

# Battle Mountain District 2013 Annual Report



"Efficient and effective use and development of the public lands while ensuring environmentally responsible outcomes" Doug Furtado, Battle Mountain District Manager



## **Battle Mountain District Bootstraps Program Receives 2013 Partners in Conservation Award**

The Partners in Conservation Awards recognize outstanding examples of conservation legacies achieved when the Department of the Interior engages groups and individuals representing a wide range of backgrounds, ages and interests to work collaboratively to renew lands and resources.

Bootstraps is a partnership between the BLM, the University of Nevada Reno Cooperative Extension and other partners that gives at-risk and underprivileged youth the skills and decision making abilities to return to school or enter the workforce by involving them in natural resource project work.

## Battle Mountain Bootstraps Crew Completed Its 9th Season



The 2013 Bootstraps crew on Cowboy Rest Creek, northeastern Toiyabe Range, Lander County, Nevada.

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After two weeks of classroom and field training, the Battle Mountain Bootstraps crew, comprised about equally of veterans and new recruits, recently began its 9<sup>th</sup> season. From June through October, the crew, using chainsaws, will remove encroaching pinyon and juniper trees from carefully selected wildlife habitats in central Nevada.

Although the pinyon and juniper problem is little known to the general public, expansion and increasing densities of these trees is having an adverse impact on wildlife habitats throughout much of the West. Since European settlement, changes in land use, fire frequency and atmospheric carbon dioxide have led to widespread increases in pinyon and juniper at the expense of wildlife. In the Great Basin, for example, the area covered by pinyon and juniper woodlands has increased 10-fold since the late 1800's.

## Battle Mountain Bootstraps Crew Completed Its 9th Season (cont.)



Dense stands of pinyon-juniper make poor wildlife habitat.  
Note dead and dying grasses and shrubs.

Pinyon and juniper woodlands have been present in the Great Basin for centuries and in moderation the trees are quite desirable; both species provide food and cover for many wildlife species. But as they become increasingly widespread and numerous, shrubs, grasses and forbs are lost through competitive exclusion (are out-competed). In many places, pinyon and juniper domination is a major factor in the decline of greater sage grouse and other wildlife. As the Nevada Department of Wildlife's *Mule Deer Management Plan* warns:

“... dense stands reduce understory plant productivity and diversity, increase site aridity, and accelerate soil erosion. Pinyon-juniper conditions throughout much of Nevada are having negative impacts on mule deer and other wildlife.”

Once habitat has been degraded, conversion back to more diverse and valuable plant communities is extremely difficult and expensive. Dense pinyon-juniper woodlands are also highly susceptible to intense wildfires, after which introduced weeds such as cheatgrass, frequently dominate the landscape, preventing or greatly impeding re-establishment of more desirable plant species.

Crews from the Bootstraps program have been removing encroaching pinyon and juniper trees from some of central Nevada's most valuable wildlife habitats since 2005. In that year, the Battle Mountain District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in partnership with University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, launched the program, which was designed to put out-of-school young adults to work, teaching them useful life and employment skills, while at the same time accomplishing much needed wildlife habitat improvement projects.

## Battle Mountain Bootstraps Crew Completed Its 9th Season (cont.)



Work on a riparian protective fence in the Battle Mountains. Steel jack fences are more expensive, but more durable and require far less maintenance than conventional barbed wire fencing, especially at high elevations where snow banks often flatten wire fences.

In addition to combating pinyon and juniper takeover of wildlife habitat, Bootstraps crews have repaired or constructed numerous fences to protect wetlands. In 2012, Bootstraps constructed almost two miles of steel jack fence for the protection of meadows in the Battle Mountains that are especially important for greater sage grouse.

Although the program began very modestly, Bootstraps crews have grown steadily over the years (crews are now comprised of 15-18 young adults) and have completed an impressive list of wildlife habitat improvement projects in the Fish Creek, Simpson Park, Roberts, Sulphur Springs, Toiyabe, Desatoya and Battle Mountain Ranges of central Nevada.

Bootstraps crews camp at the job site, greatly reducing expenses and travel time to remote project locations. Initially funded primarily by the BLM, the Bootstraps program has also been generously supported by grants from the Nevada Department of Wildlife, Nevada Bighorns Unlimited, the Mule Deer Foundation, Lander and Eureka Counties as well as by Barrick and Newmont Mining Companies. During the past three seasons, considerable funding has been provided through the Natural Resource Conservation Service's *Sage Grouse Initiative* in cooperation with C-Ranches and Grass Valley Ranch.

