



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

CPW Area Office – 73485 Hwy 64

January 18, 2017

7:00pm

Introductions: **Members present were:** Butch Theos/landowner, Rich Parr/sportsperson, Jim Brennan/landowner, Mary Taylor/BLM, Lenny Klingsmith/landowner, Bailey Franklin/CPW, Curtis Keetch/USFS and Samantha Sorensen/Admin. **Guests present were:** Pat Tucker/HPP Coordinator, AWM Bill deVergie/CPW, Mary Gillespie/USFS, Ross McGee/CPW, Kyle Arnold/BLM, Jake Lewis/USFS, Chad Carter, Lori Ann Klingsmith, Bob Klages/BLM, Mitch Jacob/BLM, Kyle Frary/BLM, Rocky Pappas, Sparky Pappas, Shawn Bolton.

General Public Comments: N/A

Budget Report: Samantha presented a final FY16 budget report, the committee ended the fiscal year with \$22,045.56. The remaining money goes to State Council for special projects. Oak Ridge SWA Seed Purchase was allocated for FY16 but due to a 'hiccup' in CORE the \$9,912.50 will now come out of FY17 funds. Samantha presented a FY17 budget report; funds remaining at the start of the meeting equaled \$73,880.72. Etchart Ranch Experimental Aerial Herbicide and MB906 Soil Inoculant projects were put on hold (funding was found elsewhere for the soil inoculant) due to the fact they were not in line with statues as written. Trevor Balzer will no longer need the \$11,000 approved for Piceance Basin Mule Deer Habitat Phase II; the awarded bid came in lower than expected.

Old Business: Minutes from August 16th and December 21st were approved as written. Bailey Franklin gave a brief update on the Landscape Scale Weed Control project. Troy Osborn is halfway done and the remaining treatments are scheduled to take place this spring. Bailey plans to propose another project in the spring.

New Business: NWCO BLM Programmatic Rx Burn: Toni Toelle presented the committee with a project summary. It was explained that she'd been in front of two other committees already; NWCO gave their approval on January 10th. "The intent of asking for State funding and not local committee contribution is solely based on the concept that the money could be used on any of the six prescribed burn locations depending upon which comes into prescription during the two year period the funding is available." Asking State Council for 41%, BLM will cover the rest. Middle Park prescribed burns would take place on state land to benefit big horn sheep. Butch Theos asked Toni to elaborate since wool growers have an issue with big horn sheep. Will they

be near any domestic sheep? Toni stated that she could not foresee any conflicts. Butch asked if the project will be advertised for local sheep owner's information. Toni said they could do that. Pat Tucker pointed out that this project will be different for the State Council. They've never funded across committee boundaries before and he's not sure where the council will take it. Toni explained she might need to ask for local committee funds contingent on where the burn takes place. The committee unanimously approved Toni's request to seek funding from the HPP State Council.

FY18 South Fork Noxious Weed Treatment: Mary Gillespie provided applications along with a 2016 project completion report for committee members. She explained that the committee had funded this project in the past but they were unable to finish in time to utilize HPP funding. Seeking \$5,000 from HPP and USFS will match in cash. Treatments have become more difficult since their weed crew has been reduced. Curtis Keetch abstained from voting on the motion. \$5,000.00 was approved for the FY18 project.

Buckles Ranch PJ Thinning: Applications and pre-treatment photographs were provided for committee members. Bailey presented with Chad Carter present. It was explained that Davy Cox would be the contractor and the goal would be to get rid of encroaching pinyon and juniper. Butch asked if the 75/25 cost share would set a precedent. Bailey pointed out that it's been done a lot in the past with mechanical treatments. Curtis mentioned that the quote reflected a good price. Bailey noted that he'd spoken with Chad about HPP dispersal hunts and he's open to participating next year. \$14,250.00 was approved for the project.

Josephine Basin Weed Mowing: Applications and photographs were provided for committee members. Bailey began by pointing out they've made a lot of headway with seeding but there's still some progress to be made with weed control. He proposed a 50/50 cost share to mow weeds mid-June before they go to seed. The seed mix should eventually choke the weeds out. \$2,600.00 was approved for the project.

Fritzler/Swenson Ranch Ag Conversion: Applications and photographs were provided for committee members. Bailey explained that the goal is to convert old CRP with custom seed mix. He pointed out that thousands of acres have been done already; this proposal would convert an additional 120 acres. The conversion has done wonders for elk and mule deer, the property holds a lot of animals. Seeking a 50/50 cost share, \$9,362.50 approved for the project.

