

2013

ANNUAL REPORT



**Wyoming Landscape
Conservation Initiative**



"Conserving world-class wildlife resources. Facilitating responsible development."

2013



C O N T E N T S



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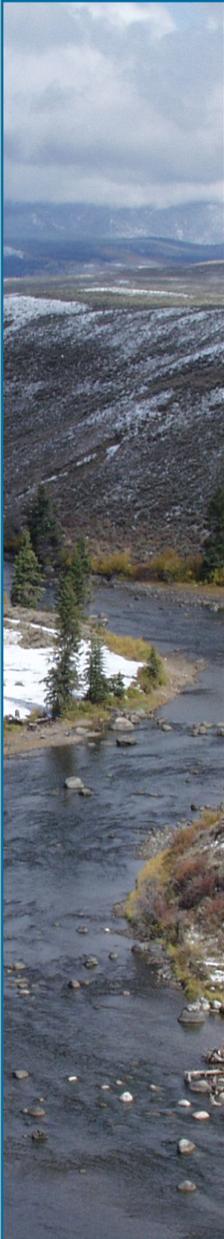
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2013



M I S S I O N



The Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative (WLCI) is a long-term science based effort to assess and enhance aquatic and terrestrial habitats at a landscape scale in southwest Wyoming, while facilitating responsible development through local collaboration and partnerships.

The WLCI...

- Exchanges information, data and research findings among partners, industry and stakeholders to improve habitat conditions and long-term viability of species at a landscape scale.
- Complements existing habitat reclamation and mitigation efforts.

WLCI Members and Cooperators...

- Conduct efficient science-based species monitoring and habitat enhancement.
- Integrate existing data with new knowledge and technologies to forecast future development of energy resources and assist in conservation planning.
- Conduct restoration and habitat enhancement activities in all habitat types with a special focus on the sagebrush, mountain shrub, aspen, riparian and aquatic communities.
- Ensure management practices support a viable livestock industry and associated open spaces.

2013



A B O U T



The WLCI was established in February 2007 after discussions between the directors of the Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department about the need for a landscape-scale approach to ensure healthy wildlife populations in areas with proposed energy development.

The WLCI program entails inventory and assessment of species and habitat to determine what habitat enhancement projects, such as vegetation treatments, are necessary. The collaborative effort represented by the WLCI is unique as it provides a means to address multiple concerns at a scale that considers all activities on the landscape, incorporates multiple needs in project implementation, and can leverage resources that might not be available for single agency projects.

Local Project Development Teams (LPDTs) identify issues that are important to the local landscape and cooperatively create projects to address identified needs for local wildlife, habitat, and other resource issues. LPDTs include biologists, range managers, conservation districts, landowners, county commissioners and interested parties, including members of the public. Four geographically based LPDTs meet quarterly:

- Carbon County
- Lincoln/Uinta Counties
- Sublette County
- Sweetwater County

The WLCI Coordination Team works with six teams which provide support:

- Support Team
- Communication Team
- Data and Information Management Team
- Science and Technical Advisory Team
- Monitoring Team
- USGS Science Team

2013



M E M B E R S

Signatories on the WLCI memorandum of understanding



Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The BLM administers approximately 9.3 million of the WLCI's 19 million acres. It implements and monitors on-the-ground actions to enhance habitats.

US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

The FWS develops conservation measures for wildlife, plants and habitats on non-federal lands. It provides assurances for engaging in conservation and expedites environmental reviews to ensure timely project completion.

US Forest Service (FS)

The FS administers 2.8 million acres of WLCI's 19 million acres. It implements and monitors on-the-ground actions to enhance habitats.

US Geological Survey (USGS)

The USGS provides integrated science, methodology, research and monitoring, and advances scientific knowledge and information and provides technical support.

National Park Service (NPS)

The NPS provides technical assistance to the WLCI effort.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

The NRCS provides technical assistance to the WLCI effort.

Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA)

The WDA acts as a liaison between the WLCI and the agriculture community for project planning and provides assistance and technical support.

Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD)

The WGFD inventories and monitors over 250 wildlife species to prioritize, plan and implement on-the-ground actions to conserve habitat and improve land management.

Southwest Wyoming County Commissions

The commissions provide local representation and direction to the WLCI.

Southwest Wyoming Conservation Districts

The districts provide local representation to the WLCI and help with technical expertise and project development at the ground level.



2013



FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Members, Cooperators and Friends:

Once again, the WLCI has had a busy year.

This year, the WLCI, working with partners, continued development of long-term science-based efforts to assess and enhance aquatic and terrestrial habitats through numerous coordination meetings, field trips, and work sessions.



The executive committee met three times throughout the year. In June they toured projects occurring near Kemmerer, Wyoming – and were able to see some of the work accomplished through the Ruby Pipeline grant.

In August, the U.S. Geological Survey presented and explained how to use the Integrated Assessment tool to the Local Project Development Teams (LPDT). The tool is available on the WLCI website (www.wlci.gov). In addition, changes to the website have made it more user friendly and informative – we invite you to browse and let us know what you think. The website also has the most up-to-date information regarding meetings and other items of interest to our members.



Through 2013, the Coordination Team (CT) continued to work with LPDT members and other WLCI partners to identify conservation priorities and geographic priority areas that have ecological implications from local to landscape scales. This information is being used to develop a Conservation Action Plan (CAP). The primary purpose of the CAP is to serve as a roadmap of the WLCI conservation priorities and actions through 2018.

We are excited about what the WLCI has accomplished, especially in the last year, and are looking forward to a busy and productive 2014. With 25 projects carrying over, the WLCI will continue to treat invasive plants, improve migration corridors for big game and fisheries, enhance habitat for pygmy rabbits, sage-grouse and mule deer, and stabilize and protect the stream and riparian areas within southwest Wyoming.

Sincerely,
Don Simpson
WLCI Chair

2013



ACCOMPLISHMENTS



This year the various sub-committees that support WLCI's mission, revisited their short and long term goals and realigned so that each group is providing for the essential needs of the initiative. Coordination team members who sit on these teams ensure fluid communication and responsiveness of the sub-committees. This has enhanced our knowledge of projects and the project areas, and continued to build our partnerships, meeting the first goal of our operations plan.



Outreach materials were improved in line with the operation plan's implementation strategies for internal and external outreach. Materials included an industry outreach flyer, www.wlci.gov updates, new fact sheets and posters and powerpoints to be used at various outreach opportunities, and training materials. CT members attended several meetings using these outreach and education tools, including LPDT quarterly meetings, executive committee meetings, and partnership meetings with industry, agriculture, non-profits, species committees (i.e., sage-grouse working group), and county commissions.



Completion of the Conservation Action Plan (CAP) is expected in 2014, fulfilling the operation plan's goal to incorporate adaptive management strategies. Both the CAP and Integrated Assessment are adaptive in nature and will regularly be updated and assessed to ensure they are providing the most current science available.

The WLCI funded a total of 34 projects in 2013, including:

- 1,350 linear feet of stream channel was restored on the Encampment River
- A single water well with electrical service, five miles of buried waterline and seven tire troughs were installed.
- Junipers were removed from 3.5 acres of riparian habitat.
- Removal of diseased pines and thinning of competitive conifer species occurred on 73 acres in an important white bark pine stand.
- Over 16 wetland acres were created by using dikes and water control structures.
- Colorado River cutthroat trout habitat was extended into 1.5 acres of river by replacement of diversion structures.
- Nine miles of wildlife friendly fence conversions.
- Over 1,000 acres of invasive plant species were monitored.
- Over 1,000 acres of invasive plant species were treated.
- Monitoring of deer use at underpasses continued with over 15,000 deer crossings recorded since 2009.

2013



P R O J E C T S



The WLCI addresses its conservation mission through four Local Project Development Teams (LPDTs) which are based in counties within the WLCI area: Carbon, Sublette, Sweetwater, and Lincoln/Uinta. Each LPDT identifies its conservation needs, develops and prioritizes its projects which are then ranked by the WLCI Coordination Team. The coordination team then makes recommendations for funding based on the ranked projects to the WLCI Executive Committee for final approval.



WLCI projects for 2013 include fencing, wetland creation, prescribed fires, riparian enhancements, conservation easements, weed treatments and river restoration. These projects have benefitted multiple species, including Greater Sage-Grouse, trumpeter swans, cutthroat trout, various warm water fish, migratory birds and big game in the WLCI's five focus areas: aquatic, riparian, aspen, sagebrush and mountain shrub communities.



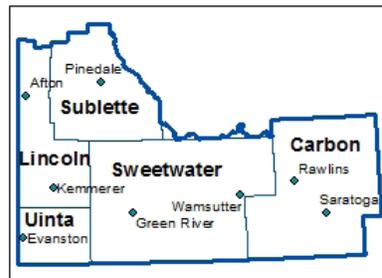
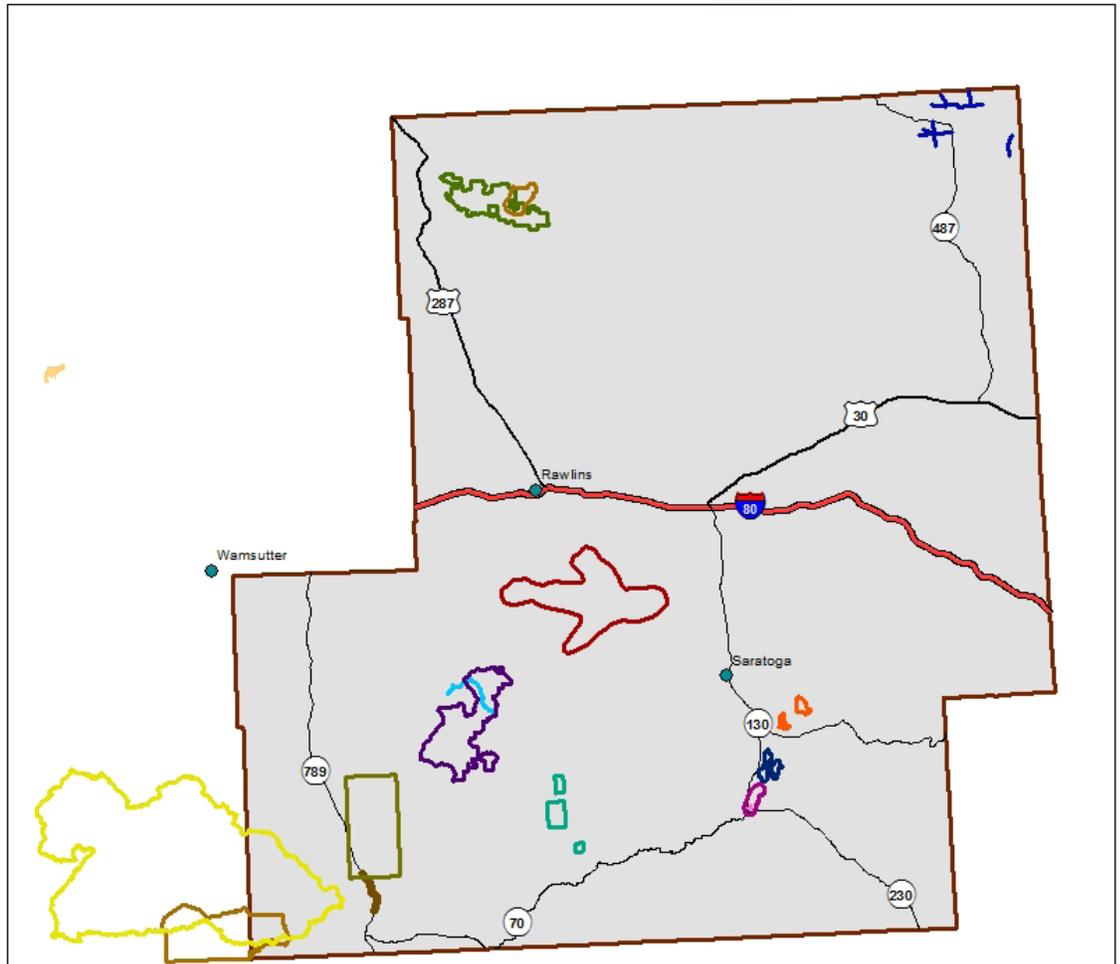
Each project title is followed by a symbol representing which focus area or areas the project benefits:

-  Aquatic
-  Riparian
-  Aspen
-  Sagebrush
-  Mountain Shrub
-  Easement
-  Special Status
-  Migration Corridor
-  Invasive

2013



C A R B O N



- Carbon County WLCI Projects**
- Aspen Conservation Joint Venture
 - Baggot Rocks Invasives
 - Baggos Deer Crossings
 - Carbon County Pepperweed Control
 - Colorado River Erosion Control
 - Ferris Mountain Leafy Spurge Treatment
 - Grizzly WHMA Fence Conversion
 - Hay Reservoir Weed Treatments
 - Platte Valley Mule Deer Habitat Management
 - Rawlins Fence Conversion
 - Riverside Stream Enhancement (Phase II)
 - Sand Creek Salto cedar Control
 - Muddy Creek Fish Passage
 - Shirley Bas in Sage-grouse Habitat



P R O J E C T S

CARBON COUNTY



Aspen Joint Venture

The Little Snake River Basin Aspen Conservation Initiative is a 10-year project to restore and enhance over 12,000 acres of aspen habitat on federal (BLM and USFS), state, and private lands. Mechanical treatments and prescribed fire have been used to enhance aspen communities. Since 2007 over 2,000 acres have been mechanically treated and approximately 400 acres treated with fire. In 2013, approximately 300 acres of mixed aspen, beetle killed lodge pole pine, and subalpine fir stands were treated by removing all conifers. Any merchantable timber was salvaged and used by a local sawmill. Non-merchantable timber, which comprised the bulk of the material removed, was either cut and scattered or skidded into burn piles to be burned at a later date. Some material was used for stream restoration/aquatic habitat improvement on the Little Snake River.