Although the Bootstraps program won't solve all of our natural resource problems, it is a model for cooperation between local communities, private enterprise, government agencies and sportsman's groups. The results are real, on-the-ground habitat improvements.

**American Vanadium Gibellini Project** - The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being prepared and is expected to be issued by the end of 2014. The Project includes an open pit, water and power line right-of-way and will eventually involve on-site power generation utilizing a photovoltaic array and vanadium battery demonstration as part of the Project.

**Newmont Phoenix Mine** - Newmont is in the baseline analysis stage of the Greater Phoenix Project. It is expected that all baselines will be completed in early 2014 and an Amendment to the Plan of Operations submitted in the third quarter of 2014. An EIS level analysis is expected.

**Newmont Buffalo Valley Mine** - Preparation of the Draft EIS was put on hold by Newmont due to lower gold prices and closure activities for existing project facilities.

**Newmont Copper Basin Exploration Project** - An Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared and was issued to the public in September 2013. The public comment period ended on November 16, 2013 and the Decision for approval is expected in January 2014.

**Eureka Moly, LLC Mount Hope Mine** - Following the Record of Decision issued for this Project in November 2012, Project construction has commenced. However, the proponent has scaled back construction activities due to financing issues. Litigation activity is on-going.

**Barrick Horse Canyon/Cortez Unified Exploration Plan** - BLM is working on an Amendment to the Plan of Operations. It is expected that an EA level analysis will be completed by June 2014.

**Barrick Cortez Hill North Waste Rock Facility** - BLM is working on an Amendment to the Plan of Operations for a reconfiguration to the North Waste Rock Facility, the addition of an ore stockpile and an increase of the ore transport to Carlin. An EA is out for public review with the comment period ending January 27, 2014. Approval is expected thereafter.

**Barrick Ruby Hill** - Project expansions have been put on hold due to the lower gold prices.

**Golden Oasis Toiyabe Exploration Project** - An administrative draft EA is being prepared. However,

there are anticipated proponent driven plan changes that may extend the EA completion.

**Halliburton Ann Barite Project** - BLM is working as a cooperating agency with the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and Halliburton. Baseline analyses are on-going to support an EIS level analysis. Project completion is not anticipated until 2015.

**McEwen Mining Tonkin Springs Mine Closure** - BLM has accepted the closure plan and is currently in the environmental analysis review portion of this Project.

**McEwen Mining Gold Bar** - The Plan of Operations was submitted on December 27, 2013. BLM is currently in a review stage to determine completeness. The environmental analysis is expected to begin early in 2014.

**Klondex Gold and Silver Mining Fire Creek Project** - The Plan of Operations for this underground exploration Project is being modified to expand operations for a mining project. This proposal is currently in the baseline analysis stage and completion is expected in late 2014.

**Timberline Lookout Mountain Exploration Project** - Ongoing exploration is anticipated to support the baseline analysis for a possible mining operation.

**Montezuma Mines Red Canyon Exploration Project** - Ongoing exploration is anticipated to support the baseline analysis for a



Drill pad reclamation at Barrick's Horse Canyon/Cortez Unified Exploration Project.

**Diatomite Mine: Global Silica, Inc. Monte Cristo Mine** - The EA has been finalized and the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) completed. A decision was finalized after the completion of the final Reclamation Cost Estimate (RCE) agreed upon by the Tonopah Field Office (TFO), Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) and Global Silica Inc.

**Corvus Gold Nevada North Bullfrog Exploration Project** - Preliminary results from their exploration operations indicate favorable values and Corvus Gold Nevada has presented conceptual plans for a Mining Plan of Operations. Baseline studies in support of this proposed plan are on-going.

**Mineral Ridge Gold LLC, Mineral Ridge Gold Mine** - An amendment to the Plan of Operation has been requested. The Plan of Operation was submitted in the latter half of 2013. The EA is available for comments and will close on January 21, 2014. It is anticipated that a decision will be completed during the first half of 2014.

**Solauro Industries Georgia Tailings Remediation Project** - A revised Plan of Operation has been accepted and the EA is currently under internal review. Communication with Solauro Industries has been lacking and it is anticipated that communications will commence again during the first half of 2014.

