



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

July 7th, 2017

Everhart Ranch

Committee Members present:

- Mike Trujillo, Colorado Parks and Wildlife AWM
- Paul Crespín, USFS
- Terry Everhart, Livestock Grower
- Dave Gilbert, BLM
- Kenn Lutz, Livestock Grower
- Arlie Riggs, Livestock Grower
- Dwaine Robey, Sportsman
- John Stroh II, Livestock Grower

Administrative Assistant:

- Hanna Cook

Guests: Mike Brown (CPW-DWM), Kim Woodruff (CPW-DWM), Zach Holder (CPW-DWM), Patty Knupp (NRCS), Carol Koscove (landowner), Phil Wilson (NPS-Great Sand Dunes), Dewane Mosher (NPS-Great Sand Dunes), Fred Bunch (NPS-Great Sand Dunes), Pat Tucker (HPP Coordinator)

Meeting called to order by Mike Trujillo at 1:00 PM

Introductions

General Public Comments

Pat Tucker thanked everyone who supported the CPW fee bill. Unfortunately it did not pass, and it is unsure right now whether the bill will be proposed again or not. Discussions about how this will affect the agency's budget are ongoing.

Fred Bunch, Dewane Mosher, and Phil Wilson gave the committee an update on the Great Sand Dunes ungulate management plan:

The Great Sand Dunes National Park has been experiencing record high numbers of visitors in the last few years and they are in the process of a land acquisition and an ungulate management plan in addition to a fish restoration project and a back country use plan. The park is in the process of acquiring the Medano Ranch which is currently owned by The Nature Conservancy. The Nature Conservancy is currently grazing bison and will continue to do so after the acquisition until the ungulate management plan has been initiated. The ungulate management plan will include both bison and elk. Hunting is not allowed in national parks, which presents a challenge when trying to reduce the number of elk in the park. There is potential to hire a contract hunter or implementing a trained volunteer hunt program for dispersal and/or reduction. The plan should be initiated by the fall of 2018. They are currently working on an EIS for agency and public review.

Budget Report

The 2017 and 2018 budget reports were reviewed. Pat Tucker updated the committee that the HPP State council has received an increase in funds that can be allocated to HPP projects. As always, project applicants have the option of coming to the HPP State Council for additional funding when the local committee cannot cover the full cost.

Old Business

The meeting minutes from the previous meeting were approved. Evaluations have been sent out. Evaluations must be received and entered by September 1st to avoid delays in committee operations.

New Business

HPP expansion:

Pat Tucker updated the committee on the HPP State Council's decisions on the clarifications of HPP objectives. HPP committees currently focus on funding projects that solve agricultural/big game conflict, particularly relating to deer, elk, pronghorn, and moose. The State Council has agreed that it will be beneficial for committees to also consider the other objective listed in the statute, which is helping the division (CPW) meet game management objectives. In the past, committees have turned down projects because there is not a direct agricultural conflict. However, the State Council has decided to expand the scope of acceptable projects to include those that help achieve game management objectives, even if there is not a direct agricultural conflict. Committees should still focus on resolving agricultural conflicts, but they will now be able to fund projects concerning game management objectives at their discretion. This expansion went into effect as of July 1st, and new research applications are available on the HPP website.

Project Application Proposals and Reviews

Upper Huerfano (BLM) habitat project-Mike Brown

Mike Brown is asking HPP for \$25,000 for a habitat treatment project on BLM land in Upper Huerfano. The funds will be used for hydro-ax work to thin pinion and juniper trees and increase forage availability for deer and elk in important winter range. This will help draw deer and elk off of private lands and onto public lands. NEPA has been completed. Pat Tucker offered \$20,000 of HPP State Council Funds if the Sangre de Cristo committee is willing to fund \$5,000.

The committee voted to approve the project for \$25,000 with \$20,000 coming from state council and \$5,000 coming from the SDC committee.

Blackhawk State Trust Land Habitat Project-Mike Brown

This project is on State Trust Land that is leased by CPW. An approval form needs to be completed and signed by the Southeast Regional Manager, The AWM, and Pat Tucker before being presented to the committee. This project will be presented at a future meeting.

Shultz Canyon State Trust Land Habitat Project-Mike Brown

This project is on State Trust Land that is leased by CPW. An approval form needs to be completed and signed by the Southeast Regional Manager, The AWM, and Pat Tucker before being presented to the committee. This project will be presented at a future meeting.

Koscove Ranch Oak Brush Thinning Project-Mike Brown

Carol Koscove is asking for \$5,300 for mechanical treatment on approximately 40 acres of scrub oak. This area was treated in 2005 and needs to be re-treated. The committee raised concerns

that mechanical treatment is generally not very effective on scrub oak and that an herbicide treatment may work better. The landowner and Mike Brown agreed to adjust the project and treat the scrub oak with herbicide as the costs will be the same. The landowner will match \$5,300 and NRCS has paid \$5,049 for the forest management plan. Reduction of scrub oak will allow for increased growth of grasses and forbs and will provide increased quantity and quality of forage for big game and livestock. The landowner has agreed to increase public hunting on her property.

The committee voted to approve the project for \$5,300 reimbursed to the landowner for herbicide treatment on scrub oak.

Koscove Ranch Water Tank/spring development-Mike Brown

Carol Koscove is asking for two tire tanks to install on her property.

The committee voted to approve two tire tanks from the SDCHPP stockpile.

Koscove Ranch vinyl wire/fencing request-Mike Brown

Carol would like to install high visibility white wire to make her fence more wildlife friendly. She will need three rolls.

The committee voted to approve 3 rolls of high visibility white wire from the SDCHPP stockpile.

Tom Grette Professional Services-Kim Woodruff

Kim Woodruff is asking the committee for \$9,000 for Tom Grette's services for mapping and flagging project sites. The mapping and flagging is very important for the free inmate and SWIFT crew hand-thinning projects.

The committee voted to approve the project for \$9,000.

Inmate Hand Thinning Support-Kim Woodruff

Kim Woodruff is asking for \$3,000 for chainsaw maintenance, materials, and supplies to support the free inmate labor crew's hand-thinning operations. This includes gas, oil, supplies, chainsaw maintenance, safety gear, etc.

The committee voted to approve the project for \$3,000.

Meals/operating expenses/committee recognition budget

The committee voted to allocate \$500 for working meeting meals and \$1,000 for committee operating expenses, including committee member recognition.

Fence Material Support Program

This program has been done annually, and provides landowners with reimbursements for fencing materials to repair fences damaged by big game. DWMs or committee members can sign and hand out vouchers to eligible landowners. Eligible landowners must be engaged in agricultural production or livestock operations within SDCHPP boundaries, and they must allow some hunting access (cannot charge more than \$500 per gun for hunting access, vouchers, or services). The committee acknowledges that expenses for fencing materials have increased and it would benefit landowners to increase the voucher limit from \$400 to \$600.

The committee voted to continue this program with a limit of \$600 per landowner.

Landowners are allowed up to \$600 of reimbursement for fence materials to fix damage cause by big game. Total project limit is \$5,000.

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion

The committee thanks Buddy Draper, Terry Everhart, Bill Schulze, and Zach Holder for taking them on a tour of project sites on Draper Ranch and Everhart Ranch. A special thank you to Terry Everhart and his family for providing a delicious lunch and a location for the committee meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM

The next meeting will be held on: July 26th at 10:30 AM at the CPW Pueblo Hunter Education Building

Photos from the SDC HPP field tour are below. The committee visited past project sites on Draper Ranch and Everhart Ranch.

Draper Ranch:



Everhart Ranch:



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