R Lazy J Ranch Irrigated Ag Conversion: Applications and pre-treatment photographs were provided for committee members. Bailey pointed out that an irrigation system had been implemented last year and now they're looking to convert those acres with a custom seed mix. Shawn Bolton explained the new irrigation system and that it will cut water consumption by 1/3. He's managing the ranch for the next five years and would like the property to hold more wildlife. Bailey is hopeful it will really make a difference for mule deer. Wounded Warrior hunts already take place on the property, dispersal hunts suggested in the future since the conversion will bring in elk. Mary Taylor expressed concerns over soil disturbance and thistle. Bailey explained that the mechanical mowing will take care of that. Shawn mentioned that the spraying program will be done through NRCS, haying every year will help as well. \$31,892.10 approved for the project.

Mary Gillespie left the meeting at 8:15PM.

Vannoy Ranch Mechanical Weed Mowing: Applications and photographs were provided for committee members. Bailey stated they'd already done some seeding on dry land in the spring

and fall of 2016 but weeds are still an issue. The goal is to preform mechanical mowing before June at a 50/50 cost share. Roy Vannoy has already allowed Bailey to take one youth hunter out and he's okay with Bailey doing it again. \$850.00 approved for the project.

Nine Mile Guest Ranch Ag Conversion: Applications and photographs were provided for committee members. Bailey explained that the area is a major migration corridor and a conversion would help hold the animals longer. Plan is to treat with herbicide then no till drill with custom seed mix. \$122.00/acre seeking a 50/50 cost share. \$1,836.25 approved for the project.

K/K Ranch Aerial Grass Spraying/Grazing: Applications were provided for committee members and photographs were passed around. Bailey began by explaining smooth brome and wheatgrass are outcompeting desirable grasses. The plan is to combine herbicide treatment with grazing. Bailey asked the committee to consider funding half of aerial herbicide application. Butch asked why the first project didn't work. Bailey said that if he could do it over again he would have been more aggressive with initial herbicide treatment. Also, it was a drought year and so the grass was not receptive. Lenny Klinglesmith abstained from voting on the motion. \$2,783.00 approved for the project.

Rocky and Sparky Pappas left the meeting at 8:30PM.

Meeker Dome Mechanical Weed Mowing: Applications were provided for committee members and photographs were passed around. Bailey pointed out that the White River committee has funded various stages of this project since 2013. The project area is not good enough to hay just yet. He asked HPP for a 50/50 cost share. \$1,780.00 approved for the project.

Meeker Dome Water Improvement: Tabled- quotes did not arrive in time for the meeting.

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion: Committee Recognition Awards: Bailey presented Toni Toelle with an award in appreciation for her years of dedicated service on the committee.

Pre and Post Treatment Photographs: Bailey asked the committee if they truly wanted to require applicants to provide pre and post treatment photographs. The committee expressed their desire to maintain the requirement and that it is a simple request. Samantha pointed out that the meeting announcements now reflect the photograph requirement.

License Fee Increase: Rich Parr began by saying it sounds like most are in favor of the increase. Bill deVergie explained that CPW is in the preliminary stages of reaching out to see how folks feel about a potential increase. The reports provided explain the incremental increases and how much more those increases would fund. Currently the agency is operating on a zero budget. Pat Tucker pointed out that Parks and Wildlife budgets are kept separate. There's talk on whether the commission should be allowed to set fees; legislative action would be needed to give the commission that ability. The Parks are on track to have similar issues in a few years' time. The point of the conversation was to make everyone aware of the discussion surrounding resident license fees.

Predator Study Update: Bill deVergie informed the committee of the Wildlife Commission's decision to approve the predator study. There has been a lot of public backlash but the point of the study is to see if predator reduction will benefit mule deer populations.

BLM Wild Horse Management and HPP Discussion: Pat Tucker stated that by law HPP is set up to solve big game and agricultural conflicts. Posed the question, should HPP be funding projects outside that scope? It's hard to make a case that wild horse projects should be funded. The State Council will be continuing their discussion on non-HPP projects at their next meeting in early April.

Select Next Meeting Date: Bailey will keep the committee posted on when another meeting will be necessary.

Roundtable: Bill deVergie announced that there will be a Sportsmen's Roundtable on Thursday February 9th. Details will be posted in the paper, looking for public participation.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.