

Gordon Creek
Wildlife Management Area
Habitat Management Plan

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Southeastern Region Habitat Section

February 2021

**Utah Department of Natural Resources
Division of Wildlife Resources**

Executive Summary

Gordon Creek Wildlife Management Area Habitat Management Plan February 2021

Primary Purpose of WMA:

Protect habitat for wildlife species with an emphasis on wintering big game. Provide recreational opportunities consistent with the wildlife values of the WMA.

Wildlife Species:

The primary species benefiting are mule deer and elk. Numerous other species also benefit from the WMA's including moose, black bear, mountain lion, furbearers (bobcat, etc.), turkeys and upland game (chukar, pheasant, mourning dove, rabbit, etc.), raptors (bald eagle, etc.), fish (sterile brook trout, etc), neotropical migratory birds and small mammals.

Habitat Conditions and Challenges:

The condition of the WMA has been degraded by historic grazing and drought. The area is currently experiencing pinyon-juniper expansion, though numerous treatments have occurred to slow the expansion. Increasing canopy cover of trees is causing a decline in the production and vigor of understory herbaceous plants and shrubs. Areas with increasing pinyon-juniper cover will be evaluated for thinning. Thinning activities will take into account the importance of pinyon and juniper as thermal cover for big game species, and thinning projects will be planned to ensure adequate pinyon-juniper cover is left on-site to provide this important habitat requirement. Noxious weed problems include infestations of musk thistle and whitetop.

Grazing is used as a management tool to reduce fire danger and release browse species for wintering big game. The grazing system is a high-intensity, short-duration rest rotation system during spring and early summer.

Access Plan:

The WMA is open to public access via county roads. Some UDWR roads exist that are subject to seasonal closure from (December 1 – April 15). Seasonal closures will be implemented on UDWR roads as needed to protect the winter range for big game species and wintering animals. Motorized vehicle traffic will be confined to existing roads. Roads will be maintained as needed to maintain public access. Mountain biking activities are also confined to existing roads. Unauthorized user-created roads and trails are not permitted and will be closed and rehabilitated.

Maintenance Activities:

Maintenance activities include annual fence maintenance, road maintenance as needed, sign placement and repair, noxious/invasive weed control, and the planting and irrigation of crops for wildlife. These activities are conducted on an "as needed" basis.

Habitat Improvements:

Areas with pinyon-juniper encroachment will be treated to protect the herbaceous plants and shrub understory. Shrub transplanting and/or seeding will take place if necessary to enhance available browse forage. Stream restoration, including erosion control structures, will be conducted enhancing the stream and associated riparian woody species. Upland game opportunities will continue through planting food/cover plots. Perimeter and interior fences will be maintained and improved to accomplish the grazing management plan. Water developments will be maintained to provide water for permitted livestock.

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**GORDON CREEK WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
HABITAT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Property Description

Location

The Gordon Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is located in western Carbon County, Utah. It comprises approximately two percent of the landmass of the County. It is centered approximately 10 air miles from Price, Utah. Primary access to the northern portion of the WMA is available via Consumers road U-139. Access to the southern portion of the property can be provided through Gordon Creek road to Porphyry Bench road.

The WMA includes 22,690 acres however this includes other land management agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and State Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA), Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (UDWR) manages 15,656 acres of the WMA. This plan will focus on the property managed by the UDWR. Elevation on the property ranges from 6,500 feet to 8,000 feet.

The legal description for the Gordon Creek WMA is:

- Great Western Townsite
- Township 12 South Range 8 East Section 27 (west half) and 28 (northwest quarter)
 - Block 1: All
 - Block 2: All
 - Block 3: Lots 1-19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27-48 (All)
 - Block 4: All
 - Block 5: All
 - Block 6: Lots 1, 2, 3-22, 23, 24, 25-48 (All)
 - Block 7: Lots 1-32
 - Block 8: All
 - Block 9: All
 - Block 10: All
 - Block 12: All
 - Block 13: Lots 1-41, 44-48
 - Block 14: Lots 1-32, 34-48
 - Block 15: Lots 1-24, 25, 26, 27-48 (All)
 - Block 16: Lots 1, 2-24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31-48
 - Block 17: All
 - Block 18: All
 - Block 19: Lots 1-44, 45, 46

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- Block 20: Lots 1, 2, 3-26, 27, 28-48
- Block 21: All
- Block 22: Lots 1-20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30-46
- Block 23: Lots 1-15, 16 (1/2), 17 (1/2) 18, 19, 20-23, 26-46
- Block 24: Lots 1-46
- Block 25: Lots 1-27, 20-23, 25-46
- Block 26: Lots 1-3, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 22-43
- Block 27: All
- Block 28: Lots 1-9, 11 (E2), 12,13-36
- Block 29: Lots 1-17, 18, 19, 20-26, 28-46
- Block 30: Lots 1-19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25-27, 29-46
- Block 31: Lots 1-46
- Block 32: Lots 1-21, 22, 23-46
- Block 33: Lots 1-46
- Block 34: Lots 1-19, 21-46
- Block 35: Lots 1-25, 28-46
- Block 36: Lots 1-46
- Block 37: Lots 1-46
- Block 38: All
- Block 39: All
- Block 40: All
- Block 41: All
- Block 42: All
- Block 43: All
- Block 44: All
- Block 45: All
- Block 46: All
- Block 47: All
- Block 48: All
- Block 49: All
- Block 50: All
- Block 51: All
- Block 52: All
- Block 53: All
- Block 54: All
- Block 55: All
- Block 56: All
- Block 57: All
- Block 58: All
- Block 59: All

Township 13 South, Range 8 East, Salt Lake Base and Meridian
Section 7 Excluding NE4NE4
Section 13 W2
Section 18 All

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Section 19 Excluding NE4NE4
Section 20 W2, NE4NE4
Section 21 E2SW4, W2SE4, see disposal 143689, SE4SE4
Section 22 W2, W2SE4
Section 25 E2E2, SW4NE4, NW4SE4
Section 26 NE4SE4, S2SW4
Section 27 All Blocks, see deed 106536, NE4NW4, NW4NE4, see deed 114495, SE4NE4
Section 28 All Blocks, SW4NE4, see deed 106536 and disposal 143689
Section 29 W2, N2SE4, SE4SE4
Section 31 SW4SE4, Lot 4, SE4SW4
Section 33 W2NE4, SE4SE4, W2, E2NE4, N2SE4, SW4SE4 (All)
Section 34 NE4SE4, N2, N2SW4, SW4SE4, S2SW4, S2SE4 (All)
Section 35 NW4, S2NE4, SE4, E2SW4, N2NE4
Section 36 All

Township 13 South, Range 9 East, Salt Lake Base, and Meridian

Section 28 S2SW4
Section 29 S2SE4
Section 30 Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, E2NW4, S2NE4, E2SW4, SE4
Section 31 All (less 9 acres of ROW National Railway Co. and Carbon County Road)

Township 14 South, Range 8 East, Salt Lake Base, and Meridian

Section 1 Lots 3, 4, S2NW4
Section 2 Lots 1-7, S2NE4, SE4NW4, E2SW4, SE4 (All)
Section 3 Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, S2N2, SW4SW4, NW4SW4, S2SW4, SW4SE4, N2SE4, SE4SE4, NE4SW4 (All)
Section 4 Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, S2SW4, SW4SE4, S2N2, N2S2, SE4SE4 (All)
Section 5 All (except N2N2)
Section 6 All
Section 7 Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, E2NW4, NW4NE4, E2SW4, SE4, S2NE4
Section 8 E2, SW4NW4, W2SW4
Section 9 NE4NE4, W2, NW4NE4, S2NE4, SE4 (All)
Section 10 NW4NW4, NE4, NE4SW4, S2NW4, S2 (All)
Section 11 Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, NW4NE4, S2NE4, E2NW4, E2SW4, SE4, NE4NE4 (All)
Section 12 W2NW4, SE4NW4
Section 15 N2NW4
Section 16 N2, W2SE4, SW4
Section 17 W2W2, NE4, N2SE4
Section 18 All
Section 19 Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, E2NW4, E2SW4, SE4, S2NE4, NW4NE4
Section 20 N2NE4, W2
Section 21 NW4NW4
Section 29 N2SE4, SW4SE4, W2

Township 14 South, Range 9 East, Salt Lake Base, and Meridian

Section 16 SE4

Encumbrances

The properties making up the Gordon Creek Wildlife Management Area were acquired from numerous entities in a variety of ways from the 1960's-2013. Many of the acquired parcels had prior existing encumbrances; new ones were often added when the properties were transferred to the UDWR. The list for each block or section is extensive; however, encumbrances have been summarized in Appendix A. Information about encumbrances on each parcel may not be complete and will have to be researched in the Warranty Deeds and Property Titles.

