

- ❖ Reducing Hazardous Fuels
- ❖ Promoting Ecosystem Resiliency

## Fuels Project Informational Bulletin

### Government Creek Fuels Project - Mechanical Treatment

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**Completion Date:** February 2013

**Location:** Government Creek - west side of Sheeprocks

**Legal Description:** T9S R7W S8,9,16,17

**Project Description:** The portion of this multi-phase fuels treatment which was just completed primarily involved mechanical treatment of 1410 acres. This joint West Desert BLM/Watershed Restoration Initiative landscape-scale effort was cooperatively conducted across multiple ownerships in conjunction with the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forests, Utah Department of Wildlife Resources and the West Desert Sage Grouse Working Group. The contractors did excellent work in treating the sage grouse habitat and blended it with previous BLM and USFS fuels treatments. This will aid in preserving the integrity of leks in the area, improve brood rearing and nesting habitat, and improve migration corridors. BYU is currently conducting research in the area on the effects of mastication on vegetation response, including post-mastication burning of the debris.

**Background:** Sagebrush habitat throughout the Great Basin is at great risk of being lost due to altered fire regimes resulting from juniper encroachment and cheatgrass invasion. It is estimated that pinyon and juniper woodlands have increased ten-fold over the past 130 years throughout the Intermountain West. Because of increased juniper cover in this area, the SLFO of BLM proposed fuel reduction in sites between the Simpson and Sheeprock Mountains. Implementation of hazardous fuels reduction projects intend to reduce the potential of wildland fire from burning across BLM and other federal public lands, as well as state, private and tribal lands. Fuels management actions are intended to reduce the rate of spread, intensity, resistance to control, and crowning (movement of a fire from the understory into the crown of a tree canopy) potential of wildfires by reducing available fuel.



Sagebrush re-sprouting after initial phase of the project



Phase 1 of the project, post-thinning