**Metallic Goldfield** - Metallic Goldfield has completed the required baseline studies for the proposed open pit mine north of Goldfield, NV. A Plan of Operation has been submitted and accepted. The Federal Register Notice has been published and the scoping meeting was conducted on January 10, 2014.

**Round Mountain Gold Corp., Plan of Operations Amendment** - Round Mountain Gold Corp is in the early stages of planning for an amendment to their current authorized operations. Baseline studies started in the latter half of 2013. It is anticipated the studies will be completed during the latter half of 2014.

**White Caps Mining Company Plan of Operations** - White Caps Mining Company has proposed to refurbish the existing White Caps mill located on public lands in Manhattan for the purpose of reworking tailings located on private lands. Baselines are currently under review and a Plan of Operation is expected in 2014.

**True Oil, LLC Application for Permit to Drill** - True Oil has changed the location of the well that was proposed to be drilled in 2012. The EA has been finalized and on January 9, 2014 a decision approving the application to drill and Right of Way (ROW) was made.



Round Mountain Project

### Mount Lewis Field Office

#### Homestake Ruby Hill Land Sale -

This Project proposes to offer, by direct sale, 150 acres of public land to Homestake Mining Company near their Ruby Hill Mine near Eureka. Only the surface estate is proposed for sale. The land is identified as disposable in the Shoshone-Eureka Resource Management Plan (RMP). An EA was prepared and no substantive or adverse comments were received during the public scoping process. A FONSI was signed in February 2011.

Before the sale can occur, a Notice of Realty Action (NORA) must be published in the Federal Register and local newspapers provided another opportunity for public comment.

A NORA was submitted to the Washington Office for final review and publication in May 2012 and was returned in August with a request for more information. Homestake (Barrick) has stated that they wish to continue pursuing the sale. Work on another NORA package is underway.



Hickison Communication Site

**Relocation of Roberts Creek Road** - Roberts Creek Road passes through the Roberts Creek Ranch, close to the main residence. To mitigate the ongoing issues of dust, safety and open gates and the anticipated traffic increases resulting from the Mount Hope Project, Eureka County has submitted an application to relocate Roberts Creek Road away from the ranch buildings. The proposed relocation would cross both public and private land. An EA will be required.

**Arizona Nevada Tower Corporation (ANTC)** - ANTC submitted five applications for communication facilities within the Battle Mountain District. Two sites, Dyer and Palmetto, are in the Tonopah Field Office. The three sites in the Mount Lewis Field Office are located at Kingston, Hickison Summit, and Prospect Peak. ANTC decided to not pursue the Prospect Peak site at this time. The Palmetto site ROW grant was issued in May 2013. The remaining three proposed sites were

combined into one EA as connected actions.

ANTC was awarded a \$7.6 million federal grant for the construction and operation of its Central Nevada Community Anchor Wireless

Backhaul Solution Project. The award will allow ANTC to further develop infrastructure that will fuel long-term economic growth and opportunity throughout rural Nevada. ANTC has until December 2014 to complete those portions of the Project receiving federal financial assistance. The FONSI was signed in August 2013. The Final EA is available on the BLM website. The ROW Grant has been finalized. ANTC will be building the site throughout 2014.

## Lands and Realty

### Tonopah Field Office

**Mt. Moriah Cemetery** - Nye County submitted a request for a direct land sale of approximately 7.5 acres of public lands. This cemetery is located on the outskirts of the historic town of Manhattan. The EA for the land sale is currently available for public comment and is expected to be finalized in 2014.

**Tonopah Public Utilities Arsenic Remediation Project** - As set forth by the Environmental Protection Agency in the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments, the revised federal standard for arsenic in drinking water must be less than or equal to 10 parts per billion (ppb). The municipal water supply in the town of Tonopah currently exceeds that standard. State and federal law requires all water systems to come into compliance with the 10 ppb standard. The Nevada State Environmental Commission has mandated that the water system be compliant by January 23, 2015. ROW Grant N-90168 was issued in December, 2011 to Tonopah Public Utilities (TPU) giving authorization to construct, operate, and maintain a water supply system on public lands administered by the BLM and permitting TPU to construct two new well sites, a gravel access road, re-equipping / rehabilitating four existing well sites, and developing a new underground water transmission pipeline, a gravel access road, and an overhead three-phase power line and all the related appurtenances. An access road would be construct-

ed within the ROW for operation and maintenance of the proposed new well sites and power lines.

