

Cutting Area for 2011  
Tabby Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA)  
Pinyon / Juniper Removal Project

Thanks for your interest in the Tabby Mountain Pinyon / Juniper Removal Project. Dedicated Hunters have already saved the Division thousands of dollars on the cuttings done in the Rabbit Gulch/Tabby Mountain area. Designed to enhance deer and elk winter range, this project removes young pinyon and juniper trees (P/J) that are encroaching into preferred foraging areas.

This year we will continue cutting trees in lower Santaquin Draw, a sagebrush flat just off Hwy 208. Take all P/J including all of the small trees and seedlings. Maps and driving instructions are attached. We will also start a new area closer to Fruitland. This one will require driving around on dirt roads so we ask that you only do so on dry days. No sense creating ruts, other road problems and damage to the winter range for a few trees when there are other options closer to the highway.

### **Why Do We Remove Pinyon/Juniper**

The Tabby Mountain foothills are a critical wintering area for elk, deer, sagegrouse and other wildlife. Over the years, there has been a considerable amount of habitat work done to enhance this area for wildlife. This project joins numerous chainings, lop and scatter (tree cutting) and reseeding projects designed to promote shrub, forbs and grass growth to improve watershed conditions and to provide winter forage for deer and elk.

P/J trees are rapidly invading the old chained areas and areas with sagebrush and other plants more critical to winter survival. As the trees grow larger and more abundant, they consume increasing amounts of water and nutrients making them unavailable for shrubs and understory plants such as grasses and forbs. Within another 30 to 50 years, this valuable winter range will become a mature P/J forest, which will contain little or no understory vegetation. In short: little forage = few mule deer, elk or anything else.

To protect the forage on these winter ranges, we have a few options: burning, chemical treatment, chaining and physical (tree-by-tree) removal. Prescribed burns and chemicals kill trees but also kill the shrubs so we lose forage values. Chaining protects more shrubs but gives only marginal results in an area invaded by small trees. The younger trees are flexible and bend under the chain, thus only a few older trees would actually be uprooted. In addition, chemical, chaining and fire treatments can be politically sensitive and are expensive.

With tight budgets, physical removal seems to be the best option currently available. Dedicated hunters and other volunteers played a major role in the rehabilitation of the Rabbit Gulch chaining. Not only have they removed thousands of pinyon and juniper trees, the money saved by not chaining or paying a contractor to do the work has allowed the Division to take on new projects. Several of these are within a few miles of Rabbit Gulch on both sides of Highway 208 where the DWR has chained or cut old sagebrush and P/J.

In 2009, Trail Hollow began a new phase in the enhancement efforts. This continued with the addition of lower Santaquin Draw (just off 208) in 2010 and now upper Santaquin in 2011. This new area will be most easily reached by going north from Fruitland.

## Lower Santaquin Draw

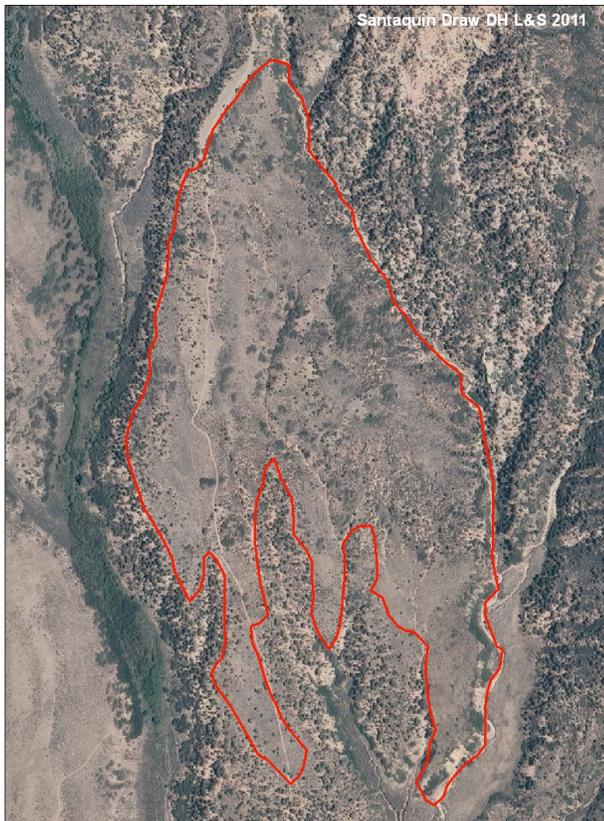
This site is a sagebrush flat being invaded by small trees. It was started last year and Dedicated Hunters did well taking the trees from the areas closest to the highway. The project is to continue cutting trees on the upper half of the flat. The cutting area is marked in red (see map).

