

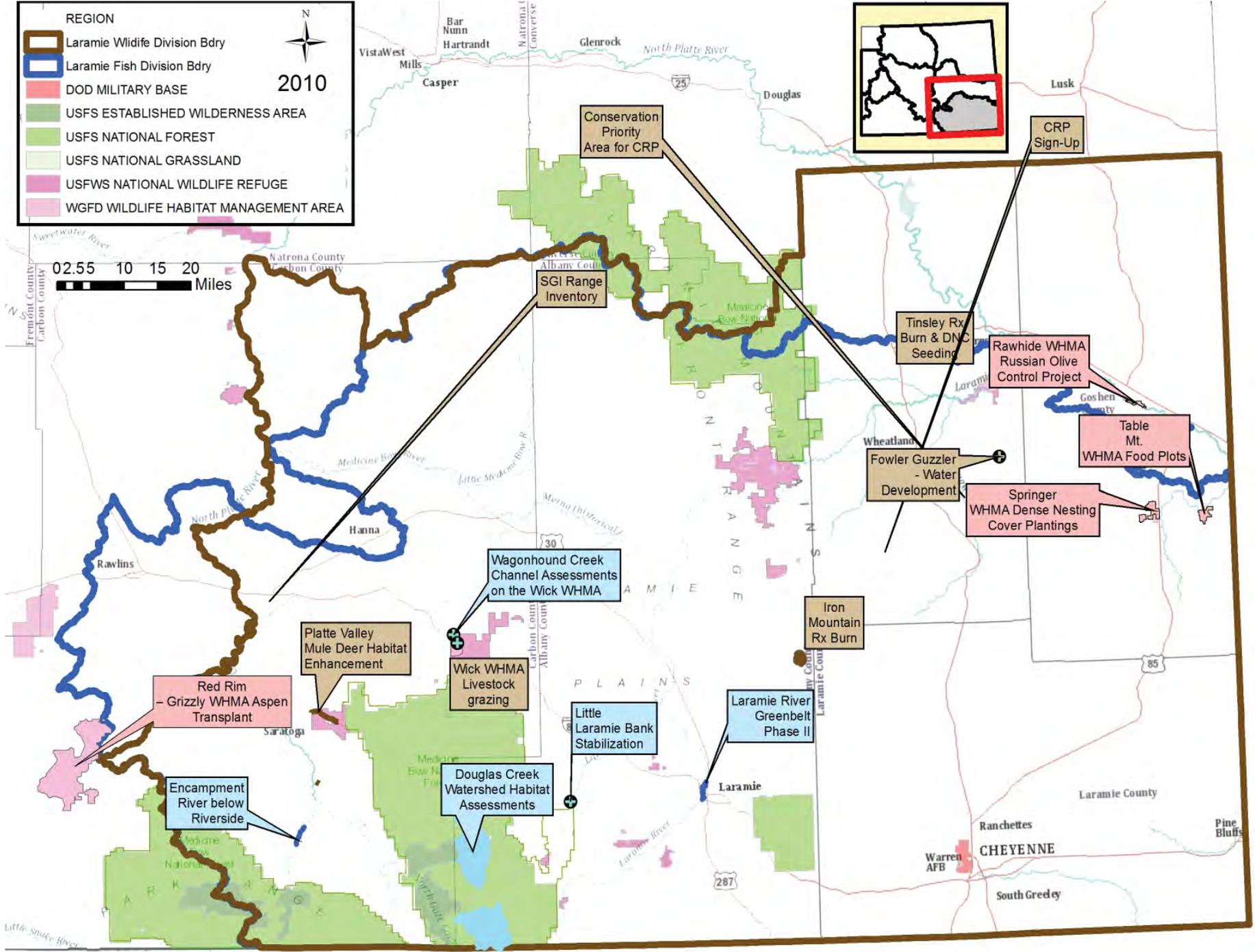
REGION

-  Laramie Wildlife Division Bdry
-  Laramie Fish Division Bdry
-  DOD MILITARY BASE
-  USFS ESTABLISHED WILDERNESS AREA
-  USFS NATIONAL FOREST
-  USFS NATIONAL GRASSLAND
-  USFWS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
-  WGFD WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT AREA

