



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES
Republican Rivers Committee January 11th, 2017
Haxtun Community Center

Committee members present:

- Josh Melby, CPW-DWM
- Kenny Rogers, Livestock grower
- Dustin Wise, Sportsman
- Chris Craig
- Gary Campfield

- Hanna Cook, Administrative Assistant

Guests: John Hardwick (HPP State Council), Todd Schmidt (CPW-AWM), Marty Stratman (CPW Terrestrial Biologist), Kyle Gordon (CPW), Don Fritzler (Landowner), Larry Conger (CPW), Ed Gorman (CPW)

Meeting called to order at 6:20 PM

Introductions

Don Fritzler will be the new livestock grower representative on the committee. Kyle Gordon is the new DWM in Holyoke.

Budget Report

2017 budget report was reviewed. The committee discussed deadlines for purchase orders and payments, and everyone is aware that larger projects should be submitted early to ensure enough time to process purchase orders and payments before the end of the fiscal year on June 30th.

New Business

License fee increases:

There have been no license fee increases yet, but CPW has held public meetings and discussions involving the possibility of a license fee increase to cover the rising cost of operations. The topic has made the Governor's agenda for legislation this year. CPW is still in the process of finding a sponsor for the bill. This proposal would likely involve increasing fees for both licenses and vouchers, though the amount of increase has not been decided on yet. License fees have not been increased since 2005. Part of the discussion is whether or not the bill should include a change to the process of adjusting license fees. Currently this can only be done through legislation, but it may be more beneficial to allow the wildlife commission to make the decision to increase or decrease a license fee. The decision on whether or not to increase fees and how

much to increase them will be up to the legislature, not CPW. CPW will be able to give input, but the ultimate decision will be made through legislature.

Review of projects-Josh Melby

Josh Melby gave a presentation highlighting the objectives and responsibilities of HPP as well as some notable projects that have been completed by the Republican Rivers HPP. Projects completed through the committee include fencing, water development, tree planting, Russian Olive removal and land restoration, habitat manipulation, hazing, and others.

Habitat Manipulation-South Platte-Josh Melby, Marty Stratman

This project is aimed at improving deer habitat on Cottonwood, Elliot, and Jean K Tool SWAs. Getting a grass stand established should help native plants outcompete noxious weeds such as Canadian Thistle and this will create very favorable habitat for deer and should reduce game damage claims to nearby corn fields. John Hardwick asked if more could be done if more money was granted and pointed out that this project sounds like a good candidate for HPP State Council special project funds. Marty and Josh said that the main limiting factor is time and manpower. It is hard to complete large habitat projects within the fiscal year with just CPW staff. They would like to complete this project before they look into hiring a contractor for a larger scale project. There is a lot more opportunity for habitat manipulation on public land in the area, so there should be more projects like this in the future.

The project was unanimously approved for \$9,000.

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion

Marty Stratman is in the process of writing the next management plan for D55. He does not anticipate too many changes, but he would like to hear from the committee about deer populations in the area and whether the management objective should be increased or decreased. The last population objective was between 1900 and 2100 deer (this includes both mule deer and white tail). The objective was successful over the last ten years, and committee members agree that the numbers seem to be ideal. A public survey was conducted of hunters who bought license over the last three years, and an overwhelming majority said they would like to see more bucks and more deer in general. Some committee members pointed out that there may be complaints of increasing wildlife conflicts with landowners if there are many more deer. Marty feels that keeping the population objective about the same makes the most sense, and he will send a draft of the management plan to the committee before submitting it so that the committee can review it and write a letter of support.

Gary Campfield announced that he will likely be stepping down from his role in the committee at the end of the fiscal year, as he will be retiring from NRCS in the fall.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM

The next meeting will be held on April 5th 7:00 PM in Akron

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