



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Lower Colorado River HPP Committee
CPW Office- 0088 Wildlife Way Glenwood Springs, CO
August 12, 2021
1:00 pm

Lower Colorado HPP Members Present: Darren Chacon- CPW, Scot Dodero- Livestock Grower, Pat Luark- Livestock Grower, Jim Nieslanik- Livestock Grower, Rick Bumgardner- Sportsman, Hilary Boyd- BLM, Phil Nyland- USFS

Guests: Michael Blanck- CPW, Katie Richman- CPW, Brian Gray- CPW, Kristy Wallner- BLM, Jessica Pettee- USFS, Wayne Pollard, Ryan Lahti

Introductions: Committee members, new staff, and guests were introduced.

General Public Comments: The committee discussed potential project options to assist an individual that was experiencing wildlife conflict with the hay crop on a property that was leased from Eagle County Open Space.

Budget Report: The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$170,100.00. Phil Nyland gave an update on the USFS Toner Creek Mastication project and stated it would no longer require the previously approved \$24,400 from HPP. With these funds unencumbered, the committee's remaining budget balance was updated to a total of \$194,500.00.

Old Business: The minutes from the April 15th meeting were approved as written.

New Business:

1. Pollard Pond Cleanouts- Wayne Pollard presented a pond cleanout project to clean 5 ponds on the USFS Meadow Creek Allotment. The existing spring fed ponds are filled with sediment and he would like to maintain and improve water catchment for livestock and wildlife use. The committee discussed and requested a seeding component to assist in weed mitigation, with USFS approval. The project was approved for up to \$5,000.00.
2. West Elk Ranch Fence- Ryan Lahti presented a 1 mile fence replacement project. This is a continuation of a 2019 project to install wildlife friendly fencing on the ranch. The current fence line is in disrepair, does not sufficiently contain livestock, and has caused wildlife entanglements. The proposed project would remove the old dilapidated fence and replace it with a wildlife friendly fence. The project was approved for up to \$5,000.00 for fence materials. The committee will provide 4 rolls of white wire from committee inventory.

3. BLM west Hill & Dry Lake Water Saver Reconstruction- Kristy Wallner presented a project for the reconstruction of 2 water savers on the Blowout Allotment. The allotment is in dry country with minimal water sources. The developments are currently in need of reconstruction to serve as adequate water catchments. The Dry Lake water saver will serve as a reliable water source in the central and northern sections and the West Hill water saver will provide water in the central and southern sections of the Blowout Allotment. These water savers would allow for additional water sources for wildlife and also provide the permittee with reliable water sources to aid in effective grazing management. Hilary Boyd and Pat Luark abstained from the approval decision. The project was approved for up to \$25,000.00.
4. Gerard Pond Cleanouts- Kristy Wallner presented a pond cleanout project that would target 25 ponds, 19 of which are located on the BLM East Hardscrabble Allotment and 6 additional on the USFS Cottonwood C&H Allotment. The ponds have not been cleaned in several years and these cleanouts would allow for better wildlife and livestock utilization and distribution across the allotments. The project would entail a dozer rental for use over a week to clean all 25 ponds, in addition to a seeding and weed spraying component. The project was approved for \$4,749.40.

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion:

1. FY22 Voucher Programs-
 - a. Fence Vouchers- Approved for up to \$15,000.00.
 - b. Herbicide Vouchers- Approved for up to \$10,000.00.
 - c. Pond Vouchers- The committee discussed the need for water projects and developments, especially in such a dry year. The committee approved the implementation of Pond Cleanout Vouchers for a total of \$10,000.00 for FY22 with the following requirements:
 1. Value of \$1,000.00 per voucher for a minimum of 2 ponds cleaned
 2. Ponds must be located on public land
 3. Ponds must receive significant use from deer, elk, pronghorn, and/or moose
 4. Before-and-after photos and GPS locations are required before payment
 5. Individuals may obtain up to 5 vouchers per fiscal year

Roundtable: The committee discussed potential meeting dates and project site visits.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:15 pm.