2010



0 2.55 10 15 20 Miles

LARAMIE REGION

LARAMIE REGION HIGHLIGHTS

- Cheatgrass sprayed on Pennock Mountain WHMA and right-of-way fence along Highway 130 east of North Platte River converted to pole-top for Platte Valley Mule Deer Habitat Enhancement
- Willow transects established in the Snowy Range and Pole Mountain to evaluate moose habitat
- Phase II of the Laramie River Enhancement Project completed and consisted of rock deflectors, rootwad revetments, boulder clusters, vegetated riprap, and rootwad spurs
- In partnership with Trout Unlimited, a consultant collected assessment data for a detailed stream restoration plan on 3.9 miles of the Encampment River
- Thirty-five stream miles were assessed in the Douglas Creek watershed on the Medicine Bow National Forest
- Over 50,000 acres of rangeland inventoried for sage grouse habitat in Little Snake River Valley
- Prescribed burning conducted on 1,500 acres of mixed mountain shrub habitats in southern Laramie Range
- CRP Sign-Up 39, the first CRP sign-up in more than a decade, enrolls / re-enrolls more than 100,000 acres in southeast Wyoming
- In Albany County, 60 acres of WGFD Public Access Areas were treated for noxious weeds
- In Carbon County, 20 acres of WGFD Public Access Areas were treated for noxious weeds

Conservation Priority Area Development (Goal 1) - Ryan Amundson

An outdated Conservation Priority Area (CPA) for Wyoming, developed in the mid-90's, was updated utilizing wildlife species seasonal range data and the department's SHP, for use in future CRP sign-ups. Approximately 240,000 acres were included in the newly established priority area in southeast Wyoming. Additional environmental ranking points will be given to producers in future CRP sign-ups that fall within the CPA's geographic boundaries.

SAFE CRP (Goal 1) - Ryan Amundson

A proposal for a "State Acres For Wildlife Enhancement – SAFE" CRP program was developed by Erika Peckham, Brian Jensen, and Ryan Amundson. A proposal was submitted to Washington, D.C. for 10,000 acres in northeast Wyoming, focusing on converting cropland back to sagebrush steppe habitat. The proposal was approved, and initial sign-up will occur in Spring 2011.

USDA's Sage Grouse Initiative (Goal 2) - Ryan Amundson

The USDA unveiled their SGI program in Spring 2010. The HEB assisted with statewide training of NRCS personnel, and also conducted field inventories on five ranches in the Little Snake River valley near Baggs. Over 50,000 acres of sagebrush / sage grouse habitat was inventoried, and reports detailing habitat management recommendations were completed (Figure 1 and 2).



Figure 1. Sage Grouse Initiative inventories conducted in the Little Snake River valley revealed some habitats in very good condition for sage grouse.



Figure 2. Some areas had been drastically altered through aerial herbicide applications.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) (Goal 1) - Ryan Amundson

The first CRP sign-up in over 10 years was conducted in Fall 2010, resulting in contacts with more than 200 landowners in SE Wyoming. Technical assistance with permanent cover seed mixes, water developments, and mid-contract cover management was frequently given. Following acceptance into the CRP program, wildlife habitat management recommendations were formally made on over 100,000 acres of permanent cover management on the 200 plus contracts.

Environmental Action Conservation Review (Goal 1) - Ryan Amundson

The HEB assisted NRCS field offices in southeast Wyoming with review of Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) conservation practices, ensuring that wildlife habitats or wildlife species are not negatively impacted by planned fences, pipelines, and other practices.

Conservation Easements (Goal 1) - Ryan Amundson

Five landowners were provided technical assistance on conservation easements. All projects are moving forward, but are being spearheaded by other conservation groups such as Ducks Unlimited.

Wind Energy / Wildlife Considerations (Goal 1) - Ryan Amundson

Wind energy development is coming to southeast Wyoming in the next few years. Numerous visits with private landowners were completed, as questions arose concerning the department's Wind Energy Development Recommendations, developed to reduce impacts to wildlife and wildlife habitat. The HEB participated on an advisory committee for Jade Energy Company, as they plan potential transmission line routes across southeast Wyoming, heading west to Idaho.