An EA was completed and a Decision Record and FONSI was approved in the first half of 2012. Construction of the project began in October 2012 and is expected to be completed in 2014.

## Renewable Energy

### Battle Mountain District

**Ormat dba ORNI 39, LLC: McGinness Hills** - This geothermal project is located 27 miles north of Austin. Construction of one 40-megawatt binary air cooled power plant was completed in 2012. Ormat is currently exploring for geothermal resources so the approved second binary air cooled power plant can be developed.



McGinness Hills Geothermal Project

# Rangeland Management

## Mount Lewis Field Office

**Argenta Allotment Rangeland Health Evaluation** - The Rangeland Health Evaluation and EA are scheduled to be completed and issued to the public for review in 2014.

**US Forest Service Enterprise Rangeland Health Assessment Crew** - Crews have completed Ecological Site Inventory (ESI) monitoring on approximately 200,000+ acres within the Argenta Allotment. Data has been received and is currently being analyzed.

**Battle Mountain Complex Permit Renewal Decision** - Grazing permits for the affected permittees on the North Buffalo and Copper Canyon Allotments will be issued in 2014.

## Tonopah Field Office

**Francisco Allotment**— The EA and monitoring report is being completed and is anticipated to be available for public comment in 2014.

**Smoky Allotment**— Monitoring for the permit renewal has been completed and the report is being compiled. Coordination with the permittee is being conducted. It is anticipated the EA will be available for public comment in 2014.

## Battle Mountain District

**Noxious Weed Control - Community Weed Management Area involvement** - In support of Greater Sage-Grouse habitat restoration within designated Preliminary Priority Habitat (PPH), the Lander County Commissioners have provided generous monetary support to the Lander County Conservation District, which is partnered with the Mount Lewis Field Office, to control a large infestation of Hoary Cress within the Indian Creek drainage. Private property owners within the drainage are currently being notified and support for the Project is gaining momentum. BLM has already controlled over 150 acres of Hoary Cress on public lands within the drainage.

The Tonopah Conservation District, in cooperation with Tri-County Weed, has currently controlled over 1,000 acres of noxious weeds throughout the District.

The Southern Nye County Conservation District continues to complete Tamarisk control in support of the Amargosa Toad Habitat Conservation Plan Agreement throughout Oasis Valley and within Beatty town proper. In 2013 50 acres were treated and already in 2014 another 50 acres have been treated. BLM treated 15 acres in the Stone Cabin Allotment.

## Mule Canyon Spring Mitigation -

The BLM is working with Newmont's environmental firm to complete an EA in support of the potential development of a spring site within the Argenta Allotment. The EA is currently being reviewed by the BLM Resource Team assigned to the project.

**Wild Horse and Burro Water Sources** - In an effort to combat drought conditions within Herd Management Areas (HMAs), BLM is maintaining the functionality of, or supplementing, currently authorized range improvement water sources. These projects are pictured below.



Bob Brown Well Water Source



Davis Pipeline Water Source

## Drought Response

### Battle Mountain District

During 2012-2013 much of northern Nevada experienced record drought conditions in which very little forage production occurred and water availability was limited resulting in water sources drying up.

In anticipation of these conditions, the Battle Mountain District (BMD) sent a letter to all permittees in February notifying them of the drought and asking them to work with us on developing and taking appropriate drought response actions before their scheduled livestock turnout. We received little response. Most permittees applied and paid for most if not all of their permitted AUMs for the 2013 grazing season. Additionally, BMD notified county commissioners, RACs and stakeholders of the drought situation and BMDs strategy for addressing drought.

In response to the drought, the BMD prepared a district drought management plan and analyzed it in an EA. The FONSI was signed in June 2012. The plan consists of a broad suite of drought response actions but emphasizes livestock reductions, rest, water hauling, and Wild Horse and Burro (WHB) emergency gathers. The main purpose of the drought plan/EA was to position BLM to authorize appropriate response actions in a timely manner to prevent resource damage. The alternative is to go through a lengthy time consuming site specific planning process for each individual documented situation while authorized uses are causing resource damage or WHBs suffer on the range.

