



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Grand Mesa HPP Committee

611 Main St., Silt, CO 81652

August 15th, 2017

1:00 p.m.

Grand Mesa HPP Members Present: JT Romatzke, CPW; Don Fulton, Ag Producer; Eric Freels, USFS; Paul Bernklau, Ag Producer; Harley Metz, Sports person; John Walter, Ag Producer

Guests: Pat Tucker, CPW; Teri Polley, CPW; Thad Porter

Introduction: Committee members were introduced. JT Romatzke announced that he will be the new Northwest Regional Manager, with Scott Hoyer acting as the interim Area 7 AWM. The new CPW representative for the committee will be determined this fall, hopefully by December.

Katie Richman reviewed the end of FY17 budget. The budget for the new fiscal year was \$101,500.00, and with previously approved projects for FY18, the remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$62,612.48.

New Business:

Project Application Proposals and Reviews:

1. The committee reviewed the fence voucher program. The minimum acreage to receive a voucher is 80 acres, and vouchers are available in \$200 increments. If excessive damage is occurring, landowners may receive more than one voucher. Landowners may also apply for fence projects for work beyond simple repairs from damage caused by big game. The committee noted that the voucher program is well received and increases landowner tolerance for big game. The program was already approved for \$10,000 in FY18, and the committee may increase this amount later in the year.
2. Thad Porter presented a proposal for a water development on Porter Ranch. The property includes 3700 acres, located in winter and transitional range for elk and

deer. The property also experiences year-round use by large numbers of resident deer and elk. There are large irrigated fields for forage production, but the rest of the property is largely dry. This results in deer and elk utilizing the fields for water and forage, and fawns and calves are routinely killed during agricultural operations. The proposal includes installing a pipeline from an existing reservoir to multiple tanks throughout the ranch, situated away from the fields. The landowners feel that increasing water availability on the non-irrigated portions of the ranch will result in better big game distribution, and will hold deer and elk off the fields during critical calving and fawning periods so that they will not be in danger from haying equipment.

The committee discussed the project and pipeline/tank design at length, and noted that while the project is beneficial for habitat improvement, it may not improve distribution. Additional cooperators may be possible in the future, but not at this time. The project was approved for a "first phase" which includes 15,000 feet of pipeline and 7 water tanks. HPP will pay \$25,000 for materials and installation labor, and the landowner will be responsible for purchasing and installing the 7 water tanks. Because HPP's share in this phase is greater than 50%, future phases will need to be funded by the landowner at greater than 55%.

3. The committee reviewed applications from West Divide Cattle Growers for pond cleanouts on the West Divide and Alkali Creek allotments. These projects are yearly maintenance work for the Cattle Growers. The projects were approved for \$5,000.00 each.
4. The committee reviewed the HPP expansion guidelines. As of July 1st, habitat management and research projects that assist CPW with meeting game management objectives may be considered, provided that the committee still focuses primarily on resolving conflicts associated with fences and forage.

Next Meeting: TBD