



# Bear River Watershed Council

Leaders in Conservation Issues for the Bear River Basin

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## News Release

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### Wilderness Trespass To Be Tackled

Logan, UT —As motorized impacts to public lands increase and government agency budgets dwindle, non-profit groups are stepping up to make a difference.

Bear River Watershed Council (BRWC) is one such group. The organization is partnering with the Wasatch-Cache National Forest's Logan Ranger District to address several unauthorized and user-created routes that trespasses into the Mt. Naomi Wilderness Area.

"One of the illegal scars climbs a steep front-range mountain and can be seen across the valley," said BRWC Executive Director Dan Miller. "This scar is a symbol of the impacts occurring every day from irresponsible users. The restoration and eventual healing of this scar will be a new symbol," Miller said.

Logan District Ranger Rob Cruz said, "This partnership with BRWC helps fulfill our mission 'to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.'"

Funded by a grant from the National Forest Foundation and Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI), the Hyde Park Canyon Unauthorized Route Restoration Project will give volunteers the opportunity to take action and restore a severely damaged area.

According to Logan Ranger District Forest Technician Ron Garrison, who is in charge of the project, the canyon "has the most roads and user-created routes in the wilderness. Motorized users are in fact, breaching the boundary into the wilderness."

BRWC's Motorized Use Data Project (MUD) previously documented the wilderness trespass. At the same time, BRWC successfully organized other barrier-building projects. As the plan evolved, the Logan Ranger District agreed that the project would be a worthwhile endeavor

The project includes 315 feet of wood barrier fencing, native plant seeding, cutting water bars, and spreading weed-free hay over the area to help slow erosion and allow the new seed to take hold. BRWC is expecting 20-30 volunteers from different organizations.

Wes Thompson, a local hydrogeologist for BIO-WEST, Inc. and a member of the Bridgerland Trail Riders Association, volunteered to provide erosion control expertise on optimum placement of water bars and reseeded. “I seriously like doing erosion control. It’s fun for me to put my education and experience to use in that area, and I love being outdoors,” Thompson said. But he has more than a passing interest in the project. “As a motorized user of public lands, I have a responsibility to mitigate the impacts caused by illegal motorized use so that agencies like the Forest Service don’t use blanket closures as a management tool.”

This sense of shared ownership is one reason why BRWC designed the project—to create collaboration among different user groups. BRWC hopes to forge a “common ground” relationship by using citizen volunteers from both motorized and non-motorized communities as ambassadors for the project.

Miller hopes the project inspires others to become involved. “We’ve said it before and we’ll say it again. While everyone has a right to enjoy our public lands, no one has a right to abuse them.”

For more information see BRWC’s Web site at: [www.BRWCouncil.org](http://www.BRWCouncil.org).

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#### **Brief Announcement:**

## **Make a Difference**

Bear River Watershed Council, in conjunction with the Logan Ranger District, is looking for volunteers for two spring projects designed to curb off-road vehicle trespass in the Mount Naomi Wilderness and repair some of the damage. On April 21, volunteers will cut channels to divert water off an illegal user created route, reseed damaged areas and place barriers at the mouth of Hyde Park and Dry Hollow canyons. On May 19, volunteers will build two buck and pole barrier fences on Cedar Ridge.

Plan to meet at the staging area (see map on BRWC’s Web site) at 8:00 a.m. and be prepared for a full day of outdoor work. Bring shovels, picks, other tools and sunscreen, and wear long pants and a hat. Food and drinks will be provided.

For more information, contact Dan Miller after 6:00 p.m. at 258-4432 or [dmiller@brwcouncil.org](mailto:dmiller@brwcouncil.org). Both projects are part of BRWC’s Motorized Use Data Project (MUD) and are funded by a generous grant from the National Forest Foundation and REI.

To see photos of the project area, visit our Web site at: [www.BRWCouncil.org](http://www.BRWCouncil.org)

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