



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Grand Mesa HPP Committee

611 Main St., Silt, CO 81652

March 22nd, 2018

1:00 p.m.

Grand Mesa HPP Members Present: Kirk Oldham, CPW; Don Fulton, Ag Producer; Eric Freels, USFS; Paul Bernklau, Ag Producer; John Walter, Ag Producer; Heidi Plank, BLM

Guests: Drew Hogan, Doug Hall, Duke Wheeler, Ty Bevan, Wayne McCray, Jim Toomer, George Gipp, Greg Gipp, Eric Bruton, Warren Bruton, Nate Schaeffer, Peter Dodd, Lyle Hyrup, Michael Blanck, Scott Hoyer

Introduction: Pat Tucker gave an update on the CPW financial bill. Committee members were introduced. Kirk Oldham, AWM for Area 7, was introduced as the new CPW representative. Katie Richman gave current project updates. The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$27,613.04.

New Business:

Project Application Proposals and Reviews:

1. The committee reviewed fertilizer project proposals. The budget for fertilizer projects was \$25,375.00. There were 19 applicants this year for a total of 2600 acres. The price per acre came to \$9.75, and this amount was approved by the committee
2. Ty Bevan presented an application to construct 2 miles of wildlife-friendly division fences on 3 large pastures to create 6-7 smaller pastures and implement improved grazing rotation. The property is located in winter and transitional range for elk and moose, and experiences year-round use by deer. Large numbers of wintering elk (500 – 600) cause significant damage to the fences and severely reduce forage production. The landowner prefers to intensively graze pastures for short periods of time to

quickly regenerate grass, which improves the availability of forage for both livestock and big game. The committee discussed some concern over installing two miles of fencing in an area that is adjacent to public lands (BLM and USFS) and in major migration corridors; however the fence design includes gate crossings at high traffic points that will be left open when livestock are not present. The project was initially approved for 50% of the project in FY18 (\$4,757.50) with the other 50% pre-approved for FY19; however later in the meeting the committee returned to this project and approved the full amount for FY18 (\$9,515.00). Materials will be obtained through Game Damage with any leftover funds available to the landowner for reimbursement, and HPP will also provide 8 rolls of high visibility wire.

3. Doug Hall presented a well development proposal. The property is located in elk winter and transitional range, and experiences year-round use by deer. The area is fairly dry, and the irrigation water is controlled by a neighbor with senior water rights. The water frequently gets shut off by July. The proposal includes drilling a well and pumping the water into a 1,000 gallon stock tank. The committee discussed the history of water developments in this area, and noted that a previous well project with Mr. Hall did not produce water. The primary concern was that this well would also not produce water for the allotted budget. The committee noted that the water table in this area is dropping. Additionally, the necessary permits have not been obtained, and the committee would like Mr. Hall to approach other potential cooperators. The project was tabled for the next meeting to see if additional partners and water information could be obtained.
4. Drew Hogan presented a seeding proposal for weed control on 20 acres of leased ground in year-round deer habitat. Currently the pasture is infested with weeds, and does not produce much forage. The landowner is opposed to using herbicide to treat the infestation, and would like to disc the pasture and re-seed it with a native forage seed mix designed by the NRCS. The project involves seeding a 3-acre test patch to see if this is an effective treatment. If successful, Mr. Hogan will likely approach HPP next year to implement the treatment on the rest of the pasture. The project was approved for \$435.29.
5. The committee reviewed applications from West Divide Cattle Growers for pond cleanouts on the West Divide and Alkali Creek allotments. These projects are yearly maintenance work for the Cattle Growers. The projects were approved for \$5,000.00 each for FY2019.

Remaining Committee Business:

1. The committee discussed requiring additional vendor quotes for high-dollar projects. In an effort to ensure accurate and fair pricing, and to promote responsibility with public funds, the committee will require at least two quotes for any project in which HPP's share is more than \$20,000. Project applications that do not have the required quotes will be tabled for the next meeting.
2. Katie Richman presented a spending report for the committee for the past 5 years. The report compared spending across project categories, as well as Grand Mesa's FY2017 spending compared to 5 other southwest HPP committees. The committee discussed trends and how to keep project spending in line with Grand Mesa's objectives and priorities.

3. Duke Wheeler noted that he may have a spring seeding project on 100 acres for about \$3500. The Wheelers will submit an application and the committee will schedule a meeting or conference call to consider the project.

4. The Grand Mesa committee is interested in ordering high visibility wire to distribute to landowners with approved fencing projects. Recent Kencove orders for other committees have been ~\$5,000 for 25-30 rolls of wire. The committee will discuss this further at the next meeting.

Next Meeting: TBD