



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Uncompahgre HPP Committee

Zoom Video Conference

November 4th, 2020

6:30 p.m.

Uncompahgre HPP Members Present: Kelly Crane, CPW; Bobby Gray, Sportsman; Loren Paulson, USFS; Todd Stewart, Livestock Grower; Thane Stranathan, BLM

Guests: Mark Caddy, CPW; Rachel Sralla, CPW; Pat Tucker, CPW; Bill Head, NRCS; Dean Stindt, Randy Luth, Nathan Carden

Introductions: Committee members and guests were introduced. The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$71,199.96.

New Business:

1. Dean Stindt and Randy Luth presented a fencing proposal for Cowboy Cave Ranch. The property is located in transitional and winter range for big game, and several habitat improvement projects have been completed there in recent years. Approximately 2.25 miles of fencing is in severe disrepair, with some sections exceeding 6 feet in height with 6-7 strands. The fence does not allow big game to cross or utilize the property effectively, and does not properly contain livestock. The project involves removing all of this old fencing and replacing it with new wildlife-friendly fence to HPP specs. While much of the property is protected under a conservation easement, the holder (San Miguel Conservation Foundation) has agreed that the fence can be replaced under the current terms.
The committee discussed the fence design, which included proposed barbed wire on the bottom. DWM Mark Caddy explained that the fence separates the property from a heavily utilized grazing allotment, and that the property experiences its highest wildlife use in the fall. Barbed wire could be allowable in this case to effectively deter cattle trespass without negatively impacting calves or fawns. Randy also indicated that he would be willing to incorporate jumps or crossings into the fence to better facilitate wildlife movement. The committee supported the project; however the two contractor quotes widely varied on pricing for materials and labor, which made decision-making on funding difficult. The project was tabled for clarification from the contractors and landowner on materials pricing.
2. Bill Head presented a fencing proposal for Shirley Thorpe, which is part of an ongoing multi-phase fence replacement. The existing fence consists of old woven wire, and the property receives heavy elk use during migration and winter. The project involves removing 2,640-ft of

old fence and replacing it with new wildlife-friendly fence to HPP specs, including high visibility topwire. The project was approved for \$6,270.00 and 2 rolls of white wire.

3. Nathan Carden presented a fencing project. The property was previously subdivided into multiple lots to be developed, but when Mr. Carden purchased the lots, he recombined them into one parcel and now wishes to rejuvenate the habitat for elk use. The area had previously been overgrazed by livestock, and is now under a rest period prescribed by the NRCS. Cattle will be brought back onto the property in several years. The boundary fencing was in disrepair, and the landowners have begun replacing it with wildlife-friendly fence. The southern portion was replaced earlier this summer, and the north side will likely be cost-shared with the adjacent landowner. The west side borders USFS for 2400-ft, and the project includes replacing it with lay-down fence. The east side borders the county road for 3100-ft, and the new fence would be hard fence to HPP specs. The western side of the property in particular contains good habitat for big game, and the committee noted that the area is in an important migration corridor. The project was approved for \$9,287.50, and the committee will provide 3 rolls of white wire.
4. The committee expects to run out of white high-visibility wire before the end of the fiscal year, with additional fencing projects anticipated in the spring. A new Kencove purchase was approved for white wire up to \$5,000.

Other Business:

1. Dave Andrews and Angela LoSasso both resigned from the Uncompahgre committee in 2020. Retirement awards were approved for both members – Angela will receive a personalized plaque that meets BLM restrictions, and Dave will receive a personalized elk art statue.
2. Public notices regarding the livestock grower's vacancy will be posted in the Nucla Co-Op, the Norwood USFS office, the Montrose CPW office, and will be distributed by DWMs to local interested parties. While any member of the public may apply, the committee noted that maintaining representation from the West End is important to balance perspectives from across the committee area. Potential livestock reps should contact Kelly Crane.

Next Meeting: February 10th @ 6:30pm