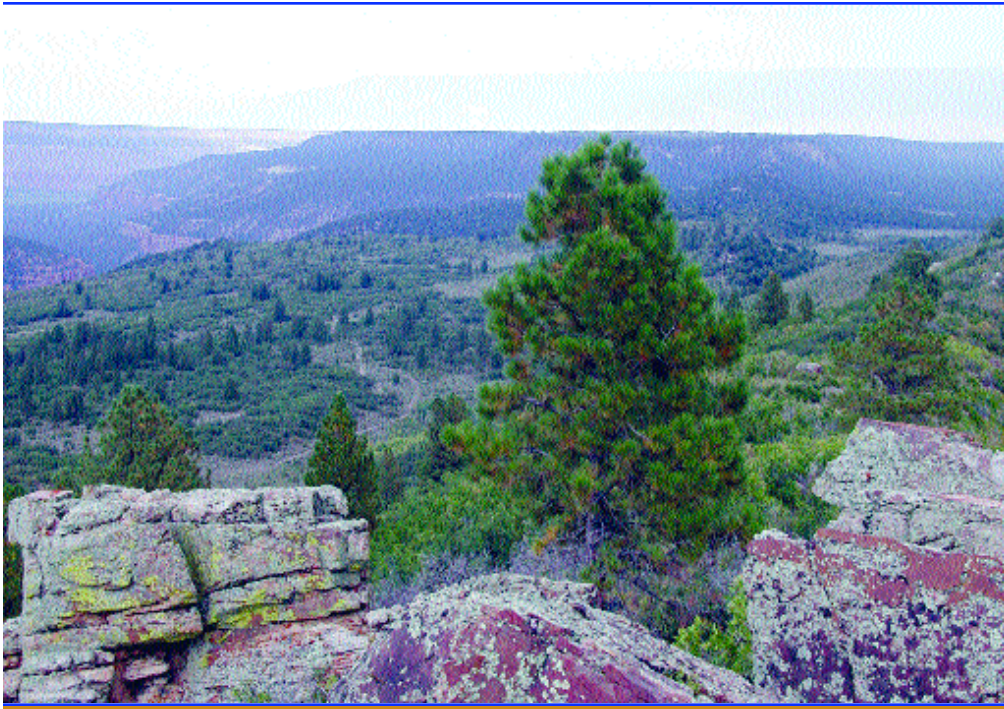




A PUBLICATION OF THE UNCOMPAGHRE PLATEAU PROJECT
FALL 2001 - ISSUE



UP-Date is a publication of the Uncompahgre Plateau Project for interested citizens of Western Colorado; and for all those who are attracted to the past, present and future of the Uncompahgre Plateau. For more information about the Uncompahgre Plateau Project and its components, educational opportunities, public meetings and presentations, field days, volunteer work, and other events, or if you want to become involved in any way, please contact:

UP
Phone: (970) 252-6002
e-mail: UP@UPproject.org
web: www.UPproject.org

Let's move UP together... for the health of the Uncompahgre Plateau

This quarterly publication is an abstract of the efforts and events that take place within the Uncompahgre Plateau Project. It is a way to reach out to all of you to share how diverse interest groups, local government, and government agencies are working together and coordinating their efforts for the greater good of the Plateau. It is a means to educate and inform, to invite and participate. It is a tool to start building lasting partnerships and developing a new language that will allow us to truly listen to each other. It is an account of our journey in learning what's important for the land, for the wildlife and for the people of the Plateau. Let's move UP together. Let's take the time to be inclusive of many of the views of this community, to read and learn, to listen and participate, to try, observe and monitor...to improve as we go.

We invite you to be a partner in this effort. Write to us with your thoughts, articles, ideas, stories. Contact us if you think you can help in any way or if you want to learn more about UP. Let's get to know each other and the Plateau, its history, its ecology, its economics, its people. Let's work together to find ways to make this beautiful part of Colorado a healthier place.

THE UNCOMPAGHRE PLATEAU

by Rick Sherman

Welcome to a brief overview of the Uncompahgre Plateau, an amazing and unique landscape, and the site of the Uncompahgre Plateau Project. The word Uncompahgre is a Ute Indian word with many connotations describing water, often described as "Dirty Water" or "Rocks that make water red". Geologic formations of Precambrian granite, Morrison and Dakota sandstones and Mancos shale dominate the Plateau, and also create some of the beautiful colored canyons and formations.

The history and use of the Plateau is as varied as its

canyons telling the stories of the canyons, wildlife and lifestyles of these wonderful people. Later stories of livestock rustling, land and livestock feuds, gun battles among landowners, development of uranium for atomic energy, to mention just a few, all add up to an enjoyable evening reading the history of this unique plateau.

The Uncompahgre Plateau is a high domed upland rising from the Colorado River, peaking near 10,000 feet in elevation, and running approximately 90 miles southeast to the base of the San Juan Mountains. The Plateau is bisected by steep walled canyons and surrounded on three sides by the Uncompahgre, Gunnison, San Miguel, Dolores and Colorado Rivers.