Baggot Rocks Invasives

Objectives for this project include controlling the spread and extent of invasive plants within the winter range complex for mule deer on Baggot Rocks, maintaining the area as crucial mule deer winter range and lessening fire frequency. Encroached junipers were removed from 3.5 acres of riparian drainage. Slash was piled and/or wind-rowed for controlled burning.



Baggs Underpass *-*-*

Two underpasses and associated fencing have been installed on Wyoming State Highway 789 north of Baggs, Wyoming. To improve understanding of how deer are utilizing the underpasses, a total of 46 deer (19 does, 11 fawns, and 16 bucks) within the local herd were captured and marked. Over 15 volunteers from the community, personnel from the WGFD, the University of Wyoming Cooperative Unit and the BLM assisted in the effort. Members of the local community have continued to report sightings of the marked mule deer, allowing the WGFD to map movement of the local deer herd.

In August of 2013 a “real time” video camera system was installed to monitor deer using the underpass. Over 15,000 deer crossings have been recorded to date.



P R O J E C T S



Boykin - Encampment River Restoration 

The Encampment River—Boykin Phase II restoration includes streambank stabilization, channel reconstruction, and riparian enhancements downstream of the Town of Riverside. In 2013, 1,350 linear feet of stream channel was restored. Restoration efforts include: installing streambank toe wood stabilization, with bankfull benches; enhancing three pools; shaping three riffles; and installing a series of four rock vanes to help narrow the riffle, providing grade control and fish habitat enhancement. Additionally, the radius of curvature was modified on two meander bends. Riparian vegetation, willow stakes and clumps, were planted in the fall of 2013. A native grass and forb seed mix will be broadcast in spring. Additional native tree and shrub species will be planted in spring and summer of 2014.



Carbon County Perennial Pepperweed Partnership 

The Perennial Pepperweed Partnership project involves treating two main stream branches in the Sage Creek watershed for perennial pepperweed, whitetop, saltcedar, leafy spurge and Russian knapweed. Chemical treatments are used to control weeds in this remote area. Only half the project area was completed this year due to access and funding issues on private lands.



Colorado River Erosion Control 

Roadwork along Muddy Creek was completed in June of 2013, with twelve 18”x 30’ culverts and one 36”x 30’ culvert installed within a two mile section of road. To reduce sedimentation during maintenance, a dozer and a road-grader were used to build up the road and move it away from steep banks bordering the stream channel. This portion of the work was funded through the BLM’s road improvement fund. Additional roadwork adjacent to McKinney Creek planned with Carbon County will be addressed in 2014.



P R O J E C T S



Ferris Mountain Leafy Spurge Treatment

Monitoring in 2005 showed infestation of leafy spurge in the Ferris Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA) for the first time. Along the fringes of the WSA, a marked increase of infested acres was also found. In 2013, 500 acres in this area and the adjacent hogback ridges were treated with herbicide for leafy spurge, whitetop, and Russian knapweed. Chemical treatments, inventory and monitoring were carried out on state, federal and private lands. Aerial treatments were not required as past treatments have thinned infestations. As long as on-the-ground maintenance activities continue in this area, aerial treatments are not expected to be required in the future.



Fish Passage Improvement Rawlins Field Office

To protect native fish populations, fish barriers were constructed to inhibit the movement of non-native fish. During 2013, two barriers were scheduled to be constructed; unfortunately, the federal government shutdown (furlough) postponed construction. Construction will be initiated when suitable low flow conditions occur in 2014. All NEPA documentation was completed during 2013. Habitat and monitoring of fish populations continued in areas where past projects have occurred and where future projects are planned.



Grizzly Wildlife Habitat Management Area Fence Conversion

The goal of this project is to convert 5- and 6-strand woven wire fencing on BLM, State of Wyoming, and WGFD lands within the BLM Rawlins Grizzly Wildlife Habitat Management Area (WHMA). This work is part of a long-term plan to convert fences in the Red Rim Grizzly WHMA to support big game migration. Previous WLCI funding has supported the conversion of 12.5 miles of fencing within the WHMA. During 2013, the WGFD contracted for five miles of fence conversion; this work was started in 2013 and will be completed in 2014.

Hay Reservoir Weed Treatment

The Hay Reservoir project includes the treatment of 1,200 acres for Russian knapweed, whitetop, and Swainson pea invasion. Treatment consisted of ground applications of an herbicide to control these weeds across the project area, including private lands. Monitoring of previously treated areas was conducted on 400 acres. Due to time constraints and the furlough, treatment and additional inventory were not completed during FY 2013. The landowner paid for treatments on their private lands. Treatment areas not completed in 2013 will be addressed in 2014.



P R O J E C T S



Platte Valley Mule Deer Habitat Management

This project includes the installation of additional livestock grazing infrastructure to improve wildlife habitat and distribution. A new water source will provide seven additional livestock and wildlife watering locations within the allotment. When complete, the new infrastructure will give the livestock operator the ability to rest portions of the allotment which have been identified as important mule deer transitional and wintering habitats. Project activities scheduled for 2014 include the construction of 4-5 miles of new pasture fencing, and the conversion of 2-3 miles of existing fence to wildlife friendly standards.



Rawlins Fence Conversions *-*-*

The crew completed 3.5 miles of fence conversion, including two miles along the Buzzard/Pole Canyon allotment boundary, a quarter mile of wood post and rail-top construction, and 1.5 miles of pasture fence conversion. A contract was awarded in August for the six miles of fence burned in the 2012 Ferris Mountain wildfire, which is planned to be completed during the spring of 2014. There was insufficient funding to complete the south side of the burned fence between Buzzard and Stone allotments. If additional funding is obtained, this section will be addressed in 2014.



Riverside Stream Enhancement Phase II

The project focused on improving riparian habitat by decreasing the width/depth ratio of the stream channel, improving bank stability and channel patterns, and enhancing both in-stream and riparian corridor habitats. Thirteen hundred feet of stream bank were treated to improve bank stability and reduce bank erosion, eight riffles were constructed, a single A-frame type rock diversion structure was constructed, 300 feet of toe-wood and bankfull benches were installed, and a disturbed area (<2 acres) was re-seeded with a native riparian seed mix. Grade control structures (cross-vanes, single arm vanes), toewood, channel shaping, bankfull benches, and riparian plantings (cottonwoods and willows) create stability within the stream reach. These treatments will decrease near-bank shear stress, while creating stable width/depth ratios and sediment transport. The overall improvements to the project reach of the Encampment River will provide better fish passage, easier and safer public boating, and better irrigation water delivery. Monitoring and additional plantings are scheduled to begin in 2014.