BMD made drought monitoring a priority during 2012–2013. Priority areas were HMAs, Priority Greater Sage Grouse Habitat and Riparian and Wetlands outside of Greater Sage Grouse Priority Habitat. Monitoring documented little to no current year's forage production even at higher, more productive elevations. Water hauling, where reasonable, occurred. As a result of the drought, wetland and riparian areas received concentrated use by livestock and WHB's which resulted in excessive and unacceptable impacts. To address such issues the BMD engaged permittees and negotiated a variety of drought response actions to include temporary water hauls, shifting season of use and removal from the range where monitoring indicated that resource damage had occurred.

Meetings with BMD affected permittees to discuss drought management plans for 2013 on an allotment by allotment basis were completed. Management for the 2013 grazing season was focused on providing drought stressed native plant communities with at least growing season rest for the following year, and possibly longer if drought conditions persist as forecasted. BMD staff developed voluntary agreements with all 35+ affected permittees, resulting in 80,000 + AUMs of voluntary nonuse.

Drought monitoring has continued in 2013 to ensure appropriate management occurs.

To date, BMD has issued four drought decisions for the following allotments:

- Battle Mountain Complex
- Shannon Station Allotment
- Diamond Springs Allotment
- Grass Valley, Simpson Park and Dry Creek Allotments

The Battle Mountain Complex Decision resulted in a temporary drought closure (204,497 acres). The remaining three decisions temporarily modified the Terms and Conditions of the grazing permits (e.g. season of use, rest).



Mount Lewis Field Office Allotment



Mount Lewis Field Office Allotment

## Diamond Complex Wild Horse Gather - Jan. 18—Feb. 11, 2013 -

- 792 horses removed from Herd Management Areas (HMA's) located on Battle Mountain, Ely and Elko Districts.
- Emergency conditions necessitated the removal of all animals gathered.
- A trap-site adoption following the gather resulted in 12 yearlings adopted.
- 30 horses were sent to the Carson Correctional Facility for holding with the potential for re-release. Due to post-gather inventory those horses were not re-released. An adoption event at the facility resulted in no horses being adopted. The adult horses have been moved to the general population while the foals and yearlings may go through an internet adoption.

### Hickison HMA

- Nuisance burros causing property damage to private property and agricultural fields in north Big Smoky Valley.
- Due to cooler temperatures and precipitation resulting in fall green up, the offending burros left the area. Area will be monitored in the spring and summer of 2014.



Hickison Burros Outside of Herd Management Area

### New Pass/Ravenswood HMA -

- Data collection to support a Rangeland Health Evaluation within the New Pass/Ravenswood HMA was completed by a US Forest Service Enterprise team. A summary is expected in 2014.

*Please Note: The 2014 National BLM WHB gather schedule has not been released.*



Healthy Wild Horses in Fish Creek Herd Management Area

## Greater Sage Grouse

### Mount Lewis Field Office

#### Three-Bars Restoration Project -

This project focuses on landscape level restoration in the Three-Bars/Roberts Mountain area northwest of Eureka. This area contains high value resources for sage grouse, Lahontan cutthroat trout, mule deer and other wildlife species. This area also boasts largely intact native or perennial plant communities and is at high risk of catastrophic wildfire largely due to pinyon and juniper encroachment. The BMD initiated an EIS analyzing numerous restoration and fuels treatments within a 750,000 acre footprint. Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and Eureka County are cooperating agencies with BLM on this project.

The preliminary Draft EIS was out for public comment through November 29, 2013. A Decision will be issued sometime in 2014. Upon the signing of the Decision, the BLM will seek formalized partnerships to leverage funding and support for multi-year implementation of this important project.

#### Greater Sage Grouse (GSG) Habitat Enhancement Projects Conducted in 2013 on the BMD -

- 1,200 acres of pinyon-juniper thinning within PPH habitat ,
- Construction of two large riparian exclosures totaling 48 acres in PPH as a condition of the McGinness Hills Geothermal Mitigation Plan,

- Flight deterrent markers placed on fence lines in PPH by volunteers and BLM staff,
- BLM, NDOW and Great Basin Bird Observatory affixing and

tracking GSG through GPS telemetry collars to more finely focus pinyon-juniper thinning efforts.



GPS satellite telemetry of collared Greater-Sage Grouse movements within the Austin Allotment supporting proposed pinyon-juniper thinning (Toiyabe West Habitat Enhancement Project) and McGinness Hills Geothermal Mitigation Plan.



