading the way for on-the-ground restoration efforts on an unprecedented scale. Since 2003, Utah BLM, in cooperation with the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development, has conducted treatment projects on approximately 500,000 acres of watersheds on the public lands across the State. The aim is to improve the health and functionality of Utah's watersheds. The majority of those improved acres required vegetation manipulation and reseeding using seed mixtures developed for each site. Initial habitat assessments, project coordination, and NEPA analysis were accomplished with BLM funding. Actual on-the-ground project construction and follow-up monitoring assessments have been accomplished with a variety of partners including (but not limited to) the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Utah State University Extension, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Sportsmen

By the Numbers
Utah Partners for Conservation and Development

- Number of dollars committed by UPCD partners for projects since 2003: $25 million
- Number of acres treated to date: 500,000
- Ratio of non-federal monies to BLM funds: as high as 7:1
- Number of acres to be treated in 2008: 81,780

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for Fish and Wildlife and numerous private landowners and livestock grazing permittees. Vegetation restoration methods included the removal of encroaching juniper through hand-cutting or mechanical treatments such as bull hog or brush saws, Dixie harrow treatments, green stripping to reduce fire hazard, and various other methods depending on the physical and biological characteristics of each individual site and the recommendations of local restoration experts. Investments by all partners involved in this statewide initiative total approximately $25 million. The improved habitat on State, Federal, and private lands exceeds 500,000 acres.

The Vernal Field Office has been busy implementing juniper encroachment projects. These projects consist of hand-cutting junipers in some areas to reduce competition with sagebrush and maintain healthy sagebrush habitat. If left untreated, the area would eventually become dominated by juniper and the sagebrush and other understory plants would be eliminated. These "lop-and-scatter" projects are often completed with a combination of both UPCD funding and the BLM's Hazardous Fuel Reduction money.

What have been the results of the treatments thus far?

Results include: increased water quality and quantity; decreased silt deposition in streams and reservoirs; a return to healthy rangeland conditions with a mix of desired species; protection of at-risk natural sites; and improved habitat to support mule deer, sage-grouse, and other wildlife populations, as well as wild horses. These, coupled with the reduction of forage competition between livestock and wildlife, are just some of the benefits of the treatments.

Anther major benefit is reduction of the risk to species such as Gunnison's and greater sage-grouse and pygmy rabbit—which are dependent on sagebrush habitat—as well as a host of endemic plants that occupy the sage-steppe ecosystem, from becoming listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Funding Plans