2013



P R O J E C T S



Sand Creek Salt Cedar Control

The Sand Creek saltcedar control project plans to treat approximately 30 miles of stream corridor in the Colorado River Watershed throughout the life of the project. Treatments will be completed with aerial and ground applications of herbicide to remove saltcedar (tamarisk). Accomplishments during 2013 included 250 acres of herbicide applications on part of Sand Creek, all of Willow Creek (stream miles), and 63 reservoirs in the vicinity. Additionally, 500 acres were inventoried for new saltcedar plants and resprouts. During 2012, an intensive assessment of reservoirs indicated that nearly 1 in 3 reservoirs are infested with saltcedar. Future plans include monitoring treated areas every three years. This will allow for detection and treatment of resprouts and new plants before they are old enough to set seed.



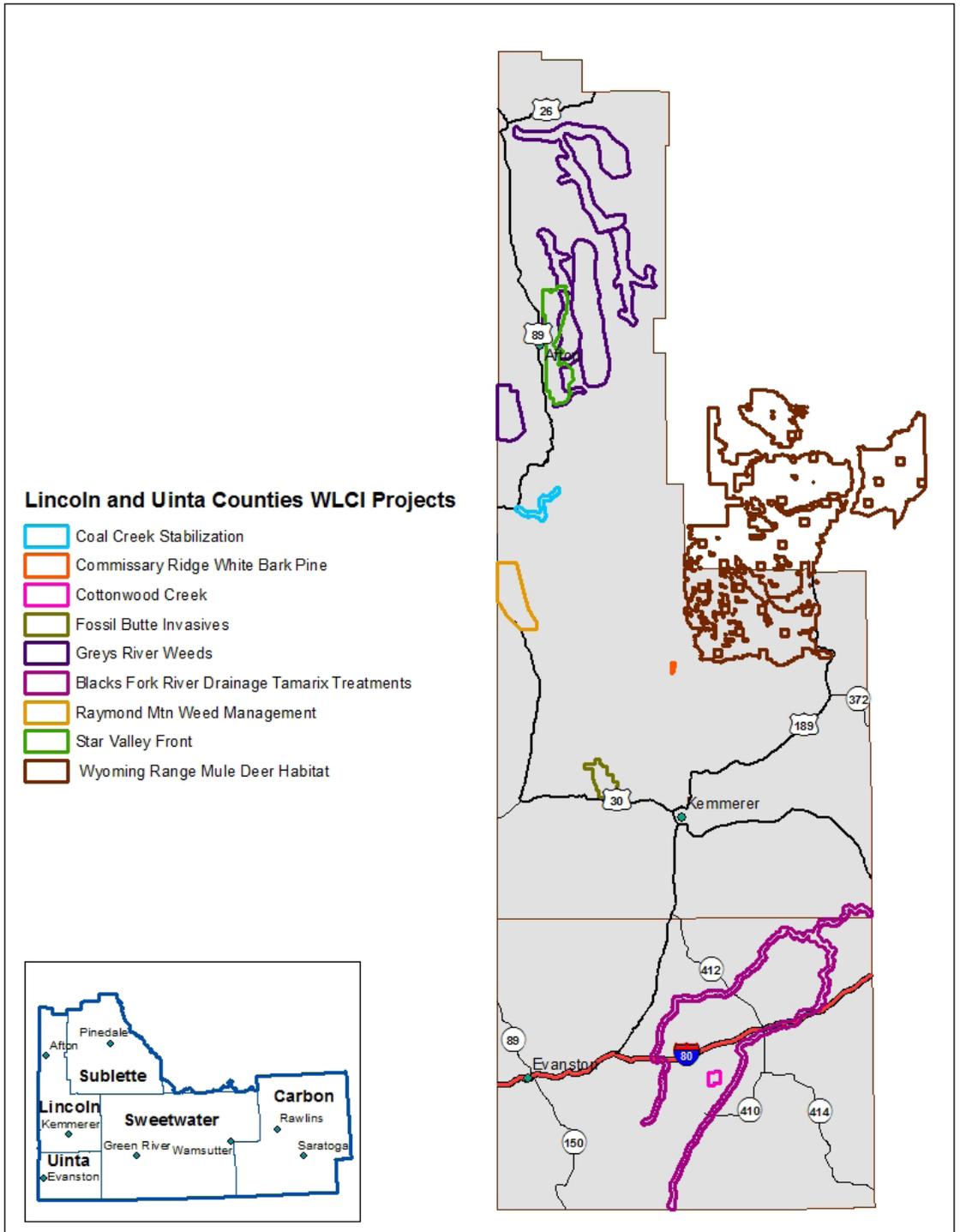
Shirley Basin Area Sage-Grouse Habitat Management

The objectives of this project are to construct approximately 20 miles of fencing to convert four existing large pastures into 11 smaller pastures. This will support a rotation-rest grazing strategy and provide more flexibility in grazing management. This year, three miles of suspension cross-fence were built in the Bates Benchmark allotment that divided a single pasture into two pastures. Additionally, about 7,300 feet of pipeline were installed to provide water to newly created pastures. The remaining seven miles of the proposed 20 miles of fencing will be completed during 2014.





L I N C O L N / U I N T A





P R O J E C T S

LINCOLN AND UINTA COUNTIES



Blacks Fork River Drainage Tamarisk Treatment  

The objectives of this long term project are to control and minimize saltcedar infestation along the Blacks Fork River watershed and along its tributaries, maintain existing riparian habitat, increase native riparian tree densities, and improve the condition of native vegetation. Accomplishments during 2013 included monitoring and retreating as needed and herbicide applications at new locations along the Blacks Fork River. More than 31 acres were treated along Muddy Creek, Blacks Fork River, Smiths Fork River and Cottonwood Creek (parts of Uinta County and Lincoln County to the Sweetwater County line) on federal, state, and private lands. Approximately 204 acres of streambank was surveyed for saltcedar. Field Services and Uinta Weed and Pest (UCWP) crews treated an additional 129 acres of noxious weeds that included perennial pepperweed, Canada thistle, black henbane and an area of spotted knapweed within the Blacks Fork River drainage. The total area improved was approximately 2,566 acres. UCWP crews watered native trees planted last year throughout the summer. Among these native plantings, survival of buffaloberry was approximately 60% in the fenced planting areas, cottonwood 40%, and willow approximately 25%.

Coal Creek Stabilization 

This project is designed to reduce sediment loads within Coal Creek by installing bridge and culvert stream crossings and also by moving the road away from the stream. Currently, there aren't any improved crossings of Coal Creek and the stream is forded frequently causing streambank and streambed erosion. Additionally, sediment is also entering the creek from the nearby road. During high flow events, the unvegetated road bank has eroded, resulting in increased steam sedimentation. Rock to stabilize the streambank was purchased during 2013. NEPA analyses were initiated in 2013; when the associated environmental assessment is completed, additional effort will be scheduled for 2014.



