



## HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

April 27, 2020

Video Conference

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### Committee members present:

- Ty Petersburg, CPW
- Lars Larson, Livestock Growers
- Conrad Swanson, Livestock Growers
- Dale Oberlag, USFS
- Raechel Nelson, Livestock Growers
- Joe Straley, Sportsmen

**Administrative Assistant:** Hanna Cook

**Guests:** Travis Rollins (Larimer County Natural Resources), Angelique Curtis (CPW-Biologist), Shannon Schaller (CPW-Senior Biologist), Eric Lowery (CPW-DWM), Pat Tucker (HPP Coordinator)

**Meeting called to order at 5:00 PM**

### Budget Report

The budget report was reviewed.

### Old Business

All 30 elk collars that the Larimer County HPP committee purchased last year have been put out. 8 of the collared elk are currently in Wyoming. Angelique is working on maps and data and will update the committee when she has more information.

### New Business

#### **DAU PH-33 and PH-36 Herd Management Plan Reviews-Angelique Curtis**

##### **PH-33**

Angelique is revising the DAU plan for PH-33. The current population objective is 1,000-1,200 pronghorn (modeled population estimate is 1,066) and the current sex ratio objective is 20-25 bucks: 100 does (modeled population estimate is 71.5). A lot of the pronghorn habitat in this area is on private land where subdivisions are being built and some properties don't allow hunting access. This makes management difficult, so Angelique does not want to make any drastic changes to the population objectives, as changes would be difficult to achieve. CPW's preferred alternative is to keep the population objective the same, and to increase the sex ratio

objective to 25-30 bucks: 100 does. The increased sex ratio objective aligns with their current management capabilities, considering the private land hunting restrictions they face.

Historically does have been harvested at a higher rate, so the buck to doe ratio is high. However, buck licenses increased last year to try to reach the sex ratio objective. Game damage issues are highest during harsh winters when pronghorn travel down from Wyoming. Dispersed hunting has helped with game damage. CPW has also extended the hunting season through the end of January, which should help to keep animals dispersed and resolve some game damage issues. The committee is confident that the longer hunting season, along with Angelique's close work with the Wyoming biologist, will allow CPW to reach these objectives without causing issues for landowners or sportsmen.

**The committee agrees with the proposed alternatives and will write a comment letter to go to the commission.**

### **PH-36**

Angelique is revising the DAU plan for PH-36. The current population objective is 550-650 pronghorn (modeled population estimate is 623) and the current sex ratio objective is 25 bucks: 100 does (modeled population estimate is 48.8). A lot of the pronghorn habitat in this area is on private land where subdivisions are being built and some properties don't allow hunting access. This makes management difficult, so Angelique does not want to make any drastic changes to the population objectives, as changes would be very difficult to achieve. CPW's preferred alternative is to keep the population objective the same, and to increase the sex ratio objective to 30-35 bucks: 100 does. The increased sex ratio objective allows for an attainable management objective based on the large tracts of private lands within the DAU that serve as a refuge for pronghorn. Buck hunting, buck maturity, and horn size will be maintained with this objective. Joe Straley mentioned that hunting opportunities in this area have been great and he has heard that hunting satisfaction is high in this unit.

The committee is confident that these are the best sex ratio and population objectives for this area, as it will not require any drastic changes to management and it provides a realistic and attainable goal that works for landowners and sportsmen.

**The committee agrees with the proposed alternatives and will write a comment letter to go to the commission.**

### **Voucher Program renewal**

#### **Fencing**

**The fencing voucher program will be renewed for FY 2021 with a total budget of \$12,000 with the following rules:**

- Applicants must own the land the fence is on and they must own a minimum of 160 acres.
- Only eligible materials can be reimbursed. Eligible materials are listed on vouchers.
- Qualifying landowners will receive a voucher that is good at Poudre Valley Co-op only. Voucher amounts are based on acreage as follows:
  - 160-600 acres = \$200 voucher
  - 600-1000 acres = \$300 voucher
  - 1,000 + acres = \$550 voucher

#### **White wire:**

White wire is kept in a stockpile at the Bird Farm in Fort Collins to be given out to qualifying landowners who would like to make their fences more wildlife friendly. Committee members or DWMs can issue wire vouchers to qualifying landowners. Landowners or DWMs will need to

contact Pepper in order to access the stockpile and take their allotted rolls of wire. Tools are also available for loan to help with installation, but landowner must return the tools as soon as they are done with them. A voucher **must** be filled out for any landowner who receives wire from the HPP stockpile. Hanna can send blank vouchers to committee members and DWMs at any time throughout the year.

#### Herbicide

**The herbicide voucher program will be renewed for FY 2021 with a total budget of \$3,000 with the following rules:**

- Applicant must own a minimum of 35 acres
- Qualifying landowners will receive a voucher that is good at Larimer County Weed District only. Landowners must use LCWD recommendations.
- HPP will reimburse the landowner 50% of the cost of herbicide only, up to the voucher limit. Voucher limits are based on acreage as follows:
  - 35-160 acres = \$100 voucher
  - 160-400 acres = \$200 voucher
  - 400-1000 acres = \$300 voucher
  - 1000 + acres = \$400 voucher

#### Fertilizer

**The fertilizer voucher program will be renewed for FY 2021 with a total budget of \$7,500 with the following rules:**

- Landowners can get a rebate of 20% of the total bill up to \$750, excluding taxes and application fees.
- Fertilizer must be applied to hay lands
- Eligible landowners must own a minimum of 160 acres

#### **2021 Meeting Meals and Operating Expenses**

The committee is allowed \$500 for working meeting meals. The committee would also like to allocate \$500 for committee operating expenses, which will include expenses for committee member recognition.

**The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 PM**

**Next meeting: TBD**

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