

Dear Forum Attendees,

In the workshops entitled “ New Breakthroughs in Fire and Invasive Weed Management” and “Sagebrush and Sage-grouse Landscape Management - Minimums and Maximums” we experimented with a service whereby attendees could text questions to the panel. A few of these texted questions were unanswered, due to time constraints or the timing of receiving the text. Upon returning to their offices last week our panelists answered these questions. I provide them and their answers below, for your interest.

Thanks your for your attendance in the International Greater sage-grouse Forum,

Sincerely,
Dr. Nicki Frey
Utah State University Extension

Submitted to Ken Meyer, WAFWA Wildfire and Invasive Species Coordinator

1. While having a working group create a plan and identifying high probability areas for treatment of invasive species --is there any effort to engage local and state weed and pest directors and stakeholders to create effective landscape projects for cheatgrass control?

Answer: Actually our WAFWA Fire and Invasive Working Group has just completed a survey of the weed management efforts across the west. When asked what are the deficiencies in the management of invasive species, the re-occurring theme of the invasive species managers in the west was that the state and local weed and pest programs have not been asked to engaged in the effort to manage and possible control cheatgrass and other invasive that contribute to the fire problem. We have identified this as an issue and are in the process of incorporating that recommendation into our Invasive Species Management Report to the USFWS for action, that is due out the first of the year [2015].

Submitted to Avery Cook, Upland Game Project Leader, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR)

What was the percent shrub cover in plots where sage-grouse were detected?

Answer: The mean percent cover in plots where sage-grouse use was detected was 13.5%, however there was considerable variation (SD 11.4%). Mean shrub cover in plots where sage-grouse were not detected was 7.0% (SD 4.6%).

How long did it take to observe use by the birds after treatment?

Answer: This was an observation study looking at treatments at a single point in time (Aug-Sept 2013) after treatments were completed, with treatments ranging from 6 years old to less than 1

year old. Since the treatments were not observed each year from implementation, I don't know how long it took for sage-grouse to begin using treatments, just that they were being used by the time of the surveys. The average age of treatments with observed sage-grouse use was 3.6 years (range of 1 to 6 years). The average age of treatments without observed sage-grouse use was 1.6 years (range of <1 to 4 years).