



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

November 13th, 2018

6:00 PM – 8:40 PM

Carnegie Library, Monte Vista

Members Present: Mick Davis, Dale Gomez, Mark Bechaver, Suzanne Beauchaine, Brent Woodward, Carol-Lee Dugan, Rick Davie

Guests: Pam Rice (NPS), Jeff Williams (BLM), John Werner (Permittee), Cathy Hagan (BLM), David Toews (Landowner), Tanner Dutton (USFS), Michael Vargas (USFS), Clayton BonDurant (CPW)

Administrative Assistant: Hanna Cook

Budget Report

The 2019 budget report was reviewed.

Old Business

The antelope census for this calendar year is completed. Mick will send the report to Hanna and she will forward it to the committee.

The Chicken Spring project has been completed and the permittees are very happy with the outcome.

New Business

DAU plans-E-26 and D-26

Brent Frankland did not attend the meeting, but Clayton BonDurant was able to speak about conflicts in his area regarding these DAU plans. Mick Davis also attended public meeting and was able to speak about some of the discussions that were had.

DAU D26

The proposed alternative for DAU D26 population objectives is alternative #3, which involves a 10-20% increase in population objectives from 2008. The population is currently at the higher end of the 2008 objective, so this alternative will encompass the present estimated population level and allow for a slight increase in population growth. The committee has not heard complaints about deer in the area, and Clayton has agreed that deer conflicts are minimal. If new conflicts arise, the committee feels that they have the resources to help resolve them.

The proposed alternative for DAU D26 sex ratio objectives is alternative #3, which slightly raises the buck : doe ratio. This would allow hunting opportunities to remain at current levels, and would maintain the current maturity levels of the buck population.

The committee will write a letter of support for the above proposed alternatives for D26.

DAU E26

The proposed alternative for DAU E26 population objectives is alternative #3, which involves a 20-40% increase of the current population estimate. This would involve a significant reduction in cow licenses for 4-5 years, or until the population has reached the objective range. The committee feels that this is acceptable and that they have the resources to help resolve conflicts should any new ones arise.

The sex ratio for E26 is based on the existing season structure. The objective will remain the same as the previous Herd Management Objectives set in 2008 (18 to 22 bulls : 100 cows), which would continue to allow for ample hunting opportunity.

The committee will write a letter of support for the above proposed alternatives for E26.

NPS Updates

Pam Rice is the superintendent at the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. She updated the committee that the Final EIS has been completed for the Park's ungulate management plan. They are hoping that the plan can be signed off and released in the next few weeks, and if everything goes smoothly it could be implemented next fall. The plan is aimed at trying to move elk onto public lands where hunting is allowed to help control the population. The Great Sand Dunes National Park is still working on acquiring the Medano Ranch. They are waiting on further appraisals and an environmental survey on contamination found at an old dip tank. Finally, the park is looking into re-introducing the Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout to Sand Creek in an effort to protect the species.

Project Application Proposals and Reviews

Stonehouse Well Project-Cathy Hagan, John Werner

Cathy and John are asking HPP for \$14,263 to help drill a well and install a solar pump system on the BLM's Stonehouse Grazing allotment. The allotment has very limited water, and the existing water developments are not very reliable. This has led to certain areas being over-grazed by livestock, and has caused increased competition for resources between wildlife and livestock. The Grazing Advisory Board, BLM, and the permittees will contribute funds for drilling, labor, and additional materials. The permittee will install the tire tanks, plumbing, complete back hoe work, and install necessary fencing. The applicants understand that the San Luis Valley committee will pay for half of a dry hole up to 400 ft. Drilling for the new well has already been completed and paid for. The well will feed two tire tanks initially, but if the well is productive enough there is potential to extend the pipeline to feed more tanks in the future. The committee requests that the tire tanks are left full throughout the winter to provide water for wildlife. The applicants have agreed to this.

The project was approved for \$14,263. HPP will pay for half of a dry hole up to 400 ft.

Toews Fencing and Wetland Enhancement-David Toews, Brent Woodward

David Toews is asking HPP for \$16,385 for fencing materials needed to build a wildlife friendly fence. David will be removing 11,300' of old fence and replacing it with wildlife friendly fence in conjunction with a 160 acre flood irrigation and wetland wildlife enhancement project. The wildlife friendly fence will promote use of the habitat by deer, elk, and pronghorn by removing existing fence crossing hazards, and will improve livestock management in the area. The committee recommends that David use white vinyl wire on the top strand of the fence to make it more visible to big game. David would like to try the white wire out on one side of the fence to determine how well it works before installing it on the entire fence. Additional funds will be added to cover extra costs of white wire and clips.

The project was approved for \$16,500.

Long Ridge Pipeline Project-Tanner Dutton

Tanner is currently looking in to the option of securing an augmentation certificate to pump water from Clear Creek into a storage pond and pipeline system to provide water for livestock and wildlife in an area that is otherwise lacking reliable water sources. The area needs water, and Tanner is unsure if a well would be successful, so this is a potential solution. Tanner is requesting that HPP pay \$15,000 for .75 acre ft of water, the permittee would pay for .25 acre ft of water, and USFS would pay for infrastructure and labor. The committee is unsure if they can purchase water, but they will look into it. Their initial preference is that HPP purchase the pipeline, tanks, and installation and have USFS pay for their augmentation certificate, but they will look into options. Tanner will do some more research and update the committee on what this would entail, and the committee will find out if they can purchase water or if they are limited to infrastructure and labor. The certificate would be in the name of the USFS. The committee likes the idea and agrees that more water is needed in that area.

The project was approved for \$15,000 contingent on further information from Tanner and approval from the HPP coordinator.

Baughman Pipeline(AKA Seitz Creek Water Development) Project-Tanner Dutton

Existing springs on the Embargo allotment have dried up, so there are very few reliable water sources. This has poorly affected livestock distribution and has started to put pressure on riparian areas. Tanner has been working with the grazing permittees as well as the neighboring landowner to come up with a solution. They would like to drill a well on the neighboring private land, and run water from that well to four tire tanks on the grazing allotment. Tanner is asking HPP to pay \$18,750 to contribute to the well drilling and solar pump. The private landowner would match the drilling and pump costs, the USFS would pay for tanks and pipe fittings, and the Embargo permittees would pay for labor and pipe. The committee would like to see an access easement and maintenance agreement from the private landowner to ensure that the agreement for use of the well for public land tanks will be maintained in the future. The well permit would be residential, so the committee wants to ensure that it was still be used for livestock tanks. Tanner and Rick Davie will work with the private landowner on the agreement, and Tanner will get more information on the well permits to ensure that a residential permit can be used for livestock tanks.

The project was approved for \$18,750, contingent on an agreement with the private landowner and confirmation of the well permit. HPP will pay for half of a dry hole up to 400 ft.

****Update-The agreement and well permit have been secured****

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion

New HPP fliers are available. They will be in CPW offices, and Hanna will have extras that can be handed out as needed.

Next Meeting: TBD

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