



## HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017

6:00 PM –8:30 PM

Carnegie Library, Monte Vista

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**Members Present:** Mick Davis, Rick Davie, Dale Gomez, Mark Bechaver, Carol Lee Dugan, Suzanne Beauchaine.

**Administrative Assistant:** Hanna Cook

**Guests:** Dayle Funka (USFS), Beau Temple (NRCS), Beth Davis-Graham (USFS), Lynn Sutherland (Landowner), Tate Scanga (Landowner), Kelly Jo Scanga (Landowner)

Introductions.

2017 budget report reviewed.

### **Old Business:**

Jillian Lucero is a wildlife biologist for the BLM and she will be taking over Joel Humphries' duties after his new job assignment along with another biologist, Sue Swift-Miller. Jill has contacted Hanna to discuss one of them taking over Joel's position on the San Luis Valley HPP committee as the BLM representative. Hanna and Mick will work with Jill and Sue to get the process started.

### **New Business:**

#### **Update on CPW license fee increase discussion- Mick Davis**

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. 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.

## **Project Application Proposals and Reviews**

### **Rio Chamita fencing project-Emily Olson**

This project will be a fragment of a larger scale habitat improvement project. They are asking HPP for \$29,100 to build fences to keep elk out of a riparian habitat to alleviate the extreme browsing pressure of elk and improve the condition of the riparian and wetland fringe. This would allow vegetation to re-establish and inhibit erosion while the habitat improvement and regeneration is taking place. The committee pointed out that the requested funds are over 2/3rds of the overall cost, which is high for the committee's preferences. In addition, exclusionary fences are not generally something that HPP pays for and it is not clear how this will resolve wildlife/agricultural conflicts. The overall project will be great for habitat in the area, but it does not seem to be a good fit for HPP.

**The project was denied by the committee.**

### **Fullerton Park Well Development-Tate and Kelly Jo Scanga, Dayle Funka**

The Landowners are asking HPP for \$12,500 to install a reliable water source in the area. There is currently no reliable water source on this pasture, and this has resulted in poor grazing management and degradation of valuable forage. HPP would pay for up to half of the drilling costs as well as a pump and solar panels, pipeline, and/or tire tanks. White Water Systems is the preferred contractor. If it is a dry hole, HPP will pay for half of drilling costs at a maximum depth of 400 ft. Cooperators include landowners, USFS, and NRCS. The landowners are prepared to start the project as soon as funding is secured and the weather is okay for drilling. A purchase order would be required for this, and the landowners will discuss and decide whether they would like to be reimbursed by HPP or have HPP pay the contractor directly.

**The project was approved for \$12,500 or half of the cost of a dry hole up 400 ft.**

### **Cross Creek East; Indian Park Pipeline Project-Dayle Funka, Lynn Sutherland**

The water system on this property was installed in the 70s and a portion of the pipeline needs to be redone and some tanks need to be replaced. With an upgrade to the water system, the water sources will be more reliable and grazing management will improve. There is an existing pond on the property and that will be left as a partially used or supplementary source. Danny Temple will be the contractor completing the work and the landowner will decide whether they would like to be reimbursed or have HPP make a direct payment to the contractor.

**The project was approved for \$7,000.**

### **HPP letter of support for Bonafacio Creek land purchase-Dale Gomez**

Dale Gomez has written a draft letter for the committee to review and vote on whether they would like to support it or not. The letter is in favor of a 215 acre land purchase in the Bonafacio Creek area by the US Forest Service. The parcel is surrounded by USFS land and is important year round habitat for deer and elk, particularly during the winter. The owner wants to sell the land to USFS, and acquisition of the parcel will allow USFS to have a more continuous piece of property rather than one that is split up by plots of private land. This will allow for increased and improved hunting, recreation, and conservation in the area. The committee agreed that this will be a great benefit to wildlife in the area.

Land is heavily used by wildlife and the committee thinks this will be a great acquisition and a great benefit to wildlife.

**The letter was approved by the committee and will be finalized, signed by the committee chair Mick Davis, and sent to all appropriate CPW personnel for approval.**

**Pinos Creek Mahogany Pruning-Dale Gomez**

This project will involve pruning of mountain mahogany in order to improve habitat for wildlife, thereby encouraging big game to stay on public lands and reducing landowner conflict. Similar treatments that have been done in the past have been successful. About 250 acres will be treated. HPP will pay for crews to work between June 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, and USFS will pay for the following two weeks of treatment. Contractor (Southwest Conservation Corp.) fees include crews, equipment, camping gear, and other necessities for the two weeks of treatment.

**The project was approved for \$7,800.00**

**Next Meeting: March 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM at Carnegie Library.**

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