



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

October 18th, 2017

Royal Gorge Field Office

Committee Members present:

- Jim Aragon, Colorado Parks and Wildlife AWM
- Aaron Atwood, Livestock Grower
- Joe Moore, Livestock Grower
- Ted Grover, Sportsman
- Jeff Williams, BLM Rangeland Management Specialist
- Stephanie Shively, USFS Wildlife Biologist
- Brett McMurry, Livestock Grower

Administrative Assistant:

- Hanna Cook

Guests: Bret Mathers (CPW-Wildlife Technician), Brian Dreher (CPW-Senior Wildlife Biologist), Bob Carochi (CPW-DWM), Pat Tucker (HPP Coordinator)

Meeting called to order at 10:04 AM

Budget Report

The 2018 budget report was reviewed

Old Business

Stephanie Shively updated the committee on the IM Ridge Herring Park habitat project. Approximately 768 acres have been treated to date.

New Business

DAU Plan Rewrite for E22 and D16

CPW is working on a DAU plan rewrite for E22 and D16. DAU plans (AKA Herd Management Plans) set population and sex ratio objectives for deer and elk. Brian Dreher told the committee that the objectives in the new plan will likely be very similar to current population objectives. Public meetings have been held and surveys have been sent out to gauge public support for the plan. Overall the response has been positive. The committee will be asked to write a comment letter before the draft plans go to the wildlife commission for approval. These plans are in effect for 10 years, but can be revisited sooner if necessary. Biologists take habitat condition, carrying capacity and agricultural and livestock conflicts into consideration when writing the plans, and they believe that maintaining the current objective will be the best option. Currently the population levels are just above the population objectives so another option would be to raise the objectives to meet the current population level, as there are few game damage claims in the area and the quality of hunting has been generally good.

The committee is concerned that if objectives are increased then the population levels will also increase and continue trend above objective levels. That increase would likely cause

problems for private landowners, especially considering projected human population increase throughout the state. As the population in Colorado increases, the amount of available land will decrease and this may push big game onto agricultural lands, causing more game damage. The committee took this into consideration and decided that they would like to see population objectives remain the same. Based on the presentation from Brian Dreher and the corresponding discussion, the committee will write a letter supporting the draft recommendation to keep the current population objective.

Project Application Proposals and Reviews

Dome Rock SWA Habitat Enhancement

Bret Mathers is requesting \$10,000 for a hydro-axe treatment on the Dome Rock SWA. Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation will match \$10,000 and Area 14 will match \$2,000 plus \$10,000 in kind for planning, monitoring, and labor. They will treat approximately 60 acres to improve wildlife habitat on public land. This should help to prevent or alleviate game damage claims on private land and will increase hunting opportunities on public land.

The project was approved for \$10,000.

Howard Budd Water Development

Bob Carochi is requesting \$5,000 on behalf of the landowner, Howard Budd, as a reimbursement for water development materials. Bob Carochi had spoken to the committee about this project prior to it being completed, but no formal application was submitted. The landowner tried to apply for funding with NRCS, but that funding fell through. The landowner needed to get the project done, so it has already been completed and he is now hoping for reimbursement to help with costs of the solar pump and other materials. The committee expressed concerns about funding a project that has already been completed, but due to the fact that the project was discussed previously they agreed to make an exception. They request that next time, the landowner come to the meeting to present any future project proposals prior to the project being started.

The project was approved for \$5,000 as a reimbursement to the landowner.

Longs Gulch and Midway Water Development

Stephanie Shively is requesting \$3,375 for pipe and three tire tanks needed to extend two existing water developments. The Long's Gulch and Midway Springs are producing enough water that the pipeline can be extended to feed more tanks and provide water to more pastures that are otherwise dry and not fully utilized. The increased water availability will help to improve grazing management and wildlife distribution. The committee will be able to provide three 8 ft tire tanks from their stockpile, so only pipe would need to be purchased.

The project was approved for \$1,875 and three tire tanks from the ARHPP stockpile.

Other committee business

New HPP project applications are available online.

The HPP annual meeting will be held on December 5th, 6th, and 7th in Grand Junction.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 PM

Next meeting: February 13th 10:00 AM at the BLM Office.

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