For the purpose of the Uncompahgre Project, the boundaries can be generally described as the San Miguel and Dolores Rivers on the West, Unaweep Canyon or Highway 141 on the north, the Gunnison and Uncompahgre Rivers on the east and Colorado Highway 62 on the south.

The project area is approximately 1.5 million acres in size of which 387, 552 acres is private. The remaining lands are public of which 9,590 acres are state managed lands; 571,992 acres are BLM managed lands and 544,777 acres are managed by the Forest Service.

The Plateau is comprised of several life zones. The Plains

Zone in Western Colorado is from 4500' to 6000', comprised of riparian (or green zones) along the stream tributaries. Cottonwoods, sumac, and rabbit-brush are some of the native vegetation types in this zone which transitions into pinyon-juniper, sagebrush, shrubby desert plants and sparse grasses and forbes. The Foothills Zone, 6000-8000', is dominated by pinyon-juniper trees throughout the Plateau. Ponderosa pine, blue spruce and scattered aspens form open woodlands at the upper elevation of this zone and into the Montane Zone.

landscape, ranging from the dinosaur quarries that tell some of the living history on the Plateau to the stone quarries that tell some of the geologic history. Did you know that sandstone quarried on the Plateau was used to build the Montrose post office and old courthouse in Montrose and granite was shipped from the Plateau to build the Denver City Hall and banks in San Francisco?

The Uncompahgre Plateau has a wonderful history of "The land of the Ute Indians". Petroglyphs are found throughout the

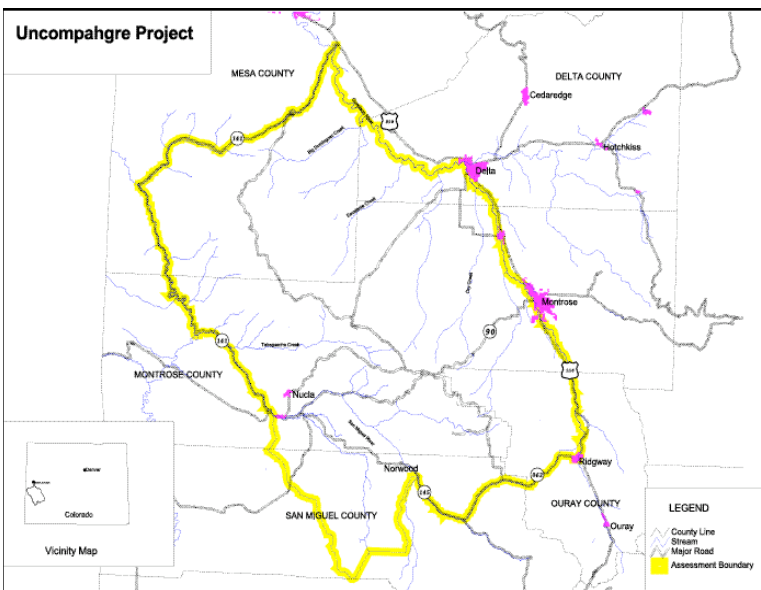
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The transition zone between the FootHills Zone and Montane Zone is dominated by shrub lands, primarily composed of mountain mahogany, serviceberry, Gambel oak and snowberry. The Montane Zone - 8000-1000' is dominated by the shrub lands to about 9000' before intermixing with ponderosa pine and larger stands of aspens, which eventually mix with denser stands of spruce-fir at the top of the Plateau.

As is true in all life zones, healthy ecosystems and communities are comprised of a diversity of age classes of plants and animals. For example, a healthy plant community has a nice mix of babies, toddlers, teenagers, middle aged adults, grandpa's and grandpa's and great grandparents. When this natural phenomenon gets out of whack, the balance of nature is lost. Natural occurrences such as disease, climactic changes, grazing and fires continually gave rebirth to the vegetation cycles on the Plateau resulting in this balanced cycle of vegetation. Recent wildlife studies are showing some interesting results in nutritional problems in mule deer. Vegetation studies are showing a closing of the forest canopy and reduction in plant



diversity and vigor as plants get older.

Human controlled natural fires for the last 120 years has resulted in major changes in the natural ecosystem as vegetation grows older and more decadent. The encroachment of trees and shrubs throughout the landscape is diminishing the quality, quantity and diversity of plant species available for both wildlife and livestock. Vegetatively speaking, the Plateau has a robust population of "baby boomers".

As we continue to enjoy and use the Uncompahgre Plateau, it is obvious that we need to look at it as a community partnership and decide what "we" can do to restore the functions of this beautiful landscape. Not only is this wonderful landscape a wonderful neighbor, but it also provides important resources and uses for our daily living. It is important that we work together to insure these resources are available for today, tomorrow and the future.

