



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Uncompahgre HPP Committee

2300 S. Townsend, Montrose

May 1st, 2019

6:30 p.m.

Uncompahgre HPP Members Present: Todd Stewart, Ag Producer; Loren Paulson, USFS; Kelly Crane, CPW; Bobby Gray, Sportsman; Dave Andrews, Ag Producer; Angela LoSasso, BLM

Guests: Kevin Duckett, CPW; Natalie Renneker, CPW; Harry Loss, Tom Kettle, Roxie Stewart, Austin Shelby

Introduction: Committee members were introduced. The current remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$71,805.55.

Old Business:

1. Austin Shelby gave an update on the Transfer Mastication Project. NWTF funds were not awarded, however RMEF will fund \$39,600.00. Hard bids have not been obtained yet, since CSFS must have funding secured before going to bid. The estimated costs on the application are on the high end of the anticipated bids, but if lower bids are submitted, the excess funds will be returned to CFLRP instead of treating additional acres. The committee approved \$39,600.00 for FY2020.

New Business:

Project Application Proposals and Reviews:

1. The committee reviewed two applications for the 'Game Damage Emergency' funds. Harry Loss and Tom Kettle have irrigated hay fields east of Colona, and usually tolerate average use by elk during the winter. Due to the extreme winter conditions this year, the elk arrived earlier than usual and remained on the fields much later than normal, resulting in aftermath damage as well as impacts to new spring growth. Both landowners were unaware of HPP or Game Damage

options, and did not notify CPW DWMs within the required timeframes to participate in those programs. The committee approved forage loss payments to Harry Loss for \$2,000.00, and Tom Kettle for \$2,500.00 based on Game Damage AUM calculations.

2. The committee reviewed a fence repair project from Ella Marolf. The property is located in winter range, and experiences year-round use by deer. Frequent wildlife crossing has damaged the existing fence, which is in severe disrepair. The fence no longer contains livestock and may injure big game as they move through the property. Portions of the fence that are in disrepair will be replaced with new materials, including high visibility wire. The committee approved \$2,000 for materials.
3. The committee reviewed a partial application from A Bar D Ranch for a fencing project. This project is part of an ongoing effort to replace existing degraded fencing with wildlife-friendly fence. Large numbers of elk and deer migrate through the ranch and utilize the area during fall, winter, and spring. The ranch has done a large portion of work already without assistance, and HPP has also participated in previous fencing projects. The project application will be approximately \$10,000 - \$15,000, however only one contractor quote has been obtained so far. The committee requires two quotes when the HPP request exceeds \$10,000. The landowners will obtain the second quote for committee consideration at the next meeting.

Other Business:

1. The committee resumed discussion about a pond cleanout program for the spring and/or next fiscal year. The BLM Grazing Advisory Board currently has a program that pays permittees \$500 for ponds completed on BLM permits. HPP may be able to partner with the GAB to provide additional funding for this program. For USFS permits, NEPA issues present a barrier to pond cleanouts, as many of the ponds predate NEPA and so are not allowed to be treated without working with USFS staff to obtain clearances for each pond. HPP may need to explore alternate options, such as paying for arc clearances to obtain NEPA on large batches of ponds in the area, and/or partnering with NRCS. For USFS permit ponds that do already have clearances, HPP may be able to fund pond cleanouts if those permit holders can be contacted.
2. The Distribution Management Plan is due for revision. The committee reviewed the current plan and identified areas and ideas for major updates. The first draft of the revised plan will be reviewed at the fall meeting.

Next Meeting: Project Tour - TBD