



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Republican Rivers Committee

November 14th, 2018

Yuma Community Center

Committee members present:

- Josh Melby, CPW-DWM
- Dustin Wise, Sportsman
- Chris Craig, Livestock Grower
- Don Fritzler, Livestock Grower

- Hanna Cook, Administrative Assistant

Guests: Marty Stratman (CPW Biologist), Cory Bullen (CPW Wildlife Technician), Doug Norman (Landowner), Paula Norman (Landowner)

Meeting called to order at 6:40 PM

Budget Report

The 2019 budget report was reviewed.

New Business

DMP Revision

The Republican Rivers Distribution Management Plan (DMP) is due for renewal in November of 2019. The committee will need to go through the old plan to revise and update each section. The committee will schedule a work session to make revisions to the plan.

Committee Vacancy

Clayt Cooper is interested in the livestock grower representative vacancy. The committee has voted to approve Clayt Cooper for the Livestock Grower representative position. Clayt will need to be approved by the HPP Coordinator and the Wildlife Commission and then appointed by the Director before he has voting power. Hanna will start the approval process and the committee will be informed when it is completed.

Projects

Water Tank Developments-Josh Melby, Dustin Wise

Josh and Dustin would like to purchase a truck load of guzzlers that would be installed in-ground. The tanks can be manually filled initially, but otherwise would collect rainfall and eliminate the need to drill a well to provide water for wildlife. The committee receives requests for water developments for wildlife, and this is a much less costly way to provide water for

wildlife than to drill a well. There are already several landowners who are interested in using these tanks, and any remaining tanks would be kept at the Wray fish hatchery until they are claimed by other interested landowners.

Landowners will be required to install the tanks themselves and ensure that the tanks are full year round. They will also be required to install a wildlife friendly fence around the tanks to keep livestock away. The Yuma County Pheasants Forever chapter will provide trail cameras for each tank, and the landowner will be responsible for monitoring the cameras and reporting back to the committee to determine the effectiveness of the tanks. Landowners must allow a reasonable amount of hunting on their property to qualify for this program.

Josh and Dustin have found a company out of Nebraska that is willing to deliver the tanks for free, as well as offer a discount for buying in bulk. 8 tanks will be ordered initially. Dustin Wise has several trail cameras on his well-fed tanks, so photos can be used to compare in-ground tanks to well-fed tanks to determine effectiveness. If the in-ground tanks are used by wildlife as much as well-fed tanks then it will prove that this is a much more cost effective system to provide water for wildlife, and the committee can continue this program in the future. Hanna will create a voucher form that will be used to keep track of which landowners are using these tanks. A voucher must be filled out every time a tank is taken from the stockpile.

The project was approved for \$16,917.

Wieser Tree Planting-Josh Melby, Dennis Wieser

Josh and Dennis are asking HPP for \$3,522.25 for trees and materials needed to establish a tree plot to create better habitat for deer in a riparian area along the Arikaree River. This will be a continuation of a project completed last year. Fences will be installed around new trees to protect them until they are well established. Dennis will provide fence posts and labor and Yuma County Pheasants Forever will donate some equipment and labor. This will improve habitat for wildlife and will help to enhance riparian areas.

The project was approved for \$3,522.25.

Doug Norman Water Development and Tree Plot-Doug Norman

Doug and Paula Norman are asking HPP for \$3,500 for trees and materials needed to establish a tree and food plot and water development on their property. This will improve habitat for deer and other wildlife and attract big game away from their crop fields. They would like to install a guzzler that can be installed in-ground and would collect rainwater. This would provide year-round water for deer without having to drill a well. Attracting deer away from crops will help to reduce big game conflict. The committee suggested that they use the committee's stockpile of guzzlers for this project so that they don't have to purchase the guzzler. If they are able to use one of the committee's guzzlers, then they will use the extra funds for additional trees to expand the tree and food plot.

The project was approved for \$3,500.

Slash Diamond Farms Grass Planting-Josh Melby

Josh is asking HPP for \$8,216.40 for grass seed needed to convert unproductive dry agricultural ground into grass to improve wildlife habitat. This is a continuation of a project done last year in which 90 acres were converted. This year 110 acres will be planted with a different mix due to a difference in the soil type. There is very heavy deer use in the area and this will provide better habitat for big game.

The project was approved for \$8216.40.

Cottonwood SWA Project-Marty Stratman, Cory Bullen, Josh Melby

Marty, Cory, and Josh are asking HPP for \$10,450 for seed mix, shrubs and trees, and herbicide needed to convert fields on the Cottonwood SWA to desirable big game habitat. Recent hail storms and tornados have destroyed a lot of vegetation in the area. The prior vegetation was less suitable for big game habitat, so this is a good opportunity to re-plant the area and create quality wildlife habitat. Currently, deer are moving to agricultural fields to feed and find shelter, and this is causing significant game damage. In addition, there is very limited access for deer hunting on the neighboring private lands. Other similar projects on State Wildlife Areas have shown a significant reduction in game damage claims, so this project should have the same effect. Creating better habitat for big game will attract them to public land and will improve hunter opportunity. CPW will pay for additional materials, equipment, and labor.

The project was approved for \$10,450.

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion

The D54 DAU plan is up for renewal. A public survey has already been sent out, and once the results are received a draft plan will be written. Marty will present the draft to the committee so that they have the opportunity to provide a comment letter for the plan.

The next meeting will be held on February 6th at 5:00 PM at the Grassroots community center in Joes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM

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