



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES
Uncompahgre HPP Committee
2300 S. Townsend, Montrose
May 2nd, 2018
6:30 p.m.

Uncompahgre HPP Members Present: Loren Paulson, USFS; Kelly Crane, CPW; Bobby Gray, Sportsman; Dave Andrews by proxy, Livestock Grower; Todd Stewart, Livestock Grower;

Guests: Brad Banulis, CPW; Mark Richman, CPW; Renzo DelPiccolo, CPW; Mike Redd, Landowner; Doug Dillon, Landowner

Introduction: Committee members and guests were introduced, and current project updates were reviewed. The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$35,157.00

New Business:

1. Mark Richman reviewed a proposed conservation and access easement project for Doug Dillon. The landowners are working with a number of cooperators, including RMEF, CPW, and Colorado Cattlemen's Association, to place easements on their 1170-acre property on Sawmill Mesa. The property is situated between USFS, BLM, and CPW State Wildlife Area lands, and is heavily utilized by deer and elk year-round. The proposed conservation easement would protect the land from future development, preserving critical habitat for big game; and the hunting easement would improve public access to adjacent public lands. The committee strongly supported the project, and will write a letter of support to be included with the application. The letter will address the importance of preserving habitat connectivity throughout the area as well as the large number of recent habitat improvement projects; the potential for increased game damage and big game conflicts if the property is developed; and the increased ability to help CPW meet management and harvest objectives through improving public access. The committee also noted that while they cannot guarantee future funding for the project, they would consider the project for funding to help with transaction costs in the appropriate fiscal year.
2. Mike Redd presented a fencing proposal on his property near Paradox. The area is located in elk winter and transitional range, and experiences year-round use by deer. The existing fencing is old and in extreme disrepair, including some sections of woven wire sheep fencing. The proposal includes removing all of the old fencing and installing new wildlife-friendly fencing, including high visibility top wire. The project was approved for \$2,317.50, and HPP will supply 4 rolls of high visibility wire.

3. The committee reviewed a fencing proposal for a community garden from the West End Public School District. However, community garden fencing is not an allowed project within HPP's guidelines. Several committee members suggested other sources as potential partners, including NRCS and Region 10.

Old Business:

1. Brad Banulis presented an update on the ongoing Uncompahgre Plateau elk study, for which the committee purchased \$20,000 of collars in FY16. The study examines multiple factors of elk health and population stability, including how habitat quality and time spent in habitat treatment areas may affect cows' ability to maintain pregnancy, as well calf health and survival. Pregnant cows are collared and fitted with VITs, and when calves are dropped they are also collared. If the calf dies, the research team attempts to recover the carcass to determine the cause of mortality. Brad discussed initial numbers of cows captured, body condition, pregnancy rates, and some common causes of calf mortality, as well as detailing some of the challenges faced during the study. Much of the data regarding habitat use will not be available until after the study is complete.

Other Business/Roundtable:

1. There is a potential fence project from Tony Abel and Todd Stewart. A portion of the fence may be able to be completed this fiscal year. The committee will schedule a conference call to discuss this project. Additionally, there are several other potential fence repair projects that do not have completed applications, but may be able to submit applications to participate in the call. Kelly and Katie will contact those landowners who have expressed interest in fencing projects.
2. The committee would like to tour the joint hydroax and habitat improvement project on the Leben and Denham properties that was funded in FY14. The committee tentatively scheduled the tour date for July 30th.