

1 **RESOLUTION URGING VEGETATION**
2 **MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON BLM GROUND**

3 2002 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Sponsor: Leonard M. Blackham**

6 **This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor urges the Federal Bureau**
7 **of Land Management to allow broad-based vegetation management practices on Bureau of**
8 **Land Management lands.**

9 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

10 WHEREAS, although the Bureau of Land Management has historically carried out a
11 rangeland restoration program in Utah, the effort has not kept pace with dynamic changes that are
12 occurring on public lands and among certain ecosystems;

13 WHEREAS, many of the more productive shrublands have been replaced by cheatgrass in
14 areas of high fire frequency or dense stands of pinyon-juniper woodland where fire has been
15 excluded;

16 WHEREAS, big game, sage grouse, and a variety of migratory bird populations are
17 dependent on healthy sagebrush ranges for their survival;

18 WHEREAS, noxious weeds and invasive annual grasses are pervasive on many of these
19 sagebrush ranges, setting the stage for an unalterable increase in the frequency of fire and the
20 subsequent loss of productive rangelands for livestock and wildlife;

21 WHEREAS, fish and wildlife populations in Utah are significantly affected by water
22 availability;

23 WHEREAS, watersheds dominated by closed-canopied, pinyon-juniper woodlands lack
24 sufficient herbaceous plant cover to trap, store, and slowly release water to springs, streams, lakes,
25 and reservoirs;

26 WHEREAS, vast areas within these ecosystems have become "ecological dead ends,"
27 where plant communities no longer function to provide healthy watersheds, diverse wildlife



28 habitats, or productive grazing lands;

29 WHEREAS, natural recovery is no longer possible due to loss of seed reserves in the soil,
30 and the introduction of noxious weeds and exotic annual grasses;

31 WHEREAS, mule deer populations for several herd units in the state are currently below
32 the management objectives established by the state Wildlife Board;

33 WHEREAS, herd size is affected by the carrying capacity of the winter range;

34 WHEREAS, a significant amount of the winter ranges in the state are located on Bureau
35 of Land Management land, and management of these lands is key to sustaining healthy big game
36 populations;

37 WHEREAS, a well-planned, long-term restoration program is necessary to prevent the
38 large-scale conversion of diverse, productive shrublands to either annual grasslands or dense stands
39 of pinyon-juniper woodlands, depending on the fire regimen;

40 WHEREAS, the Bureau of Land Management needs to be able to select from the full range
41 of treatment prescriptions, such as mechanical, chemical, fire, and biological treatments, that have
42 proven successful in carrying out restoration projects in Utah;

43 WHEREAS, all adapted species, both native and nonnative, should be considered for use
44 in range restoration projects so that land managers may make adjustments in response to
45 restoration objectives, seed availability, budget constraints, and the need to select species that can
46 compete effectively with invasive weed species;

47 WHEREAS, the Bureau of Land Management should increase its capability for carrying
48 out prescribed burns to meet current and future targets for range restoration work on its lands;

49 WHEREAS, proper planting techniques should be followed when artificial seeding is
50 required to meet restoration objectives; and

51 WHEREAS, vegetation management on Bureau of Land Management land within Utah
52 would be of great benefit to the state:

53 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
54 Governor concurring therein, urges the Federal Bureau of Land Management to use broad-based
55 vegetation management practices on Bureau of Land Management lands within Utah.

56 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Federal Bureau
57 of Land Management, the Utah Department of Natural Resources, and the members of Utah's
58 congressional delegation.

Legislative Review Note
as of 1-30-02 2:09 PM

A limited legal review of this legislation raises no obvious constitutional or statutory concerns.

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel