2008 Annual Report

SALT LAKE BLM FUELS MANAGEMENT

Mission Statement

The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for stewardship of our public lands. The BLM is committed to manage, protect and improve these lands in a manner to serve the needs of the American people.

As we enter a new year and an aggressive schedule of fuels management in northern Utah, the Salt Lake BLM Fuels program wanted to share the successes of 2008 and our plans for 2009.

Looking back on the sheer volume of hazardous fuels reduction projects needed can be a bit overwhelming: encroachment of juniper and cheatgrass on historical healthy rangelands, the wildland-urban interface fire problem, and the complex economic, environmental and societal challenges.

Together with our partners' help in 2008, we were able to achieve many important goals established through the 10-year Collaborative Strategy and Implementation Plan. The primary goal of this plan seeks to actively respond to severe wildfires and their impacts on communities while ensuring sufficient firefighting capacity for the future.

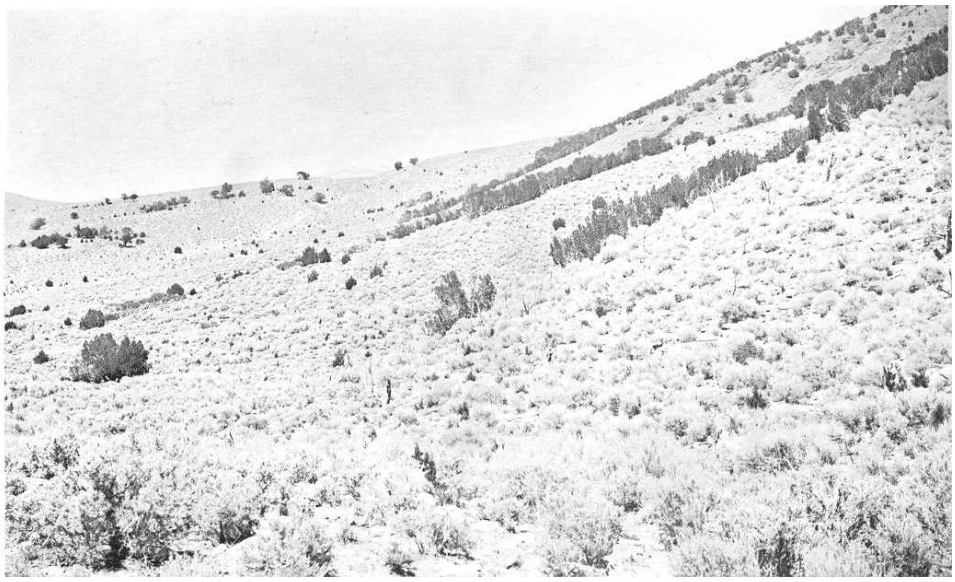
Treatment	WUI* acres	Non-WUI* acres
Prescribed Fire	602	1134
Mechanical	5698	626
Stewardship & Biomass Utilization	130	0
Totals	6430	1760

**Wildland Urban Interface*

- Prescribed fire is used to mimic periodic fire occurrence which maintains healthy ecosystems.
- Mechanical treatments are utilized in reducing the hazards posed by wildfire by reducing fuel density and structures.
- Stewardship contracts stimulate local economic growth and encourage biomass utilization.
- Contracting opportunities abound-over 80% of project work is out-sourced.

Picture the Problem

Then



Historical Sagebrush steppe ecosystems, like this one in northern Utah, were high in biodiversity and extremely productive. These vegetation communities supported a number of key wildlife species including sage-grouse, mule deer, pygmy rabbits, pronghorn and burrowing owls. They are also an important component of Native American and Western culture.

Working on Solutions

Now

Today, the Western juniper is a species recently documented as "invading" the grassland sagebrush steppe. It has been estimated to increased by a factor of ten in the last 130 years. Management practices such as fire suppression and grazing have been implicated as the primary factors responsible for this expansion.
The expansion of junipers has increased the risk of a catastrophic crown fire while decreasing the water supply of ground water supply to springs and streams.

When Wildfire Hits a Fuels Project-

Design and Placement Matter Most

3:43 p.m.
The Devil Fire ignites from a lightning holdover.

4:16 p.m.
Wildfire takes off in untreated fuels.

> *"The existence of the Chokecherry fuels project reduced the fire's intensity and movement; firefighters were given the opportunity to attack the fire directly with engines and air tankers when it hit the fuels project*," said Fire Management Officer Jeff Kline of the West Desert District.

4:30 p.m.
Wildfire continues to rage unchecked in thick juniper.

Meanwhile . . .
Embers from the wildfire struggle to stay lit in the fuels project area.

Community Education Community Involvement Community Mitigation

Many thanks to our partners for being such an integral part of the West Desert District's foundation of support.
More projects are on our website:
http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/salt_lake/fire/fire_and_fuels_management.html
Or projects across Utah:
Www.utahfireinfo.gov

Communities are the Crux of our Success

Northern Utah has over 300 Communities-At-Risk from wildfire. The Salt Lake BLM Fuels program is proud of the private and public partnerships in community outreach and education. Many communities adjacent to BLM public lands have formulated community wildfire protection plans identifying hazards, evacuation procedures, and mitigation measures. There are numerous examples of proactive communities developing and maintaining fire plans in conjunction with the State of Utah and the Bureau of Land Management.
The Dove Creek community is just one example of a proactive community developing and maintaining a wildfire protection plan with the State of Utah and BLM. The residents have been active participants doing the work needed on private ground. Federal funds administered by the State of Utah have assisted fuels reduction, reseeding efforts and the purchase of reflective, non-combustible street signs to help responders locate and access homes.

Building Relationships while lessening Risk

Another private and public partnership we're proud of includes the innovative use of private goats on public lands to reduce fuels build-up. The namesake Lamborn project consists of up to 2500 goats belonging to a local citizen allowed on 350 acres of public land. The goats started munching their way through the heavy fuels beginning last fall.
At the Lakepoint Fuels Reduction Project a local resident has offered to harvest the abundant annual rye grasses north of the railroad, thereby reducing the threat of wildfire to adjacent homes, while providing feed for local cattle and horses.