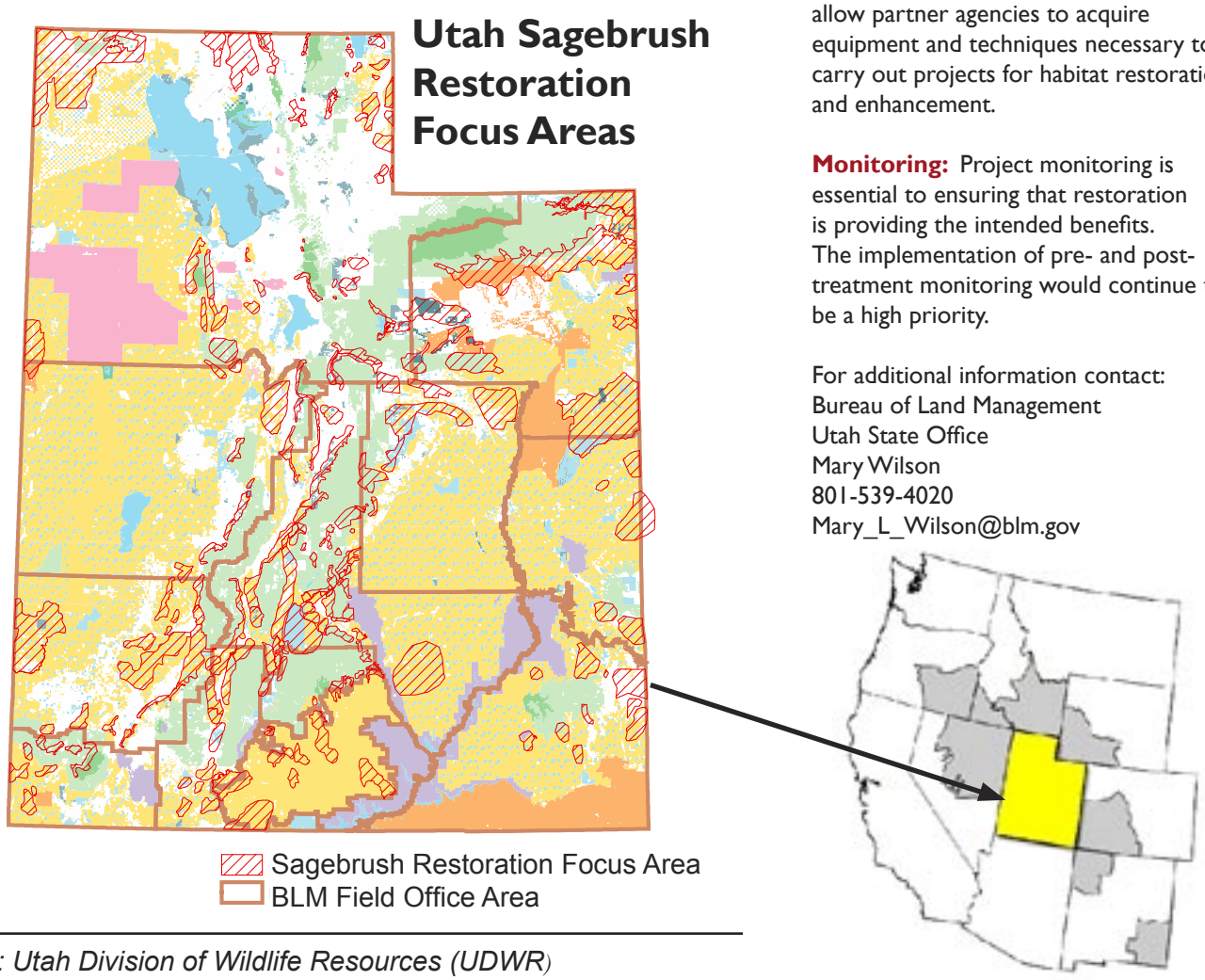
With the proposed funding, partners in Utah would be able to implement 60 projects to restore over 80,000 acres on a landscape scale across the state. These projects would benefit wildlife and water quality and reduce the chances of catastrophic wildfires. The following are additional examples of how this funding would make a difference in Utah:

Seed warehouse: The seed warehouse that services the entire state has exceeded its capacity. Expanding the size of this warehouse would not only increase storage capacity, but would help native seed producers increase their native plant production capacity. As these seeds are used in on-the-ground restoration projects, this is a critical component in the process. Increased storage capacity would provide for greater quantity and quality in implementing restoration projects.

Equipment: Increased funding would allow partner agencies to acquire equipment and techniques necessary to carry out projects for habitat restoration and enhancement.

Monitoring: Project monitoring is essential to ensuring that restoration is providing the intended benefits. The implementation of pre- and post-treatment monitoring would continue to be a high priority.

For additional information contact:
Bureau of Land Management
Utah State Office
Mary Wilson
801-539-4020
Mary_L_Wilson@blm.gov



Source: Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)

Healthy Lands Initiative

OREGON-IDAHO-NEVADA Shrub-Steppe Landscape

By the Numbers

Oregon-Idaho-Nevada Cooperative Shrub-Steppe Restoration Partnership

Planned Treatments

- Number of acres of vegetation to be treated on public land: 23,000
- Number of acres of vegetation to be treated on non-BLM land.: 3,900
- Number of miles of stream to be improved: 65
- Number of riparian improvement projects: 75

The Oregon-Idaho-Nevada Cooperative Shrub-Steppe Restoration Partnership is a coordinated, landscape-level program involving multiple partners working together to maintain shrub-steppe health where it currently exists and to strategically restore areas critical to wildlife. The Partnership will accelerate implementation of the three states' sage-grouse conservation plans. Sagebrush shrub-steppe habitat is vital to ensure viable populations of sage-grouse to preclude the need to list this and other sagebrush obligate species.

The Shrub-Steppe Restoration Partnership Area provides a stronghold for sagebrush-dependent wildlife species. This three-state area encompasses 53.5 million acres, roughly 50 percent of the remaining sagebrush-steppe habitat in the Great Basin. The diversity and integrity of the plant communities in this area support crucial habitat for large populations of sage-grouse, mule deer, antelope and numerous sagebrush dependent birds. At the same time, this area is important to the livelihood of local communities. These lands provide significant economic benefits to local communities from livestock grazing to hunting, mineral extraction, and recreational uses.