Many of the previous property owners retained coal, oil, gas, and mineral rights when they were transferred to the UDWR. These rights include egress and ingress for exploration and removal of material. Some previous owners retained water rights and their associated infrastructure (ditches and canals). Particular language for some of these rights is described in patents from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Several rights-of-way and easements exist on parcels, particularly those associated with the Great Western Townsite. Some of these include old railroad rights-of-way, pole line easements in favor of Utah Power & Light Company, National Coal Railway Company, and some oil, gas, and hydrocarbon leases, and public road rights-of-way (county and state highway).

A 10-foot right-of-way was granted to Utah Power & Light Company from the UDWR on December 17, 1976. The right-of-way occurs in Township 13 S. Range 8 East, Salt Lake Base and Meridian, Sections 22, 27, 28, 33.

An easement agreement was entered into on May 10, 1982, between the UDWR and Utah Power & Light Company to obtain a 130-foot wide right-of-way in T 13 South, Range 8 East, Salt Lake Base and Meridian, Sections 21, 28, 33, and T 13 South, Range 8 East, Sections 3, 4, 10, and 15. However, the term of the easement was a period of 30 years and would have expired in 2012. The easement was also subject to Federal Aid approval.

An agreement and right-of-way easement for a natural gas pipeline was made between the UDWR and Questar Pipeline Company now Dominion Energy for an easement for the 104 Pipeline Route subject to compliance with State Rule R657-28 (Use of Division Lands). The term of the easement was for 30 years from June 29, 2001. An easement 50 feet in width is situated in Township 12 South, Range 8 East, Salt Lake Base and Meridian, Sections 33, 34, 35, 36.

Minerals

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The majority of the minerals were reserved by the previous owner when the land was acquired by the UDWR. Minerals reserved are listed by deed number in Appendix A however each deed and title should be referenced for accuracy.

Currently, there are active gas wells on the WMA managed by several different operators. This consists of twelve gas wells that are either producing or shut-in and one injection well for produced water. There are also five wells that are plugged and abandoned. The majority of these wells were developed during SITLA ownership, with a land exchange in 2009 the UDWR acquired them and inherited the existing Surface Use Agreement. The surface use agreement for existing infrastructure reflects SITLA's requirements, any new development will be subject to Administrative Rule R657-28, Use of Division Lands.

Easements

Currently, there are several easements on the WMA that are listed below. Applications for new easements are held to Administrative rule R657-28 Use of Division Lands.

Easements on the WMA include the following:

- #700188 Questar Pipeline Company April 23, 1998
- #700202 PacifiCorp, d.b.a. Utah Power and Light June 1, 1998
- #701624 State of Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands June 28, 2012
- #701556 Thunderbird Energy Company
- #700162 River Gas Corporation
- #MUL0106EA003 Questar Pipeline Company

Grazing

Encumbrances in relation to grazing include a livestock trailing authorization which allows livestock operators to trail livestock across the WMA when going to and coming from summer pasture. This does not include allowing livestock to disperse and graze across the WMA. Operators are required to contact the UDWR at least 24 hours prior to trailing. Trailing may be done on horseback or on foot. ATVs and other motorized vehicles may only be used on the road constituting a trailing right. The WMA may be accessed by foot or on horseback when searching for stray or lost livestock.

Land Acquisition History

Acquisition Dates

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A series of acquisition transactions from numerous individuals began with the purchase of the Migliore property in 1960. Several acquisitions have occurred since, with several inholdings still existing within the WMA. The acquisition history is listed as follows:

Year	Type	Deed ID	Grantor	Acres (round)
1960	Quitclaim Deed	91335	Milgiore+	159
1962	Warranty Deed	106536	Oman	3851
1963	Patent	104826	USA-BLM	529
1964	Patent Warranty	105333	USA-BLM	85
1966	Deed	112324	Ritzakis	1191
1967	Patent Warranty	113107	USA-BLM	665
1967	Deed Warranty	113856	Patterick+	121
1967	Deed Warranty	114495	Storrs	933
1969	Deed	118244	Powell	159
1970	Patent	119700	USA	655
1970	Patent Warranty	119860	USA	2330
1977	Deed Warranty	142306	Calvin K. Jacob and Sons' Partnership	163
1977	Deed	143642	Stamatakis	378
1982	Patent Quitclaim	162606	State of Utah	674
1999	Deed Quitclaim	76534	Plateau Mining Corporation	41
2000	Deed Warranty	79054	Farrell	0.1
2001	Deed Warranty	89146	Stamatakis	306
2001	Deed	97195	Stamatakis	41
2009	Patent	803854	SITLA	2650
2012	Patent	815596	SITLA General Services Administration-	684
2013	Patent	818580	SITLA	40

Mechanism of Purchase

The majority of the acquisitions have involved federal grants through the Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration Program, often referred to as the Pittman-Robertson or P-R Act, which authorizes federal participation in cooperative wildlife restoration projects with state wildlife agencies.

Other parcels were acquired through trades with State Institutional Trust Lands Administration (SITLA) and General Services Administration (GSA). GSA properties are subject to Public Law 99-587 where if lands are exchanged they must be comparable in terms of wildlife. If they cease to be used for the purposes of wildlife, they will be reverted to the United States. Attachment 2 is a map showing the parcels where federal funds were used and the UDWR is required to comply with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines when considering actions. This should not be considered a final map and UDWR records should be referenced for accuracy. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the responsible party for issuing the record of decision with regards to proposed actions on these sections of the WMA.

Historic Uses of the WMA

Carbon County has a long history of coal mining, with coal mines opening near the WMA as early as 1924. The Great Western Mine located on the north fork of Gordon Creek was mined by residents of Coal City, located on the WMA, which George A. Storres tried developing, however, this city was abandoned by the 1950s. Some of the buildings from Coal City can still be seen on the WMA. Mining activity continued up to 2012 when the last active mine (Horizon Mine) was closed.

The WMA was also used for livestock grazing and some limited farming activities. Many historic trailing permits are still used to move livestock through the WMA.

Purpose of UDWR Ownership

The primary objectives of all UDWR Wildlife Management Areas are to conserve and protect wildlife populations and habitat, and to provide hunting, angling, and wildlife viewing access to the public where we can. Other incompatible uses could be limited. Gordon Creek WMA was acquired primarily to protect, preserve, and enhance critical big game winter range, and to reduce crop depredation by mule deer and elk on private property. According to the Deer Herd Unit Management Plan 16BC/12 and 16A September 2020, the habitat management objective is to maintain or improve mule deer habitat on the unit by protecting, maintaining, and enhancing existing crucial habitats. The plan also states that one of the management strategies is to improve, protect, and restore sagebrush steppe habitat. This WMA allows the UDWR to carry out these types of activities. The WMA also provides habitat for a variety of other wildlife species and provides recreational opportunities for the public including hunting, hiking, and wildlife viewing.

Conservation Partners Involved in Acquisition

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, through its federal aid program, has been a major partner in acquiring the WMA. Land trades have also been conducted with SITLA who traded portions of this WMA for the Range Creek property in 2009 and GSA due to the Lee Kay property exchange in 2013.

PROPERTY INVENTORY

Existing Capital Improvements

Roads

Several categories of roads exist on the WMA including but not limited to county roads that are open year-round, UDWR roads that may be subject to seasonal closure from December 1 to April 15, and roads that are open to authorized vehicles only. UDWR reserves the right to close UDWR roads either seasonally or permanently to align with the management goals laid out within this plan. A map listing roads and what category they are can be found in Attachment 4.

Fence

Much of the existing fencing was present when private inholdings were acquired and the WMA was assembled. Since the formal designation of the area, major fencing projects have included the Forest Boundary in 2014, Bob Wright fields in 1985 and again in 2014, the lower fields in 1983, and the cost-sharing on the J. Stamatakis property in 1977.

Fences along the consumer's Road right-of-way remain primarily net wire, due to the traditional trailing of sheep to and from Privately-owned lands west of the area. In an attempt to make this fence more wildlife-friendly, rails have been installed or the top wire raised in an attempt to reduce entanglement.

Facilities and Equipment

Facilities on the WMA are fairly limited. Next to the "upper fields" there is a pit toilet that was installed and is maintained by the county.

The only equipment that is associated directly with the property would consist of the irrigation systems both at the "Bob Wright fields" and the "upper fields". This consists of diversion structures, buried pipelines, and surface irrigation equipment. This is used for raising crops for wildlife on the property. The UDWR has a special use permit with the Forest Service for the Bob Wright Stream Diversion which includes a pipeline right-of-way 20 feet wide covering 0.2 acres in T 14 S., R7 E. Section 1 E2. This permit will expire on December 31, 2049. The other stream diversion to irrigate the upper fields is located in T 13 S., R 8 E. Section 21 SW4.

There is a corral located in T 13 S. R 8 E. Section 27 (SE4SE4) and section 34 (NE4NE4). There was a special use permit issued to Gordon Creek Grazers, LLC that allowed the permittees to construct and maintain such corrals for gathering, holding, sorting, loading, and handling livestock. This includes holding pens, working pens, and a truck loading and turnaround area. There is a cooperative agreement between the UDWR and the Association for management of

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these corrals. The corrals are owned by the UDWR and are available for use by the UDWR to control trespass livestock on the property.

There is an additional corral near the Great Western Townsite that was acquired in 2001 in a land purchase agreement between the UDWR, and the Stamatakis brothers (Joel, Pete, and Steve). The terms of this agreement included the Grantors (Stamatakis brothers) having access to the corral. The use of this corral should be verbally communicated to the habitat manager. Use of the corral is allowed until 2026 or until the corral no longer exists.

A roof structure was constructed in 2019 in the area referred to as the “upper fields” to store equipment and other supplies. All other buildings on the WMA are considered cultural resources and should not be disturbed or used for storing equipment.

Water Rights

The irrigation rights on the property are used to irrigate the “Bob Wright fields” as well as the “upper and lower fields”. Water readings are taken at both diversions and reported to the water master. UDWR has several 1874 1st class water rights. In years of low water availability, UDWR splits the water with the lower water users. UDWR has the right to 42 percent of the water while the lower water users receive the other 58 percent.

91-777 (part of the Gordon Creek & Tributaries Delivery Schedule)

- Source No. Fork of Gordon Creek
- 1874 1st class right
- When water levels are below 6.649 cfs UDWR is allocated 42% of the water with a 1st class right.
- The right is for 1.570 cfs or 360-acre feet.

91-774 (part of the Gordon Creek & Tributaries Delivery Schedule)

- Source Bob Wright Creek
- 1874 1st class right.
- When water levels are below 6.649 cfs UDWR is allocated 42% of the water with a 1st class right. The right is for 1.050 cfs limited to 63 acres

91-776 (part of the Gordon Creek & Tributaries Delivery Schedule)

- Source Trail Canyon Creek
- 1874 1st class right.
- When water levels are below 6.649 cfs UDWR is allocated 42% of the water with a 1st class right.
- The right is for 0.176 cfs

91-778 (part of the Gordon Creek & Tributaries Delivery Schedule)

- Source No. Fork of Gordon Creek
- 1876 2nd class right
- The right is for 0.150 cfs

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91-775 (part of the Gordon Creek & Tributaries Delivery Schedule)

- Source Bob Wright Creek
- 1876 2nd class right
- The right is for 0.176 cfs

91-779 (part of the Gordon Creek & Tributaries Delivery Schedule)

- Source Transmountain Beaver Creek Rediversion North Fork of Gordon Creek
- 1893 3rd class right
- The right is for 2.0 cfs

91-121 (part of the Gordon Creek & Tributaries Delivery Schedule)

- Source Bob Wright Creek
- 1939 9th class right
- The right is for 7.0 cfs

Limited to 139.1 acres

The following list of water right identification numbers are all 1869 Priority with a use type of stock water: 91-257, 91-396, 91-397, 91-398, 91-554, 91-807, 91-1826, 91-1827, 91-2390, 91-2393, 91-3073, 91-3096, 91-3098, 91-3214, 91-3216, 91-3217, 91-3714, 91-3715, 91-3716, 91-4399, 91-4403, 91-4813, 91-4979.

91-4995

- 1874 Priority
- Use type - stock water

91-3703

- 1902 Priority
- Use type - stock water

Cultural Resources

Numerous cultural resources occur on the property related to historical mining in the area including buildings, water development, railroad grades, etc. A brief history of Coal City, established in 1885 and now a ghost town, can be found in Appendix B. The entire WMA has not been surveyed for cultural resources.

Important Fish and Wildlife Habitats

The WMA is primarily composed of sagebrush steppe rangelands, pinyon-juniper woodlands, mountain brush, and open cliff faces. These habitats provide a crucial winter range for big game including deer, elk, and moose. The WMA also provides habitat for carnivores and furbearers including mountain lions, bears, bobcats, and beavers. There has been an emphasis in recent years to provide improved habitat for upland game including wild turkey, mourning dove, pheasant, and chukar. In 2020, sterile brook trout were stocked into Gordon Creek and stream restoration is planned to further improve fish habitats on the WMA. In addition to fish and game,

the WMA also provides habitat for raptors, pinyon jay, neotropical migratory birds, bats, and other small mammals, and reptiles.

Habitat conditions within the WMA vary from poor to good. Balancing pinyon-juniper habitats and open sagebrush habitats to maintain forage, caching areas, and cover will be important to maintain suitable habitats for the diversity of species on the WMA. At the lower elevations, sagebrush steppe rangelands have experienced stress from drought and overutilization. Browse and forbs should be maintained or improved in these areas with adequate tree cover available for thermal refuge. There are varying ages and densities of pinyon-juniper habitats on the WMA. Projects will aim to maintain pinyon-juniper woodlands with adequate understories as well as reduce encroachment of these species into historically brush-dominated areas. Mountain brush communities include oak brush, mountain big sagebrush, serviceberry, and mahogany. These habitats provide forage as wildlife transition from a lower elevation to higher elevation habitats. A majority of the oak brush community on the WMA was burned in the 2012 Seeley fire and has re-sprouted providing succulent and palatable new forage for wildlife. Opportunities to encourage diverse seral stages of mountain brush habitat will be important, as many species are in late seral stages reducing the availability for browsing. In addition to these rangeland habitats, two areas, the “Bob Wright fields” and “upper fields” are planted with annual crops including winter wheat, barley, triticale, and sunflower. These fields are irrigated to provide habitat and foraging opportunities for big game and upland game.

Limiting factors for fish are migration barriers and low macroinvertebrate populations. Gordon Creek was impacted by the Seeley Fire in 2012. Project work has been identified to improve habitat complexity in the stream and restore it to a more functional state, while also restoring a floodplain and increasing riparian vegetation.

Utah Wildlife Action Plan

The 2015-2025 edition of the Utah Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) was created with the express purpose and goal of managing native wildlife species and their habitats to help prevent listings under the Endangered Species Act. To help achieve this goal, the WAP provides a statewide approach for the partnership-based, coordinated planning and implementation of wildlife and habitat conservation practices. The WAP addresses the following elements:

- Conservation targets: species of greatest conservation need (SGCN), and those species' key habitats. Information about the status and distribution of these species. Information about the location and condition of these key habitats.
- Threats and limiting factors facing these species and habitats, and research are required to help managers more effectively address these problems. Threats are measured and prioritized on a statewide basis, based on how many targets they impact, and how badly.
- Conservation actions are required to abate the highest-priority threats and improve the supply of these limiting factors.
- Monitoring the status of these targets, and in particular the effectiveness of these actions.
- Approaches for including the public, partners, and stakeholders, in consideration of the mission and authority of partners.