As the Uncompahgre Plateau Project (UP) unfolds, we look forward to working with you as a neighbor and UP TEAMMATE to learn more about how we can collectively move in a positive direction to protect, enhance and utilize the natural resources of this unique landform, known as the Uncompahgre Plateau. Wishing you an "UP" day! ■

Rick Sherman recently retired after a 30-year career as a wildlife biologist with the Colorado Division of Wildlife. He graduated from Colorado State University with a degree in fisheries biology. Prior to working for CDOW he worked for California Game and Fish, studying the impacts of water development, logging and road building on salmon, steel head and other anadromous species.

In 1976 Rick began a new assignment with CDOW in Montrose as the environmental and habitat biologist for Southwest Colorado.

Rick also served as one of the two original coordinators in Colorado for the prototype Habitat Partnership Program (HPP).

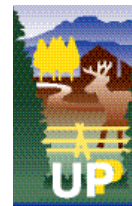
Rick spent many years working with the USFS and BLM on "CO-OP" projects utilizing CDOW funds for doing wildlife projects on public lands. A great deal of his career has been spent working in the area of wildlife habitat enhancement in Western Colorado.

Rick currently serves as a volunteer technical advisor for the Valley Land Conservancy and Montrose Greenway Committee and is the owner of a consulting business named "Wildlife Habitat and Natural Resource Specialists".

Rick served as a past president of both the Colorado State University and Colorado/Wyoming Chapters of the American Fisheries Society. He also served on the international board of directors for the AFS. Rick served on the board of directors of the Colorado Chapter of the Wildlife Society in addition to holding several positions with CWS. He is associated with numerous professional and conservation organizations nationally and locally.

Rick can be reached at: rtsherman@dmea.net

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WHAT IS THE UNCOMPAGHGRE PLATEAU PROJECT (UP)?

by Daniela Howell

Land - Stewardship - Resources - Community — all are words that represent the Uncompahgre Plateau Project (UP). Land, in view of its focus on restoring ecosystem health on the Uncompahgre Plateau. Stewardship, because we will learn how to restore, enhance and maintain the health of land. Resources, because they will be managed for the economic benefit of the people in the area. Community, for it is through joining efforts and working together that this meaningful goal will be accomplished.

One of a Kind Partnership

Partnerships and true collaborative efforts are becoming less rare among resource users and decision makers, but it is not too often that three of the major government agencies, local governments and a wide variety of private land users and engaged citizens with diverse backgrounds and interests decide to join and coordinate their efforts for a greater cause than their own.

This is exactly what's going on on the Uncompahgre Plateau, one of Colorado's most outstanding landscapes. BLM, USFS, CDOW and the Public Lands Partnership (representing four counties: Delta, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel) are leading a project that could become a model for community resource management and sound decision making across the country: UP (Uncompahgre Plateau Project, formerly the Uncompahgre Ecosystem Restoration Project).

Why is UP any different from other efforts?

Because those involved are committed to move UP together, to work with a clear collective goal in mind and remain proactive and forward focused until it is reached. Scientists and land users, agency personnel and environmentalists, from the local, regional and national levels, are all talking to each other, listening to each other, trying to understand each other, and moving beyond conflict into effective collaboration and decision making.

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From deer to the whole picture

The projects' roots date to more than a decade ago, when biologists at the CDOW became increasingly concerned about the declining mule deer populations on the Plateau. USFS and BLM officers were at the same time aware of the decrease in overall ecosystem health. Just a few years later the PLP started concentrating their efforts on the Plateau as well, eventually becoming an UP key partner, effectively tying together the other members through active public involvement and bringing much local and political support to this effort.

All of these groups realized they needed to work together, across agency boundaries and along with private land owners, and address the management needs of the Plateau as a unit. From the very beginning this alliance understood the importance of involving the broader public and land users to effectively meet the ecological needs of the land while simultaneously addressing and considering the community's social and economic concerns. Since then, many field trips, public meetings and on the ground projects have taken place. A public collaborative council, made up of all of UP's partners and all interested members of the public, was formed, and is growing rapidly as the project moves forward.

UP and running

In May 2001, the alliance decided to formally launch UP, at which point a technical coordinator and a public education and outreach coordinator were hired to take some of the work load that was being generated by such a great endeavor. Among the many undertakings initiated since then, a landscape assessment (see page 5), a fire history project, a landscape dynamics project, a GIS study for grazing allotments, a native seed program (see page 7) and on the ground vegetation enhancement treatments, such as roller chopping, can be mentioned. UP's sister projects, such as the Living History and Uncompahgre Commerce, among others, lead by PLP are also contributing to the land management and educational efforts on the Plateau. Agency moneys as well as substantial grants (Ford Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Habitat Partnership Program, among others) are financing this project.

The public will be kept informed and updated on

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these efforts through this publication and our upcoming web site (at www.UPproject.org). Field days, public meetings and collaborative council meetings will serve as forums for public involvement and collaboration on these and future proposals within UP.