Increasing Threats to the Shrub-Steppe Landscape

The Partnership area is experiencing a tremendous increase in large catastrophic wildfires due to increased fine fuels buildup from invasive species such as cheatgrass and vast shrub areas that provide a continuous fuel source. Cheatgrass is locally abundant and fuels a vicious cycle of recurring wildfires that prevent the recovery of the shrub-steppe habitat. This hinders efforts to restore sagebrush habitat and sets the stage for the spread of more aggressive invasive species that further threaten the native landscapes.

In the higher elevations, sagebrush steppe habitat is being degraded by the

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increasing expansion of pinyon pine and juniper woodlands. A rapidly growing regional population is increasing human impacts.

Restoration at the Landscape Level

The highest priority is to maintain sagebrush steppe habitat followed by strategically restoring fragmented habitat. This action will conserve habitat for at-risk wildlife species, such as sage-grouse, that are dependent on large sagebrush communities.

What We Know

- Catastrophic wildfires will continue to occur in this area, but the frequency and extent can be reduced with appropriate fuel-management treatments.
- Invasive species will continue to increase and reduce the health of shrub-steppe communities.
- Increasing use by growing populations in the region will further strain the ecological integrity of native plant communities.
- Maintaining healthy sagebrush-steppe contributes to the economic and ecological needs of communities.

The Cooperative Shrub-Steppe Restoration Partnership Will...

- Partner with local sage-grouse working groups, Federal agencies, and the scientific community to accelerate implementation of habitat restoration projects identified in State and local sage-grouse conservation plans.
- Engage tribes, conservation organizations, and other State and Federal agencies to strategically select and implement land treatments to maintain and restore the upland and riparian components of these shrub lands.
- Build upon existing programs and initiatives, such as the BLM's Great Basin Restoration Initiative, to implement a landscape-restoration strategy.
- Leverage funds to build on current successes to maximize the positive benefits of restoration at the largest scale.

Current Successes

- **Izzenhood Fire:** seeded 2,034 acres to provide winter habitat and reduce the potential for catastrophic wildfire on intact sage-grouse habitat.
- **Northwest Sheep Fuels Project:** treated 709 acres to provide seasonal habitat and reduce the potential for catastrophic wildfire on intact sage-grouse habitats.
- **Pixley Basin:** prescribed fire was used to treat encroaching western juniper trees on 3,400 acres to improve sage-grouse habitat.
- **Battle Creek Allotment:** improved about 30,000 acres by hand cutting western juniper trees that were encroaching into key sage-grouse habitat.
- **South End Wildfire Complex:** 10,811 acres were seeded to encourage the recovery of native plant communities important to the sage-grouse and redband trout. Also, noxious weed treatments are being implemented on 7,715 acres in areas occupied by sage-grouse and other obligate species.

Oregon-Idaho-Nevada Shrub-Steppe Landscape

For additional information contact:
Bureau of Land Management
Oregon State Office
Jody Weil
503-808-6027
Jody_Weil@blm.gov

Idaho State Office
Cheryle Zwang
208-373-4016
Cheryle_Zwang@blm.gov

Nevada State Office
Doran Sanchez
775-861-6586
Doran_Sanchez@blm.gov

Surface Jurisdiction	Total Acres
Bureau of Land Management	37,170,276
Bureau of Reclamation	39,026
Department of Defense	77,567
Other Federal Agencies	90,273
US Forest Service	4,350,396
Fish and Wildlife Service	467,822
Indian Reservation	421,784
National Grasslands	14,064
National Park Service	77,040
Private	9,910,505
State	927,034
Total	53,545,786

By the Numbers

Colorado Landscape Conservation Initiative

- Number of acres of Federal land within the project area: 13.4 million
- Number of acres of State, private, and local government land within the project area: 13.5 million
- Number of wildlife species in Colorado: more than 960
- Number of recreation visitors annually: 5 million in Colorado, many of whom visit National Monuments, the Anasazi Heritage Center in Southwest Colorado, and National Conservation Areas within the project area

Southwestern Colorado provides quality habitat for diverse wildlife populations, including seven of the eight remaining populations of Gunnison sage-grouse in the world, as well as desert big horn sheep, lynx, Rio Grande cutthroat trout, Kachina daisy, and numerous special status species. The Bureau of Land Management, Colorado Division of Wildlife, and other Federal, State, and private partners are working together to restore, enhance, and protect habitats through conservation planning efforts and partnerships.

