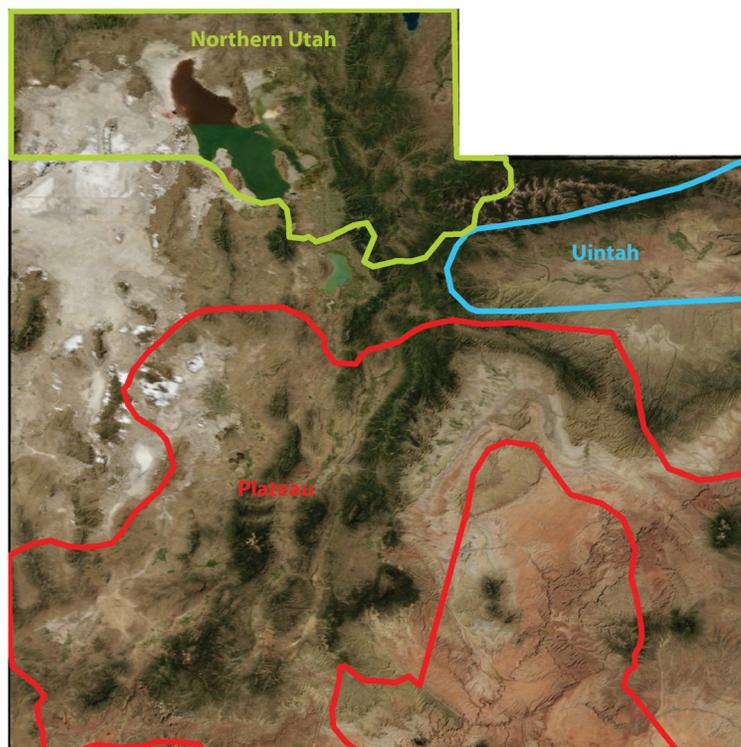


# Utah



*Utah Partners Program Conservation Focus Areas*

## Introduction and Overview

Utah is the 13th largest state in the nation with approximately 20% of the land base being privately owned (Utah facts 2011). This private landownership represents reasonable program potential with approximately 16,980 square miles or 10,867,200 acres being privately owned.

Utah is the second driest state in the nation with 13" of average annual precipitation (Water facts 2011). This dry climate makes lakes, streams, and springs extremely important areas for both human and wildlife species. Privately owned property along these water-rich areas provide valuable habitat for Federal trust species and opportunities for the PFW

program. Sagebrush steppe habitat associated with low precipitation zones is another valuable habitat type for numerous Federal trust species, such as the greater sage-grouse.

Some of the threats to key habitats include invasive species, developmental pressure, channel alterations, along with past and current land use practices.

Focus areas were developed using the following criteria:

- Species Diversity and Trust Responsibility
- Intact Landscapes
- Threats
- Public Land – Private Land relationships and patterns
- Partnership Opportunities

The original strategic plan developed for 2007-2011 had more individual focus areas with some of the areas adjoining each other. This FY 2012-2016 plan, condensed these smaller focus areas into two specific focus areas and added a new one. Previous focus areas were consolidated because similar key species were commonly found across borders. The original focus areas that were merged had similar habitat types and species of interest. The new focus areas contain a combination of private and public property with core areas for specific wildlife species occurring within the boundaries. PFW biologists will concentrate their efforts in these strategic areas.

## Northern Utah Focus Area



This focus area contains the watershed for the Bear River, the Ogden River, and a portion of the Jordan River. These three watersheds contribute the majority of the water for the Great Salt Lake which terminates in a closed basin. This area has 68% private ownership comprised primarily of farming, ranching, private wetland management areas, and municipalities. Northern Utah has diverse habitat types influenced primarily by changes in elevation and precipitation. Wetland habitats

found within this area are often associated with the Great Salt Lake and the valley corridor of the Bear River. The value of the wetland complexes in this area was recognized and designated as a site of hemispheric importance by the Western Hemispheric Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN). This designation is defined as an area having at least 500,000 shorebirds annually and at least a 30% species biographic population. These wetlands are also vitally important to a number of waterfowl with approximately 50% of all U.S. nesting cinnamon teal using the area, along with the greatest concentration of redheads in North America occurring in the Great Salt Lake region (Bellrose).

The upland portions at lower elevations are dominated by sagebrush intermixed with grassland areas and provide valuable habitat to greater sage-grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, pygmy rabbits and other upland species.

Moving higher in elevation the vegetation changes to spruce, fir, and aspen dominated communities. Interspersed throughout the area are stream/riparian communities which are important to native fish and neotropical migrants.

### Priority Species

- Cinnamon teal
- Redhead
- Bonneville cutthroat trout
- Least chub
- Greater sage-grouse
- Columbian sharp-tailed grouse
- Long-billed curlew
- White-faced ibis
- Yellow warbler



*Stream restoration project Utah PFW. USFWS photo.*

### Northern Utah Focus Area Five Year Targets

- Upland Restoration/Enhancement: 8,625 acres
- Riparian Restoration/Enhancement: 10 miles
- Wetland Restoration/Enhancement 500 acres
- In-stream Structures: 10

#### Partnerships

- New landowner partners: 55
- Other new partners: 10
- Amount of technical assistance: 250 staff days
- Percentage of leveraging (ratio Service to Partner): 1:3



*Great Salt Lake in Utah. USFWS photo.*

### Plateau Focus Area



This focus area is 20% privately owned with the predominate use being grazing or irrigated farmland. The other 80% of the land mass is managed by the Forest Service, BLM and National Park Service. There are three physiographic regions within this focus area. They are the Colorado Plateau, the

Great Basin, and the transition zone between the Colorado Plateau and the Great Basin. The landscape consists of a wide variety of habitat types with upland areas consisting of sagebrush, pinyon-juniper, and aspen conifer communities. Streams and rivers with riparian habitats occur throughout the area with some localized wetland habitat interspersed throughout valley bottoms. This area contains numerous species that are Federally threatened and endangered. The endangered species found within this focus area include the southwestern willow flycatcher, humpback chub, and virgin chub. Stream and riparian restoration efforts on private property benefitting these species will be implemented whenever

possible. The only populations of the threatened Utah prairie dog are found within this landscape and upland work on private property will be a priority when opportunities arise.

#### Priority Species

- Southwestern willow flycatcher (Endangered)
- Bonneville and Colorado River cutthroat trout
- Bonytail (Endangered)
- Colorado pikeminnow (Endangered)
- Woundfin (Endangered)
- Gunnison's sage-grouse
- Greater sage-grouse
- Utah prairie dog (Endangered)



*Cinnamon teal in Great Salt Lake focus area. USFWS photo.*



*Geologic formation in Utah containing a riverine system. USFWS photo.*

### **Plateau Focus Area Five Year Targets**

#### **Primary Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Efforts**

- Upland
- Seeding/vegetative manipulation
- Invasive Species Control
- Grazing Management
- Stream and Riparian
- Channel restoration
- Riparian Plantings
- Invasive Species Control
- Grazing Management
- Removal of fish barriers
- Installation of fish screens
- Wetland Management and Enhancement
- Repair/installation of dikes and water control structures
- Invasive Species Control
- Grazing Management

#### **Five Year Targets**

- Wetlands Restored/Enhanced – 35 acres
- Uplands Restored/Enhanced – 10,000 acres
- Stream/riparian – 4 miles

#### **Partnerships**

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1) Number of private landowners                                    | 30             |
| 2) Number of new partners (in addition to landowners)              | 3              |
| 3) Percentage of leveraging (ratio of Service to Partners dollars) | 1:3            |
| 4) Technical Assistance  | 150 Staff Days |

### Uintah Focus Area



land areas consisting of sagebrush, pinyon-juniper, and aspen conifer communities. Scattered within the area are streams and rivers with riparian habitats and wetlands associated with the rivers. The Colorado pikeminnow, Bonytail, and Colorado River cutthroat trout are found within this focus area.

### Priority Species

- Greater sage-grouse
- Bonytail (Endangered)
- Colorado pikeminnow (Endangered)
- Colorado River cutthroat trout

This focus area is 31% privately owned and contains two physiographic regions. The two regions are the Colorado Plateau and the Middle Rocky Mountains. The landscape is comprised primarily of up-



*Project partners standing at a water control structure used to manage a wetland restoration. USFWS photo.*

## Uintah Focus Area Five Year Targets

### Primary Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Efforts

- Upland
- Seeding/vegetative manipulation
- Invasive Species Control
- Grazing Management
- Stream and Riparian
- Channel restoration
- Riparian Plantings
- Invasive Species Control
- Grazing Management
- Fish barrier removal
- Installation of fish screens
- Wetland Management and Enhancement
- Repair/installation of dikes and water control structures
- Removal of dikes to restore connectivity of river floodplains
- Invasive Species Control
- Grazing Management

### Five Year Targets

This focus area is not currently staffed so the target is primarily realized through technical assistance. The technical assistance will be accomplished utilizing a joint position that will have a sole emphasis of targeting Federal Farm Bill funding to benefit greater sage-grouse. There is also potential to work with the state, the Colorado River recovery efforts, and the Fisheries Assistance Office to deliver projects benefitting the Federally threatened and endangered fish species found in the Colorado river and tributaries located within this focus area.

