



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Montelores HPP Committee

Dolores Public Lands Center, Dolores, CO

November 5th, 2019

5:30 p.m.

HPP Members Present: Andy Brown, CPW; Nate West, BLM; Ivan Messinger, USFS; Eldon Simmons, Livestock Grower; Tanner Young, Livestock Grower

Guests: Tyler Kersey, CPW; Matt Sturdevant, CPW; Hanna Ertle, Bonnie Loving, Rilla Cramer

Introductions & Budget Report:

The ending budget from FY19 was reviewed. The remaining FY20 budget at the start of the meeting was \$80,400.00.

New Business:

1. Hannah Ertle presented a water development project for the Ute Mountain Ute Indian Tribe. The area is very dry and experiences extended and recurring drought periods, and the lack of water storage results in poor big game distribution. The project involves converting an old hay barn structure into a water catchment system with holding tanks to capture rain and snowfall, which will be made available to wildlife via a drinker. Wildlife-friendly fencing would be installed to prevent livestock from accessing the water. The committee felt that the project would greatly benefit wildlife in the area; however because the tribe does not allow non-tribal hunting on the reservation, the project was denied.
2. Bonnie Loving presented a noxious shrub control project for Montezuma County. The county has been performing mechanical removal and herbicide treatment of salt cedar and Russian olives along waterways and ponds on private lands to help reduce water consumption by invasive and non-beneficial species. Increasing water available for agricultural or habitat uses will help to improve forage production for both wildlife and livestock. The project includes numerous cooperators including water conservation districts and private landowners, and the work is complementary to similar efforts being undertaken by the BLM on public lands. The project was approved for \$7,100.00.

3. The USFS burn project was not ready to be presented and was tabled for the next meeting.

Other Business/Roundtable:

1. Rilla Cramer attended the meeting to solicit feedback on a potential water development project. Her property is located outside of Cahone, and includes 160 acres that is adjacent to public land and the Dolores River. An existing pond structure has been heavily eroded, and Ms. Cramer would like to reconstruct the berm and pond to provide water for wildlife and some light irrigation to reseed forage species. However, she does not allow hunting on the property, which is generally required for HPP projects. The committee discussed whether this project represented important habitat work that would benefit wildlife on the nearby public land, or if it would create a refuge situation and encourage big game to spend more time on adjacent private lands where they cause damage. The committee would be willing to entertain a formal proposal, but these issues should be clearly addressed.
2. The committee reviewed the draft DMP revisions and continued to work on updating content and maps.
3. The Statewide Meeting will be held in Grand Junction from December 3-5. The committee extended invites to Garth Nelson with BLM and Ben Robinson, a seasonal USFS employee.

Next Meeting: November 5th, 5:30pm