Landscape Approach

The greatest value of wildlife conservation is achieved when wildlife enhancement is conducted at a landscape scale. A cooperative approach to conservation can lead to actions that are more cost effective, sustainable, and compatible with other governmental and public conservation goals. Restoring these areas will bring the immediate and long-lasting benefits of improved land health.

Program Objectives

- Maintain, enhance, and expand existing habitat and populations of Gunnison sage-grouse, lynx, desert big horn sheep, and other special status species in Colorado, while continuing to provide multiple-use opportunities.
- Promote native vegetation, habitat restoration, and functioning ecosystems to maintain flourishing plant, animal, and aquatic resources throughout the area.

Multiple-Use Context

Increases in land uses related to recreation, energy, and population growth place more demands on natural resources and accelerate the need to invest additional dollars to sustain and improve habitat conditions. The Colorado Landscape Conservation Initiative is an opportunity for the BLM to address land stewardship and conservation priorities on an important landscape, consistent with the Bureau's multiple-use mission. This effort would complement habitat restoration and mitigation efforts required

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The President's 2008 budget requests a substantial increase of $15 million in funding for the BLM to begin implementing the Initiative in six specific geographic areas to demonstrate the new approach. Projects will be located in Wyoming ($4.5 million), New Mexico ($3.5 million), Utah ($2.0 million), Oregon/Idaho/Nevada ($1.9 million), southern Idaho ($1.8 million) and Colorado ($1.3 million).

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of energy companies when developing Federal minerals. The BLM believes it can protect both the habitat and the species that rely on this land, and maintain current and future energy production for the Nation.

Partnerships in the Landscape Initiative

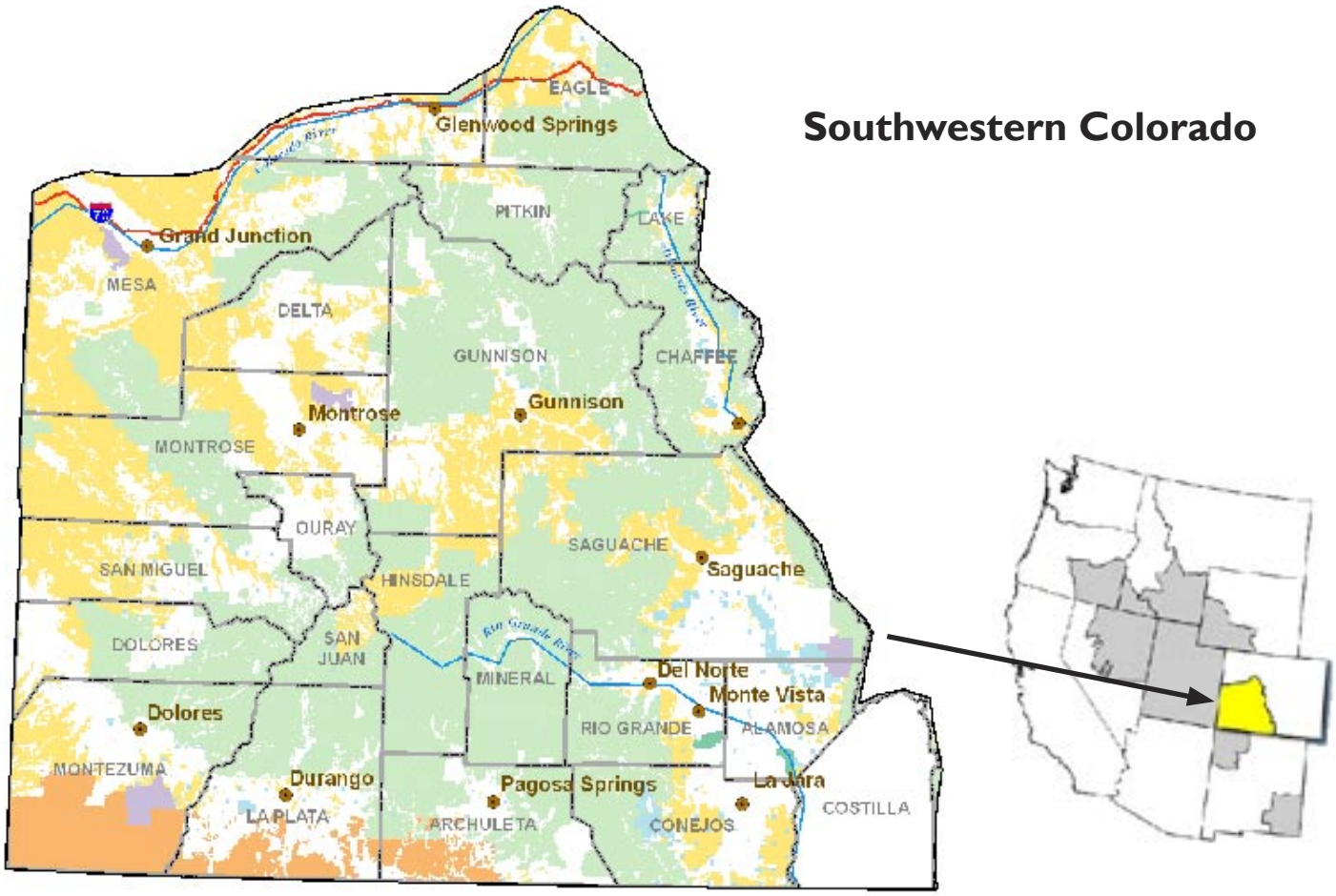
The BLM is working with the following partners on this project:

- Colorado Division of Wildlife Habitat Partnership Program
- USDA Forest Service
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- National Park Service
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

For additional information, contact
Bureau of Land Management
Colorado State Office
Vaughn Whatley
303-239-3668
Vaughn_Whatley@blm.gov

Colorado's Planned Activities and Opportunities for 2008 and Beyond

- Prioritize and implement appropriate habitat treatment projects to enhance existing resources or restore former habitat conditions.
- Implement effective weed management efforts across the area.
- Expand the native-seed program through the Uncompahgre Plateau Project to facilitate the development and use of native seed in reclamation efforts across the landscape.
- Pool resources to investigate and/or pursue conservation easements or opportunities to protect key habitats across the landscape.
- Work with partners to ensure that project implementation and habitat management is planned and occurs across ownership boundaries to maximize effectiveness across the landscape.
- Expand knowledge of resource conditions on the landscape and identify habitat objectives for the future.
- Monitor the effectiveness of treatments within area and adapt management accordingly.



Healthy Lands Initiative
NEW MEXICO Permian Basin

By the Numbers
Permian Basin, Southeastern New Mexico

- Number of acres in the Basin: 10 million (About the size of Maryland)
- Number of acres of Public Lands: 3 million
- Number of barrels of oil produced in the basin annually: 62 million
- Number of drivers that oil could fuel annually: 3.1 million
- Number of cubic feet of natural gas produced in the basin annually: 570 million
- Number of homes that could be heated with natural gas production: **13 million**

Southeast New Mexico's sweeping mid-grass prairies encompass some of the nation's unique prairie vistas. Public lands in the Permian Basin provide essential habitat for mule deer, pronghorn antelope, quail, and a host of other wildlife. Hunters come each fall for unparalleled opportunities to enjoy the abundant wildlife. Statewide, more than 130,000 hunters spend over $150 million each year on their sport.

The Permian Basin hosts a unique geology—and a significant petroleum industry. Oil and gas are produced from 18 different formations in New Mexico alone, and major development has been ongoing since the 1920s. Producers range from small independents to major oil companies.

Since the 1920s, roughly 55,000 oil and gas wells have been drilled in southeast New Mexico. Today there are about 29,000 active oil and gas wells, of which about 15,000 are Federal. About 450 new wells are drilled and 150 wells plugged each year.

The BLM's Pecos District works with over 170 different oil companies, while typical BLM offices deal with 10 to 15 companies. The BLM is monitoring the reclamation and restoration of 1,700 abandoned wells. More than 2,000 inactive or abandoned wells must also be reclaimed.

More than 6,000 miles of road were constructed for these wells, resulting in an expansion of invasive plant species (e.g., African rue and Russian knapweed); declines in habitat for wildlife; degraded water quality; and extensive habitat fragmentation.