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- Provisions for coordinating the WAP with other natural resource management plans.

The Gordon Creek WMA contains habitat for 22 of the 141 Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) identified in the Wildlife Action Plan. These species have been listed in the table below.

Common Name	Scientific Name	S Rank	N Rank
Birds			
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	S2	N5
Black rosy-finch	<i>Leucosticte atrata</i>	S1	N4
Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	S3	N4
Ferruginous Hawk	<i>Buteo regalis</i>	S3	N4
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	S4	N5
Greater Sage-grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>	S3	N3
Lewis's Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes lewis</i>	S3	N4
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	S3	N4
Mammals			
Dwarf Shrew	<i>Sorex nanus</i>	S3	N4
Fringed Myotis	<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	S2	N4
Little Brown Myotis	<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	S4	N3
Preble's Shrew	<i>Sorex preblei</i>	S2	N4
Spotted Bat	<i>Euderma maculatum</i>	S3	N3
Townsend's Big-eared Bat	<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	S4	N3
Western Red Bat	<i>Lasiurus blossevallii</i>	SU	N3
White-tailed Prairie Dog	<i>Cynomys leucurus</i>	S3	N4
Amphibians			
Northern Leopard Frog	<i>Lithobates pipiens</i>	S3	N5
Fishes			
Colorado River Cutthroat Trout	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus</i>	S3	N2
Reptiles			
Many-lined Skink	<i>Plestiodon multivirgatus</i>	S1	N5
Midget Faded Rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus oreganus concolor</i>	SNR	N4
Smith's Black-headed Snake	<i>Tantilla hobartsmithi</i>	S3	N5
Utah Milksnake	<i>Lampropeltis triangulum taylori</i>	S3	N4

General Conditions of Habitat

The Wildlife Action Plan identifies key wildlife habitats in Utah. Seven of these habitats exist in the Gordon Creek WMA; Lowland Sagebrush, Desert Grassland, Mountain Sagebrush, Gambel Oak, Mountain Shrub, Aspen Conifer, and Aquatic – Scrub/Shrub. Two separate long-term data sets are gathered by the UDWR to help monitor the habitat conditions through time. The UDWR

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has completed annual utilization surveys on several sites within the WMA. This data shows increased leader utilization by deer with a reduction in the number of days used by deer per year since 2012.

A second long-term data set is collected by the UDWR Range Trend Crew. This project monitors vegetation transects throughout the state on a five-year rotation. This data monitors changes in vegetation communities and long-term browse utilization over time at the species level. The WMA was last monitored in 2019. The 2019 data summary found that overall, on the Central Mountains, the upland sagebrush community is dominated by mountain big sagebrush interspersed with oak, rabbitbrush, and black sagebrush. Most browse is composed of young to mature plants with a small number of decadent individuals. The density of species fluctuates, but utilization of browse species remains high. Pinyon and juniper in these habitats are showing an increasing trend. Understories in these habitats are not very diverse but do provide moderate cover. Annual grasses remain present in small amounts. Forbs, both annual and perennial, provide only a small amount of cover. Trend sites on the Gordon Creek WMA contributing to this summary are Wiregrass Bench, Slackpile, North Slackpile, and Telephone Bench. Browse has increased over time and impacts from browsing have been low. The cover and density of pinyon and juniper in these habitats have decreased, due to restoration projects. These habitat types have abundant understories with little diversity. The cover and frequency of perennial grasses have been stable. Perennial forbs have decreased and annual forb cover has fluctuated. Annual grass is present but the cover has remained low. The complete report can be reviewed in its entirety at https://wildlife.utah.gov/pdf/range-trends/archive/2019_Southeastern_Region_Unit_Summary_Report.pdf

Human Use Related Problems

Cattle and sheep grazing occurs adjacent to the WMA, as well as trailing rights through the WMA spring and fall. Livestock frequently trespasses on the property and grazing occurs in areas not managed for livestock.

Some off high-way vehicle use and other recreational uses such as mountain biking occur in the area. These activities are allowed on existing roads however, new user-created trails are not permitted on the WMA.

Camping is currently permitted on the WMA however, it is at the discretion of the UDWR and can be closed at any time.

Adjacent Land Uses and Potential Impacts

The land to the west is owned by the U.S. Forest Service. Various recreation uses occur and include camping, hiking, hunting, and OHV recreation. The land north, south, and east of the WMA have mixed ownership including privately owned, BLM, and SITLA with the primary activity being grazing.

Oil and gas field development occurred on land that is now part of the WMA and adjacent lands. With this development comes issues such as; invasion of noxious weeds on well pads and roads, production water spills, underground high voltage power lines that may become exposed, or erosion caused by road developments. These issues are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The acquisition and management of this property are consistent with the resource goal outlined in UDWR's 2019 Strategic Plan:

Resource Goal: Conserve, enhance and actively manage Utah's protected wildlife populations.

Objective R2: Maintain existing wildlife habitat and increase the quality of critical habitats and watersheds throughout the state.

Objective R7: Decrease the number of wildlife-related incidents – including property damage, crop depredation, and threatened or endangered species listings – that negatively affect private property owners.

Constituency goals outlined in UDWR's Strategic Plan:

Constituency Goal: Strengthen support for wildlife management by demonstrating the value and importance of wildlife to all Utahns.

Objective C1: Increase Participation in fishing, hunting, and other wildlife-related activities.

Objective C6: Increase hunting and fishing opportunities.

The Gordon Creek WMA will be managed to increase its functionality, appeal, availability, and use by all fish and wildlife species. Habitat management will be consistent with sound ecological principles and wise land-use practices.

STRATEGIES FOR PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Development Activities

Establish Property Boundary/Fence

Several private inholdings on the property exist which make fencing difficult. Many of these inholdings were leased for wildlife from the early 1990s until 2020. Taxes from greenbelt status being revoked on these private inholdings made it no longer cost-effective for the landowner to lease to the UDWR. Fencing of these areas may be needed now more than ever to prevent livestock trespass on the WMA from these properties. Fence maintenance is needed on the

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boundary fence running north from the Bob Wright fields. New fencing is needed along the south end of the WMA to reduce trespass livestock. The east end also has little to no fencing.

Fences constructed by or with the UDWR participation are typically constructed to be wildlife-friendly. This should include a height of no more than 42” with a space of 12” between the top and second wire. This is intended to lessen the chances of wildlife becoming entangled in the fence. The bottom wire is normally 18” off the ground, and smooth wire, to allow passage under the wire. Other fencing options may be necessary when sheep are grazed on adjacent land or trailed through areas. These fences will be constructed as wildlife-friendly as possible while still serving their intended purpose.

Sign Needs

The needs for signage on the WMA are minimal. Some maintenance could be beneficial for signs that may have been shot or are fading. There are some signage needs along the south end of the WMA where boundary signs could be placed along the borders of the WMA, and on areas where roads enter or leave the property.

Public Access

Public access is provided to all classes of vehicles to the Gordon Creek WMA by way of Consumers road or U-139. A fair-weather “loop road” branches south of U-139 that provides access to the central and southwestern parts of the WMA. This road also continues southeast into Price after exiting the WMA’s southern boundary. Several other unimproved roads and trails generally provide access to private inholdings or other infrastructure throughout the WMA. No developed recreation opportunities exist on the WMA. There is a pit toilet by the upper fields that was installed and is maintained by the county, otherwise, there are no trash collection bins, potable water, or fire pits on site. The property is open to hunting and provides opportunities for deer, elk, pheasant, chukar, doves, and rabbit with the potential for turkey. The property is also open to trapping, angling, wildlife viewing, hiking, and horseback riding/packing. Horse travel is allowed on the WMA but certified weed-free hay is required. Corrals may not be used for holding facilities. Mountain biking and OHV use are allowed on the open roads through the WMA. New trails for mountain biking, OHV use, or horseback use may not be established on the WMA.

Camping is allowed on the WMA for no more than 14 consecutive days. Camps must be occupied daily. Parking of motor vehicles, trailers, or leaving camping equipment will not be allowed. Camping is not allowed in any of the irrigated fields, or along the road or parking area near the Coal City information kiosk or county pit toilet. Camping is at the discretion of the UDWR and can be closed at any time.

