



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES
February 12th, 2019
Canon City Hunter Education Building

Committee Members present:

- Jim Aragon, Colorado Parks and Wildlife AWM
- Aaron Atwood, Livestock Grower
- Joe Moore, Livestock Grower
- Jeff Williams, BLM Rangeland Management Specialist
- Stephanie Shively, USFS Wildlife Biologist
- Brett McMurry, Livestock Grower
- Tyrel Woodward, Sportsmen

Administrative Assistant:

- Hanna Cook

Guests: Peter Hambidge (The Trust for Public Land), Patty Knupp (NRCS), Nick Bankston (Fremont County Weed Management Director)

Meeting called to order at 10:04 AM

Budget Report

The 2019 budget report was reviewed.

Old Business

New HPP brochures are available. Hanna will be distributing them to local offices, but if anyone would like additional brochures to hand out Hanna can provide them with additional brochures.

Tyrel Woodward has been approved by the Wildlife Commission as the new sportsmen representative on the Arkansas River HPP committee and is now an official voting member.

New Business

Project Application Proposals and Reviews

Rye Slough South Water Development-Brian Allio, Jeff Williams

Jeff is asking HPP for \$2,720 and 1 8ft tire tank for a water development. This project is on a grazing allotment on public lands in the Upper Badger Creek drainage. The property is owned by BLM and State Land Board through a livestock management agreement, and SLB has expressed their support for this project. The BLM is working with permittees to promote better livestock and grazing management by improving water distribution in the area. This will improve habitat and increase the quantity and quality of forage for wildlife and livestock. There is currently a well in the area that is producing water, so Jeff and the permittees would like to

install pipeline that would bring water from that well to a tank that will be placed in the another pasture 3400 ft away. In addition, they will be replacing an old metal stock tank with a new tire tank. HPP would pay for the pipeline and provide one tank, BLM will provide the second tank, and the permittees will install the pipeline and new tanks. The State Land Board paid for the original well to be drilled. The permittees would like to start immediately and have the project done before June.

The project was approved for \$2,720 plus one 8ft tire tank from the committee stockpile.

The Grinch Burn Prep Line-Stephanie Shively

Stephanie is asking HPP for \$3,000 for labor to remove slash from a temporary road in preparation for a prescribed burn within the Mt Shavano burn area. This area has had ongoing prescribed burns for several years in an effort to improve habitat and reduce the risk of wildfires (Angel of Shavano Burn). A previous timber sale had created a temporary road, which was closed after the operation was complete, per USFS requirements. The contractor would clear slash from that road using a bulldozer to re-open it, and hand crews will improve the fire line along roads. Habitat improvement resulting from burns helps permittees in the area by opening up more grazing options, as well as improving habitat and forage for wildlife on public lands. The USFS will pay for the prescribed burn, including additional preparation, NEPA, planning, and implementation. The burn will be done in the fall of 2019 at the earliest. The USFS is prepared to implement the burn line prep right away, but due to the fact that the match (the prescribed burn itself) falls in the 2020 fiscal year, it makes sense to have the HPP portion spent during the same fiscal year. The project will begin in July, 2019. The committee asked Stephanie if there is increased recreation in areas where burn lines have been established, but Stephanie said she has not seen any in that area.

The project was approved for \$3,000 for Fiscal Year 2020.

Rafter 26 Ranch Conservation Easement-Peter Hambidge

Peter is asking HPP for \$5,000 to help with transaction costs for a conservation easement on the Rafter 26 Ranch in Chaffee County. This easement will be 400 acres and is phase II of a 3-part CE acquisition. Phase I consisted of 472 acres, and phase III will contribute additional donated acres to protect the total 1,000 acre ranch. The property will remain a working ranch and they allow limited hunting. The property is in between public lands (Maxwell SWA and San Isabel National Forest), so this CE will protect the wildlife habitat corridor between the two public properties and ensure that it remains free of development. There is one primary home and one small cabin, but no further development will be allowed. The conservation easement will be held by the Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust. Jim let the committee know that there is a neighboring CE that may have a prohibition on hunting, so it would be beneficial for the committee to encourage this CE (where hunting is allowed) in order to further protect hunting access in the area. Peter expects that this easement will close prior to June 30th. HPP will only reimburse landowners for transaction costs after the CE has officially closed.

The project was approved for \$5,000.

Dead Horse Habitat Project Updates-Stephanie Shively

Stephanie updated the committee on the Dead Horse habitat project. HPP's portion of this project (phase 1) has been completed. A total of 110 acres have been treated by the SWIFT crew. Kim Woodruff has raised \$16,000 for the next phase, including funding from the Muley Fanatic Foundation and the Mule Deer Foundation. Stephanie has also been pursuing RMEF money for the last remaining acres. If this other partnership money cannot be secured, then

they may come back to the committee with a proposal, but for now they are not pursuing HPP funds for phase 2.

SWIFT Crew Habitat Project Update-Kim Woodruff

This discussion has been tabled until Kim has a chance to talk to the committee.

Remaining committee business/Other Discussion

Nick Bankston has been working on controlling noxious weeds in the committee area, and is working on a future project proposal in the Tallahassee Creek area. This area has a major Leafy Spurge infestation and Fremont County has been working with the private landowners to control the weeds, but they have not had enough funding to implement a more effective plan. Their weed management efforts have been ongoing since 2012. Nick is working to put an application together for the next meeting to request funding to help with the cost of treatments in partnership with the county and the landowner. The spraying would ideally be done in August or September.

For future CE requests, the committee would like to see (as part of the application) if there is a clause to require things such as forest treatment, continuation of grazing and agricultural operations, and other language that would require protection and maintenance of the habitat for wildlife.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:33 PM

Next meeting: April 4th at 10:00 AM at the Royal Gorge Field Office.

Hanna Cook, HPP Administrative Assistant
4255 Sinton Rd
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
719-227-5221
hanna.cook@state.co.us