Restoring this land will help maintain hunting opportunities and energy access to public lands, and prevent Federal listing of sensitive species under the Endangered Species Act. Two candidates for listing include the lesser prairie chicken and the sand dune lizard.

Meeting both our energy and land health goals requires integrated, landscape-scale habitat protections and resource management. Our initiative combines investments in habitat protection with policy improvements that will protect 800 species, including the sage-grouse.

Secretary Dirk Kempthorne
February 5, 2007

What is the Healthy Lands Initiative?

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Ranchers, recreational users, conservation groups, the oil and gas industry, hunters and other public land users know the significance of doing large-scale collaborative efforts. The BLM recognizes the importance of reclaiming disturbed areas, which will both reduce the likelihood of listing sensitive wildlife species and enhance other wildlife populations.

Goals

- Remove exotic plant species and reverse the expansion of invasive shrubs
- Restore native habitat for fish, wildlife, and special-status species
- Improve water quality and watershed health
- Reduce habitat fragmentation from historic oil and gas development and ensure responsible energy development
- Reduce impacts from catastrophic wildfire

Continuing the Momentum

In 2006, the BLM and its partners restored and reclaimed 68,300 acres of public land in southeastern New Mexico. During each of the next 2 years we plan to restore and reclaim up to 100,000 acres of public land.

Getting Involved

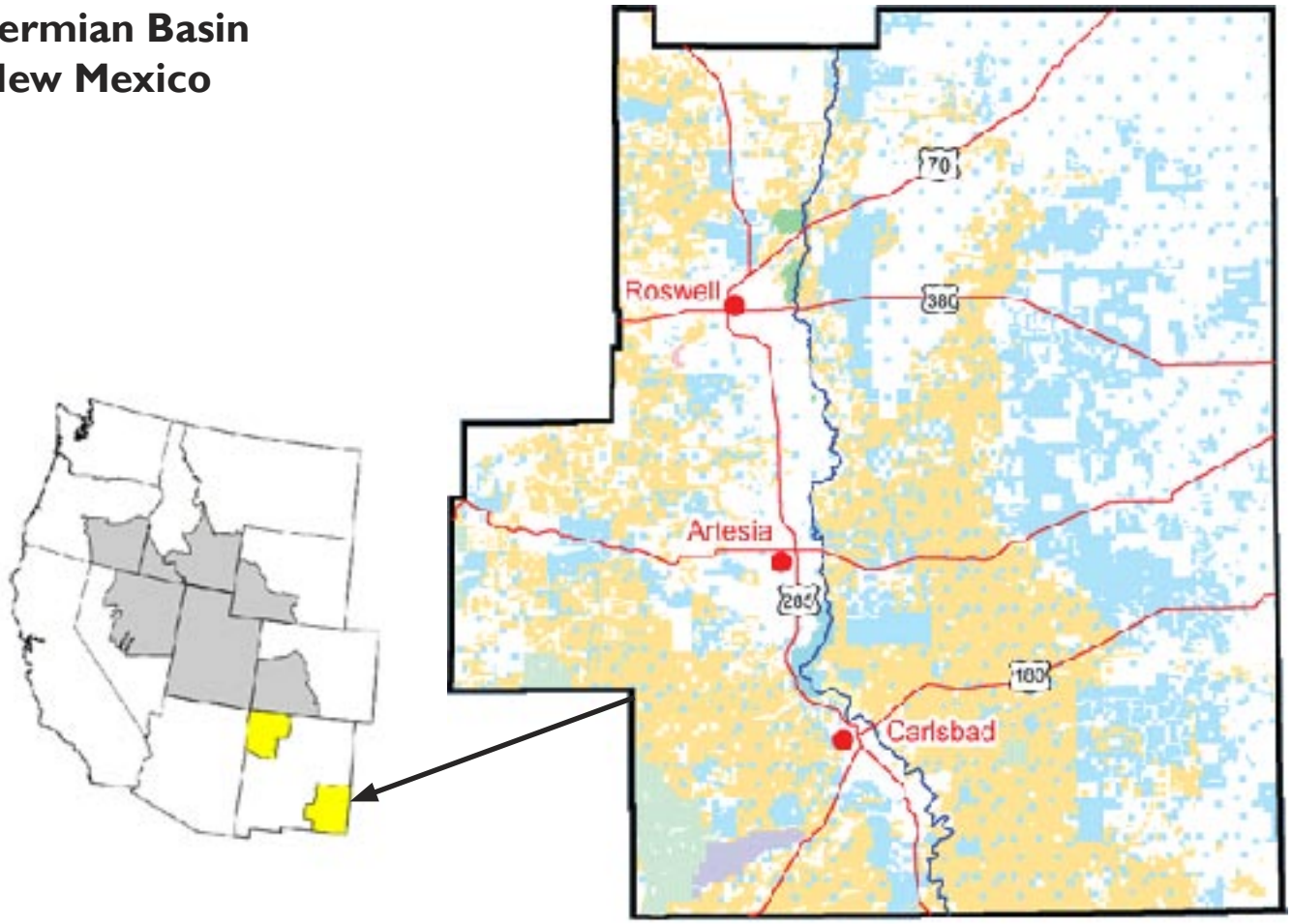
There are many ways to get involved in Restore New Mexico. Landowners and other agency employees can contact the BLM's Pecos District Office or its partners for further information. Conservation groups are working with BLM on specific habitat improvement projects; contact the BLM or your group to see how you can participate or otherwise support their work.