Greater Sage Grouse PPH habitat

### Mount Lewis Field Office

**Shoshone Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Trail and Host Site Construction** - Roughly 30 miles of the trail have been completed to date. The BLM worked with Great Basin Institute (GBI), who administered the grant, to finalize the first phase of the trail construction and maintenance. A new brochure will be printed and available at the trailhead and the BLM office. In order to welcome visitors and monitor trail usage, a host site will be constructed at the trailhead during 2014. The host site will consist of a concrete trailer pad with a structure, water, septic, and electricity.



Views from the Shoshone OHV Trail

**Copper Basin Bike Trail** - The Copper Basin Bike Trail is a recreation area developed with an agreement with Newmont Corporation. The BLM has been maintaining and updating this trail with new signage and benches. The area is used by hikers and mountain bikers. The BLM is currently working on a proposal to

create a park/new trail head area. The BLM will be looking to the community of Battle Mountain for their continued support and potential concepts for this area. The BLM has awarded the contract to prepare the conceptual design plan and is planning to present this concept to the public in 2014.

**Student Conservation Association** - In September 2013, the BLM hosted a Student Conservation Association (SCA) crew. The crew completed maintenance for the Copper Basin Bike Trail and the Hickison Petroglyph Recreation Area hiking trail, which included redefining and signing the trails, and cleaning debris from the trails.



Petroglyph at Hickison Recreation Site

**Hickison Petroglyph Recreation Area: Architecture and Engineering** - This outstanding display of Native American petroglyphs is located on U.S. Highway 50, approximately 20 miles east of Austin. The site consists of an interpretive trail, campground, and hiking and equestrian trail. The campground was constructed in the early 1960's and has served many visitors over the decades. The BLM issued a notice to proceed to the contractor to begin site plans in June 2013. The contractor completed the architecture and engineering (i.e. design) documents for a subsequent upgrade in December 2013 which include a host area, expanded campsites, and equestrian pull throughs. This is an exciting project that will update the BMD's only developed recreation site along U.S. Highway 50.

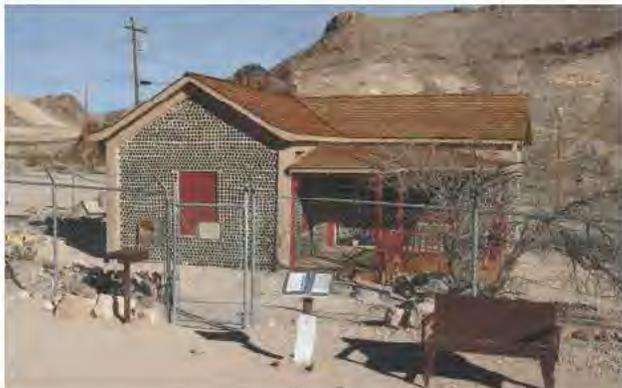
**Rhyolite Historic Town Site** - Rhyolite is the second most visited area on BLM lands in Nevada, second only to Red Rock Canyon. The BLM has been restoring the buildings in the town to provide visitors with a better understanding of the town site.



Kelly Bottle House before restoration

Currently the BLM is working to restore the Porter Store. The BLM is also in the process of developing an assistance agreement to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of management at the site.

Kelly Bottle House after restoration



**Tough Mudder, LLC, Endurance Event** - Tough Mudder, LLC completed another endurance event in mid-April near Beatty. The event was conducted along a similar route, with a similar number of participants as the 2012 event.

**Wilderness Study Area Incursion EA** - The TFO is developing an EA for rehabilitating disturbances and removing unwanted incursions in Wilderness Study Areas within the BMD. In 2013, the TFO provided funding to support an agreement with the Friends of

Nevada Wilderness to accomplish needed work. This past fall, the first work project between BLM and Friends of Nevada Wilderness occurred on Palisade Mesa and The Wall Wilderness Study Areas.

Signage was installed and inventory and monitoring occurred.

**Crescent Sand Dunes Recreation Area** - The TFO made progress on developing the Crescent Dunes Recreation Area by placing picnic tables and a portal sign at the site. This work is a continuation of the effort begun during 2012 NPLD.

