



## Watershed Management Plan/Assessment

The Upper Sevier Watershed Management Plan is a collaborative assessment addressing resource issues within the 1,324,999 acre Upper Sevier River Basin. Located in south-central Utah, this basin encompasses portions of Beaver, Iron, Kane, Piute, Garfield and Wayne counties. It is governed by a steering committee, composed of a diverse group of leaders concerned about the future of the basin and its resources (Appendix A).

By engaging diverse groups of stakeholders, including federal, state and local interests, to help identify priority issues within the watershed, the Upper Sevier Watershed Management Plan encourages agreement, involvement and ownership to help address complex resource issues.

### ***The Upper Sevier Watershed Management Plan/ Assessment aims to:***

- *involve diverse groups of community members representing both advocates for beneficial uses of water and potential sources of pollution from problems throughout the watershed.*
- *Create an environment that allows for thoughtful, thorough and productive discussions of issues, and encourages consensus, builds trust, invites participation and facilitates learning, creativity and planning.*
- *Provide a context and ranking for important issues within the watershed, to help guide current and future watershed management decisions.*

The initial phase of this assessment was completed in February 2003. Key issues identified within the watershed and an overall assessment for 63 resource issues are contained in this document (Chapter 4).

Critical to the success of this project was the involvement and ownership of six technical advisory committees in areas such as fire and fuels, human uses, agriculture, species and habitat, vegetation and hydrology (Appendix B).

Maps showing key issues, as identified by technical advisory committees, are included to help better understand how issues relate to one another. Over 60 technical advisory committee members provided input to the plan, and identified over 74 issues of concern within the nine Upper Sevier River Watersheds. Key issues descriptions, key issue maps and overall issue ratings are contained in Chapter 4, with additional summaries provided in Appendices D and E.

## **Key Issue Results**

Noxious weeds and sagebrush/grasslands were addressed in seven of the nine watersheds. Other issues frequently addressed include accelerated erosion, access management, communities at risk, aspen areas, riparian vegetation and habitat, wildlife management in agricultural areas, and pinyon/juniper areas.

Riparian habitat/vegetation, mixed conifer areas, sagebrush grassland areas, noxious weeds, pinyon/juniper areas and Ponderosa Pine areas were addressed within some watersheds by more than one technical advisory committee.

The two issues most frequently addressed by more than one committee were sagebrush/grassland areas and pinyon/juniper areas. In addition, those species typically associated with these vegetation types (sage grouse, prairie dog, deer) were also more likely to be addressed by species and habitat technical advisory committees. Moreover, comments provided for issues such as ‘Wildlife Management in Agricultural Areas’ may be directly tied to sagebrush/grassland and pinyon/juniper vegetation composition. A summary graph of priority issues addressed, watershed location and frequency addressed, is contained in Table E-1. Additional assessment information can be found in Chapter 4.

