



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Republican Rivers Committee

October 1st, 2019

Bank of Colorado, Yuma

Committee members present:

- Josh Melby, CPW-DWM**
- Dustin Wise, Sportsman**
- Chris Craig, Livestock Grower**
- Don Fritzler, Livestock Grower**
- Clayt Cooper, Livestock Grower**

- Hanna Cook, Administrative Assistant**

Guests: Marty Stratman (CPW Biologist), John Hardwick (HPP State Council Member)

Meeting called to order at 6:35 PM

Budget Report

The 2020 budget report was reviewed.

Old Business

The RR DMP has been approved by the State Council, and will now be going to the commission for final approval.

New Business

DAU D-44 Plan Revisions-Marty Stratman

Marty has been working on revisions to the D-44 DAU plan. The current 5 year estimated population average is 3,950 deer (objective is 3,500-3,800), and the buck doe ratio estimated average is 40 bucks/100 does (objective is 35-40/100). Chronic Wasting Disease has been a major concern in the area. Based on results of mandatory testing, they have found that mule deer prevalence is at 26% and white tail deer prevalence is at 12%. Public comments support keeping the deer population where it is now, and they support management practices that would help reduce CWD prevalence while still maintaining mature bucks. They do not want to see an increase in the population, as there has been too much damage along the river.

The current population is slightly over objective, so Marty is recommending increasing the objective to allow CPW to manage for the current population as is. Based on the difference in prevalence rates for mule deer and white tail deer, Marty feels that the two species may need to be managed differently. In order to try to manage for a decrease in CWD without reducing

mature bucks too much, Marty recommends reducing the sex ratio objective to 33-38 bucks/100 does. Mule deer will be managed at the lower end to address the higher CWD prevalence, and white tail deer will be managed at the upper end. This will be implemented by having mule deer specific buck licenses to increase mule deer buck harvest.

The committee agrees with Marty's recommendations and feels that this will be the best management strategy for the area. They will write a comment letter that will be sent to the commission along with the D-44 plan.

DAU D-54 Plan Revisions-Marty Stratman

Marty has been working on revisions to the D-54 DAU plan. The current 5 year estimated population average is 3,884 deer (objective is 2,900-3,100), and the buck doe ratio estimated average is 43 bucks/100 does (objective is 35-40/100), so both estimates are currently over objective. Public comments support keeping the population objective at status quo, and continuing to provide quality buck hunting opportunities. The CWD prevalence in this deer herd is unknown, so managing for CWD is not a major concern right now.

Marty is recommending increasing the population objective to allow CPW to manage for the current population as is and keep it at status quo. Marty is also recommending keeping the current post-hunt sex ratio at 35-40 bucks per does. Mandatory CWD testing is in place this year, so if the results show high CWD prevalence (exceeding the statewide threshold) in this herd then they will manage at the lower end of the sex ratio objective in order to reduce CWD prevalence.

The committee agrees with Marty's recommendations and feels that this will be the best management strategy for the area. They will write a comment letter that will be sent to the commission along with the D-54 plan.

Project Application Proposals and Reviews

Sitzman Tree Planting Project- Josh Melby

Josh is asking HPP for \$3,839 for trees, fabric, and fencing materials needed to develop a tree plot. This area does not have a lot of trees, so there is limited wildlife habitat. The landowner would like to develop this tree plot in order to create long term habitat for big game. The larger trees will need to be fenced to protect them from beaver damage. The landowner will install cattle fencing to protect the tree plot from livestock and will do labor and provide equipment. Yuma County Pheasants forever will provide equipment and labor for tree planting.

The project was approved for \$3,839.

Ryan Noble Sandhills Habitat Project- Josh Melby

Josh is asking HPP for \$4,857 for trees, erosion control mats, seed, and other materials needed to re-establish wildlife habitat in a sand-blowout area. The area is regularly blown out by wind, and this has prevented vegetation from growing. The landowner would like to plant trees to help break up the wind, seed the area, and use erosion control mats to keep the seed from blowing away before it can take root. Once the habitat is restored, the landowner will be able to install a guzzler to make the habitat even more favorable for big game. The landowner will fence the area to keep cattle out, and will do labor and maintenance of the project area. Yuma County Pheasants Forever will provide equipment and some labor.

The project was approved for \$4,857.

Dennis Wieser Riparian Habitat Project- Josh Melby

Josh is asking HPP for \$2,331 for trees and materials needed for a tree plot. This project is a continuation of projects done in previous years to establish habitat for wildlife. They will be planting native trees that will provide long term big game habitat. The landowner and Yuma County Pheasants Forever will provide labor and equipment.

The project was approved for \$2,331.

Jory Drager Riparian Habitat Project- Josh Melby

Josh is asking HPP for \$3,946 for trees, seed, and materials needed to create wildlife habitat. The landowner will be removing old buildings and junk piles and replacing them with big game habitat. The landowner hopes that providing habitat and cover elsewhere will draw big game away from corn fields.

The project was approved for \$3,946.

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion

Invited Guests for the HPP Annual Meeting

The HPP statewide meeting will be on December 3rd, 4th, and 5th in Grand Junction. The committee can invite two guests that will have their expenses paid for. The committee has chosen to invite Doug and Paula Norman. If they are unable to make it, the committee will reach out to other local landowners.

The committee now has 25 rolls of white vinyl wire that can be given out to landowners with an approved voucher.

Marty is working on an application for a habitat improvement project on various SWAs. Marty will work on getting the necessary approval for the SWA project and will present it to the committee at the next meeting.

There are two guzzlers remaining in the stockpile.

The next meeting will be held on January 15th at 5:00 PM at the Bank of Colorado in Yuma.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM

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