Organized events or groups of 25 people or more require a special use permit issued by UDWR.

Annual Maintenance Activities

Assessments by UDWR personnel will be made annually, and a maintenance budget will be requested for the following types of activities.

- Fences will be maintained annually or as needed to ensure pastures are maintained. UDWR personnel, leasees/permittees, and dedicated hunters will be the primary means for maintaining fences.
- Access roads will be monitored annually and maintenance will be conducted as needed to keep them passable and safe for the public. Roads and other rights-of-way that are administered by other parties (e.g. county) will be maintained by those parties. The UDWR will coordinate with local entities to resolve access issues.
- Signs will be inspected and replaced as needed.
- Water rights will be exercised to maintain them. Maintenance staff will work with the local water master to monitor the use of water.
- Ponds will be monitored annually and maintenance will be conducted when needed.
- The upper fields will continue to be irrigated and planted when necessary. Crops may include but are not limited to: alfalfa, annual grains (winter wheat) planted every other year in the fall, and annual crops (sunflower, sorghum, corn, wheat, barley, triticale, etc) planted annually in the spring.
- Noxious weeds will be inventoried and sprayed by UDWR personnel and a seasonal weed crew, as required by state law. Herbicides used near waterways will be reported annually to appropriate agencies. Care will be taken to limit opportunities for noxious weed introduction, and any hay used by visitors, hunters, or livestock-owners must be certified weed-free. The UDWR participates in the Skyline Cooperative Weed Management Area to plan and coordinate noxious weed activities on the WMAs and surrounding lands.

Compatibility of Proposed Uses with Local Government Planning and Zoning Ordinances

The WMA is zoned Mining and Grazing (M&G) as well as a watershed (WS) under Carbon County Zoning Regulations. The most recent building and zoning regulations can be found at <https://www.carbon.utah.gov/Administration/Building-Planning-Zoning/Carbon-County-Planning-and-Zoning>. The website was accessed February 11, 2020, and at the time Gordon Creek WMA was compatible with Carbon County's Zoning Ordinances.

STRATEGIES FOR HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Strategies for habitat management will be consistent with those outlined in the mule deer and elk management plans previously mentioned which include:

- Continue to improve and restore critical habitats according to the statewide Watershed Restoration Initiative (WRI) being coordinated through the Utah Partners

for Conservation and Development (UPCD). Cooperate with federal land management agencies and private landowners in carrying out habitat improvements such as reseeded, prescribed burns, water developments, etc. on public and private lands.

- Pursue land trades and conservation easements that block up the land, improve public access, and preserve critical wildlife habitats adjacent to the WMA.
- Work cooperatively with the Forest Service, BLM, and local governments to prepare access management plans that enhance wildlife habitats and range conditions. Such plans may emphasize a mix of permanent and seasonal road closures and vehicle type restrictions.
- Continue to monitor the permanent range condition and trend studies located on the WMAs.

Deer Herd Unit Management Plan for Deer Herd Unit # 16B/16C (September 2020)

The Management Plan sets a target of 28,000 wintering deer on the Manti unit based on the best available model and as range conditions permit. Habitat management strategies for this deer herd include the following:

- Continue to improve, protect, and restore sagebrush steppe and aspen habitats critical to deer.
- Protect, maintain, and restore stream and riparian habitats to provide diverse foraging opportunities.
- Work with federal and state partners in fire management and rehabilitation on crucial deer habitats.

Mule deer habitat on the WMA is considered a crucial winter range.

Elk Herd Unit #16 Central Mountains August 2016

The Management Plan sets a target for 12,000 wintering elk on the Manti with an average age of harvested bulls between 5.5-6.0 years old. Habitat management strategies for this elk herd include the following:

- Remove pinyon-juniper encroachment into winter range sagebrush parks.
- Enhance elk habitat on a minimum of 20,000 acres during the next 5 years through direct range improvements.

Elk habitat on the WMA is considered a crucial winter range.

Habitat Improvement Plan

Specific, detailed habitat improvement plans are beyond the scope of this HMP. However, when needed, habitat improvement plans will be submitted to the UDWR's Habitat Council through

Utah's Watershed Restoration Initiative and other potential partners for funding. Habitat improvement project plans will include specific recommendations including treatment methods, seed mixes, and total acreage targeted for treatment. In the next ten years, stream restoration on the WMA will be an emphasis on habitat improvements.

Maintain Previous Restoration Projects

Generally speaking, the best opportunities for habitat improvement on this WMA will focus on pinyon-juniper habitats that have been previously treated. Areas with increasing pinyon-juniper cover will be evaluated for thinning. Thinning activities will take into account the importance of pinyon and juniper as thermal cover for big game species, and thinning projects will be planned to ensure adequate pinyon-juniper cover is left on-site to provide this important habitat requirement.

Water Developments

Water developments should only be pursued if they help reach the management objectives of the WMA. Water developments that would result in big game species becoming year round residents on these crucial winter ranges should be discouraged. Water development projects that would assist in meeting the goals and objectives of the grazing management plan should be pursued.

Access Management Plan

The WMA is open to public access when seasonal closures are not in effect. There are seasonal closures for motorized travel on parts of the WMA from December 1 to April 15. The WMA is popular for hunting deer, elk, pheasant, and chukar. It is also a popular location for shed antler gathering and trapping. Access is available on county roads, but access may be restricted due to weather that makes the roads impassable for travel. Motorized access is restricted to authorized, existing, and designated roads and trails (Utah Code Section 41-22-10.1). The UDWR reserves the right to close all unauthorized roads and trails. Foot and horseback traffic is permitted throughout the WMA.

Fire Management Plan

All activities dealing with wild and prescribed fire will be coordinated with the Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (FFSL) according to guidelines established in the Memorandum of Understanding (2005) between UDWR and DFFSL. Fire management provisions include:

- When a prescribed fire is needed as a habitat management tool, UDWR will provide all applicable information to FFSL to ensure burn plans are complete and submitted by deadlines.
- Wildfires will be aggressively battled to protect cottonwood trees and their associated riparian habitats.
- Open fires are allowed, but cannot be unattended, and adequate provisions must be taken to prevent the spread of fire (R657-28). State, federal, or local fire restrictions will apply

to all WMA's when deemed necessary by fire officials and UDWR. Non-combustible materials cannot be used in the building of fires and must be removed. The UDWR reserves the right to ban open fires on the WMA if needed to protect valuable wildlife habitat on the WMA. Open fires are not allowed when there is a closure on adjacent lands due to hazardous fire conditions. The UDWR may also restrict open fires to designated areas if the use of open fires becomes a management problem. Only dead wood lying on the ground may be used for fires.

- The use of fireworks and explosives is prohibited on WMA's (R657-28).

Wood Products

Wood products are managed according to Administrative Rule R657-28, Use of Division Lands. Timber resources are limited as pinyon and juniper are the most abundant woody species. Christmas trees are the main wood products on this WMA which requires a permit from the UDWR.

Livestock Grazing Plan

Livestock grazing is managed according to Administrative Rule R657-28, Use of Division Lands. Grazing on the WMA will be evaluated by regional personnel. Stocking rates and season of use will be adjusted as needed to obtain desired habitat conditions. A high-intensity short duration grazing strategy is used on the "North" and "South" pastures. This grazing should occur in the spring between grass green up and the flag leaf stage. This strategy was implemented to decrease grass and increase shrubs on the WMA in an effort to provide crucial winter forage for deer and elk. Grazing allotments are alternated by year with 150 AUM's on the south pasture and 200 AUM's on the north pasture. Other areas of the WMA are held as a grass bank that can be utilized when determined it is needed which will be decided on a case by case basis. Some examples of possible use include when habitat improvement projects or fires are in need of deferred grazing at which time temporary grazing may occur. The grass bank may also be considered to reduce impacts during exceptional drought. Utilizing this grass bank requires hauling water and a herder to be effective.