Park along the dirt road and walk in to avoid ripping up the winter range we are trying to enhance. Ignore the trees on the ridge to the left or south, it is the smaller trees invading the sagebrush flat that need to be removed.



### Driving Instructions:

To get to the site, turn north on 208, go 3 miles and go through the UDWR gate to the left or west side. The cutting area is the sagebrush flat between the dirt road (northern edge) and the tree-lined ridge. If you are coming from the north, the road is about 7 miles from the turnoff. ~ GPS: N: 40° 14.936, W: 110° 42.689

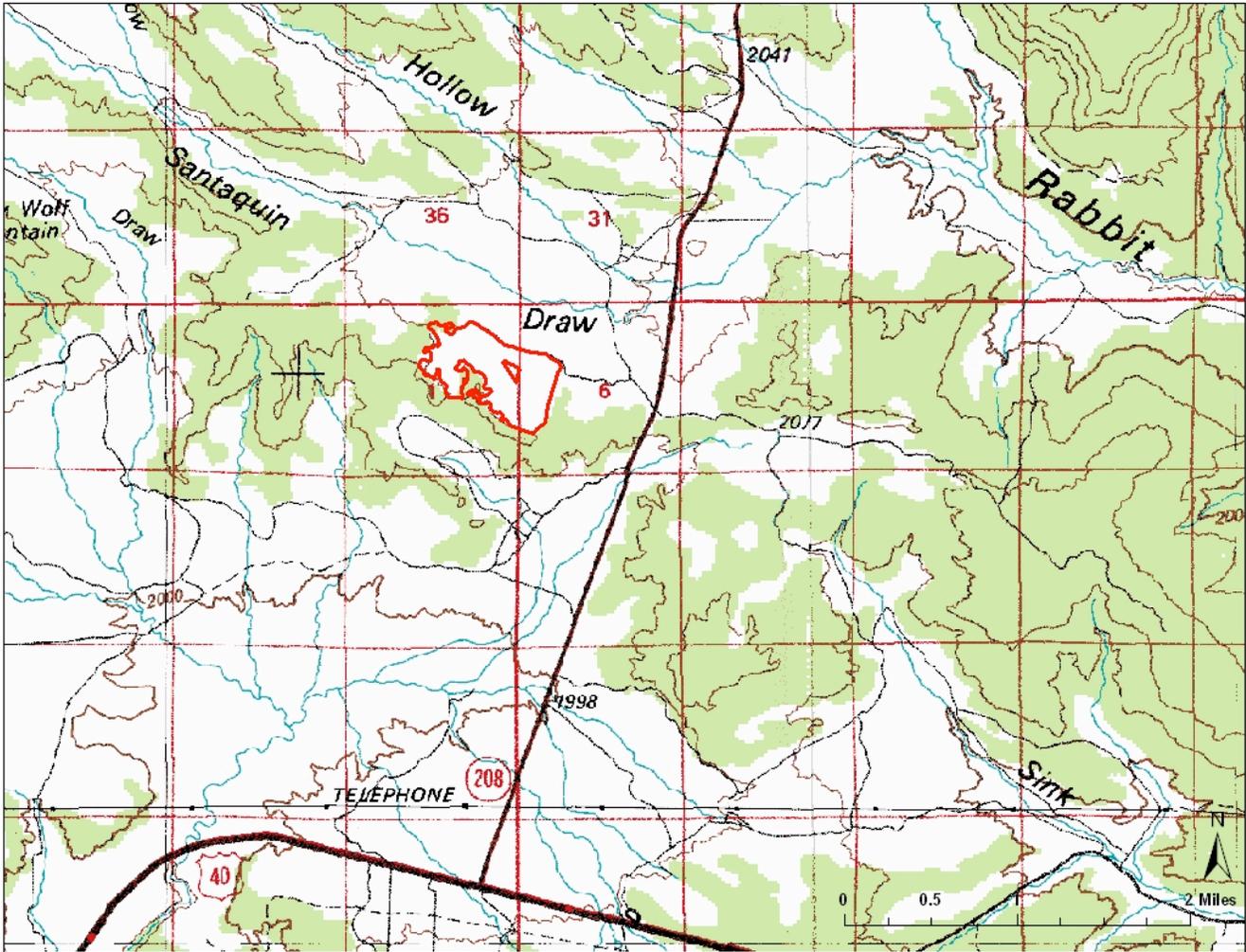


## Upper Santaquin Draw

The upper Santaquin Draw site is also a sagebrush flat being invaded by PJ. Dedicated Hunters and other volunteers should concentrate on the smaller trees surrounded by sagebrush. Biologists said most of these trees in the sagebrush will be less than about 7 to 9-inches in diameter. A grove of trees can be skipped, we are mainly interested in getting the invaders, including the seedlings.

### Driving Instructions

Take Highway 40 to Fruitland, roughly mile post 62. Across from the general store is a paved road going north (marked 4500 west) head north for 4.3 miles. Look for a Tabby Mountain WMA sign and take the road cutting back to the right or east. This road should climb out of the little canyon to get you up on top. Follow the road to the cutting area, which will be just shy of 8 miles from the highway. (see map and aerial photo). Park along the road and walk in to avoid damaging the winter range we are trying to enhance.



Map 1. Lower Santaquin, three miles north of Hwy 40 on Hwy 208. Cutting area outlined in red.

### Rules, Regulations and Helpful Hints:

#### Suggestions:

- 1) Map - the USGS Duchesne 1:100,000 map is useful to reach the site and shows the entire area.
