

Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group

Working Together For Healthy Landscapes and Quality Lifestyles

2008 – 2009

Fourth Annual Newsletter

Program Highlights:

The Gold Belt Coalition- A Northern Nevada Partnership First Gold Belt Sustainable Development Workshop

The latest workshop held in Battle Mountain last October marked the first sustainable development annual Gold Belt workshop. "Northern Nevada Sustainability – A Promise for the Future" began the coordinated effort by Elko County, Lander County, and Humboldt/Pershing Counties to explore topics and activities that will enhance community stability following current mine production. A core pilot project FIND (Future Industrial Needs Discovery) was presented by the Lander County Group. The FIND Project is designed to collect data from mines and on community infrastructure to formalize a study that companies with potential industrial needs could assess.



The FIND Project is managed by the Lander County Group and funded by a BLM grant, and has been contracted to Summit Engineering in Reno Nevada. Other topics at the workshop included community recycling, sustainable agriculture, cogeneration ideas, study on housing profiles in Lander County and regional planning for optimum success which would compliment the FIND process. All attendees at the Battle Mountain workshop felt the continued effort of the Gold Belt Coalition is essential for the region, mines and the communities.

Harrison Pass Fire Rehabilitation Project

On May 3rd and 4th over 60 volunteers showed up to plant 5000 bitterbrush and sagebrush plants donated by the Department of Wildlife on 570 acres of National Forest at a spot that burned two summers ago south of town at Harrison Pass, in the Toyn Creek watershed, which is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Jiggs, Nevada. The action-oriented community event of planting native grass seed, sagebrush and bitterbrush seedlings was funded in part by the National Forest Foundation's Matching Awards Program. The Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group (NNSG) sponsored and organized the event, in collaboration with the U. S. Forest Service, Nevada Department of

Wildlife, Jiggs Conservation District, Mound Valley 4-H Club, and Mule Deer Foundation.



"Manual planting of bitterbrush and sagebrush is crucial as the two species only germinate in cyclic conditions and this might only happen once in several years," said Gerry Miller, NNSG President. To further evaluate the success of the Rehabilitation Project, the Range Management Class at Great Basin College will do monitoring and the assessment this fall.

Lamoille Institute For Educators (LIFE) Program

Thirty educators participating in the LIFE program arrived August 6th at the Spratling Family Ranch in Death, NV to see how ranching and environmental issues work in a production setting.



This was the third year of NNSG hosting the LIFE program, which had new sponsors: Sierra Nevada Journeys & Project Learning Tree joined Nevada Natural Resource Education Council for the week-long summer program. The focus for the afternoon Ranch Tour was "impacts of fire" on the rangeland system. The team leading the 2008 Ranch Tour was headed by Boyd Spratling, DVM and owner; Kent McAdoo, Range Specialist, UNR Coop. Ext.; Chuck Petersen, Rangeland Spec., USDA, NRCS; Ron Torrel, Specialist, UNR, Coop. Ext. Jan Petersen contributed a historic background information on Metropolis, an early 1900's planned agricultural community that experienced a brief, and ambitious existence.

Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group – 4th Annual Newsletter 2008 – 2009

Thanks to everyone who supported NNSG's 2009 membership campaign!

Monitoring Sage Grouse In Northeastern Nevada

Do you know how many sage grouse live in northern Nevada? That is something that Elko County asked the Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group – which in turn assisted Elko County with securing funding from the Nevada Division of State Lands Question One grant program.

With Assembly Bill No. 9 in July of 2000, Nevada citizens provided support of the Proposal to Issue Bonds for Conservation Resource Protection. Under AB 9, commonly known as “Question 1”, part of the funding generated was to provide for the development of habitat conservation plans. These plans are to protect and/or enhance wildlife habitat for endangered species, and other species that warrant special attention, and biodiversity.

“We can't really find out how many sage grouse are in Elko County, but we can assess population trends and resource conditions” according to Gerry Miller. The Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group (NNSG) worked from 1999 to 2005 to complete the Elko County Sagebrush Ecosystem Conservation Strategy- this document was designed to be implemented by the agencies and other partners at the Watershed level. Those developing the strategy recognized the need and ultimate benefit of using a third-party coordinator and contractors to complete and deliver a watershed assessment product that would reflect the existing habitat conditions of the Tuscarora Watershed/ Tuscarora Sage Grouse Population Management Unit and recommend landscape-scale actions that would improve habitat for sage grouse.

Elko County contracted with Great Basin Ecology to work on the Tuscarora Watershed and Population Management Unit assessment which was just recently completed and we are very pleased with the result.

Meanwhile the Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group is assisting Elko County with a round nine Question 1 application to complete a Habitat Assessment of the North Fork Watershed / Sage Grouse Population Management Unit.

Dates To Remember

- NNSG Day- 4/14
- NNSG Annual Meeting- 4/14-15
- Earth Day- 4/22
- Arbor Day- 4/24
- Elko CleanUp, GreenUp & Recycle Day- 4/25
- 7th Annual Weed Summit- 4/28-30
- National Trails Day- 6/6
- Friends of the Forest Day- 6/27
- National Public Lands Day- 9/26
- Lamoille to Secret Pass non-motorized trail presentation- May, date TBA
- Outdoor Recreation workshop- October, date TBA
- North Fork Habitat Conservation Plan Update- November, date TBA

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT...

I am pleased to present the 2008 – 2009 Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Groups' Annual Report. The eleven member volunteer Board of Directors have continued to stay busy.

The National Forest Foundation (NFF) through their Friends of the Forest program partners with NNSG on public land projects. NFF matching grant projects in 2008 - 2009 Jiggs, Lamoille and Starr Valley Conservation Districts' dollars to buy bugs to control leafy spurge and Canada Thistle along the foothills of the Ruby Mountains. The US Forest Service and local chapter of the Mule deer foundation are also project sponsors.

In June 2008, trees were planted and general maintenance done at the Pole Creek Ranger Station in memory of a young man – a USDA Forest Service, Jarbidge and Ruby Mountains Ranger District employee who took a voluntary assignment to help reconstruct agricultural projects in Afghanistan, but never made it back home to his family, fiancée or career.

Last April, the members of NNSG helped with a booth and general support at the Elko Band of the Te-Moke Tribe of the Western Shoshone's Earth Day activities.

NNSG assisted with Elko Clean Up Green Up day activities in various capacities – but the main activity was cleaning up the Chimney Rock allotment where a car body was among the stuff picked up.

We hosted a public forum for Nevada Department of Wildlife's Ken Mayer and Shawn Espinoza to speak to the community about current topics concerning Sage Grouse.

We co-sponsored the second Annual Fire fair where the theme topics were defensible space around private structures and fire ecology.

Our Organization assisted in the local National Trails Day activities held in June. NNSG provided dollars for lunch and workers to assist the Back Country Horsemen maintain and improve the Soldier Creek Trail.

National Public Lands Day activities, Nevada Range Management School, The Northeastern Nevada Demonstration Plots and pursuing the use of fire in the fall as a way of altering the dominance of cheatgrass are all ongoing projects and we have many more planned for this coming year.

It has been my pleasure to serve as president of the Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group and present a snippet of what we've been actively engaged in this past year and coming year as we will continue our pursuit of: “Working Together for Healthy Landscapes and Quality Lifestyles!”

Please visit us at: www.nnsg.org

Gerry Miller