We invite you to be part of this great journey...a journey to rediscover the meaning of community...to become better stewards of the Plateau's natural resources... a journey to ensure a thriving and truly sustainable society. ■

UP's Public Education and Outreach Coordinator, and Up-Date editor Daniela Ibarra-Howell, was born and raised in Argentina. She studied Agricultural Sciences at the University of Buenos Aires and worked for the Argentine Ministry of Agriculture for four years in the areas of land degradation and restoration. She further completed a Masters Degree in Natural Resource Management at Lincoln University in New Zealand. Having met husband Jim in New Zealand, and after traveling extensively around the world, Daniela settled in the USA and co-managed with Jim the Center for Holistic Management Learning Site, the

35,000 acre High Lonesome Ranch in southwestern New Mexico, for a period of two years. During this time she also completed the 2 year Certified Educators Program in Holistic Management. Daniela settled in Montrose in 1997. She immediately became involved in a 4-year, Kellogg funded community based project as a trainer and facilitator and worked together with many of the local agencies and government leaders, as well as with members of the PLP. She also began co-managing with husband Jim their family ranch. Their primary enterprises include contract grazing of cattle, a big game guiding and outfitting business, timber production, educational retreats and training in land management. During the North American winter, Daniela and husband Jim lead trips to successful, creatively managed ranches in Zimbabwe, Argentina, Australia, New Zealand and various destinations in North America.

If you'd like to schedule a presentation on UP or to participate in the educational and outreach aspects of UP, you can contact Daniela at howelljd@montrose.net

UP Statement of Purpose

To develop a collaborative approach to restore and maintain the ecosystem health of the Uncompahgre Plateau, using best science and public input.

WHAT'S UP WITH UP - ON-GOING EFFORTS

THE UNCOMPAHGRE PLATEAU LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

By John Moore

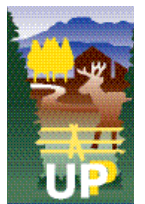
On August 2, 2001 the Public Lands Partnership met with agency administrators from the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, the Grand Junction and Uncompahgre Field Offices of the BLM, and the West Slope Region of the Colorado Division of Wildlife, and together, they approved the concept for conducting an integrated landscape assessment of the resource conditions on the Uncompahgre Plateau, as part of the UP effort.

Landscape assessments employ an ordered process

involving interdisciplinary teams of resource specialists that use a watershed-based approach for evaluating land and resource conditions. The purpose of landscape assessments is to characterize the dominant physical, biological, and human processes or features of the landscape that affect the condition and function of the land. In other words-what are the primary elements that influence how the land looks and behaves over time.

The 1,600,000-acre Uncompahgre Plateau landscape analysis area includes National Forest System land, Bureau of Land Management land, Colorado State land and private land. The analysis area is defined by State

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Highways 141 on the west and north, State Highways 50 and 550 on the east and State Highways 62 and 145 on the south. It also includes an area near Norwood that is of concern to the land management agencies and the Division of Wildlife due to its importance as mule deer winter range. *(see map on page 3)*

The landscape assessment contract was awarded in September 2001 to Foster Wheeler Environmental Corporation, a national leader in natural resources services with experience in conducting large-scale landscape assessments and it's being funded by BLM and Forest Service jointly. It is scheduled to be completed by the end of February 2002. Most of the fall of this year will be used to gather the existing condition information from the many different sources and develop a common GIS database to be used by the different agencies. GIS stands for Geographic Information System, and it is a computer based mapping and analysis tool used by land managers to evaluate complex land management analysis scenarios.

How will the landscape assessment be used?

The landscape assessment is not a decision document but a tool for effective and informed decision making .

It is a consolidated mass of critical information that becomes readily available to the decision makers. Assessments provide scientific observations, trends, and conclusions that can be used for recommendations in prioritizing areas for land management treatments, based on risk assessment. It provides the land managers and the public with a comprehensive scientific basis for evaluating current land health conditions against both a reference (past) condition and a desired landscape condition. How did the land look? What does it look like now? How do we want it to look in the future?

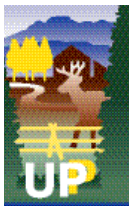
Future project analysis in the Uncompahgre Plateau area will utilize the information developed in the landscape assessment. One of the objectives for the landscape assessment effort is to identify areas of high priority for wildland-urban interface treatments (residences and properties at risk from wildfire), fuels and vegetation management, mechanical and prescribed fire treat-

ments, ecological restoration activities, and wildlife habitat improvement projects. Another emphasis will be to complement interagency fire, vegetation and habitat management projects and adequately address cumulative effects across land ownerships.

Following public involvement and environmental analysis of proposed projects, the partnership will begin implementing projects in the spring of 2003. Funding for implementation will come from a combination of Forest Service and BLM dollars, coupled with cooperative dollars from other UP partnership participants. Likely sources of additional funding for implementation of restoration and habitat improvement projects are grants from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the Habitat Partnership Program, the Mule Deer Foundation, the Wild Turkey Federation and the Colorado State Forest Service. ■

John has a degree in Range and Forest Management from Colorado State University. He began his Forest Service career on the Routt N.F. in Walden, CO, where he was a Forestry Technician and Range Conservationist. He later transferred to the Natural Resource Conservation Service NRCS (formerly SCS) in the Cortez, CO Field Office and provided technical assistance to farmers and ranchers in Dolores and Montezuma Counties. He worked for the (NRCS) as both a Soil Conservationist and Range Conservationist. After that, he transferred back to the Forest Service in Thy, Oregon as a Range Conservationist on the Fremont NF. Following his assignment in Oregon he transferred to Springerville, AZ as a District Range Staff on the Apache Sitgreaves NFS. He held a variety of positions on that forest including District Range Staff; Range, Wildlife and Fisheries Staff; Zone Range Staff on the Alpine and Springerville Ranger Districts and then as a Planning, Wildlife and Timber Staff on the Lakeside RD. He is currently a forester assigned to the Planning Staff in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison NFS Supervisor's Office responsible for implementation of the National Fire Plan (NFP). John has added a new level of dynamism and valuable insight to this project. You can contact him at jmoore06@fs.fed.us

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NATIVE SEED PROGRAM

Two field tours and a couple of meetings have given way to a great program: the Native Plant/Seed program for the Uncompahgre Plateau Project (UP). Currently being discussed are such topics as what a native plant is, how to grow them, how to get private growers involved, challenges for growing etc. All involved (UP partners, university scientists and CSU extension agents, seed growers, seed laboratories and interested citizens) have discussed how they could become involved and contribute to this effort. An initial plant list for grasses, forbes and shrubs, primarily for the Pinyon- Juniper life zone, was developed to start setting the direction of efforts.

A team of native plant experts from the various agencies and groups was established to primarily review the species list and help establish some guidelines for getting the program going. It was expressed that the Meeker Plant Center and CSU Rogers Mesa

Experimental Station could be key partners in research and development to establish some foundation seed sources for commercial growers, in addition to contracting and supervising established local growers in the development of a long term native seed program.

A proposal for FS funding as well as potential funding from the BLM National Native Seed Development Program under the direction of Steve Caiico will be put together by UP's technical coordinator, Rick Sherman, and botanist Stephen Monsen, from the USDA Forest Service Shrub Sciences Laboratory in Provo, Utah.

It was acknowledged that it takes time to develop a successful seed industry, and it is important to get started on a priority basis. UP will work closely with the "people in the know" to get this program rolling.

We'll keep you updated on this. If you'd like more information or if you have expertise on this subject and would like to participate in this effort, please contact Rick Sherman at rtsherman@dmea.net ■

Other On-going Projects

- GIS Grazing allotments data base - James Ferriday
- Landscape Dynamics Model - Carmine Lockwood
- Fire History project - Wayne Shepard

Look for more information on these and more up-coming projects on our web - site and in future issues of UP-Date.

LAND MANAGEMENT TOOLS

FIRE AS A TOOL TO ENHANCE THE ECOSYSTEM



By Dan Hiusjein

Editor's Note:

Any tool which humans use to manage the land (fire, grazing, technology, etc) can result in positive or negative effects on its integrity. They all have the potential

to restore ecosystem health. At the same time, if inappropriately used, they can be very harmful. This section of UP-DATE will explore the benefits and potential risks of the application of different tools in managing natural resources. Its purpose is to become more informed and aware, and be better qualified to effectively and appropriately influence decision-making affecting natural resource management. This is the first in a series of articles on "fire" as a tool.

Through them we will explore its effects on the ecosystem in the short and the long term. We'll draw from the experience of

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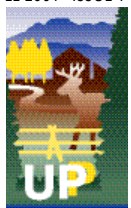
those who have used and analyzed the adequacy of this tool in improving ecosystem health.

Prescribed fire can be a valuable tool to treat vegetation to improve wildlife habitat, enhance watershed condition, and reduce the potential for catastrophic fires in the future

All wildlife species rely on their local habitat to supply them with food, water, and shelter. As the vegetation within their habitat ages it becomes more dense and continuous, effectively crowding out the grasses, forbes, and shrubs that many species depend on for food. These dense stands of timber also utilize more water than areas dominated by grasses and shrubs; this often results in decreased spring flow in areas with dense timber. The amount of shelter, or hiding cover, often increases with the age of stands but, without food and water in close proximity to this cover, it does not meet the entire needs of the species and subsequently has little value. Prescribed fire can be used in many older vegetation types to reduce the amount of decadent, unusable vegetation and increase areas where younger grasses and shrubs can grow. These areas can be small or large depending on the needs of specific wildlife species. In some instances the openings created by the prescribed fire are seeded using a mixture of native seeds designed for the specific needs of a variety of species.