Platte Valley Mule Deer Habitat Enhancement (Goal 2) - Grant Frost

The right-of-way fence along Highway 130 was converted to pole-top along the first ½ mile on both sides from County Road 209 to the east. Small portions of the fence had been constructed originally that way in high wildlife crossing spots, but there were continued problems with young animals not being able to cross, or getting trapped in the ROW, or individuals getting caught in the fence (Figure 3). The Pennock Mountain WHMA has seen an increase of cheatgrass presence and dominance through the recent drought. A contract sprayer was hired to spray Plateau herbicide with ATV and backpack equipment on 38 acres of heavily infested sites along the main road along South Lake Creek. Plateau herbicide and 120 treated poles were purchased for future use.



Figure 3. Completed sections of pole-top fence along Hwy 130.

Red Mountain Project (Goal 2) - Grant Frost

Department involvement in this project began in 2004. A project update has been included in the previous five annual reports. In 2010, a legal challenge was raised to the planned sagebrush mowing, and the project was put on hold.

Southeast Wyoming Cheatgrass Partnership (Goal 2) - Grant Frost

The Partnership continues to meet and share project planning and information.

Comprehensive Management Plan for the Platte Valley Mule Deer Herd (Goal 2) - Grant Frost

Department personnel continue to use the Platte Valley Mule Deer Habitat Assessment to plan projects, and look for opportunities to meet with landowners. Coordination meetings are held with personnel from the BLM, NRCS, and local conservation districts. Project planning and funding applications have begun for work on the Mark Condict Ranch.

Mule deer will be collared in the 2010-11 winter for a new study on habitat use, migration, sightability and mortality. Information from this study will help in population estimation and in planning more effective habitat projects.

Laramie River Greenbelt Phase II (Goal 2) - Christina Barrineau

Phase II of the Laramie River Enhancement Project was completed in 2010. Habitat treatments in the river and along the streambanks consisted of rock deflectors, rootwad revetments, vegetated riprap with rootwad spurs, and longitudinal stone toe with rootwad spurs (Figure 4). Funding for Phase II was provided by the WWNRT, WGFD trust fund, City of Laramie, Albany County, Laramie Rivers Conservation District, BP Amoco, Wyoming DEQ, Laramie Economic Development Corporation, and the Mule Deer Foundation. Additionally, numerous local volunteers participated in the cutting and planting of willow at the treatment sites. The third and final phase will be completed in 2011.

Also in summer 2010, streambank erosion and photo monitoring were conducted to fulfill requirements for a WYDEQ 319 grant (Figure 5). Monitoring assistance was provided by the Laramie Rivers Conservation District and the WYDEQ. To monitor changes in streambank erosion, a 1,500 feet long reach was established downstream of the Snowy Range Road bridge. Habitat enhancement construction is scheduled for this reach in 2011. The Bank Assessment for Non-point source Consequences of Sediment (BANCS) model, along with the Bank Erosion Hazard Index (BEHI) and Near-Bank Stress (NBS) were used to obtain streambank erosion rates. Variables in the model include bank angle, bank material, bank height/bankfull height, and the ratio of near-bank maximum depth to bankfull mean depth. Using BEHI and NBS ratings from the monitoring reach, the annual erosion rate was estimated at 0.042 tons/year/foot. The BEHI and NBS will be used over the next three years to monitor annual erosion rate.

In addition to streambank erosion monitoring, five photo points taken in 2008 for the project design plan were relocated. These photo points could be easily relocated and show several treatment types. Photos at these points will be taken once every year for at least the next three years.



Figure 4. Vegetated riprap with rootwad spur habitat treatment along the Laramie River.



Figure 5. Conducting bank erosion monitoring along the Laramie River for the Laramie River Enhancement project.