P R O J E C T S



Commissary Ridge Whitebark Pine

This project is designed to protect and enhance the Commissary Ridge whitebark pine stand (250 acres), which is the southernmost whitebark pine stand in Wyoming. The area has age-diverse stands of both whitebark and limber pine. The mature stands have extensive (70 percent +) mountain pine beetle infestation with a new infection of white pine blister rust. The project includes the removal of diseased whitebark and limber pine trees to reduce the spread of both mountain pine beetle and white pine blister rust and to improve survivorship of younger aged cohorts. Activities may also include the removal of a proportion of subalpine fir in order to aid expansion of whitebark pine. Diseased whitebark pine and subalpine fir trees will be removed from the area to increase the viability and regeneration of whitebark pine. During 2013, tree thinning and removal activities occurred on 73 acres. Treatments on the remaining 177 acres will be completed in 2014 between July and September.



Cottonwood Creek

The Cottonwood Creek project is designed to increase and improve existing wetland habitat for a variety of wetland-dependent wildlife species. Habitat improvements include constructing and repairing dikes, installing water control structures, and development of a reservoir on flood-irrigated land. Proposed dikes and water control structures were completed during 2013. These activities created or enhanced 16.3 wetland acres. Improvements on additional 50 to 55 acres (mostly Cottonwood Reservoir) are planned for 2014.

Fossil Butte Invasives

A WLCI funded intern (Student Conservation Association) contributed to the control of non-native invasive plants within the Fossil Butte National Park by pulling nearly 14,000 invasive plants, 37 bags of uncounted Russian thistle, 308 musk thistle plants, 35 bull thistle plants, and 20 spotted knapweed plants. Approximately 61 acres were treated for Canada thistle with the herbicide Milestone® within the park and adjacent BLM land. Dry spring weather inhibited this year's production of non-native invasives in and around the national park.



P R O J E C T S



Greys River Weed Treatments

Approximately 385 acres of non-native, invasive weed infestations were treated this year on the USFS Greys River Ranger District, with about 75 of those acres being facilitated by WLCI funding. The main weed species treated were spotted knapweed, leafy spurge, yellow toadflax, Dyer’s woad, houndstongue, black henbane, and musk thistle. Noxious weed treatments will continue during 2014.



Raymond Mountain Weed Treatments/Lincoln Uinta Noxious Weeds

Lincoln County Weed and Pest treated 192 acres to control Dalmatian toadflax and Dyer’s woad. They inspected and monitored nearly 1,000 acres with the aid of a helicopter during two days of spraying. An assessment was conducted to determine treatment progress and to identify funding and areas to treat in 2014.



Star Valley

No actions have been completed on this project this year. Scoping letter and NEPA analysis have yet to be initiated

Wyoming Range Mule Deer Habitat Project

The Wyoming Range mule deer herd is Wyoming’s largest deer herd and one of the largest in North America. Much of the winter range and transitional habitat for this herd is degraded, decadent, or otherwise unsuitable to sustain or improve herd health. A 300 acre herbicide treatment (Spike®) was completed in fall 2013. The next phase of treatments will be dependent on completion of NEPA analyses that are currently underway.



P R O J E C T S



Ruby Pipeline Focus Group

The Ruby Pipeline Focus Group was established to find mitigation projects for the pipeline under the direction of the WLCI.



Assessment of Springs and Reservoirs

This project began in 2011. To date, 262 reservoirs, comprising 156 acres, have been mapped and inventoried. In addition, 71 springs and seeps, comprising 123 acres, have been mapped and inventoried within the priority area. Due to changing management priorities, the focus for 2013 was only partially focused within the priority area. Monitoring and inventory was focused in one allotment within the priority area as well as two allotments outside the priority area. One of which is designated as core area habitat within the Wyoming Governor's Sage-grouse Core Area Strategy.



Impacts of Ravens on Sage-Grouse Nests

This study compared sage-grouse nesting success and productivity in raven removal and non-removal study sites. The goal was to identify a method to mitigate adverse impacts of anthropogenic development of sage-grouse. In 2013, 180 sage-grouse were tracked using radio collars, 109 sage-grouse nests were found, data of survival rates during the breeding season were collected and a paper was submitted for review.

Pygmy Rabbit Habitat Occupancy

The pilot portion of the Pygmy Rabbit Survey Accuracy Assessment was completed in 2010, with specific camera brands and capabilities explored and selected. Experimental camera placements and locations within burrow systems have been used to develop a consistent protocol for each field sampling set. A funding shortfall in FY 2011 resulted in no work on this project during that year. Field work in 2012 and 2013 yielded hundreds of useable photographs depicting pygmy rabbits in a variety of situations. Documentation of overlapping use of the same burrow by both pygmy rabbits and cottontail rabbits was obtained.

2013



P R O J E C T S



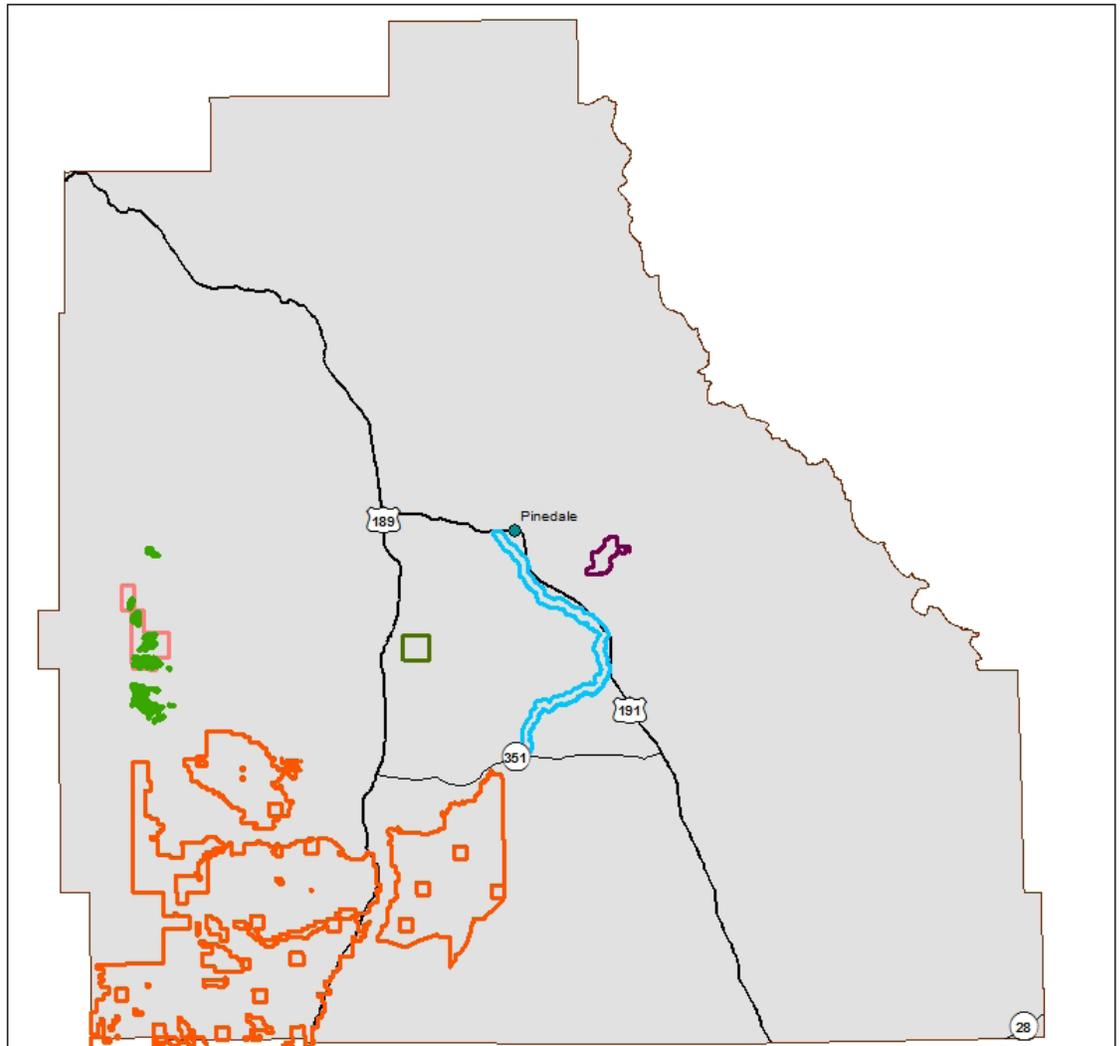
Pygmy Rabbits, Habitat and Gas Field Infrastructure *SS*