Older stands of timber or brush often have significantly more bare ground beneath the older trees than younger stands of timber or brush because of the increased competition for both water and nutrients. This bare ground is subject to erosion during heavy rains or rapid snow melt, resulting in loss of soil from the area and increased loadings of sediment in downstream areas. As with wildlife habitat, prescribed fire can be utilized to create openings and reduce the density of these older, decadent stands, allowing grasses and shrubs to move back into the area. The increase in grasses and shrubs can help hold both water and soils in place, reducing the overland flow of water, the loss of soil, and the sedimentation of streams.

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Over the past several years most of the

catastrophic fires in the Western U.S. have occurred in stands of dense, continuous timber. These fires are very hard for firefighters to control because of the high intensity with which they burn. Long flames, temperatures of a 1000 degrees or more, and smaller 'spot' fires started by embers blown ahead of the fire all make control difficult. By breaking up these dense stands of timber with carefully planned prescribed burns, managers can decrease the intensity of a timber crown fire to that of a grass fire. Spot fires are also less likely to occur in grass fuels. These changes in vegetation and the subsequent fire behavior give firefighters a safer place from which to fight the fire and a significantly better opportunity to control the fire before it destroys valued natural resources, subdivisions, and private property.

By carefully planning and implementing prescribed fires across the landscape, managers can improve the value of both wildlife habitat and the watershed while increasing our ability to protect valuable resources, adjacent subdivisions, and private property. In order to increase their capability to utilize prescribed fire on public lands, the federal fire agencies, which include the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and United States Forest Service, have recently hired additional expertise in both the planning and implementation of prescribed fire. ■

Dan is the Fire Ecologist for the Montrose Interagency Fire Program. He has been in that position for 6 months. Prior to that he spent 9 years as the Fire Management Officer for the Socorro Field Office in New Mexico where he concentrated both on protecting Wildland Urban interface areas through fuel reduction and enhancing habitat and watershed condition through prescribed burning. His knowledge and expertise are a great asset to UP. Dan can be reached at daniel_hiusjen@co.blm.gov

Editor's Note:

As we become more involved in public resource management and try to influence government decision-making, we can take one of several paths. We can fight and react to things we don't like. We can step aside and witness the outcomes of others' decisions...or we can proactively decide to take part on the shaping of our communities' future. The UP team has no doubt the latter is the way to go. But we need to learn the art of collaborating and rediscover the joy of teamwork. Our diversity of views and backgrounds can be the source of much conflict, but can indeed become our biggest strength in improving the state of the environment.

As a member of the Cameron County Agricultural Coexistence Committee has put it: "I think it's pretty interesting because coexistence is really what it's about. It's not saying that we are all going to love each other. We are just going to find a way to work together and come to some common ground."

And then again who knows. . . we might start to like each other too in the process!

This section of UP-DATE is dedicated to exploring frameworks and techniques for diverse groups to succeed at working together. In this first issue, we present "Collaborative Learning", a method that the USFS is planning to use in order to encourage public participation in the Landscape Assessment project under way, in coordination with the rest of the UP's partners.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

*Excerpts from **Working through environmental conflict: The Collaborative Learning approach.***

Steve Daniels, and Gregg Walker

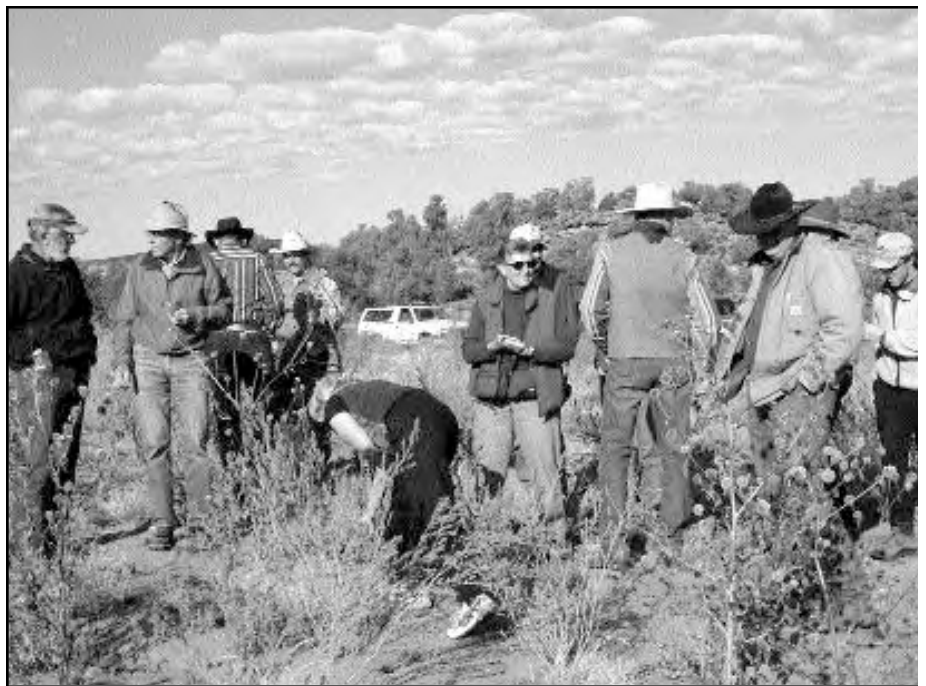
What is Collaborative Learning?