Encampment River below Riverside (Goal 2) – Christina Barrineau

In partnership with TU, a consultant was hired to collect assessment data for a detailed habitat restoration plan on the Encampment River. The design plan will cover four landowners from the Highway 230 bridge downstream approximately 3.9 river miles. WGFD provided assistance to the consultant for data collection. The most upstream reach, owned by Mr. Randy Boykin, was selected for the first phase of project implementation. The Boykin Reach is approximately 4,300 linear feet and is considered an unstable Rosgen C3 channel type. The project design plan calls for building floodplain benches, excavating pools, installing cross-vanes, narrowing riffles, and changing the radius on meanders. The restoration on the Boykin Reach is scheduled to begin in 2011. The restoration of the Boykin Reach will be used as a pilot project for design concepts to be used on the downstream reaches assessed in 2010.

In addition to assisting with design data collection, several monitoring stations were established on the Boykin Reach. Bank erosion pins were installed at three established pool cross-sections to quantify annual bank erosion rates prior to stream restoration (Figure 6). Bank profiles were also obtained at the cross-sections. The bank profiles and bank pins will be resurveyed following spring run-off to obtain erosion rates. Additionally, the BEHI and NBS were evaluated at the three monitoring banks for the prediction of streambank erosion rates. Twenty-one permanent photo monitoring points were also established throughout the Boykin reach.



Figure 6. Establishing bank erosion monitoring at a pool cross-section on the Boykin Reach of the Encampment River.

Little Laramie Streambank Stabilization and Habitat Enhancement (Goal 2) – Christina Barrineau

Technical assistance was provided to NRCS, USFWS, and a landowner on a streambank stabilization project on the Little Laramie River downstream of Highway 130. The small project addressed an eroding streambank issue along a meander bend of the Little Laramie River. A j-hook structure was installed to redirect flows into the center of the channel and away from the eroding bank. Additionally, a toewood structure below the j-hook was used for bank protection and fish habitat enhancement.

Wagonhound Creek Channel Assessments on the Wick WHMA (Goal 2) – Christina Barrineau

Two channel stability monitoring sites were re-evaluated on Wagonhound Creek on the Wick WHMA during summer low-flow conditions. The upper site was located approximately 0.5 river miles upstream of I-80, while the lower site was located approximately two river miles downstream of I-80. At each site the following information was collected: longitudinal profile, permanent cross-sections (pool, riffle, run, and glide), riffle pebble count, reach pebble count, and particle sample from point bars. For measurements of bed scour, scour chains were recovered from riffle and glide cross-sections and the depth of scour or deposition was measured. For measurements of bank erosion, bank profiles and erosion pins were measured at monitoring locations on pool cross-sections. Additionally, the bank erosion hazard index and near bank stress was estimated for each reach, along with several other indices of stability (i.e., meander patterns and depositional patterns).

Preliminary data analyses from both reaches indicate some channel instability. In 2011, data from 2009 and 2010 at both sites will be summarized in an administrative report. Additionally, a summary of lessons learned from establishing stream stability monitoring stations will be detailed.

2010 Production and Utilization Surveys (Goal 2) - Grant Frost

Game wardens and population biologists assisted with collecting utilization and production information in the spring and fall (Table 1). Utilization was measured for the winter of 2009-10 at 53 of the pronghorn and mule deer shrub winter range monitoring stations. Average utilization was down for bitterbrush and sagebrush, and up for mahogany. Utilization levels exceeded the recommended level of 35% at 17 transects.

Table 1. Laramie Region Average Shrub Utilization

	Big Sagebrush	Antelope Bitterbrush	Mountain Mahogany
2009 Measurement	32%	36%	5%
2010 Measurement	30%	29%	14%
Change	-2%	-7%	+9%

Production for the growing season of 2010 was generally similar to 2009, with slight drops for bitterbrush and mountain mahogany, but an increase for big sagebrush. Measurements were taken at 37 transects (Table 2).

Table 2. Laramie Region Average Shrub Production (in)

	Big Sagebrush	Antelope Bitterbrush	Mountain Mahogany
2009 Measurement	0.94	3.56	3.99
2010 Measurement	1.13	3.39	3.71
Change	+20%	-4%	-7%

The information is used to help address big game population management efforts.

