



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Zoom Video Conference

August 4, 2020

7:00pm

Introductions: **Members present were:** Mary Taylor/BLM, Curtis Keetch/USFS, DWM Bailey Franklin/CPW, Rich Parr/Sportsperson, Butch Theos/Livestock Grower, and Admin. Samantha Sorensen/CPW. **Guests present were:** HPP Program Assistant Teri Polley, and HPP Coordinator Pat Tucker.

General Public Comments: None.

Budget Report: Committee members were presented with FY21 and FY20 budget reports. State Council approved a 10% increase for all of the local committees. White River started the fiscal year with \$220,000.00 and had \$207,548.75 remaining at the start of the meeting.

Old Business: Minutes from April 30 and July 16 were presented and approved as written.

New Business: Buckles Ranch-Timber Gulch Water Improvements: The committee previously assisted with a pipeline on the property. There is an existing waterline and pump on the private property and the plan is to extend the waterline to the north and the south onto their neighboring BLM grazing allotment. Two to three tanks would be added for the benefit of livestock and wildlife. Bailey and Mary thought the project might come in under budget but HPP will only pay up to 50%. BLM's contribution includes more than just NEPA but the new tank design cost is unknown at this point. The committee approved a 50/50 cost share up to \$22,046.00.

Miller Creek Ranch Irrigated Ag Fall Re-Seeding: Previous proposals were approved but unfortunately irrigated field wasn't very successful due to drought. Bailey would like to reseed while the contractor is on site for the dryland project. Area is critical wildlife habitat and progress has been made on houndstongue. The committee approved a 50/50 cost share up to \$1,581.25.

Nine Mile Ranch Ag Seeding & Water Development: The goal is to spray, disk, plow, and seed several different fields totaling approximately 63 acres and enhance 2 different springs to fill ponds on both sides of the highway. The committee discussed concerns about improving the field closest to the highway and the potential to create more wildlife/vehicle collisions. Ultimately they decided not to fund the field closest to the road but they approved a 50/50 cost share up to \$4,907.70 on the other fields and the spring developments.

Oldland Brothers Connley Pasture Well: Over the years the old well has slowly gone dry and the landowners are currently hauling approximately 4k gallons of water/day for their cattle. Mary explained that if the new well is successful the water would also benefit another existing project. It was made clear that HPP would only participate if water was found, funding would be void in the event of a dry hole. The committee approved a 50/50 cost share up to \$12,370.

Watson Ranch East End Spring Development: The goal is to develop a spring and pump water to two tire tanks. The improved water source would benefit livestock and wildlife. Mary inquired as to whether Oldland and Watson would entertain allowing special hunts on their properties; Bailey said he's unsure but would ask. The committee approved a 50/50 cost share up to \$12,875.00.

WRHPP Herbicide Voucher Program: Bailey explained that the voucher program has worked well and it eliminated the need for an inventory and trying to guess how much herbicide to order. The vouchers are tiered based on acreage. Landowners can also receive assistance from the county so the bulk of their contribution is typically labor. The committee approved \$8,500.00 for vouchers.

WRHPP Landscape Scale Weed Control: Bailey feels the committee has an obligation to treat weeds when projects require the disturbance of soil. This project is geared more toward landowners who feel more comfortable hiring a contractor. Pat suggested taking Oak Ridge off the list in order to make room for another private landowner since funding for the SWA could go through State Council. Rich voiced that he would like to see the project go out to bid. Mary wondered if the program could be handled similar to the herbicide vouchers so as to allow landowners to choose their own vendor. She also brought up the educational component and Bailey explained that some people had been taken off the list once they felt comfortable doing the work themselves. The committee decided to table the proposal.

RAP Landscape Scale Habitat Monitoring: DNR bid completed and a 5 year contract has been approved but the committee still has the flexibility to approve a specific dollar amount each year. Bailey proposed 60 sites for FY21. The committee approved \$50,000.00.

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion: RAP Searchable Habitat Database: The hope is to set up a presentation eventually but the database is still in the works. Bailey had a conference call with Todd to go over some modifications. Samantha sent out an email with a link to the test site for committee members to try out.

Select Next Meeting Date: TBD but Bailey anticipates a September meeting will be needed.
Future Agenda Items: Bailey has a number of proposals he's working on including a prescribed burn.

Roundtable: Pat thanked the committee for their time and patience during these difficult times and explained that virtual meetings is how business will be conducted for the foreseeable future.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:27pm.