Partners

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts
Oil and gas companies
New Mexico State Land Office
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Electric utility cooperatives
Conservation groups, including Quail Unlimited
Private landowners, including BLM grazing permittees

For additional information contact:
Bureau of Land Management
New Mexico State Office
Hanson Stuart
Hanson_Stuart@nm.blm.gov
505-438-7510

Permian Basin New Mexico



By the Numbers
San Juan Basin, Northwestern New Mexico

- Number of acres in the basin: **8 million** (About the size of Massachusetts)
- Number of producing oil and gas wells: **20,000** (mostly natural gas)
- Number of new wells to be added in the next 20 years: **10,000**
- Number of cubic feet of natural gas produced in the basin annually: **1.1 trillion**
- Percentage of natural gas consumed by homes in the U.S. that comes from the basin: **20%**

Broad mesas interspersed with deep canyons are characteristic of the New Mexico's San Juan Basin, as are its entrenched narrow valleys, dry washes, and floodplains.

Mule deer and elk share the landscape with more than 20,000 oil and gas wells and three major coal mines. Hunters flock to northwestern New Mexico each fall for opportunities to enjoy the abundant wildlife. Statewide, more than 130,000 hunters spend over $150 million each year on their sport.

BLM lands also provide important habitat for upland game birds such as Gambel's quail, which inhabit densely vegetated areas in canyon bottoms and near waterways, and scaled quail, which occur in sage/grassland areas. Flowing through the basin are the Animas and San Juan Rivers. A world-class trout fishery on the San Juan below Navajo Dam attracts fly fishermen from across the world.

The San Juan Basin hosts America's second-most productive natural gas field; it supplies 6 percent of the nation's total production and is California's largest supplier of natural gas.

There are currently over 6,400 miles of roads on the public lands managed by the BLM, most of which were created for the oil and gas industry. The BLM is working with the industry to ensure that pipelines follow existing roads where possible and to encourage "twinned" well locations wherever practical for new wells.

Impacts of these roads include fragmentation of wildlife habitat; expansion of invasive plant species, such as Russian knapweed and musk thistle; and water quality degraded by erosion. Restoring landscapes in the San Juan Basin will help ensure that hunting and fishing opportunities are maintained and enhanced, protecting a major contributor

Meeting both our energy and land health goals requires integrated, landscape-scale habitat protections and resource management. Our initiative combines investments in habitat protection with policy improvements that will protect 800 species, including the sage-grouse.

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to the economic health of northwestern New Mexico. Our work will also focus on protecting wildlife species affected by past land uses including legacy oil and gas wells.

Ranchers, recreational users, conservation groups, the oil and gas industry, hunters and other public land users recognize the advantages of large-scale collaboration. The BLM understands the importance of reclaiming disturbed areas, so as to reduce the likelihood of listing sensitive wildlife species while enhancing other wildlife populations.

Goals

- Remove exotic plant species and reverse the expansion of invasive shrubs
- Restore native habitat for fish, wildlife and special-status species
- Improve water quality and watershed health
- Reduce habitat fragmentation from historic oil and gas development and ensure responsible energy development
- Reduce impacts from catastrophic wildfire

Continuing the Momentum

In 2006, the BLM and its partners restored and reclaimed 18,000 acres of public land in northwestern New Mexico. Within the next two years we plan to restore and reclaim over 36,000 acres of public land each year.