- 2) Vehicles are restricted to the main existing roads. Please park along the road itself, do not drive off or follow the small two tracks. This area is a critical winter range and the fewer roads the better. Do not take 4-wheelers or other off-road vehicles off the existing (main) roads.
- 3) Cut only the pinyon and juniper. Other trees and bushes are much scarcer and have more values for wildlife. In the sagebrush area of upper and lower Santaquin Draw, take all the trees, including the small seedlings. A **chainsaw is recommended but not required**. An axe, Pulaski (ax/flat pick combo), handsaw, clippers or shovel may make removing the smaller trees and branches easier. Spare blades and possibly an extra saw are also recommended.

4) Cut trees within two inches of the ground and remove all limbs and pine needles below the cut. If any branches, needles or anything green is left on the stump, the tree will continue to grow and eventually one or more branches will become a main trunk.

Notes:

- Tree shears may help with cutting the remaining branches.
- It's also easier to work in pairs. One person cuts the tree while the other works as the spotter and helps to hold branches.
- Another trick is to cut the top off at knee or waist high, pull it out of the way, and then recut at ground level.
- If you do not have an axe or chainsaw, you may still participate. Often other tree cutters miss a green branch while cutting. Someone trailing along behind or scouting through areas where others have cut with a tree shear or small saw can make a valuable contribution by cutting off these branches.

5) Leave the trees where they fall; small trees can be left whole. For larger trees, de-limb the trunk [cut off the branches] and cut the branches into three-foot sections. The trunk can remain whole. Removing the branches helps by allowing the tree to settle to the ground and it removes tripping hazards. These fallen trees and branches will also help: a) prevent erosion, b) catch moisture by trapping blowing snow and c) provide valuable microhabitats for small animals and plants.