### Partnerships

Develop at least one new partner in addition to the private landowners each year.  
Percentage of leveraging (ratio of Service to Partners dollars) 1:3

### Related Plans

- Intermountain West Joint Venture Coordinated Bird Conservation Plan Version 1.1 (IMWJV, 2005)
- United States Shorebird Conservation Plan (May 2001)
- Waterbird Conservation for the Americas, North American Waterbird Conservation Plan (Version 1)
- Coordinated Implementation Plan for Bird Conservation in Utah (Utah, 2005)
- Partners in Flight physiographic regions. (Pashley, 2000)
- Utah Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (Gorell, 2005)
- Range-Wide Conservation Agreement and Strategy for Bonneville Cutthroat Trout (Lentsch 2000)
- Conservation Assessment of Greater Sage-Grouse and Sagebrush Habitat (Connelly, 2004)
- Status Assessment and Conservation Action Plan for the Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*) BTP-R6012-2009
- Bear River Conservation Action, The Nature Conservancy 2010.
- North American Waterfowl Plan (NAWP, 2004)
- Boreal toad (*Bufo boreas boreas*) Conservation plan in the State of Utah (Hogrefe, 2005)
- Conservation agreement and strategy for least chub (*Iotichthys phlegethontis*) in the State of Utah (Bailey, 2005)
- Conservation Agreement and Strategy for Spotted Frog (Perkins, 1998)
- Gunnison's sage-grouse (*Centrocercus minimus*) Conservation Plan San Juan County Utah



*Sagebrush-steppe is a major habitat type within the Uintah Focus Area. USFWS photo.*

# Utah Statewide Goals



## Improve Information Sharing and Communication

Objective: Collaborate and share information and concerns with our partners, stakeholders, potential future partners, decision-makers, and others to protect, restore, and enhance trust resources.

- 1) Complete a yearly annual report detailing number of technical assistance contacts.
- 2) Attend coordination meetings which include; state technical committee meetings for Farm Bill implementation, Intermountain West Joint Venture (IWJV) yearly meeting, sage-grouse working group meetings, and local Utah partners for conservation development working groups.
- 3) Coordinate with other Service offices, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Trout Unlimited (TU), Ducks Unlimited (DU), Conservations districts, and Utah Department of Natural Resources offices to consolidate efforts for Service trust species.

## Enhance Workforce

Objective: Maintain and support PFW program staff to insure successful implementation of the PFW program and achieve on the ground results for Federal trust species.

- 1) Insure all employees attend a minimum of 40 hours of training each year
  - a) Media and public outreach training
  - b) Grant writing training
  - c) Resource orientated training such as GIS, Census techniques, etc.
- 2) Leadership program
  - a) Attend leadership training and share experiences through job shadowing
  - b) Temporary details to work with other programs and branches within and outside the Service.
  - 3) Ensure IDP's and employee performance appraisal plans are reviewed and implemented with input from the employees.

## Increase Accountability

Objective: Measure, assess, and report the effectiveness, efficiency, and fiscal integrity of the PFW program in Utah.

- 1) Achieve 90% of habitat accomplishments within established HabITS focus area polygons.
- 1) 100% of projects linked to trust species in HabITS.
- 2) Projects reported in HabITS will have some type of photo associated with the project
  - a) 75% will contain pre and post restoration photos in HabITS.
  - b) The pre and post restoration photos will be entered into HabITS within three years of project completion.
- 3) Have a follow-up site inspection on 50% of the projects within 3 years of project completion and have the reports entered into HabITS .
- 4) 90% accuracy for data entry into HabITS.
- 5) Complete 100% HabITS data entry by date requested each FY.



American avocets utilizing a restoration in the Great Salt Lake focus area. USFWS photo.



*Utah PFW staff re-seeding a riparian area immediately after heavy equipment restoration work. USFWS photo.*



