



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Uncompahgre HPP Committee

February 12th, 2020

6:30 p.m.

Uncompahgre HPP Members Present: Kelly Crane, CPW; Bobby Gray, Sportsman; Angela LoSasso, BLM; Todd Stewart, Livestock Grower; Dave Andrews, Livestock Grower; Bob Black, Livestock Grower; Loren Paulson, USFS

Guests: Pat Tucker, CPW; Mark Caddy, CPW; Natalie Renneker, CPW; Mark Richman, CPW; Matt Ortega, CPW; Bill Head, NRCS; Kelly Sanburg, John Harold

Introduction: The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$7,429.80.

New Business:

Project Application Proposals and Reviews:

1. Kelly Sanburg presented a fence project that involves removing old sheep wire, clearing the fence line, and constructing a new wildlife-friendly fence on a leased property. The total fence line includes approximately 7 miles, with some sections in worse shape than others. The property is located in deer and elk winter range, with some use during the spring, and is adjacent to BLM. The committee was amenable to smaller phases of the project, however the application did not include any match from the landowner/landlord. The committee also expressed concern about the potential for future sale of the property, which might result in the loss of HPP's investment in the fence. The project was tabled so that these concerns could be addressed.
2. Bill Head presented a fence proposal for John Harold involving removal of old sheep fence and construction of new wildlife-friendly fence. The committee participated in a previous phase of this project, and this phase continues the next two miles of fencing. Due to timing restrictions in Gunnison Sage Grouse habitat, the project would not be implemented until after July 1st. The committee approved the project for \$25,000 in FY21, and will also provide 8 rolls of high visibility wire.

3. The committee reviewed a proposal for weed treatment on Cliff Bankston's property on Disappointment Creek. Previous weed treatment had initial success, and the landowner would like to continue treating the infestation of knapweed and whitetop to bring irrigated fields back into production. The area is important winter range for big game, and deer and elk contributed to the overall degradation of the field. The committee discussed whether pre-emergent treatment in the spring was advantageous over fall treatment, and generally agreed that fall treatment was more effective for knapweed in particular. The project was approved for \$1350, and the funds may be used either in the spring (FY20) or the fall (FY21). The decision on timing will be left to the Dolores County Weed Control District, who will be performing the treatment.
4. Fence repair projects from the Garvey Brothers Cattle Company and Marla Fritzlen were reviewed. These are small repair projects that the Garveys submit every year, and the committee feels that repairing fences damaged by big game helps prevent big game entrapment or death, as well as increasing landowner tolerance for big game in important winter range. The projects were approved for \$500.00 (Garveys) and \$250.00 (Fritzlen).
5. Mark Richman presented a pond cleaning project for Oscar Massey on USFS and BLM allotments. A large northern portion of the Uncompahgre Plateau is currently without functional ponds, which reduces the amount of water storage and availability for both big game and wildlife. Conflicts exist between wildlife and agricultural operators when deer and elk consume water that is hauled in for cattle, and very uneven distribution of big game and livestock across the area negatively impacts the overall habitat quality. The project involves renting heavy equipment to clean out, seal, and treat ponds on the allotments as needed to help increase the number of ponds that effectively store water for wildlife and livestock. BLM, GAB, and USFS have also agreed to help fund different portions of the work, and provide salt and bentonite. The committee supported the project, but noted that a more targeted list of ponds to be treated should be provided. The project was tabled for a phone conference meeting after Bob Black, Mark Richman, and Oscar Massey could meet to work up the list of ponds.
6. The committee reviewed fertilizer project proposals. There were 15 applicants this year for a total of 2782 acres. The available budget was \$32,400.00, and the committee approved \$11.87 per acre with a \$5,000 cap on individual recipients.

Roundtable:

1. The committee reviewed the draft Distribution Management Plan revisions, and approved the draft to go to the State Council with some minor changes.
2. The committee briefly discussed upcoming DAU plans that will require an HPP comment letter. The committee also discussed the recent CPW mountain lion plan.

Next Meeting: TBD