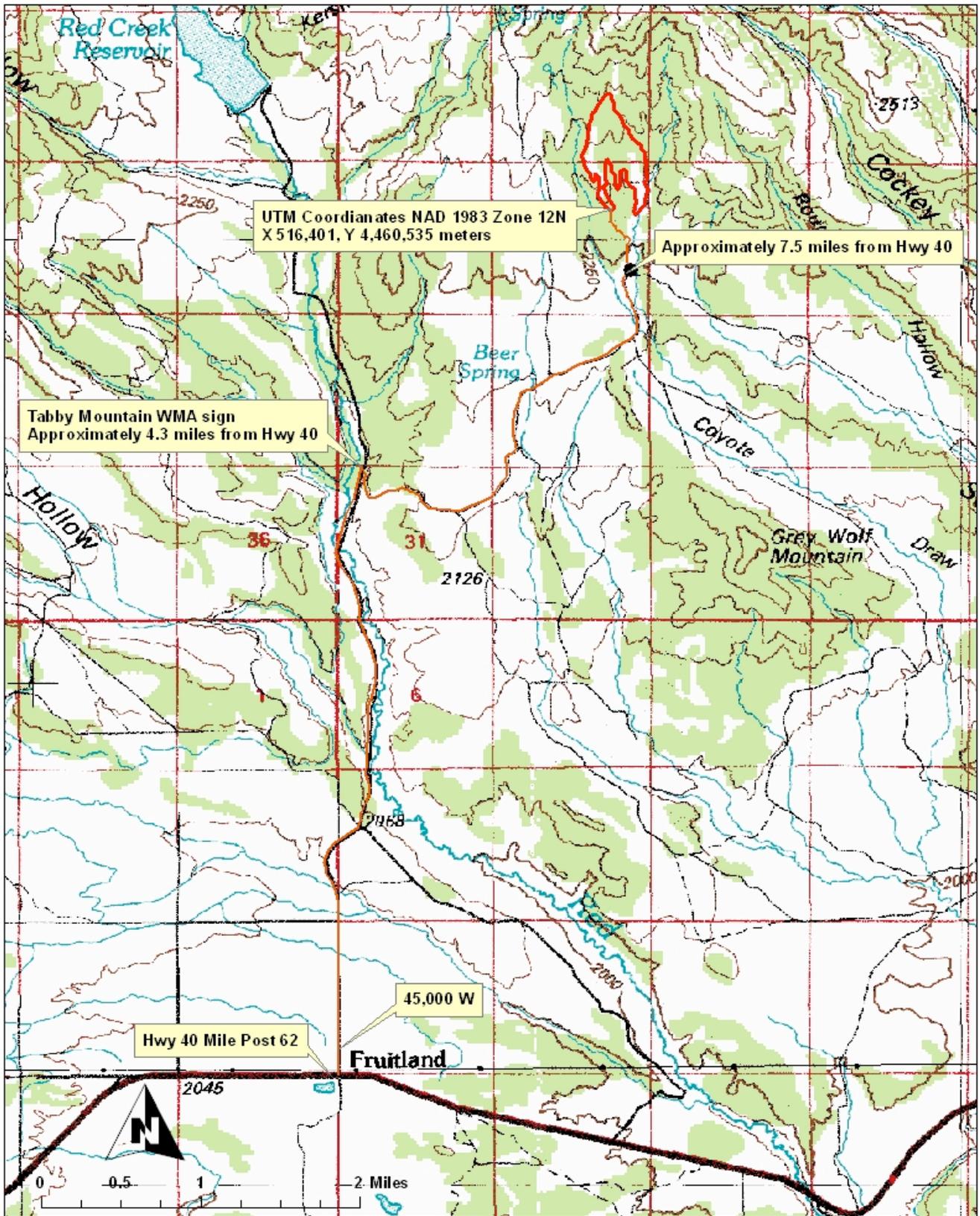
6) Take as many safety precautions as you can while cutting such as using quality eye wear, gloves, heavy boots, etc. That includes drinking water regularly to avoid dehydration. Also, do not go solo; take along someone who can be there in case of an emergency.

