



## HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

### Grand Mesa HPP Committee

711 Independent Ave, Grand Junction CO 81505

August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019

1:00 p.m.

**Grand Mesa HPP Members Present:** Paul Bernklau, Livestock Rep; Harley Metz, Sportsman; Heidi Plank, BLM; Eric Freels, USFS; Kirk Oldham, CPW; John Walter, Livestock Rep

**Guests:** Bill & Naomi Morse, Travis Bybee, Scott Hoyer, Brit McLin, Daniel Savage, Bob Morris, Michael Blanck, Duke Wheeler, Ivan Archer

**Introduction:** Committee members and guests were introduced. The ending budget from FY19 was reviewed. The remaining FY20 budget at the start of the meeting was \$45,625.00.

#### **Old Business:**

Kirk Oldham thanked committee members for holding a conference call to discuss funding for a conservation easement on the Ringer property. The State Council considered the project the following day and agreed to fund up to \$50,000 for the easement. Kirk also updated the committee on the status of the Garfield Creek SWA hydroax project.

#### **New Business:**

The committee noted that project applications will be due 10 days in advance of meetings so that they can be properly noticed on the agenda and distributed to committee members before the meeting.

#### **Project Application Proposals and Reviews:**

1. Dan Savage presented a proposal for a stackyard. The property receives heavy use by elk, especially during migration and winter. There is sufficient forage for big game and livestock during the summer, but stacked hay is consumed by elk during winter. The project was approved for \$1,028 for materials from Game Damage, and the landowner will provide the labor to construct the stackyard.

2. Bill Morse presented an herbicide project. The property includes 240 acres of pasture that is currently infested with weeds after the wet winter. The property is located in transitional and winter range for big game, and provides important winter forage. The project request is for HPP to purchase herbicide, and the landowner will provide labor to spot treat the weed infestation.  
A later agenda item for the committee included an herbicide voucher program, and the committee tabled the Morse project to discuss vouchers. The DWMs frequently receive small requests herbicide projects in the spring, and the timing with HPP meetings is sometimes challenging. DWMs and the committee could benefit from having pre-approved herbicide vouchers available for landowners. The committee approved \$2,000 for herbicide vouchers in \$200 increments, up to three vouchers per landowner annually, to be distributed as needed by DWMs. The committee then resumed discussion on the Morse herbicide project, and approved the request via a \$200 herbicide voucher.
3. Joanne Couey's pond project has not been updated since the last meeting and was tabled.
4. Duke Wheeler had a habitat improvement project on the agenda, however the time frame for that project had passed since the last HPP meeting. There were several other habitat project opportunities that could be implemented; however the committee noted that they do not want projects created "on the fly." Projects should be developed in advance with specific costs, timelines, and objectives, and complete applications must be submitted prior to the meeting. The committee also noted that a 'package' of smaller individual projects could be presented to either the local or state committees, or a large project that is broken into multiple phases.
5. The committee approved the annual fence voucher project for \$10,000 in \$200 increments, to be distributed by DWMs as needed. The committee also approved 1 roll of white wire per voucher to be distributed if the landowner requested it.

#### **Other Business/Roundtable:**

1. The committee reviewed the current Habitat Management Plan and discussed updates, with particular focus on updating conflict areas, eligibility rules and management strategies. Katie will continue to work with the DMP and produce a draft for the next meeting.
2. Eric Freels has accepted a new position and will be leaving the committee in the fall. USFS will select a new representative for the committee.
3. Kirk introduced Ivan Archer as the new Area 7 Assistant AWM, and requested that committee members (and other partners) continue to think about new and innovative projects for HPP. As the program comes up for reauthorization, it will be critical to continue important habitat and conflict resolution work, and maintain relevance for the agricultural community and sportsmen.

**Next Meeting: TBD**