**Best in the Desert 2013 "Vegas to Reno OHV Race"** - The TFO was the lead office for processing the Special Recreation Permit. As in past years, the event was held in August on the existing route through portions of public land administered by the Carson City District and BMD.



Best in the Desert 2012 "Vegas to Reno OHV Race".

**Forestry**

248 vegetative (fuelwood) permits sold,  
997 tons of biomass utilized, and  
Seven commercial woodcutting areas were established.

**Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)**

80 acres of prescribed fire treatment on the Eureka Project,  
175 acres of mechanical treatment on the Eureka Project,  
40 acres of mechanical treatment on the Lida Project in conjunction with the Timbisha Tribe,  
57 acres of chemical treatment on the Lone Project,  
82 acres of chemical treatment on the Manhattan Project,  
924 acres of mechanical treatment on the Austin Project, and  
5,000 acres of WUI projects monitored.

**Non-Wildland Urban Interface**

200 acres of prescribed fire treatment on the Railroad Valley Project and  
2,000 acres of non-WUI projects monitored in 2013.

**Suppression**

Last season, the BMD had 26 fires that burned 7,692 acres of public land. Of this total, there were six human caused fires for 4,032 acres and 20 lightning fires for 3,660 acres. We assisted other BLM Districts and agencies within NV, ID, CA, NM, OR and UT with suppression help last year. Our aviation base's in Battle Mountain and Eureka stayed busy flying over 350 missions to 45 fires in the BMD and surrounding areas.

**Rehabilitation**

8,000 acres of the 2012 Frazier Fire was aerial seeded in February 2013. Thirty acres of knapweed was treated in 2012 and 2013.

100 acres of cheatgrass was treated with Plateau herbicide in the 2013 Spanish Gulch Fire.

466 acres of the 2013 Goat Peak Fire were aerial seeded in January 2014.



Frazier Fire rehabilitation success one year after the fire



Pile burning in the Eureka WUI Project



Hand thinning on the Lone Project

## Resource Management Plan (RMP) Revision

**Cooperating Agencies** - The following have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to become cooperating agencies (CAs): Esmeralda, Eureka, Lander, and Nye Counties, United States Forest Service (Humboldt-Toiyabe), National Park Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Nellis Air Force Base, Fallon Naval Air Station, Duckwater-Shoshone Tribe, Timbisha-Shoshone Tribe, and Yomba Shoshone Tribe.

**Status** - In April of 2013, the four counties affected by the RMP formed a four county coalition with the intent of enhanced coordination and streamlining of local government participation in the RMP development. In addition to the monthly CA conference calls, the BMD scheduled monthly RMP conference calls with the coalition.

The Preliminary Drafts of Chapter 1, 2 and 3 of the RMP were made available to the BMD RMP cooperating agencies/county coalition for review and comments are due by February 2014.

The BLM has identified themes for three action alternatives to address the issues identified by BLM staff, public comment, and through Tribal consultation and coordination with cooperating agencies. The three themes (outside of current management) are resource use, resource con-

servation, and a balance of conservation and use.

CAs will also have the opportunity to review drafts of Chapter 4 once it becomes available, sometime in 2014.

### Sustainable Development

Begun in 2008 as a regional cooperative effort, representatives from the Battle Mountain District, Lander County, Lander Economic Development Authority, University of Reno, Barrick, Newmont, and Gold Corp have worked tirelessly together to develop meaningful data and potential solutions to break the “boom and bust” mining cycle and find ways to increase economic sustainability in the Gold Belt Region of northeastern Nevada. Initially focused on looking at uses of mining infrastructure for post mining land use, the Project has resulted in several publications spearheaded by the Lander County Sustainable Development Committee and “Project FIND” (Future Industrial Needs Discovery). In a nutshell, this collaborative group developed a target area map of Developmental Potential, including a GIS database, identified the most promising economic opportunities in the



Sustainable Development Meeting

region, completed the Housing Study GAP Analysis to determine what type and how much additional housing is needed, completed the Leakage Study to identify where people are spending their money and on what, compiled a Community Vision, and developed a short list of Target Industries. Currently, the collaborative Marketing Effort is being completed to draw targeted industry to the region and a Case History Summary Publication. With approximately \$300,000 from BLM committed to this effort, in addition to funds from Barrick, Newmont and Gold Corp, the BLM has played an active role to ensure the agreed upon tasks are completed and communicate the purpose of this important project to the community.