7) Pack it in; pack it out. Please take your litter home and leave the area as clean or cleaner than you found it.

8) Whenever you venture outdoors, make a plan and stick to it. Tell someone where you are going, when you will return and leave maps if you can. If you have a cell phone, bring it. Increase your chances of being found by giving search and rescue crews the correct place to look.

9) There are no organized campgrounds or camping areas in this area. Our recommendation would be to stay at Starvation Reservoir, which has a State Park with a camping area, boat ramp and water. It also has some excellent walleye, bass, perch and trout fishing.

10) Take along extra water, food, gas, spare tires, etc. The cutting areas are not far from civilization and are adjacent to or close to a main road but it is always good to go prepared for emergencies.



Map 2. Upper Santaquin Cutting Area Please respect the roads in this area and enter only when it is dry. There is no need to ruin the roads just to cut a few trees. The money we would then have to use to repair the roads could be better spent somewhere else.

### **To Receive Dedicated Hunter Credit:**

- 1) Prior to going in the field, pick up a 2011 timesheet/volunteer agreement at one of the Division offices, fill in Name and Job Description (Tabby Mountain PJ removal project) and have a Division employee sign them. (The employee's signature, on the DWR authorizing signature line, only activates the insurance policy; it does not make them the project leader. You are your own project leader.) One individual may pick up agreements for everyone who will be involved (including kids over 12), fill in names and get them signed. Timesheets are good for two weeks. Note: You may go out at your convenience and I do not need to be informed of when you go.
- 2) Please record on the timesheet as much information as you can. Include date, total hours worked, mileage for the driver and equipment used (handsaw, chainsaw, clippers, etc.) Break out drive time from on-site time and write down which is which – I will give credit for both. Plan to stay overnight rather than trying to commute. Drive time can not exceed work time and I will not give credit for driving long distances on consecutive dates. If you have a long drive, you may want to check the website to find a closer project.
- 3) Take before and after photos of the work done and send a **few** to me. These can be film or digital and either mailed or emailed. If you decide to email the photos, please convert them to **small** files. Email photos and information, other than time sheets, to [ronstewart@utah.gov](mailto:ronstewart@utah.gov); this also helps as a backup and a way for me to contact you if I have questions. A note or a map of where you cut is useful and if you have ideas on how to make the project better, please include those also.
- 4) You may work more than the eight or 16 hours required per year and I recommend getting as many hours as you need as quickly as you can for the entire enrollment period. You never know what will keep you from doing hours next year. I can give Dedicated Hunter credit up to or even beyond the 24 or 40 hours needed during a three-year period but it cannot be applied toward a new DH enrollment nor may I credit hours worked by another individual. You must work your own.
- 5) Send the original timesheets, photos and other information back to Utah Wildlife Resources, Attn: Ron Stewart, 152 East 100 North, Vernal Utah 84078. **I need the original timesheet**, not a copy or email version. The signed, original volunteer agreement/time sheet (of the correct year) is the only way to make it official.
- 6) On some occasions, organized groups such as the Mule Deer Foundation and Boy Scout troops have lead trips to work on this project. This is welcomed and appreciated. Generally, someone is named as the "project leader" and is given extra time sheets and authority to sign.
- 7) After I receive the timesheets and photos, I will enter it in the database. It may take a couple of weeks before it gets entered depending mail services, vacations and other workload.

Note: credit will be given for the hours worked cutting down trees and drive time (within reason). Other time such as eating, fishing, camping, wildlife watching, etc. cannot be considered for credit.



Juniper – scaled leaves



Pinyon Pine – needle shaped leaves

Finally, have some fun! Take along family, friends and make a day or weekend of the event. There is good fishing and camping nearby as well as good places to watch wildlife such as Starvation Reservoir and the Uinta Mountains.

Thank you for considering this project!!