



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Montelores HPP Committee

Mancos NRCS Building - 604 Bauer Ave
August 31st, 2021
6:30 p.m.

HPP Members Present: Eldon Simmons, Livestock Grower; Ivan Messinger, USFS; John Sheek, Sportsman; Andy Brown, CPW; Tanner Young (proxy)

Guests: Bonnie Loving, Tom Rice

Introductions & Budget Report:

Committee members and guests were introduced. The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$101,118.44.

New Business:

1. Bonnie Loving presented a weed control project for Montezuma County. 11,000 acres of Russian, spotted, and diffuse knapweed infestations have been mapped on private lands within big game winter range in Montezuma County. Noxious weed infestations suppress native/desirable forb and grass species, which reduces the amount of forage available to big game. When forage quantity decreases, deer and elk utilize irrigated crops for forage, which results in game damage to fences and crops. Montezuma County is initiating a knapweed treatment cost-share program to help control and/or eradicate weed infestations on private lands, and HPP funds are requested to help offset reimbursement costs to landowners. The County will continue to identify infestations on private and public lands, and work with landowners to complete treatments. Infestations will be treated with post-emergent herbicide to reduce the current growth, and with pre-emergent herbicide to help control the seed bank and prevent re-establishment for 2-3 years. This treatment prescription will allow native grass and forb species to establish and increase forage availability for big game, as well as prevent the future spread of noxious weeds. The County will monitor infestations after treatment to evaluate efficacy and perform follow-up treatments if necessary. The project was approved for 50% of treatment costs up to \$10,000.00.
2. Tom Rice presented a reseeding/reclamation project for USFS. The Lizard Head Pass area receives year-round use by elk and moose. Prior to 2018, illegal user-created trails severely degraded habitat along the pass. Improved travel management and closures helped rejuvenate habitat, but previous reseeding efforts were only partially successful due to utilizing hand broadcasting instead of

drilling. Further reseeding with heavy equipment is required to fully restore grasses and forage for big game. The project consists of reseeding 10 acres of previously-treated areas with a drill. Restoring native forage and grasses will improve forage production for big game throughout the area. The project was approved for seed costs up to \$1,650.00.

3. Tanner Young presented a reseeding project. The area is located in transitional range and experiences year round use by elk and deer. A 50-acre field has been abandoned and no longer produces forage for livestock or big game. Additionally, the absence of productive vegetation increases potential for weed infestations. The project involves reseeding 50 acres with a native forage and grass mix via drilling. Rejuvenating the field with grass will increase forage production and help improve big game distribution. Planting with forage species will also help prevent noxious weed establishment. The project was approved for \$3,200.00 for seed costs.

4. Tanner also presented a water development project. An existing well on the property produces reliable water, however there is no pump in place to bring the water to the surface. An existing pond used to capture and hold the water for livestock and wildlife. Tanner will have the recharge rate tested and if the well is able to produce more than 100 gallons per day, a contractor estimate will be obtained to install the pump and other infrastructure. The committee was supportive of the project and will resume discussion once the recharge rate and contractor costs are established.

Next Meeting: November 9th @ 5:30pm