Livestock Trespass

At times, trespassing livestock is found on the WMA. Occurrences of trespassing livestock will be handled by UDWR personnel according to the guidelines outlined in the Division's Land Use, R657-28-10, and according to GDL W3TER-02.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF PROPOSED USES

The primary goals and objectives of this WMA presented in this HMP are to preserve, enhance and protect big game winter range and wintering wildlife, and reduce deer and elk depredation on surrounding private lands. The UDWR will allow for and provide wildlife-related

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recreational activities that are consistent with the goals and purposes for which this WMA was acquired.

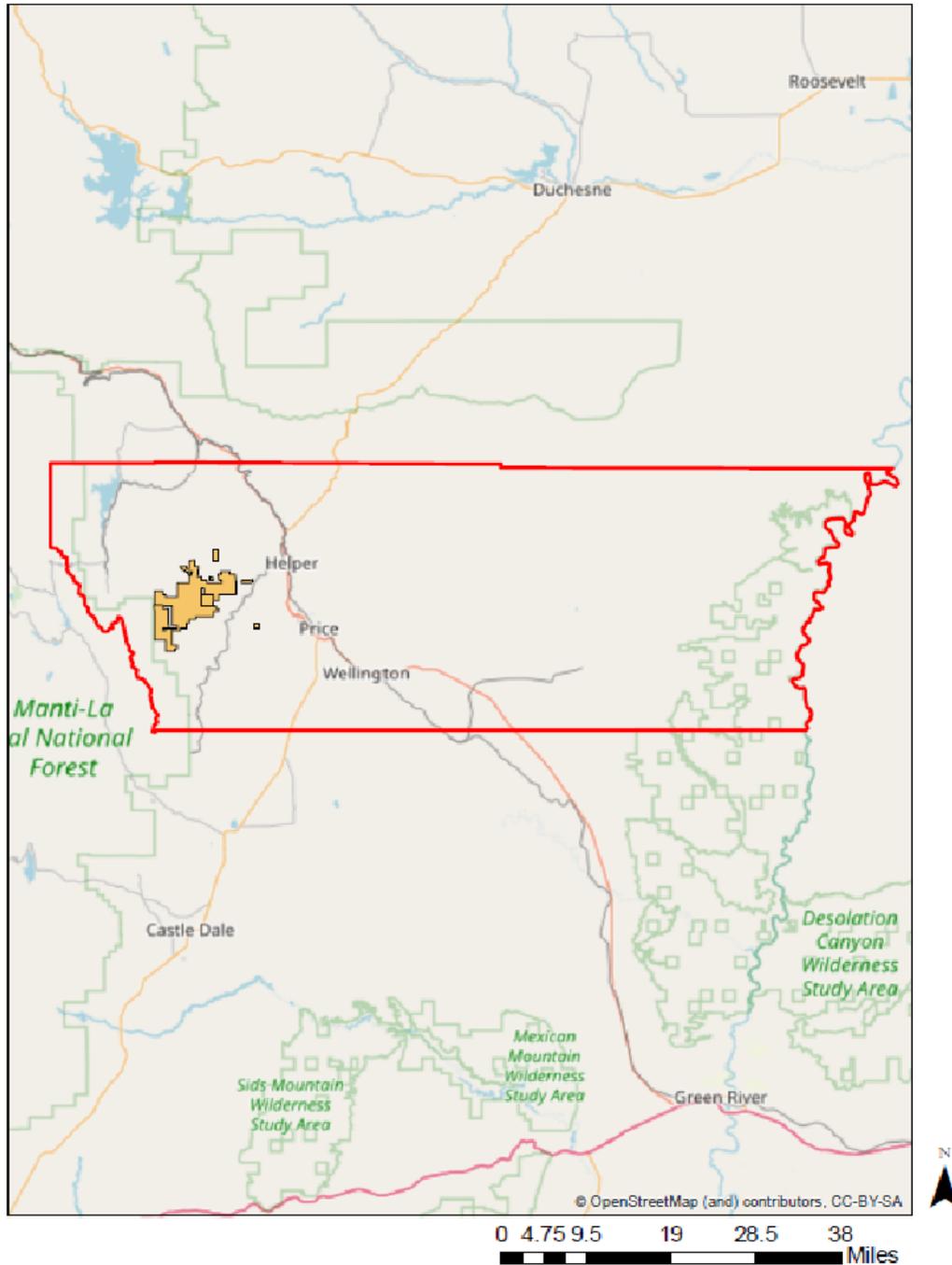
MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Regional habitat section personnel, the area wildlife biologist, and the district conservation officer will be responsible for monitoring the overall effectiveness of the program. Appropriate sections will provide expertise as required. The Lead and Assistant Habitat Maintenance Specialists will monitor the needs and effectiveness of physical facilities and improvements. Range Trend program personnel will continue to read the existing trend study's on a 5-year rotation and will add additional monitoring sites as needed. The regional habitat section will amend this habitat management plan as needed.

ATTACHMENTS

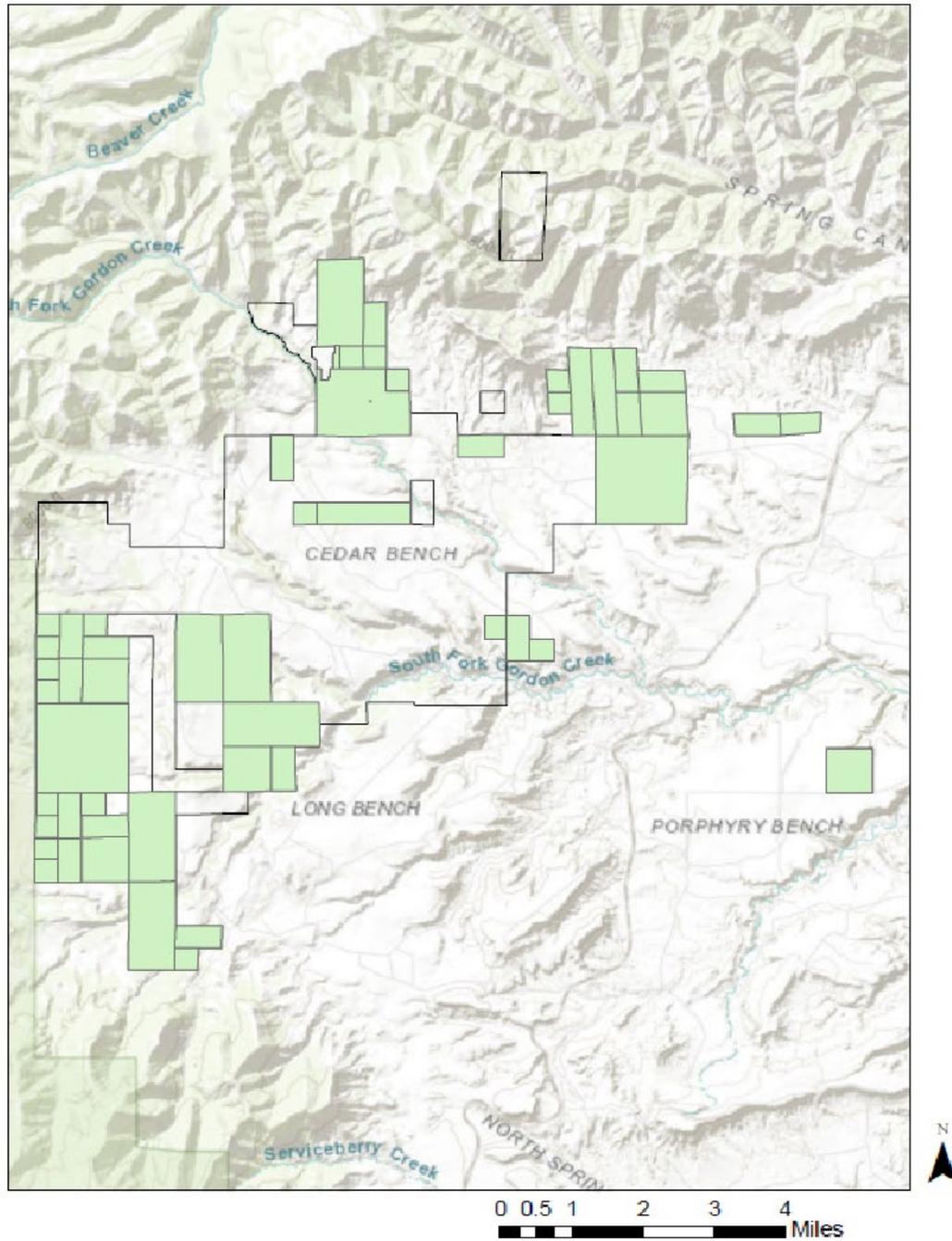
- Map # 1. Location of Gordon Creek WMA Carbon County, Utah
- Map # 2. Gordon Creek WMA Parcels Requiring NEPA
- Map # 3. Gordon Creek WMA Land Ownership
- Map # 4. Road Classification