Mountain Pine Beetle (Goal 2) - Grant Frost

Mountain Pine beetles continued to spread north and east onto 63,000 new acres, especially in the Snowy Range; this includes a dramatic expansion in lower-elevation ponderosa pine trees. Additional information on mountain pine beetle expansion can be viewed at

http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5259977.pdf



Figure 7. September forest fire in beetle-killed lodgepole near Fox Park.

There was one small fire (~112 acres) near Fox Park that was contained (Figure 7). The Medicine Bow National Forest continues to remove hazardous trees around roads, trails, camping areas and other places, and planning for treatments in the Spruce Gulch area and wildland/urban interface and watershed protection on the east side of the Snowy Range.

Douglas Creek Watershed Habitat Assessments (Goal 2) - Christina Barrineau

Wyoming Habitat Assessment Methodology (WHAM) Level 1 surveys were conducted on tributary streams in the Douglas Creek drainage on the Medicine Bow National Forest during summer 2010. Surveys were conducted on 11 streams within 2 sixth level HUCs (Pelton Creek - 101800020106 and Upper Douglas Creek 101800020104). Approximately 35 stream miles were surveyed. Streams assessed were stable, although some areas of instability were observed. Potential reference reaches were identified for future data collection of stable stream habitat. Most reaches had evidence of past beaver activity, while current beaver activity was predominately located on only two streams (Figure 8). Widespread watershed impacts observed included bark beetle impacts to upland conifer vegetation and unauthorized ATV trails. Once all streams in the Douglas Creek drainage are surveyed, the information will be summarized in an administrative report. Additional information can be found in the WGFD WHAM and Photo databases.



Figure 8. Beaver activity and bark beetle impacts to upland habitats in the Illinois Creek drainage within the Douglas Creek watershed.

Habitat Extension Services (Goal 2) - Ryan Amundson

In 2010, 37 individual landowner contacts were made, with 80% of those developing into on-the-ground projects. Numerous other contacts were made while performing normal job duties, that may or may not lead to a landowner implementing a project on his or her own.

Field inventory information was gathered for 4 pending conservation easement projects in Goshen County, aimed at preserving important wetland habitats. Several other potential conservation easement projects were reviewed with the State Forest Stewardship Committee, and funding recommendations were made.

A one page handout on the values of fence markers for sage grouse was developed for use by NRCS as part of their 2010 Sage Grouse Initiative. The handout discussed the how to's, the reason for marking fences, and where to purchase the markers. This handout was utilized in all field offices throughout Wyoming.

Over 1,800 acres were burned through prescription in mixed mountain shrub communities (1,500 acres) and CRP lands (300 acre) (Figure 9 and 10).



Figure 9. Prescribed burning near Iron Mountain, northwest of Cheyenne, Wyoming in Spring 2010.



Figure 10. Prescribed burning resulted in excellent response by shrubs such as antelope bitterbrush.

CRP stand renovation through burning, herbicide application, and re-seeding was conducted on 200 acres. Burn planning was conducted with BLM personnel and private landowners for several other burns planned for 2011-2012. Planning involved use of GIS and field site visits with cooperating agencies and funding partners (Figure 11).

Two wetland restoration projects totaling more than 15 surface acres of water were completed, after nearly two years of planning, permitting, and design work. More than 40 upland acres surrounding the wetlands will be managed for nesting cover for migratory waterfowl nesting (Figure 12 and 13).



Figure 11. CRP burns are conducted with assistance from local volunteer fire departments.



Figure 12. Wetland restoration along the Laramie River involved reconnecting river hydrology to off-channel historic oxbows.



Figure 13. Wetland restoration will be managed for migratory waterfowl nesting.

Landowner interest in upland water developments remained high in 2010, with over 175 guzzlers being planned for installation in the coming year on newly enrolled or re-enrolled CRP lands. Guzzler standards and specifications were cooperatively developed with NRCS personnel to meet the needs of wildlife in southeast Wyoming.

Over 30 USDA EQIP applications were reviewed by the Habitat Extension Biologist, where recommendations were made in the Conservation Assistance Notes sections of the landowner's file. The HEB also assisted the NRCS field offices with review of draft ECS-42's, prior to submittal to the department's Environmental Protection section for formal comment.

