

Montpelier Watershed Analysis



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INTRODUCTION

The Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960 directs the USDA Forest Service to manage the renewable surface resources of the Forests for multiple uses and to provide those resources (products and services) at a conservative rate that is sustained over time. The Montpelier Watershed Analysis Area features a diversity of resource uses and landownership. The competing uses of some resources in particular places within the analysis area have limited the decision space of Forest Officials. The watershed analysis process allows decision-makers and their staffs an opportunity to step back and take a holistic, interdisciplinary watershed-level look at an analysis area. The watershed analysis process culminates with a list of recommendations the Forest Officials can use to address resource management challenges and opportunities.

Primary resource uses on the Forest and BLM lands include livestock grazing, motorized recreation, fishing, hunting, camping, firewood collecting, and logging. Management activities also include prescribed burning and fire suppression. Livestock grazing is a historic use of the analysis area. While some areas are improving, other areas have shown little improvement from historic grazing impacts. The proximity of the Montpelier Drainage to the City of Montpelier and the ease of accessibility in the drainage make it an attractive location for motorized vehicles use. The frequent use of Home Canyon, a sub-watershed of Montpelier Watershed by motorized vehicles is evident and has created some impacts upon the landscape, including illegally created trails. It has also required an increase in enforcement. Bonneville cutthroat trout occur in several drainages and the analysis area is important habitat for elk, moose, and deer. The analysis area is a popular location for firewood collecting and commercial logging

has occurred in the area. Areas of conifer encroachment upon aspen stands and increased ladder fuels created by multiple layer forests have attracted the attention of fire management specialists. Prescribed burns have been conducted in mountain brush types in the analysis area, most recently in Whiskey Creek.

Watershed Analysis Process

The purpose of watershed analysis is to develop and document a scientifically based understanding of the processes and interactions occurring within a watershed. This document is our current understanding of the Montpelier Watershed Analysis Area.

A watershed analysis is an interdisciplinary process that compares the past and current conditions of an analysis area to develop an understanding of resource trends. The report culminates with several recommendations developed to address the identified trends.

No decisions are made with this document. The findings represent a foundation on which to develop site-specific project proposals and base specific decisions.

The Montpelier Watershed Analysis was conducted by a Forest Service interdisciplinary team, with data source assistance from neighboring citizens and agencies. Little new data were collected by those who wrote this document. Rather, they primarily used existing information, including surveys, documents, maps, photos, and anecdotal information.

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