Gordon Creek Wildlife Management Area Carbon County, Utah



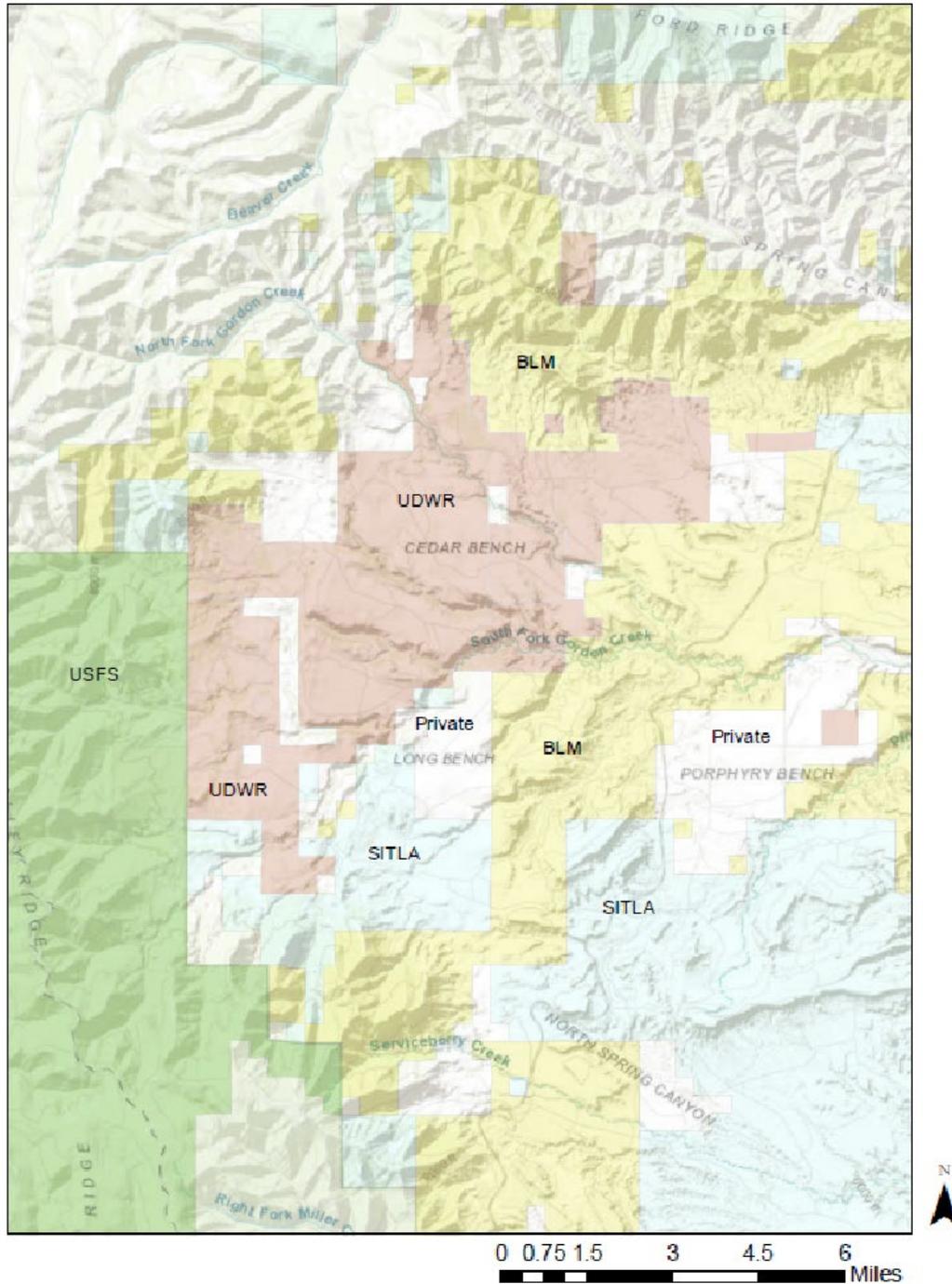
Map # 1. Location of Gordon Creek WMA Carbon County, Utah

Gordon Creek Wildlife Management Area Parcels Where NEPA is Required



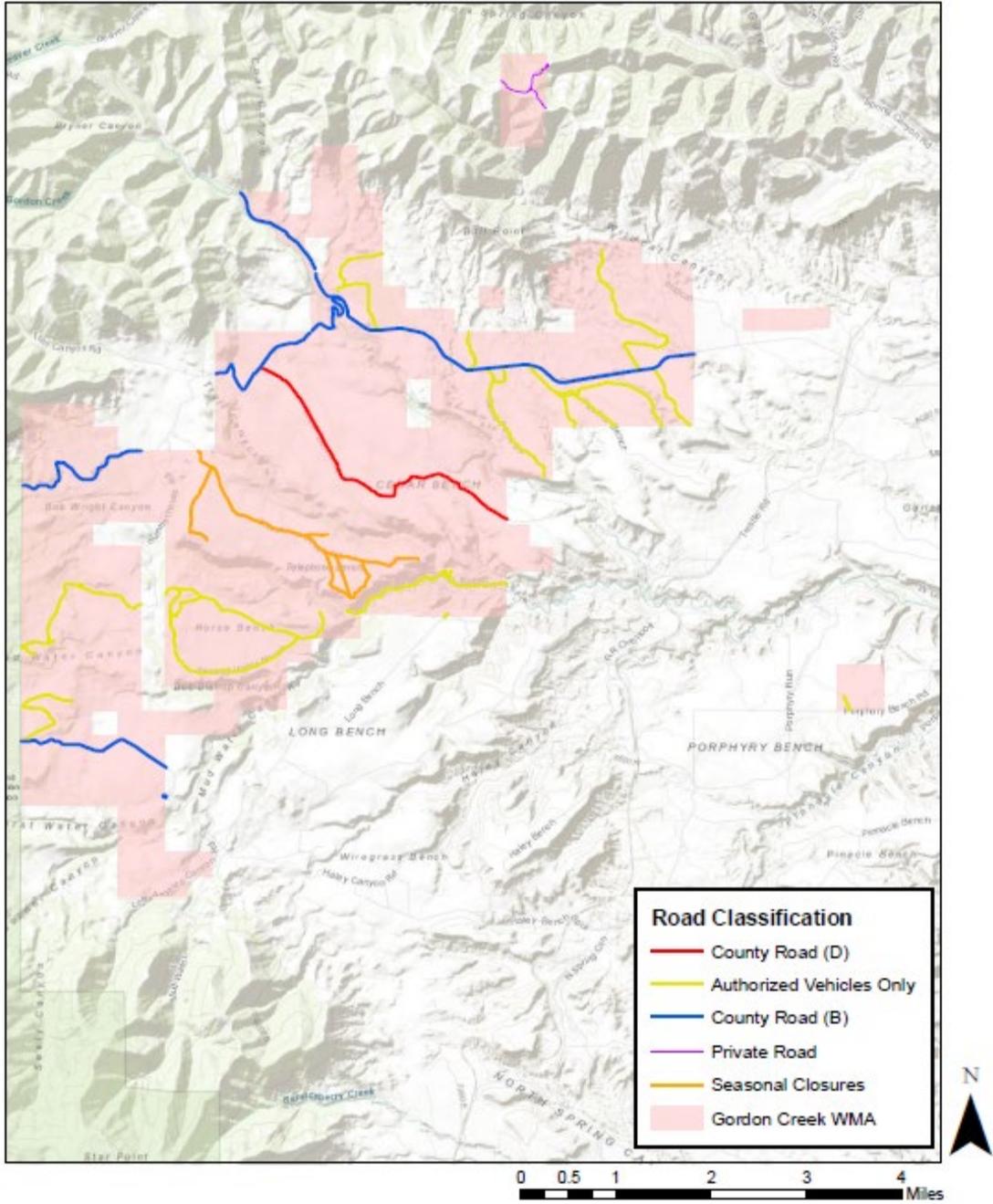
Map # 2. Gordon Creek WMA Parcels Requiring NEPA

Gordon Creek Wildlife Management Area Land Ownership



Map # 3. Gordon Creek WMA Land Ownership

Gordon Creek Wildlife Management Area Road Classification



Map # 4. Road Classification

APPENDICES

Appendix A

The majority of the minerals were reserved by the previous owner when the land was acquired by the UDWR. Minerals reserved are listed by deed number below. Each deed and title should be referenced for accuracy.