Twenty shrub transects are read on an annual basis throughout the Laramie Range to measure annual production and utilization by ungulates.

Walk In Area Program (Goal 3) - Ryan Amundson

The HEB continues to coordinate with private landowners participating in the Walk In Area program, and provides technical habitat management recommendations to PLPW staff and landowners.

Pennock Mountain Beaver Transplant (Goal 5) - Grant Frost

Heavy runoff with a large component of rocks and gravel filled in much of the dam complex previously built on South Lake Creek, and beaver were displaced to unknown parts. Future transplants will have to be coordinated with upland stabilization work upstream.

Education (Goal 4) - Ryan Amundson

Numerous educational events were held throughout 2010 where the HEB delivered conservation messages to over 350 attendees including: Hunter Safety / Education, Wheatland Science Day, Wheatland High School Science Classes, CRP landowner workshops (Figure 14), Girl Scouts, Laramie Peak Cattlewomen's Ag in the Classroom, and Water For Wildlife (WFW) Foundation field tour.

Technical Assistance (Goal 5) - Ryan Amundson

The HEB continues to work in the role of "State Coordinator" and "Western U.S. Project Technical Advisor" for the Water for Wildlife Foundation based out of Lander. In addition, he still contributes technical assistance to the Wyoming State Forestry's Living Snow Fence program and State Forestry Stewardship Committee.

In 2010, extensive effort was made to continue to build working relationships with USDA's FSA and NRCS, particularly with CRP and SAFE CRP sign-ups occurring.

Technical assistance was provided to department personnel on management of croplands, rangelands, riparian and wetland habitats on WHMA properties (Figure 15). Approximately 320 acres of meadow habitats on the Wick WHMA were grazed with livestock under a short-duration / high intensity grazing scheme. The grazing treatment, conducted annually since 2004, helps to control noxious vegetation and improves forage quality for big game use (Figure 16).

Over 200 acres of dense nesting cover were planted on the Springer WHMA–Thaler Farm in Spring 2010. Considerable effort was spent to find alternative funding sources to pay for cover establishment. \$12,000 in outside funding was secured to plant the permanent cover from groups such as Pheasants Forever and Goshen Rooster Boosters. The HEB continues to serve on the WGFD's management team, developed to cooperatively manage the Thaler Farm.

Efforts to conduct a prescribed burn on Sugarloaf Mountain – Laramie Peak WHMA in cooperation with the BLM was met with resistance from neighboring landowners / permittees in Summer 2010, and will not be pursued at this time. With the onset of pine beetle infestations on the mountain, natural fires are highly likely at this location in the years to come, enhancing habitat for bighorn sheep and other wildlife.



Figure 14. Landowner interest in CRP stand renovation is high as contracts start to expire in 2010. This landowner field day to view CRP re-seeding was attended by over 50 people.



Figure 15. Cropland conversion to permanent nesting cover habitat on the Thaler Farm at Springer WHMA.



Figure 16. Moving cattle into another small meadow paddock on the Wick WHMA in September 2010.

The Southeast Wyoming Cheatgrass Partnership brings together representatives from WGFD, BLM, USFS, county weed and pest districts, NRCS, Conservation Districts, researchers and university faculty, and private citizens to communicate, collaborate, and learn. CSU credits the partnership with helping get funding for their current research and the newly initiated Rocky Mountain Cheatgrass Management Project. In 2010, the group met twice, the first in September for a tour of the CSU study locations and presentation on their cheatgrass management program (Figure 17). The second meeting occurred in November in Laramie, with a presentation by Ed Vasquez on “Ecologically Based Invasive Plant Management”.



Figure 17. CSU presentation at study site - Thorne/Williams WHMA.

Rawhide WHMA Russian Olive Control Project (Goal 2) - Dave Lewis

In the winter/spring of 2009, a team of interested parties started efforts to control the state designated noxious weed Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*) on Rawhide WHMA. The team included members of the Casper region Habitat and Access crew, the Goshen County Weed and Pest District supervisor; representatives from the 2-Shot Goose Hunt, Pheasants Forever, and the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF); the Wheatland extension habitat biologist; the WGFD waterfowl biologist; the Wheatland wildlife biologist; the Torrington game warden; the Goshen County NRCS supervisor; and members of the Goshen County Weed Coordinated Resource Management group. All members of the coalition provided input and expertise with regard to treatment methods. The coalition decided on a four-year time frame for the project. The first year of the project consisted of ripping the trees out, roots and all on 75 acres of Rawhide WHMA (Figure 18). The removed trees were stacked in small piles to provide thermal and screening cover for small mammals, birds, and deer. In the fall of 2009, follow-up chemical treatments were applied to any re-growth that was evident in the 75-acre treatment area.

Left over funding was used in the spring of 2010 to purchase and plant 200 seedling trees/shrubs. We planted 100 native plum trees, 50 chokecherry trees, and 50 buffaloberry shrubs within the 75-acre treatment area from the 2009 application. New funds have been acquired for the project and will be utilized to complete as much of the project area as funding will allow.



Figure 18. Mechanical removal of Russian olive trees.

Table Mountain WHMA Food Plots (Goal 3) - Dave Lewis

At Table Mountain WHMA, the Casper Habitat and Access crew planted 45 acres of food plots, including 21 acres of corn, sorghum, and sunflowers, 20 acres of a mixture of sunflowers, millet, and buckwheat, 2 acres of millet, and 2 acres of barley. The Pine Bluffs Chapter of Pheasants Forever provided all of the seed. The 21 acres of corn, sorghum, and sunflowers was planted in alternating strips to maximize pheasant hunting opportunities, and provide a diverse stand of food/cover (Figure 19). The 20-acre mix of sunflowers, millet, and buckwheat also provided a great source of food and cover for pheasants, deer, and doves (Figure 20).



Figure 19. Alternating strips of corn, sorghum, and sunflowers at Table Mountain WHMA.



Figure 20. Mixture of sunflowers, millet, and buckwheat at Table Mountain WHMA.

The Casper H&A crew also inter-seeded 5 acres of millet, and buckwheat in an existing food plot. The food plots were irrigated through the use of a flood irrigation system. The major goal of this project was to increase wildlife-based recreation through habitat enhancements that maintain or increase productivity of wildlife.

Springer WHMA Dense Nesting Cover Plantings (Goal 2) - Dave Lewis

Crew members of the Habitat and Access Branch from around the state assisted in the planting of one hundred and sixty eight (168) acres of dense nesting cover (DNC) on the new Thaler property on Springer WHMA (Figure 21). One hundred and two (102) acres of warm season grasses were planted under the irrigation pivot on the north side of the Thaler property. Sixty-six (66) acres of cool season grasses were planted on the remainder of the property outside of the irrigation pivot.

The warm season grass mixture included big bluestem, switchgrass, indiangrass, little bluestem, sideoats grama, prairie sandreed, and an additional forb/legume mix, which was premixed and prepared by Pheasants Forever (Nebraska). The cool season grass mixture consisted of tall wheatgrass, intermediate wheatgrass, hybrid wheatgrass, and cicer milkvetch.



Figure 21. Planting of dense nesting cover on Springer WHMA.

Red Rim - Grizzly WHMA Aspen Transplant (Goal 2) - Dave Lewis

Crews transplanted sixty 8 ft. to 16 ft. tall aspen trees on the Upper Muddy Creek riparian area inside the Grizzly WHMA (Figure 22). The project is in the second year of a trial planting for riparian area rehabilitation. This was a cooperative project in which the Little Snake River Conservation District supplied the spaded aspen, the BLM built the big game fence enclosures and the WGFD Laramie Habitat and Access crew completed the plantings with the WGFD backhoe.



Figure 22. Aspen transplanted on the Upper Muddy Creek.

