

War on Cheatgrass

Mitigation of Invasive Species

Issue:

Catastrophic wildfires are increasing in intensity and size adversely impacting public safety, the environment, wildlife habitat and rural Utah economies.

Problem:

Deteriorated rangelands dominated by cheatgrass and other invasive species and unmanaged forests are more susceptible to fire, burn more often and when burned the fires are larger.

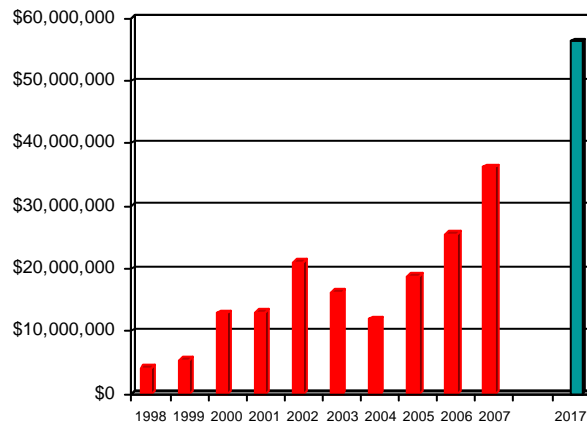


Figure 1. Utah BLM Fire Suppression and Rehabilitation Cost [2017 estimated]

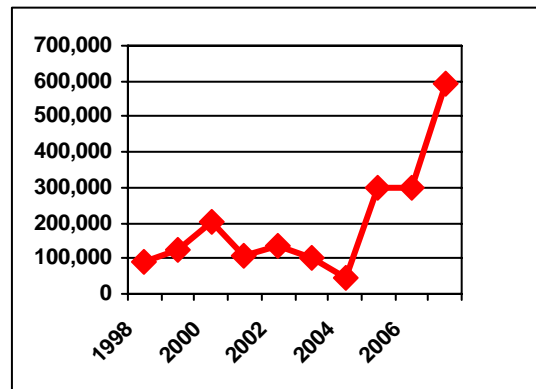


Figure 2. Utah Wildfire Acres Burned per Year
Bureau of Land Management; Bureau of Indian Affairs; Fish and Wildlife Service; National Parks Service; State/private; other

How this could affect your constituents:

The health and safety of private citizens and property is at risk. In Utah during 2007 dust and smoke from the Milford Flat fire contributed to four automobile fatalities on I-15, to a record number (40) of poor air quality days, hundreds of livestock and wildlife were killed, nearly 100 ranchers were severely impacted, and it cost the tax payer \$44 million for fire suppression.

The Utah Legislature last session appropriated \$2 million to the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food for large scale landscape-level multiple ownership range restoration projects. The Department has requested federal land management agency participation.

What you can do about this issue:

Include in the federal budget additional funds [at least \$2 million] for the federal BLM and Forest Service to partner with the Utah funding for range restoration on Utah private, state and federal range and forest lands.

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