

grouse creek mtns / raft river mtns, ut

Intermountain West regional FLN

1.3 million acres



Wildcat Creek in the Raft River Mountains. © Elaine York.

Spanning more than 1.3 million acres in northwest Utah, the Grouse Creek and Raft River Mountains support a diverse range of habitats and species, including sagebrush steppe, aspen-conifer forest and canyon streams, as well as pronghorn, greater sage-grouse, ferruginous hawks and the Yellowstone cutthroat trout. The ownership and management of land in this unique area is also diverse and complex — ranging from private farmers and ranchers to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Sawtooth National Forest. The Nature Conservancy and a host of private and public partners are now using cutting-edge technology to develop a collaborative vision for the long-term health of this region's ecosystems. The project will not only alleviate risks to the area's habitats and species, but it will also foster information exchange among stakeholders, and equip them to better meet their various land management goals.

With support from the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development and the tools of GIS, remote sensing and spatial modeling technology, the partners are working together to quantitatively model the cumulative impacts of land management proj-

ects on the ecological integrity of the Grouse Creek and Raft River Mountains. Ecological systems are represented by sagebrush shrublands, salt desert scrub, woodlands of aspen, pinyon and juniper, mountain mahogany, and montane conifers; and wet meadows associated with montane riparian systems. The proposed measure of landscape-scale integrity will be the natural range of variability, which has been defined by LANDFIRE Biophysical Settings. The Conservancy will host a series of partner workshops to develop objectives and specifications, including long-term goals for specific habitats and species. The Conservancy will collect and compile partner GIS data layers (for example, land ownership, fuels and vegetative treatments, and type/seasons of uses), and will, with partner expertise, develop the non-spatial and spatial models (including Vegetation Dynamics Development Tool models and Tool for Exploratory Landscape Scenario Analyses spatial models). The results of the models will be disseminated and discussed through shared computer models, maps, a report and future workshops.

Implementation Needs 2007–2009

Task	Year	\$ Needed	Non-Federal Match Available	Federal Match Available
Design, implement and monitor aspen restoration	2007	120,000		
Design, implement and monitor sagebrush steppe restoration	2007	140,000		
Complete Conservation Action Plan for Grouse Creek and Raft River Mountains	2007	10,000		
Work with Utah Division of Wildlife Resources to implement actions for species and habitats in State Wildlife Action Plan for this area	2007	50,000		



The first of several workshops organized to develop long-term goals and objectives for the habitats and species of the Grouse Creek and Raft River Mountains. © Elaine York.

Partners:

Bureau of Land Management
 Natural Resources Conservation Service
 US Forest Service Sawtooth National Forest
 Utah Association of Conservation Districts
 Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
 Utah Partners for Conservation and Development
 Private landowners

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