The primary goal of this project is to spatially relate pygmy rabbit distributions with variations in habitat, including gas field infrastructure. In 2013, two occupancy surveys at 28 plots in the vicinity of the Moxa Arch gas field were completed. In 2014, an additional 70 plots will be surveyed. This data will refine a USGS pygmy rabbit habitat map/model. The tools, products and information generated will include an up-to-date habitat map (including marginal habitat and non-habitat), a map predicting current distribution, and information on levels of gas field development that are compatible with continued pygmy rabbit site occupancy. Once completed, the pygmy rabbit habitat map may be used to identify and conserve areas of habitat when any developmental action is planned. The map may also identify areas where habitat enhancements are expected to aid colonization and occupancy. Information resulting from this project may be used during new gas field planning by helping guide the spatial location and compatible densities of well pads and roads in areas where pygmy rabbit conservation is a management priority.



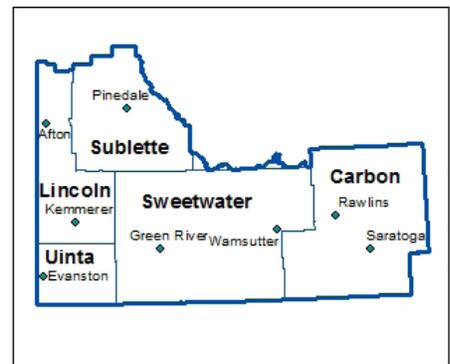


S U B L E T T E



Sublette County WLCI Projects

-  Boulder Cheatgrass
-  Lynx Habitat Assessment
-  New Fork River Infiltration of Trace Organics
-  Trumpeter Swan Habitat Enhancement
-  WY Front Aspen Restoration Project
-  Wyoming Range Mule Deer Habitat





P R O J E C T S

SUBLETTE COUNTY



Boulder Jonah Cheatgrass

The Sublette County Weed and Pest District treated 1,140 acres of cheatgrass in 2013 and established three additional photo points to achieve a total of five monitoring sites. Monitoring has demonstrated that herbicide applications have been effective at controlling cheatgrass.



Lynx Habitat Assesment

This assessment of lynx habitat will help the BLM gain an understanding of pre- and post-treatment impacts to local snowshoe hare (SSH) populations from aspen regeneration treatments. The information garnered from the assessment will allow for a greater understanding of when and where to thin forested areas in the Wyoming Range. Work completed included 50 permanent snowshoe hare pellet plots within the Camp Creek treatment 1-year post burn area and 50 permanent snowshoe hare pellet plots within the proposed Miller Mountain treatment area. Additional data collected at each of the above locations included stand measurements, SSH browse, horizontal cover, and photo points. In the Camp Creek treatment area, the plots were split among slashed but unburned, burned and un-slashed unburned.



New Fork River Infiltration of Trace Organics

Planning for research regarding the location and water quality characteristics of groundwater sources in the New Fork River began and fieldwork will be initiated in 2014. Funds were received in July 2013, thus we were not allowed to purchase equipment for the project. Planning will continue in fall 2013, equipment will be ordered, and field work will commence during spring 2014.

Trumpeter Swan Summer Habitat Enhancement

This project includes construction and restoration of shallow water wetland ponds on private lands to enhance summer habitat for trumpeter swans and other waterfowl, waterbirds, and wildlife in the Green River Basin. At the Swift Ranch, island construction for nesting, head gate installation on a feeder stream to the pond, and site reclamation and cleanup work were completed in 2013. At the Sullivan Pond, project planning for construction of two ponds was completed in 2013. At Rimfire Ranch, eight pre-planted vegetation mats were installed which completes work at this site.