Collaborative Learning is an approach appropriate for natural resource, environmental, and community deci-

sion-making situations with the following features: multiple parties, deeply held values, cultural differences, multiple issues, scientific and technical uncertainty, and legal and jurisdictional constraints. It emphasizes activities that encourage systems thinking, joint learning, open communication, constructive conflict management, and a focus on appropriate change.

Collaborative Learning is a hybrid of soft systems methodology (SSM), experiential and adult learning theories, and the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) areas of conflict resolution, mediation and negotiation. Key notions of Collaborative Learning include:

- Re-defining the task away from solving a problem to one of improving a situation.
- Viewing the situation as a set of interrelated systems.
- Defining improvement as desirable and feasible



change.

- Recognition that considerable learning—about science, issues, and value differences—will have to occur before implementable improvements are possible.

Collaborative Learning respects value differences and provides an opportunity for transforming value disputes into interest disputes.



How does Collaborative Learning work?

Collaborative Learning operates on three levels: (1) as a philosophy or orientation, (2) as a framework, and (3) as a set of tactics. As a public participation or planning team approach, Collaborative Learning encourages people to learn actively, to think systematically, and to learn from one another about a particular problem situation. In initial stages, activities might include information exchange, imagining best and worst possible futures, and visual representations of the situation, perhaps through the use of "situation maps." In middle stages, CL participants focus on concerns and interests regarding the specific situation, and how those concerns relate to other concerns. Out of these concerns, CL parties identify possible changes that could be made: "situation improvements." In latter stages, the participants debate these improvements, addressing whether or not they represent desirable and feasible changes in the present situation.



What does Collaborative Learning produce? Collaborative Learning presumes that situations are dynamic, systemic, and changing. CL is a framework that can be adapted to a particular situation to generate:

- Dialogue between diverse communities: scientific, public, administrative.
- Improved understanding of the specific problem situation.
- Integration of scientific and public knowledge about the problem situation.
- Increased rapport, respect, and trust



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among participants.

- Clearly articulated systems-based concerns about the problem situation.
- Tangible improvements in the problem situation.

How does Collaborative Learning relate to ecosystem-based management?

Collaborative Learning is both philosophically and practically compatible with the basic tenets of ecosystem-based management (ESBM). First, ESBM's commitment to ecological analysis and methods is consistent with CL's emphasis on a "human activity system" view of situations. Second, CL needs the best science and technologies that ESBM features to be a part of CL's learning activities. CL provides a venue for scientific and technical knowledge to be part of the civic discourse. Third, the CL framework adapts well to public participation. CL accommodates open participation, values local knowledge, and respects citizen interest and commitment. Fourth, CL provides the opportunity for the development of shared visions and goals upon which partnerships may be based. Collaborative Learning encourages a holistic, systemic view of a situation. It respects the complexity of a situation in a manner similar to ecosystem-based management.

What Collaborative Learning is Not.

Collaborative Learning, while beneficial within any complex and controversial policy situation, is no panacea or "silver bullet." It is one of possibly many frameworks that can involve people in meaningful learning and discussion about challenging management and decision situations. It does not stress or demand consensus. It does stress learning, understanding, and the development of improvements in the situation. CL does not foster the development of a group "mentality" or "recommendations." Rather, CL encourages parties to make progress on improving the situation as they work through issues, values, and concerns.

For more information contact:

Steve Daniels, WRDC, Utah State University

Email: sdaniels@ext.usu.edu

Gregg Walker, SPCOMM, Oregon State University

Email: gwalker@orst.edu

INHABITANTS OF THE UNCOMPAGHGRE PLATEAU

MULE DEER

by Bruce Watkins

Similar to mule deer populations in many other areas, the deer on the Uncompahgre Plateau make seasonal movements and use a variety of habitats.

Deer on the Plateau begin moving to lower elevations in late September and October. This is the time of year when deer make the greatest use of their transitional range. On the Uncompahgre Plateau this transitional range usually occurs between about 7500-8500' and is characterized by the mountain shrub community consisting of Gambel's oak, serviceberry, mountain mahogany, mountain big sagebrush, and other shrub types. This transitional range is very important for deer as they need to achieve their peak body condition at this time of the year to help carry them through the winter.

By mid to late November, the majority of deer have usually arrived on the winter range. Depending on weather and possibly other factors such as hunting pressure, the majority of this movement to winter range can occur within a matter of days. Most mule deer on the Uncompahgre Plateau winter below 7,500' even in mild winters. The upper elevation of the winter range is below the mountain shrub zone and well into the pinyon-juniper zone in most places. The peak of breeding for mule deer on the Uncompahgre Plateau occurs on the winter range during the last week of November and the first week of December.

