



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

October 22nd, 2019

Trinchera Sawmill

6:00 PM- 9:00 PM

Committee members Present:

- Ron Garcia, *USFWS Representative*
- Alvin Kunugi, *Livestock Growers Representative*
- Mike Maldonado, *Sportsperson Representative*
- Roy Oliver, *Livestock Growers Representative*
- Brian Bechaver, *CPW Representative*

Administrators: Hanna Cook

Guests: Conrad Albert (DWM), Scott Nilson (BLM), Jacob Robinson (Fence Contractor), Brent Frankland (CPW-Biologist)

Budget Report

The 2020 budget report was reviewed.

New Business

DAU PH-14 Plan-Brent Frankland

Brent is renewing the DAU plan for PH-14. CPW is not proposing any changes to the previous plan, so the objectives from the last ten years will be the same for the next 10 years. If there are any major changes to the herd or biological pressures (i.e. disease, extreme drought, development, etc.) then Brent will be able to revisit the plan and make revisions prior to the 10 year expiration date. The current population objective for pronghorn is 2,000-2,500 animals, and the sex ratio objective is 27-33 bucks/100 does. The population is currently under objective at approximately 1,400 animals, and 26 bucks/100 does, so the population objective will allow for some growth of the herd. Limitations on the population are believed to be drought, availability of quality forage, and fawn recruitment. There has also been historical over-harvest of does, which caused a sharp decline in the population in the 90s. The availability of water resources seems to have a significant impact on the pronghorn population, fawn survival, and dispersal of pronghorn in the area. It will be important for HPP and other agencies to continue to work together to install new water developments in the area to help support this herd.

Neither Brent nor the committee have heard of many game damage complaints dealing with pronghorn in the area, and game damage and dispersal licenses will continue to be used as a tool to help alleviate any increased conflicts that may arise. The committee has also heard from hunters that they would like to see population numbers increase. However, private land

development may be a future concern, especially for the dispersal of pronghorn. While this has the potential to increase conflicts, the committee feels confident that they have the resources to help fund projects that will improve pronghorn dispersal. They plan to work with CPW and other agencies to fund potential water development and habitat projects. Implementing the proposed objective will involve keeping buck harvest at status quo, but eliminating public and private land limited doe licenses. It will also involve continuing depredation control and further enhancing habitat and water resources. The committee agrees with Brent's proposed objective of 2,000-2,500 animals and 27-33 bucks/100 does. They will write a comment letter that will be given to the commission along with the draft plan.

DAU PH-16 Plan-Brent Frankland

Brent is renewing the DAU plan for PH-16. CPW is not proposing any changes to the previous plan, so the objectives from the last ten years will be the same for the next 10 years. If there are any major changes to the herd or biological pressures (i.e. disease, extreme drought, development, etc.) then Brent will be able to revisit the plan and make revisions prior to the 10 year expiration date. The current population objective for pronghorn is 1,000-1,500 animals, and the sex ratio objective is 27-33 bucks/100 does. The population is currently under objective at approximately 900 animals, and the sex ratio is within the objective at approximately 32 bucks/100 does. The population objective will allow for some growth of the herd. Limitations on the population are believed to be drought and availability of quality forage. Fawn recruitment in this herd has been relatively stable since 2008. The availability of water resources seems to have a significant impact on the pronghorn population and dispersal of pronghorn in the area. It will be important for HPP and other agencies to continue to work together to install new water developments in the area to help support this herd.

This DAU is on the "transplant list", which would allow the DAU to receive a transplant pronghorn herd should the population of this herd decline sharply. Neither Brent nor the committee have heard of many game damage complaints dealing with pronghorn in the area, and game damage and dispersal licenses will continue to be used as a tool to help alleviate any increased conflicts that may arise. However, private land development may be a future concern, especially for the dispersal of pronghorn. While this has the potential to increase conflicts, the committee feels confident that they have the resources to help fund projects that will improve pronghorn dispersal or deal with any game damage issues that may occur. They plan to work with CPW and other agencies to fund potential water development and habitat projects.

Implementing the proposed objective will involve keeping buck harvest at status quo, continuing depredation control, and further enhancing habitat and water resources. The committee agrees with Brent's proposed objective of 1,000-1,500 animals and 27-33 bucks/100 does. They will write a comment letter that will be given to the commission along with the draft plan.

Project Application Proposals and Reviews

Fence Contractor-Brian Bechaver, Jacob Robinson

The committee would like to continue the fence contractor program to help landowners with big game damage to fences. Landowners will notify their DWM of the damaged fence, and the DWM will contact the contractor. When a DWM gives the contractor approval, they are verifying that the fence damage was caused by big game, and that it is a wildlife friendly fence (i.e. HPP funds will not pay for repair to exclusionary fences or fences deemed not wildlife

friendly). This program is not intended to re-design fences. The contractor can install white vinyl wire (provided by the committee) if the landowner agrees to it, but otherwise the fence will be repaired to its original design. Landowners who are interested in rebuilding their fences with a wildlife friendly design can contact the committee for funding and design assistance.

Jacob is still interested in working with the committee. In order to avoid communication issues that came up last year, the committee has asked that Jacob try to make contact with the landowner within 24 hours of a DWM notifying him of a damaged fence. If Jacob cannot get in touch with the landowner he will leave a voicemail or text message. If he does not hear back within 24 hours of leaving a message, he will then contact the initiating DWM to let them know. Jacob will be paid \$25/hour plus \$0.52/mile. The committee requests that Jacob take before and after pictures that will be sent along with time sheets each month.

The project was approved for \$10,000, billed at \$25/hr plus \$0.52/mile.

Alvin Kunugi Fencing Project- Conrad Albert

Alvin would like to replace 1 mile of old fence that is regularly damaged with new wildlife friendly fence. The new fence will help to keep trespass cows off of his property and will not get damaged by elk as often. Alvin will use white vinyl wire from the committee stockpile.

The project was approved for \$2,655.56 plus 4 rolls of white vinyl wire from the committee stockpile.

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion

Upcoming MBHPP DMP Revisions

The committee's DMP is due for renewal in February 2020. The next committee meeting will be a work session to go through the plan and make any necessary revisions.

Invited Guests for the HPP Statewide Meeting

The HPP statewide meeting will be on December 3rd, 4th, and 5th in Grand Junction. The committee can invite two guests that will have their expenses paid for. The committee has chosen to invite Shane Lancaster (or his designated replacement if he cannot attend) from the Trinchera Ranch, and Pam Rice (or her designated replacement if she cannot attend) from the National Parks Service. If they are unable to make it, the committee will reach out to someone from The Nature Conservancy with Medano Ranch.

Committee Livestock Grower Representative

Ty Ryland has stepped down from the committee after taking another position within his company. The committee now has a vacant livestock grower position. The vacancy will be announced by email, in public offices in the area, and by word of mouth, and the committee has set a deadline of Monday, December 2nd for applicants. Applicants will be required to submit a statement of interest and will need to attend the next meeting to meet the committee before they make their final decision.

Next meeting: January 22nd at 1:00 PM at the Baca National Wildlife Refuge Office.

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