



**By the Numbers**  
**Utah Partners for Conservation and Development**

- Funds committed by UPCD partners for projects since 2003: \$30 million
- Number of acres treated to date: 500,000 acres
- BLM funds have been matched and leveraged with non-Federal monies as high as 7:1
- Acres to be treated in 2009: 100,000 acres

In Utah, a consortium of agencies form the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development. Seven Federal agencies, seven state agencies, private landowners, a university extension service, and non-profit organizations such as Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife 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 \$30 million to restore 120,000 acres of public and private land. The State of Utah has given an annual and on-going commitment of \$4.5 million to this effort.

habitat assessments, project coordination, and NEPA analysis were accomplished with BLM funding. On-the-ground project construction and follow-up monitoring assessments have been accomplished with a variety of partners including the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Utah State University Extension, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife, and numerous private landowners and livestock grazing permittees. Vegetation restoration methods have included the removal of encroaching juniper through manual

*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

**Goals of the Initiative**

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

**Current Efforts**

BLM funding is paving the way to conduct 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 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

**What is the Healthy Lands Initiative?**

Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne launched the Healthy Lands Initiative (HLI) in 2007 to accelerate land restoration, increase productivity, and improve the health of public lands in the Western United States. The goal of the Initiative is to preserve the diversity and productivity of public and private lands across the landscape. The Initiative will enable and encourage local BLM managers to set priorities across a broader scale and mitigate impacts to an array of resources in ways not previously available to them.

The President's 2009 budget includes an increase of \$10 million for HLI over the level enacted in Fiscal Year 2008. The effort has focused on landscape-level restoration effort on southwest Wyoming; northwest and southeast portions of New Mexico; south-central Idaho; southwest Colorado; Utah; and a three-corner area of Idaho, Oregon, and Nevada. In FY 2009, areas in northwest Colorado and parts of California would be added.



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. Total investments by all partners involved in this statewide initiative total approximately \$25 million. The improved habitat exceeds 500,000 acres of state, Federal, and private lands.

## Results of the Treatments

Monitoring efforts are being conducted to determine the results on: 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, improved habitat to support mule deer, sage grouse, wild horses, and other wildlife populations; and the reduction of forage competition between livestock and wildlife are just some of the anticipated benefits of these treatments. Such benefits also reduce the

risk to sagebrush-obligate species—such as Gunnison’s and greater sage-grouse, pygmy rabbit, and a host of endemic plants that occupy the sage steppe ecosystem—from becoming listed under the Endangered Species Act.

## Funding Plans

With BLM’s proposed contribution to this effort, partners in Utah will be able to implement 90 projects to restore over 100,000 acres on a landscape scale across the State in 2009. These projects will benefit wildlife and water quality, and reduce the chances of large-scale wildfires. The following are additional examples of how this funding will be making 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 expand their native plant production capacity. Because these seeds are used in on-the-ground restoration

projects, this is a critical component in the process. This 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 will continue to be a high priority.

**Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR):** The process has been employed to conduct (ESR) activities across large multiple ownership areas burned over by wildfire. It represents a major change from how ESR has been implemented in the past.

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