## **Water Quality Results**

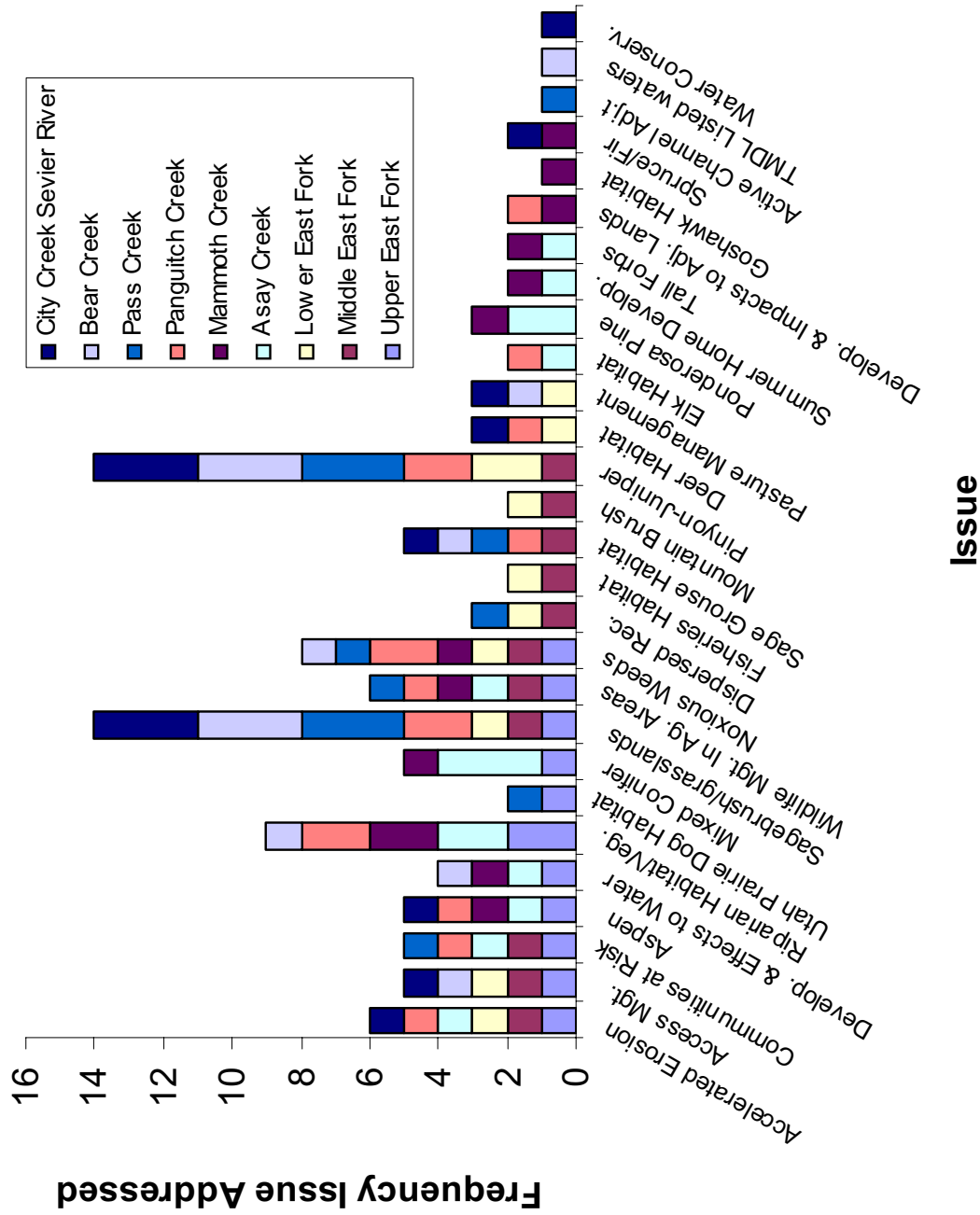
A complete Total Maximum Daily Load Analysis (TMDL) was submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency on April 1, 2004. This analysis provides a summary of the water quality assessment, issue identification, pollution load allocation and recommendations established in the TMDL development for the Upper Sevier River Basin. Four river segments and two waterbodies within the basin were listed as “impaired” under the current water quality guidelines. A summary of the TMDL/Water Quality Analysis is contained in Chapter 5.

## **Steering Committee Recommendations**

In February and March, 2004, technical advisory committees and steering committee members finalized priority areas and goals for restoration for the Upper Sevier Watershed Management Plan.

Four priority focus areas were chosen, based on potential for restoration, water quality concerns, and opportunities for multiple partners to participate in on-the-ground improvement projects. The focus areas for this initial watershed management plan correspond to those focus areas outlined as part of the Department of Water Quality/TMDL findings (Chapter 5). Individual goals for each of the four focus areas are contained within Chapter 6. Additional goals and opportunities for all nine watersheds are outlined, based on additional technical advisory committee, state and federal agency and public meeting input.

## Upper Sevier River Watershed Issues Identified



*Fig. E-1. A summary of key issues addressed within the Upper Sevier Management Plan within the 9 Upper Sevier Watersheds. Note that some issues have been addressed more than once within a watershed.*

