



Ecological Site Descriptions as a Management Tool: Results of an SRM Workshop

Joel Brown¹, Wendell Gilgert¹, Terry Messmer², Mark Brunson² and Jeremy Maestas¹; (1) USDA-NRCS, (2) Utah State University; Contact Author Email: joelbrow@nmsu.edu

The Society for Range Management (SRM) sponsored a workshop in Park City, UT 23-25 October 2007. The workshop was designed to 1) provide attendees with basic information on the concepts and applications of Ecological Site Descriptions (ESDs) 2) explore opportunities to improve applications of ESDs to the management of fish and wildlife habitat, specifically greater sage grouse and 3) seek input on additional information and reorganization of ESDs to improve utility. The workshop organization consisted of a full day of introductory remarks from experts, a day of facilitated group discussion divided into geographic regions, one-half day of summary and synthesis and a one-half day field trip. Approximately 300 people attended the workshop. Recommendations from the group identified several important considerations for future ESD development: more flexibility in the description of vegetation attributes (patch structure), an increased emphasis on vertical vegetation structure, increased discussion of the landscape scale arrangement of habitat elements (states). In addition, the groups desired to see the ESD development process expanded to include a wider variety of expertise and stakeholders and a greater emphasis on standardization across soil survey, state and regional boundaries. The SRM ESD workshop was widely considered a success and provides a basis for the continued expansion of outreach via technically oriented regional workshops.

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