Wick WHMA - Dave Lewis

- Installed seven miles of electric fence to manage the one-year livestock grazing treatment as required on the 2,880-acres of State Lands inside the WHMA
- 900 acres of hay meadows were irrigated on the WHMA
- 20 miles of crucial winter range fence were maintained
- 107 acres of noxious weed control were completed by the contractor
- 180 acres of hay meadow were grazed as a fall vegetative treatment

Pennock Mountain WHMA - Dave Lewis

- 68 acres of hay meadow were irrigated on the WHMA
- 29 miles of crucial winter range boundary fence were maintained
- 25 acres of noxious weed control were completed by the contractor
- 32 acres were sprayed with herbicide in a cheatgrass control trial

Red Rim - Daley WHMA - Dave Lewis

- 49 miles of crucial winter range fence were maintained
- Daley WHMA livestock grazing 1528 AUMs were used

Red Rim - Grizzly WHMA - Dave Lewis

- 88 miles of boundary fence were maintained
- Grizzly WHMA livestock grazing 3258 AUMs were used

Forbes WHMA - Dave Lewis

- Albany County Weed and Pest sprayed 5 acres of noxious weeds
- 6 miles of boundary fence were maintained

Laramie Peak WHMA - Dave Lewis

- Albany County Weed and Pest sprayed 5 acres of noxious weeds
- 6 miles of crucial winter range fence were maintained

Tom Thorne / Beth Williams WHMA - Dave Lewis

- 18 acres of noxious weed control were completed by the contractor
- 7 miles of boundary fence were maintained

FWS Private Landowner Projects (4) in Carbon County (Goal 2) - WLCI

1. Historically the cooperating ranch operated sheep transitioning to a cattle operation. The large pasture size has limited the Wildlife Cooperator's ability to adequately manage season of use and timing of grazing. This has resulted in a shift from grass and sagebrush dominated communities to prickly pear cactus and woody aster dominated communities. The goal of this project is to assist the Wildlife Cooperator with fence and water developments to improve native range conditions for potential brood-rearing and nesting sage grouse as well as other sagebrush dependant bird species on 4,572 acres of private lands. Approximately 1,185 acres outlined within this agreement falls within the Wyoming Sage Grouse Core Area (July 2010 version). A livestock grazing and wildlife management plan is being developed for the site. Fencing construction will consist of a 3-strand suspension fence with the bottom strand being smooth. This fence design is encouraged because the area falls within a large resident population and migratory corridor for pronghorn antelope.
2. This Wildlife Cooperator, with assistance from BLM and University of Wyoming range specialists, has come to recognize that changes are needed in both grazing management and added infrastructure in order to maintain native rangeland health. The USFWS has interests in this project because of its potential importance as brood-rearing and nesting habitat for sage grouse. The entire project area lies within the Wyoming Sage Grouse Core Area (July 2010 version). This agreement identifies habitat benefits on 9,313 acres of private land and 4,318 acres public land (BLM and State of Wyoming). This portion of the project would require the installation of roughly 19,500 linear feet of fence, 11 gates, one cattle guard, one reservoir enclosure, and one trough enclosure. Approximately 21,300 linear feet of suspension fence will be installed to divide this large single pasture into two smaller grazing units. A livestock grazing and wildlife management plan is being developed for the site.
3. The primary purpose of this project is to improve riparian health (19 acres) by limiting grazing within riparian area of the Little Medicine Bow River (~8,500 feet). In addition to riparian protection, fencing will create a new upland grazing paddock (49 acres) that allows cattle grazing to be more easily managed. Both riparian and upland habitat work could potentially benefit brood-rearing sage grouse. Riparian efforts could reduce sedimentation, improve the fishery, and promote riparian dependant neo-tropical bird use.
4. This project area falls within the Wyoming Sage Grouse Core Area (July 2010 version). The primary purpose is to restore riparian habitat along 2,844 feet of the Little Medicine Bow River (9.2 acres riparian acres) and manage upland vegetation within a 54.7 acre pasture. Both riparian and upland habitat work should potentially benefit brood-rearing sage grouse. Riparian efforts should reduce sedimentation and promote riparian dependant neo-tropical bird use. A secondary benefit is to remove 5,900 feet of tightly-woven wire sheep fence in order to allow the movement of pronghorn antelope through the private land. This area, in particular, has been determined to have a large distribution of year-round pronghorn use. Movements through the area have been limited by the location and style of fencing. Partners include private landowners, WWNRT, WGFD, and Medicine Bow Conservation District.