During the winter, deer seek out areas that provide food and milder climate conditions. The mule deer's winter feeding strategy is to slow their rate of inevitable weight loss as much as possible. Pinyon and juniper forests provide important thermal and escape cover for deer but offer little in the way of adequate forage. For food during the winter, deer are very dependent on lower elevation sagebrush parks. Sagebrush and other browse species, forbes, and growing, cool season grasses are important components in the winter diet. Along the Uncompahgre Valley and in the San Miguel Basin, agricultural areas in general and alfalfa fields in particular are heavily used by deer and no doubt play an important role in determining wintering deer densities. Based on aerial surveys, winter deer densities along the Uncompahgre

Valley averaged 85 deer/mi² on the south end of the Plateau and in some areas have been found to exceed 200 deer/mi². In contrast, the average density on the northeast end of the Plateau is less than 5 deer/mi². Deer usually remain on the winter range well into April.

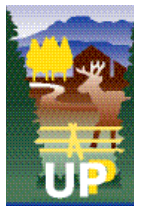


With snowmelt and spring green-up, the deer begin moving to higher elevations through their transitional range areas. By early to mid-May, most of the does have moved to their preferred fawning locations. These fawning areas are typically

aspen or mixed aspen-mountain shrub communities between 8,500'- 10,000'. The does take advantage of the nutritious spring plant growth to support rapid fetal development during the last trimester of gestation. Does that come out of the winter in better condition are more able to cope with the increased demands of fetal development and milk production. The peak of fawning on the Uncompahgre occurs during mid to late June. Does typically remain in the same general fawning areas throughout the summer and feed on an abundance of forbes, deciduous shrubs, and growing grass. Food is abundant but demands for lactation are high until August when the fawns become more reliant on forage. Does don't begin to regain body condition until late summer. Late summer habitat is very important to ensure that does and fawns are well on their way to achieving good condition when they move to their transitional ranges once again in the fall. ■

Bruce Watkins grew up in Colorado Springs. He received a BS in Wildlife Biology from CSU, an MS in Wildlife Ecology from Oregon State University, and a PhD in Wildlife Biology and Animal Science from Michigan State University. After graduating from MSU he taught wildlife biology at Washington State and Fresno State Universities before going to Chicago to be the Nutritionist at the Brookfield Zoo. While in Chicago he developed an animal nutrition software package, started his own business and moved to Durango. In 1993 he went to work for the CDOW as a District Wildlife Manager in Colorado Springs. In 1998 he became the Terrestrial Biologist for CDOW in Montrose. Bruce is the representative of the CDOW in the UP Technical Committee. He brings a wealth of knowledge and practical skills to this project. Bruce can be contacted at: bruce.watkins@state.co.us

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UP on the Bookshelf

We believe that reading and exposing ourselves to many views and other ongoing efforts similar to UP will make us better decision-makers. This section of UP-DATE will suggest readings and sources of information that we think can be of interest to our readership. If you have any recommendations on reading materials, websites or videos, let us know. We'll put your favorite ones UP on our bookshelf.



“The Quivira Coalition - Sharing common-sense solutions to the rangeland conflict” (Newsletter - subscription by mail : 551 Cordova Road # 423 Santa Fe, NM 87505 - www.quiviracoalition.org)
“Patterns of Choice” by Peter Donovan, OR (Bimonthly e-mail newsletter from website: <http://www.managingwholes.com> On-line subscription)

Books:

“Beyond the rangeland conflict” Dan Dagget
“The Eternal Frontier - an Ecological History of North America and its Peoples” -Tim Flannery
Both fantastic!!
“Making Collaboration Work - Lessons from Innovation in Natural Resource Management”
Julia Wondolleck and Steven Yaffee

UP-coming Events

The most important **UP-coming event is our next public Collaborative Council meeting** on October 30, 2001. This meeting has been set to update the interested public on UP and the efforts undertaken this year. Also, we will be starting to shape the community goal for the Plateau. So, start thinking of those aspects of the Plateau you value the most and want to see protected or enhanced. Consider all the social, cultural, economic and ecological aspects. UP will move in the right direction only if the community contributes to the understanding of where we want to go and what we want to see happening on the Plateau. So, mark your calendars and attend this important public meeting on **October 30, 2001 at 2 PM - Friendship Hall - Montrose**. See you there!

We are planning to offer field trips, workshops, conferences and other educational opportunities related to UP. We'd like to hear what you'd like us to organize for you. Is there a speaker you'd like to hear and interact with? Is there a topic you'd like to explore with experts? Do you have a specific skill that you'd like to develop to become a better resource manager or decision-maker? There is a long winter just ahead of us with “less busy” time for many. We could organize a few programs if there is enough interest. Contact us and let us know.