76534- Subject to all prior oil and gas leases; all prior conveyances of record, or any rights, titles, or interests; reservations of right to drill for oil, gas, water, and other minerals of record; all exceptions, reservations, conditions, rights privileges, easement, encumbrances, or rights-of-way contained with prior instruments of record

79054-None

89146- All coal and other minerals. Subject to easements, reservations, and restrictions however evidenced (grazing purchase and first right of refusal? (020227))

91335- All minerals, mineral interests, fissionable materials, coals, oils, gases, clays, spars, potash, sand, gravel, asphalt, commercial rock, veins, lodes, and deposits of every kind and nature. Right by Grantor and heirs the right to enter the lands to explore, develop, mine, produce, remove the above minerals, and to build roads, pipelines, power or telephone lines, structures or facilities upon as may be necessary for mining, producing, exploring, or removal or processing of above-mentioned minerals

97195- Excepting all coal, oil, gas, and other minerals. Subject to easements, reservations, and restrictions however evidenced. Access to existing corral (020233). Less any portion of all parcels that lie within the county roads, highways, or Old Railroad ROW. Pole Line Easement executed by Great Western Coal Mines Company in favor of Utah Power & Light Company. Pole Line Easement executed by J.L. Storrs and Ruth Storrs in favor of Utah Power & Light. Subject to rights of way for the public to use. Subject to any lack of right of access for ingress and egress. Terms and conditions as contained in the Land and Grazing Permit Purchase Agreement.

104826- Subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights. A right-of-way thereon for ditches and canals was constructed by the authority of the United States. All mineral deposits with the right to mine and remove the same.

105333- Subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights. A right-of-way thereon for ditches and canals was constructed by the authority of the United States. All mineral deposits with the right to mine and remove the same.

106536- Subject to roads and utility line ROW, road and highway. Excepting all oil, gas, and mineral rights. Reserving all range rights and rights to the use of the public domain. (Grazing lease 99317). Reservation by Oman of all personal property including livestock, all supplies, hay, grain, equipment, trucks, tractors, and machinery, and all personal property of any kind and nature (until 1962). Reserves the right to compensation to be paid by Mountain Fuel Supply Company for construction and completion of a natural gas line and associated roads. (Less portion deeded to National Coal Railway Company. Subject to any vested and accrued water rights constructed by the authority of the United States (Patent 9/26/1919 Book 6, page 420). Pole Line Easement across the north end of Section 36, T 13 SR 8E). (9532))

112324- all minerals, oil, coal, and gas (not including sand and gravel). Water rights, reservations in Patents, mining claims, easements, or encumbrances. Excepting all mineral, mineral interests, fissionable materials, coals, oils, gases, clays, spars, potash, asphalt, commercial rock, veins, loges, and deposits of every kind and nature. Subject to ROW deeds to Utah Power and Light Company. Subject to agreements to National Coal Railway Company. Subject to a 50-foot ROW to be used for a public road. Subject to Pole Line Easements. Subject to terms of Oil and Gas Leases.

113107- Subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights. A right-of-way thereon for ditches and canals was constructed by the authority of the United States. All mineral deposits with the right to mine and remove the same. Allow the BLM to manage, consistent with the wildlife propagation objectives of the area, all other values of the lands and to recognize the right of the US to retain the revenues from such management. Subject to reservations, conditions, and limitations.

113856- all minerals, oil, coal, and gas (but not including sand and gravel). Patent reservations or mining claims. Subject to terms of Oil and Gas Leases.

114495-all mineral, oil, coal, and gas (but not including sand and gravel). Patent reservations, mining claims. Pole Line Easements. Oil and Gas leases.

118244- all mineral, oil, coal, and gas (but not including sand and gravel)

119700-A ROW for ditches and canals constructed by the authority of the United States. All mineral deposits in the lands are so patented. Subject to reservations, conditions, and limitations.

119860- A ROW for ditches and canals constructed by the authority of the United States. All mineral deposits in the lands are so patented. Those rights for natural gas pipeline purposes are granted to Mountain Fuel Supply Company and Utah Natural Gas Company.

142306- Subject to all reservations previously recorded

143642-Subject to Oil, Gas, and Mineral leases

102606-Subject to all existing rights of record. Reserving all coal and other minerals. ROW for canals, ditches, tunnels, telephone, and transmission lines constructed by the authority of the United States.

803854- Excepting and reserving all coal, oil, gas, and other mineral deposits (not including common varieties of sand, gravel, volcanic cinders). Subject to rights of ingress, egress, and regress by SITLA. Excepting and reserving all sub-surface void and pore spaces and the right to utilize them for carbon sequestration purposes. Subject to any valid, existing easement or right of way of any kind. Subject to Easement ROW No 844 for Carbon County Road. Subject to Oil, Gas, and Hydrocarbon leases. Subject to access easements for Klabzuba Oil & Gas, Inc., assigned to Horse Bench Gathering, LLC to access buried natural gas pipeline. (?). Terms and conditions of Pooling Agreement between SITLA and various working interest owners. Unrecorded Agreements for extraction of oil and gas. Subject to reservation and easements in Exchange Patent No. 20159. Subject to MOU 803856.

818580-Subject to federal surface use restrictions for wildlife conservation and reverter, trust land administration exceptions, reservations, and surface use limitations. Any valid existing ROW. All existing ROW, easement, or other encumbrances. All oil, gas, and mineral rights. Unpatented mining claims. Utah Power & Light Company perpetual easement and ROW. Oil, gas, and hydrocarbon leases

815596- Excepting and reserving all coal, oil, gas, and other hydrocarbons and other mineral deposits. Excepting and Reserving and access and utility easement to benefit SITLA. Subject to any valid, existing ROW. Subject to all existing ROW, easements, or any other encumbrance.

Appendix B

The WMA is the location where George A. Storrs formed the Great Western Coal Company and dreamed of creating a new type of coal mining community. Storrs' vision for the town included 2,600 lots, miner-owned homes, farms, and company stock, a town hall with local elections, free enterprise, community water and electricity, a hospital, park, and an amusement hall. Potential investors to his enterprise included 1920's World Heavyweight Champion Jack Dempsey. Dempsey briefly moved to the Great Western Township, training in the basement of the town's first store. Dempsey soon left town to train for a championship fight, and so did his financial backing for the enterprise.

Great Western Mine never was a huge producer and only 200 lots were ever purchased in town, with only four documented farms. Dwellings were tents, log cabins, and a few frame and cinderblock homes. No more than 100 residents lived in town at any one time. Businesses included two stores, two bakeries, and one pool hall. No electricity except for a couple of individually paid hook-ups and the culinary water supply was problematic.

Although the population was never more than 100 people at any time, the diversity among residents was astounding. Most residents came from (or had parents from) foreign countries, including Syria, Armenia, Greece, Italy, England, Australia, Mexico, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Serbia, Germany, Wales, Norway, Denmark, and France.

The community never received all of the financial support to make George Storrs' dreams come true. The Great Western Coal Mines Company was dissolved in 1936 and Coal City was abandoned by all but a few plot owners by the early 1950s. The UDWR acquired most of the original township in the 1960s and the area is now designated for wildlife management.