2013



P R O J E C T S



Wyoming Front Aspen Restoration Project

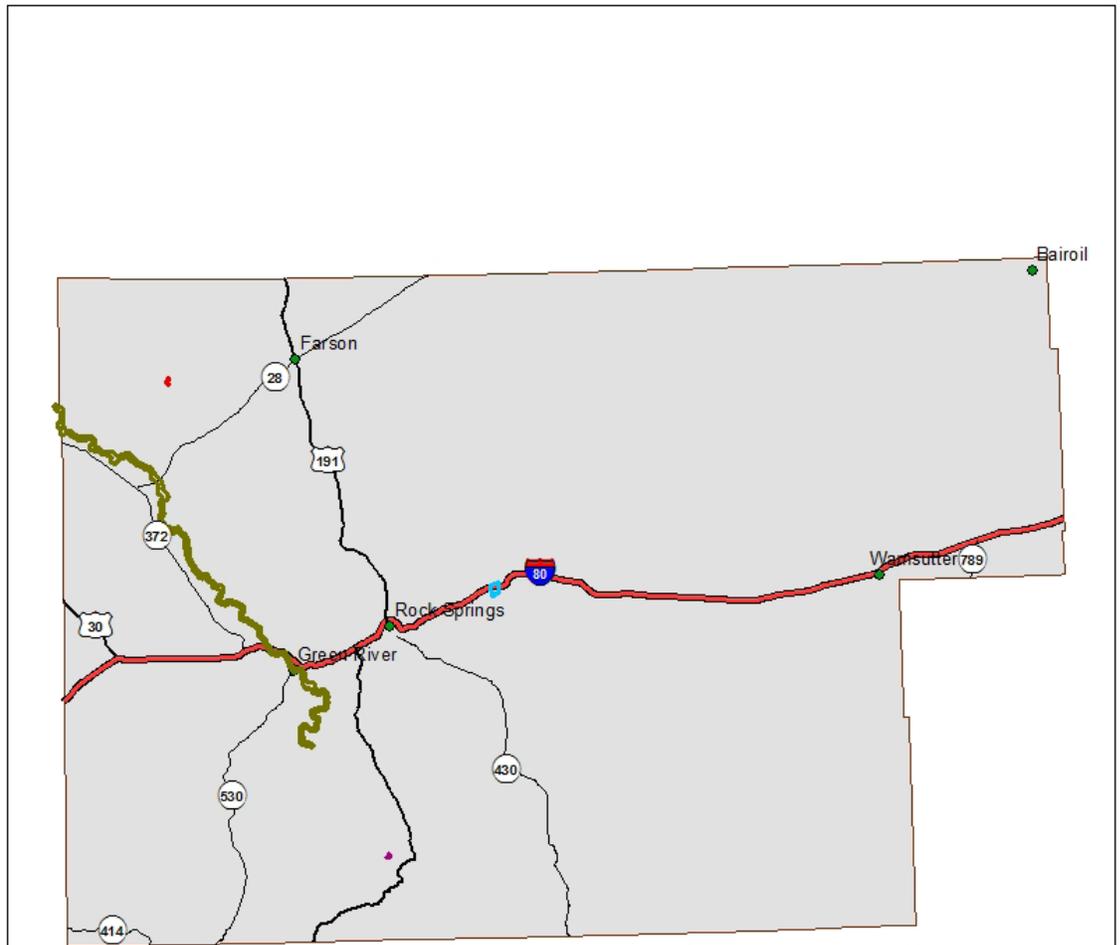
This project is focused on improving the ecological condition of aspen stands along the Wyoming Range. The project will treat approximately 9,000 acres of aspen through mechanical removal of conifer trees within aspen stands on BLM-land over a 10-year period. In 2013, the Upper Billies project treated 850 acres of conifer encroached aspen with prescribed fire. All of the prescribed burn project objectives were achieved in 2013. Mechanical treatments will be carried out in future years.



2013

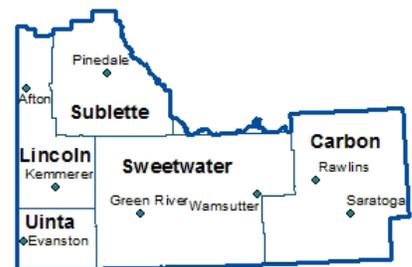


SWEETWATER



Sweetwater County WLCI Projects

-  Bitter Creek Restoration
-  Buckhorn Flowing Well
-  Gooseberry Creek Fish Passage
-  Green River Russian Olive Treatment



2013



P R O J E C T S

SWEETWATER COUNTY



Bitter Creek Restoration

This project involves replacing a failing in-stream structure, controlling invasive plant species in the riparian corridor, and reestablishing native vegetation in the Bitter Creek watershed. The Pierotto ditch diversion off Bitter Creek is in danger of being rendered dysfunctional as a channel incision moves upstream. In 2013, the contractor for the Sweetwater County Conservation District has collected core samples near the Pierotto ditch diversion. These core samples will be analyzed to determine the best location and method for installation of a new structure to benefit the Pierotto Ditch.



Buckhorn Flowing Well

This is a three-phase project dependent upon donated materials to enclose approximately 100 acres around a flowing well and associated riparian area southwest of Farson. The well head was protected last year. In 2013, a post pounder was purchased for the High Desert District to be used by BLM and WLCI on this and future fencing projects. Enough material has been donated to enclose a 40 acre area and posts have been driven for the second phase. During winter 2013-14, time and weather permitting, BLM field staff will weld railing to posts until materials are depleted.



City of Green River Russian Olive and Tamarisk Removal

This is a multi-phase project involving assessments, control measures, planting of native vegetation and monitoring. Russian Olive and Tamarisk are at a density that, if left unchecked, has the potential to become a monoculture along the Green River. No on-the-ground actions have occurred to date. Arrangements made with private landowners to begin treatments in late fall have been postponed until 2014.

Gooseberry Fish Passage

In summer 2013, the Gooseberry Creek fish passage project was finished with completion of the head-cut structure retrofit and the rock out cropping retrofit. Both the rock out cropping and the head-cut structure retrofit projects used large rock and logs to create a series of small drops with large pools. These created improved fisheries habitat, increased the riparian habitat and will allow fish passage. Approximately 1.5 miles of stream was reconnected, creating extended habitat for Colorado River cutthroat trout. Approximately 900 feet of stream habitat was enhanced, 500 feet of riparian fenced and exclosed to cattle and wild horses and 200 coyote willows planted.



PROJECT FUNDING



Project Name	Lead Agency	Funding Request	Funding Allocation	Cost Share Amount
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CARBON LPDT

Aspen Conservation Joint Venture	Little Snake River Conservation District	\$75,000	\$15,000	\$139,500
Baggot Rocks Invasives	Wyoming G&F	\$40,000	\$30,000	\$105,000
Baggs Deer Crossing	Wyoming G&F	\$37,000	\$35,000	\$150,000
Boykin Phase II	Wyoming G&F	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$239,000
Carbon Cty Weeds Perennial Pepperweed	Carbon County Weed and Pest District	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$6,000
Colorado River Erosion Control	BLM	\$11,000	\$0	\$29,000
Ferris Mtn WSA Leafy Spurge Treatment	Carbon County Weed and Pest District	\$21,000	\$18,500	\$6,500
Fish Passage Improvement RFO Area	BLM - Rawlins	\$90,000	\$80,000	\$275,000
Grizzly Fence Conversion	Wyoming G&F	\$38,000	\$30,000	\$0
Hay Reservoir Weed Treatment	BLM	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$7,000
Platte Valley Mule Deer habitat management	BLM	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$128,557
Rawlins Fence Conversion	BLM	\$50,000	\$45,000	\$45,396
Riverside Stream Enhancement Phase II	Saratoga-Encampment-Rawlins Conservation District	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$128,000
Sand Creek Saltcedar Control	BLM	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$0
Shirley Basin Sage-Grouse Habitat	Medicine Bow Conservation District	\$0	\$0	\$50,000

