



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Grand Mesa HPP Committee

711 Independent Ave, Grand Junction CO 81505

September 7th, 2018

1:00 p.m.

Grand Mesa HPP Members Present: Don Fulton, Livestock Grower; John Walter, Livestock Grower; Harley Metz, Sportsman; Heidi Plank, BLM; Kirk Oldham, CPW; Paul Bernklau, Livestock Grower

Guests: Teri Polley, CPW; Teresa Nees, Mesa County Weed Dept.; Pat Tucker, CPW; Bruce Michaelsen; Thad Porter; Scott Hoyer, CPW; Michael Blanck, CPW; Bob Morris, CPW; Greg Gipp, George Gipp

Introduction: Committee members and guests were introduced. The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$55,625.00.

New Business:

1. Teresa Nees with the Mesa County Weed Department presented an overview of her work to the committee. The department handles regulated non-native, invasive species in the Collbran/Mesa area, specifically targeting list B species such as knapweed, leafy spurge, and yellow toadflax. Much of the work is completed on private lands that are close or adjacent to USFS or BLM in an effort to target oil/gas development or agriculture operations that can act as dispersal vectors onto public lands. The county does offer an herbicide cost share program, and devotes time and funding to intensive outreach, education, and management efforts with landowners and land managers. The committee recognized the importance of weed control and maintenance, but stressed that not all weed control efforts fit within the scope of HPP. There may be partnership opportunities in the future with Mesa County to treat weed infestations on private lands or agricultural operations on public lands.

Project Application Proposals and Reviews:

1. Thad Porter presented the second phase of a water development project. The ranch is the primary source of water and irrigated forage in the area, and so the

property experiences heavy use by deer and elk year-round. Last fall the committee approved \$25,000 for 15,000-feet of pipeline installation and 7 water tanks. Increasing water availability on the non-irrigated portions of the ranch helped improve big game distribution, holding elk and deer off the fields during critical calving and fawning periods and reducing the amount of damage to crops.

Phase 2 of the project involves installing additional pipeline and more water tanks to further improve water availability and big game distribution. The system can be kept running during the winter to continue supplying water year-round, and there may be potential to divert some of the water onto the adjacent Badlands SWA. The committee generally supported the project; however there were concerns about last year's project involving a 55% HPP match and a requirement for the landowner to complete Phase 2 with a 55% landowner match. The committee had also requested that the landowner work with NRCS on partnership opportunities, which had not been completed. Ultimately the committee tabled the project until additional cooperator opportunities are more fully explored.

2. Bruce Michaelsen presented an electric fencing project. The project area is used by big game during migration and summer, and supports large numbers of elk. The existing fence is old and in disrepair, and does not properly contain the landowner's livestock or prevent livestock trespass from adjacent public lands. The proposal involves removing old fence and constructing approximately .6 miles of new electric fence. The fence will be turned on when livestock are present, and will be turned off and taken down once livestock have moved to winter ground. The project was approved for \$1100, and HPP will provide 3 rolls of Hotcote high visibility electric wire.
3. The committee approved up to \$4400 for 24 rolls of high visibility wire and connectors for inventory. Rolls of wire may be given to landowners to use in fence projects.
4. The committee approved \$10,000 for fence vouchers in increments of \$200. The minimum acreage to receive a voucher is 80 acres, and if excessive damage is occurring, landowners may receive more than one voucher. Landowners may also apply for fence projects for work beyond simple repairs from damage caused by big game.

Other Business:

1. The committee scheduled the following meetings for FY19: Thursday, November 29th in Collbran; Thursday, March 7th in Silt (fertilizer meeting); and Thursday, May 9 in Parachute. The committee may meet again in June if needed.

Next Meeting: Thursday, 11/29 - 1:00pm in Collbran