



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Gunnison Basin HPP Committee

300 W. New York Ave, Gunnison CO 81230

October 9, 2019

11:00 a.m.

Gunnison Basin HPP Members Present: Paul Mowery, Livestock Grower; Steve Guerrieri, Livestock Grower; Nick Gallowich, CPW; Matt Vasquez, USFS; Shane Cox, Livestock Grower

Guests: Walt Cranor; J Wenum, CPW

Introductions, Budget, & Old Business:

1. Committee members and guests were introduced. The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$44,609.23.

New Business:

Project Application Proposals and Reviews

1. Walt Cranor presented a proposal to bring a pasture back into good forage production. The field is approximately 40 acres that is currently infested with weeds. The property is located in critical winter range for deer, and also receives year-round use by deer and some antelope. The landowners have worked with NRCS to develop a weed treatment plan involving intensive fall cattle grazing, dragging followed by seeding in the spring, and spot treating weeds with herbicide as necessary throughout the summer. The cattle will be kept off through the first growing season. The committee noted that this type of project on private lands helps build habitat resiliency from drought and supports big game management objectives, and they wish to see similar projects from other landowners in the future. There was some discussion about the funding amounts and match, and the committee felt the proposed landowner match of \$1,250 did not accurately reflect the amount or cost of labor that this project would require – the actual in-kind match was likely much closer to \$5,000. The project was approved for \$4,140 for seed.
2. The committee resumed discussion about the previously-proposed UGRWCD Wet Meadow Restoration project. Since the last application, the project coordinators had worked with CPW staff to revise the funding requests for HPP and seek appropriate approvals to conduct work on SWAs. Ongoing work of this nature on public lands has garnered positive attention, especially with respect to the partnerships and cooperation among agencies and volunteers. The committee approved \$14,100 for the project.

3. The committee discussed a proposed allotment fence on BLM. The allotment is adjacent to Hwy 114, and is currently unfenced on some portions which allows cattle to move across the highway to access Cochetopa Creek. This results in uneven distribution of livestock, public safety risks, and competition with big game for forage on important winter range. The fence would be wildlife-friendly to HPP specs. There was not a map included with the application, and the committee was unsure of the benefit to wildlife. The project was tabled until more information and a map could be obtained.

Other Business:

1. The committee resumed discussion on feedlots. The previously-approved Robbins feedlot was unique to the committee due to its location in critical winter range, where CPW management efforts result in concentrated big game during winter months. Future requests for feed lots may not have that important nexus of public lands immediately surrounding private agricultural fields with desired heavy big game use. The committee will consider feedlots on a case-by-case basis, and it is unlikely that very many future requests will be approved unless the project meets HPP objectives.
2. The committee continued to work on DMP revisions. The final draft will be available for the committee to review and approve in January.

Roundtable:

1. Matt Vasquez informed the committee that the USFS was working on the GMUG Forest Management Plan, and that wildlife management areas and corridors were being identified. USFS is also enforcing closures on user-created routes.
2. The Statewide Meeting will be held in Grand Junction from December 3-5.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 29th @ 11:00am