LINCOLN/UINTA LPDT

Coal Creek Stabilization	Wyoming G&F	\$86,200	\$60,000	\$119,880
Commisary White Bark Pine	BLM	\$40,000	\$0	\$40,000
Cottonwood Creek	USFWS	\$55,000	\$30,000	\$74,058
Fossil Butte Invasives	NPS	\$5,335	\$5,335	\$20,770
Greys River Weeds	USFS	\$47,500	\$32,000	\$77,500
Muddy Creek and Black Fork Tamarix Removal	Uinta County Weed and Pest District	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$0
Raymond Mountain Invasives	BLM	\$27,000	\$45,000	\$194,000
Star Valley	USFS	\$40,000	\$35,000	\$67,500
Wyoming Range Mule Deer Habitat	BLM	\$50,000	\$45,000	\$15,000



PROJECT FUNDING



Project Name	Lead Agency	Funding Request	Funding Allocation	Cost Share Amount
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SUBLETTE LPDT

Boulder Jonah Cheat Grass	BLM	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Lynx Habitat	BLM	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
New Fork River Infiltration of Trace Organics	USGS	\$ 170,872.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 143,940.00
Swift/Sullivan Trumpeter Swan Nest Site Enhancement	Wyoming G&F	\$ 107,000.00	\$ -	\$ 107,000.00
Wyoming Front Aspen Treatment	BLM	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 65,000.00

SWEETWATER LPDT

Bitter Creek Restoration	Sweetwater County Conservation District	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
Buckhorn Flowing Well	BLM	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$5,000
Gooseberry Fish Passage	Trout Unlimited	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$142,000
Green River Russian Olive Treatment	Wyoming G&F	\$30,000	\$29,500	\$125,000

Leverage	County	Funding Request	Funding Allocation	Cost Share Amount
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\$4	Carbon County	\$442,000	\$370,500	\$1,287,557
\$2	Lincoln/Uinta County	\$381,035	\$282,335	\$598,108
\$3	Sublette County	\$372,872	\$101,000	\$345,940
\$4	Sweetwater County	\$85,000	\$74,500	\$272,000

WLCI Average Leverage for FY13: \$3.2

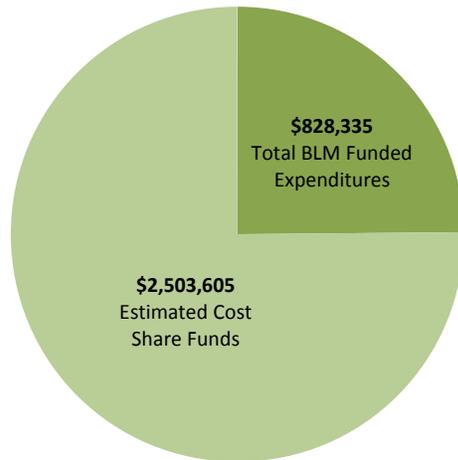
2013



PROJECT FUNDING



\$3,331,940 - Total WLCI Expenditures



\$845,748- Total BLM WLCI Budget



2013



PROJECT COOPERATORS



Bow Hunters of Wyoming
City of Green River
Carbon County Weed and Pest District
DuPont
Encana
Fremont Weed and Pest District
Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative
Knight Oil and Tool
Lincoln County Weed and Pest District
Little Snake River Conservation District
Medicine Bow Conservation District
Mule Deer Foundation
Muley Fanatics
Private Landowners
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Sage Grouse Working Group
Saratoga-Encampment River Conservation District
Sublette County Weed and Pest District
Sweetwater County Weed and Pest District
Sweetwater Conservation District
Teton Science School
Trout Unlimited
Uinta County Weed and Pest District
Uinta Development Company
University of Wyoming
Utah State University
Wyoming Community Foundation
Wyoming Department of Transportation
Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust



T E A M S



Executive Committee (EC)

Provides guidance and decision-making authority

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Coordination Team (CT)

Coordinates all WLCI activities and manages daily and fiscal operations

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Communications Team (CommT)

Conducts outreach about the WLCI and its work

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Science and Technical Advisory Team (STAT)

Provides science and technical advice and support to WLCI teams and committees

- | | |
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T E A M S



Data and Information Management Team (DIMT)

Shares WLCI data and information and pulls together resources and tools that assist with information management and data analysis

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 Kirk Nordyke, WGFD
 Barbara Ray, U.S. Geological Survey
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Monitoring Team (MT)

Provides technical information on monitoring activities by WLCI partners

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 Mark Goertle, BLM
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Support Team (ST)

Provides information and support to the CT and LPDTs to facilitate conservation actions

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 Mark Hogan, FWS
 John Keck, NPS
 Don Kranendonk, FS
 Adam Mendonca, FS
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T E A M S



USGS Science Team

Provides science information, expertise, and integration of science to support WLCI decision making

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Ruby Pipeline Focus Group

Focuses on conservation actions associated with the Ruby Mitigation Fund

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SCIENCE SUMMARY



During 2013, the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) science and technical assistance activities continued to focus on addressing management needs identified by WLCI partners; providing assistance with identifying, implementing, and tracking habitat projects in priority areas; conducting research and effectiveness monitoring to reveal patterns in and mechanisms behind species and habitat responses to land-use changes, habitat projects, and management actions.

There were 27 ongoing, completed, or new projects conducted in 2013 under the five major multi-disciplinary science and technical-assistance activities: (1) Baseline Synthesis, (2) Targeted Monitoring and Research, (3) Data and Information Management, (4) Integration and Coordination, and (5) Decision-making and Evaluation.

Three new projects include mapping the extent of cheatgrass within a natural gas development, the compilation of important agricultural data, and a native fish assessment associated with oil and gas development.

Numerous map products were completed during 2013. Some examples of these include sagebrush trend maps, mountain shrub patches within the La Barge Project Area, and maps of aspen occurrence and establishment dates in the Little Mountain Ecosystem Area, an energy map and mineral resource map of Southwest Wyoming, and ground-water potentiometric surface maps.

The USGS also met with local project development teams to discuss revisions to the Integrated Assessment and introduce them to the online assessment tool. Local team members provided feedback on features and data associated with the tool. The USGS is using this information to make revisions to the tool and to incorporate additional data.

The USGS continues to address WLCI partner technical-assistance needs, including development of Web tools and associated systems for storing, managing, displaying, downloading, and analyzing data, products, and other information. With the help of the WLCI Communication Team and Coordination Team, the USGS completed a new version of the WLCI web page and added web features to accommodate information for WLCI teams and committees.

2013



LEARN MORE



Ducks Unlimited

www.ducks.org

Fish and Wildlife Service Partners Program

www.fws.gov/pacific/ecoservices/habcon/partners/

Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative

greatnorthernlcc.org

Greater Yellowstone Coalition

www.greateryellowstone.org

Jonah Interagency Project Office

www.wy.blm.gov/jio-papo/jio/index.htm

The Nature Conservancy

www.nature.org

Pinedale Anticline Project Office

www.wy.blm.gov/jio-papo/papo/

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

www.rmef.org

Trout Unlimited

www.tu.org

Mule Deer Foundation

www.muledeer.org

Wyoming Natural Diversity Database

www.uwyo.edu/wyndd

Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust

wwnrt.wyo.gov