



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

North Fork HPP Committee

Delta County Annex

February 26th, 2018

6:00 p.m.

North Fork HPP Members Present: Cody Purcell, CPW; Adam Gall, Sportsman; Ken Holsinger, BLM; Dennis Garrison, USFS; Ross Allen, Livestock Grower; Jess Campbell, Livestock Grower; Steve Kossler, Livestock Grower

Guests: Pat Tucker, CPW; Jeremy Fouts

Introduction: Committee members were introduced. The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$19,942.78.

New Business:

1. Jeremy Fouts presented an updated fencing proposal. The property is adjacent to BLM and USFS on three sides, and much of the existing boundary fence is in severe disrepair from elk damage. Grazing permittees on the BLM have not repaired allotment fences and cattle trespass occurs frequently. Habitat improvement work including brush treatment has occurred in recent years, and the area holds large numbers of elk coming off public lands. The proposal includes ripping out 1.4 miles of old fence, bulldozing the right of way, and constructing new wildlife friendly fence. The committee discussed the history of HPP's involvement of building fences along public boundaries, and confirmed that they do not want to set a precedent for this type of project. However, they acknowledged that this area in particular experiences heavy use by big game. The project was approved for \$4,000 in materials from Game Damage, and the fence will be required to be laydown fence with smooth top and bottom wires where possible. The committee will also provide 6 rolls of high visibility wire from inventory.
2. The committee discussed FY18 fertilizer projects. This was a very mild and dry winter, and the general consensus is that the damage to crops from big game was lower than usual. The committee considered only paying 50% of the usual fertilizer amounts; however they also

felt that in particularly harsh winters, they were not willing to increase fertilizer distributions. The committee also felt that the fertilizer program is highly valued within the community and goes a long ways towards increasing landowner tolerance for big game, and they wanted to maintain good relationships with landowners. Ultimately the fertilizer budget was unchanged, with the expectation that by keeping the budget the same in mild winters, the continued assistance should help offset harder years where there is more severe game damage and the budget would not be increased to reflect those conditions. Jeremy Fouts was added as a recipient for \$1,000. Another landowner (Hawkinberry) was considered for fertilizer funding; however they were denied this year due to limited numbers of elk on the property and minimal damage. They may be considered next year if normal winter conditions return.

3. Dennis Garrison presented a proposal for an herbicide purchase for USFS. The targeted infestations are primarily oxeye daisy and toadflax, and in a larger USFS area that has been marked for timber sales and beetle resilience work. \$12,500 in cooperator funds has already been secured to help treat weeds and prevent further spread as the timber sale and resilience treatments increase human activity in the area. With last fiscal year's herbicide purchase, the USFS was able to treat approximately 660 acres, and a similar area of treatment is expected for this year. The project was approved for \$3,000.
4. Dennis also reviewed an aspen mowing project that the USFS is undertaking. A hydroax will be used to remove dead and dying stands of aspen, which have come to dominate the landscape. The flush of aspen regeneration is expected to significantly improve the habitat for big game and help reduce pressure on nearby agricultural operations. Additionally, downed aspen will be piled strategically to prevent grazing access into sensitive areas, giving the vegetation a chance to reestablish without being disturbed by cattle. The project is fully funded through the USFS, however the committee will write a support letter for the project.
5. Andrew Taylor presented two landowners (Klinger Ranch and Carter Ranch) for consideration for herbicide vouchers. Both properties are heavily infested with oxeye daisy, and experience significant damage from wintering elk. Klinger Ranch was approved for \$2,000, and Carter Ranch for \$1,000. The ranches will receive herbicide vouchers to Cropworx.

Other Business:

1. Pat Tucker gave a review of the CPW financial sustainability bill. Further announcements will be made as information becomes available.

Next Meeting: TBD