



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

July 9th, 2019

Royal Gorge Field Office

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: Pat Tucker (HPP Coordinator), Chris Williams (Landowner), Nick Padilla (USFS)

Meeting called to order at 10:00 AM

Budget Report

The 2019 and 2020 budget reports were reviewed.

Old Business

The committee discussed options to get more information out to landowners to get more projects implemented, such as mailing flyers or announcements out to local landowners. There are a lot of opportunities for projects, especially with federal agencies, but time for planning projects is limited. The committee will continue to discuss options to help implement more projects.

New Business

Project Application Proposals and Reviews

2020 Fence Voucher Program Renewal

This program has been done annually, and provides landowners with reimbursements for fencing materials to repair fences damaged by big game. DWMs can approve and hand out vouchers to eligible landowners. Eligible landowners must be engaged in agricultural production or livestock operations within ARHPP boundaries, and they must allow some hunting access (cannot charge more than \$500 per gun for hunting access, vouchers, or services). Landowners are allowed one voucher per year, with a maximum of \$350 per voucher. Vouchers can only be used once, and any unused funds are forfeited. Only eligible materials can be reimbursed. The committee will add metal swinging gates and telephone poles to the list of eligible materials.

The committee voted to continue this program with a limit of \$350 per landowner. Landowners are allowed up to \$350 of reimbursement for fence materials to fix damage cause by big game. Total project limit is \$9,000.

2020 White Wire and Tire Tank Voucher Program

The committee has a stockpile of white vinyl wire and tire tanks to distribute to landowners. Landowners are allowed to take white vinyl wire and/or tire tanks from the committee stockpile to be used for projects in the AR area. **Any landowner that would like white wire and/or tire tanks from the committee stockpile must fill out a materials voucher at the time of pickup. The Voucher must be approved by a DWM or committee member, and returned to Hanna Cook as soon as possible.**

-The HPP State Council has purchased white wire for local committees. Each committee is allowed 25 rolls. The new shipment of 25 rolls of white wire was delivered to Canon City. Vouchers must be authorized (signed and dated) by a DWM or committee member for a landowner to be eligible. Landowners are allowed 2 rolls per year. Requests for additional rolls can be brought to the committee for special approval. Landowners can receive both a materials voucher and a fencing reimbursement voucher in the same year, as long as both vouchers are approved and signed by a DWM or committee member. Some rolls will be stored in Salida for easier access for landowners in that area.

-Tire tank requests must be presented to the committee during a meeting or conference call to ensure availability. Approved tire tanks must be picked up before the end of the fiscal year, or the landowner will forfeit their reserved tank. DWMs or Aaron Atwood can issue tanks if it is urgent, but the preference is that the request goes before the committee first.

Meals/operating expenses

The committee voted to allocate \$500 for working meeting meals and \$500 for committee operating expenses, including committee member recognition.

Conservation Easements-Committee Requirements

Some committee members are concerned about funding conservation easements where the regulations do not fit with HPP's mission. For example, any conservation easement with a clause that prohibits hunting would be against HPP's standards. Aaron would like to see that there is a plan to keep hunting on the property, keep the property functioning as agricultural land, and maintain forest health to ensure healthy wildlife habitat and reduced risk of wildfire. Information on how a conservation easement is structured will be very helpful to the committee when they are deciding whether to help with funding or not. In addition, it will be helpful to have the local DWM approve the CE to signify that it does in fact have valuable wildlife habitat and that the landowners allow hunting and are good stewards of the land. Any CE that prohibits hunting will not be considered by the committee.

The committee can also draft a letter that would be filed with the conservation easement stating that HPP helped to fund the project and what they expect or would like to see from the current owners (i.e. maintaining agricultural use, maintaining forest/habitat health, allowing hunting). Any time a conservation easement is presented to the committee, the applicants should come prepared with the following information to help inform the committee decision:

- What kind of hunting and fishing parameters are included in the easement?
- What are the plans or parameters concerning forest/habitat health and wildfire mitigation?
- What are the parameters for grazing or agricultural use?
- Information on water rights for the property.

AR HPP DMP Revision

The AR HPP DMP is due for renewal in March of 2020. The plan needs to be updated and revised, and it is important that all committee members have ample opportunity to voice their opinions and approve all revisions. A work session will be scheduled to work on the plan at the next meeting.

Remaining committee business/other discussion

The HPP statewide annual meeting will be happening on December 3rd, 4th, and 5th in Grand Junction.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:55 AM

Next meeting: DMP work session- September 10 at 10:00 AM at the Hunter Education Building in Canon City-BBQ after.

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