



Managing Pinyon-Juniper Encroachment

Partners and Collaborators:

- ✓ Lincoln County Conservation District
- ✓ Nevada Conservation Districts Program
- ✓ US Forest Service

Acres to be Conserved or Treated:

- ✓ 295 of rangeland
- ✓ 5 of riparian

Communities & Residents to be Affected or Protected:

- ✓ Wilson Creek Range
- ✓ Fry Ranch Retreat

Watershed(s):

- ✓ Wilson Creek
- ✓ Hamlin-Snake Valley
- ✓ HUC: 16020301

Project Purpose

This project is intended to improve sagebrush habitat and riparian health on approximately 300 acres by reducing the impact of encroaching conifers on sagebrush ecosystems in northern Lincoln County, NV.

Project Treatments

Removal of encroaching conifers and decadent sagebrush through hand thinning, mastication, and chipping or burning of slash. Seeding will be applied when appropriate (sites with advanced encroachment where seed-source plants and seedbank have been reduced) to increase plant diversity, resilience to disturbance, and resistance to invasion by invasive annual grasses and noxious weeds. Riparian stream course modifications (primarily through beaver dam analogues) and vegetation improvements (planting and willow staking).

Anticipated Impacts & Outcomes

- Reduced abundance of conifers encroaching into sagebrush habitat.
- Improved wildlife forage, greater plant diversity, improved sagebrush ecosystem health
- Increased stream sinuosity and on-site water retention, and expanded wet meadow habitats

Project Details

| Project Timeline | Start | to | End |
|---------------------|-----------|----|----------|
| Project Scoping | 06, 2016 | | 12, 2019 |
| Resource Inventory | 06, 2016 | | Ongoing |
| Planning | 06, 2016 | | 06, 2019 |
| Funding Search | Completed | | |
| Funding Acquisition | Completed | | |
| Contracting | 06, 2016 | | Ongoing |
| Implementation | 06, 2016 | | 12, 2020 |
| Monitoring | 06, 2016 | | Ongoing |

Priority Landscape(s)

Funding and treatments were targeted for this area because it is greater sage-grouse habitat in the Wilson Creek Range (priority landscape) in the Nevada Natural Resources Action Plan (<http://www.stateforesters.org/forest-action-plans/nevada>).

National and Nevada's Cohesive Strategy

This project is part of the strategy because it allows federal, state, local organizations, and landowners to concurrently plant and implement management activities that improve sagebrush ecosystems through project connectivity.

Funding Source(s)

- Nevada Division of Forestry
- US Forest Service – State and Private Forestry
- Nevada Conservation Districts Program

Threats and Risks to the Area

Wildfire hazards exist this area. Several large fires have occurred within the Wilson Creek Range since 2000 with fire scars ranging back decades. The greater fuel load associated with conifer encroachment can increase the intensity and severity of wildfires. Reduced shrub and forb species diversity due to encroachment reduces resiliency and may result in greater erosion potential.



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