Getting Involved

There are many ways to get involved in Restore New Mexico. Landowners and other agency employees can contact the BLM's Farmington District Office or its partners for further information. Conservation groups are working with the BLM on specific habitat improvement projects. Contact the BLM or your group to see how you can participate or otherwise support their work.

New Mexico Partners

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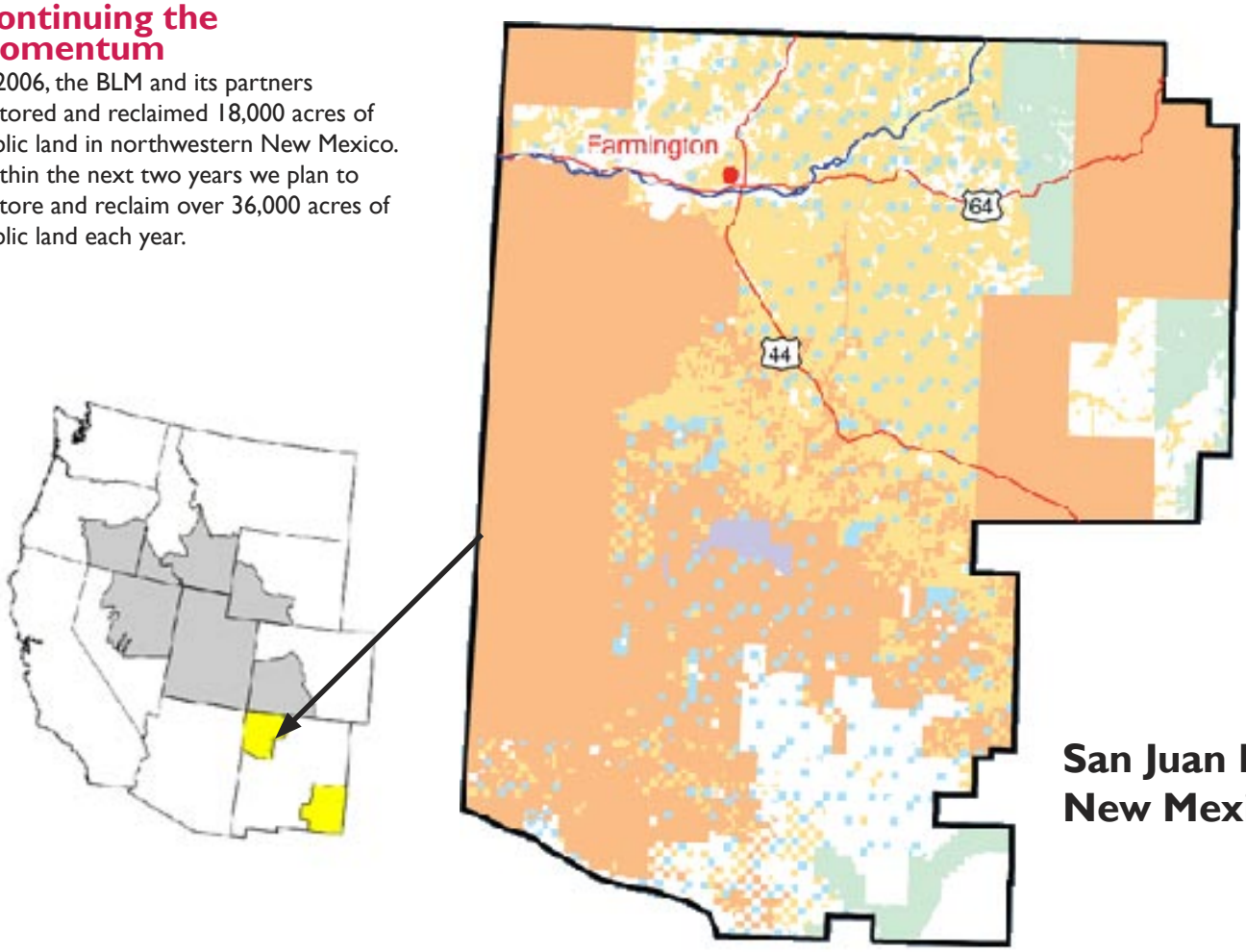

San Juan Basin
New Mexico