



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Grand Mesa HPP Committee

Zoom Videoconference

May 3rd, 2021

1:00 p.m.

Grand Mesa HPP Members Present: Kirk Oldham, CPW; Sylvia Ringer, BLM; Heidi Plank, USFS; Don Fulton, Livestock Grower; Harley Metz, Sportsperson; John Walter, Livestock Grower

Guests: Scott Hoyer, CPW; Travis Bybee, CPW; Bob Morris, CPW; Michael Blanck, CPW; Tom Bieser, Drew Hogan, Joe Fazzi, Richard Watkins, Pat Tucker, CPW

Introduction: Committee members and guests were introduced. The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$19,089.68.

Old Business:

1. The committee resumed discussion on the Eagle Springs Fencing Project. The existing fence is in severe disrepair and does not contain livestock. The property is in active forage production and experiences heavy use by deer during the winter. 5,686-feet of old fence will be removed and replaced with wildlife-friendly fence to HPP specs, including high visibility topwire. The project was approved for \$3,300.00 for materials, and the committee will provide 5 rolls of high visibility wire.

New Business:

1. The committee reviewed a fencing proposal from Drew Hogan. The project area is located in an important transitional and winter range for elk, and experiences year-round use by deer. There are currently no interior cross-fences, which does not allow for proper grazing rotation or separation of pasture and hayfields. Exterior fences on the property are in good shape. The project involves constructing wildlife-friendly cross fences to separate pasture from irrigated forage-producing hayfields. Improved grazing rotation will allow for increased forage production for both livestock and wildlife. Wildlife-friendly fence design including high visibility topwire will allow deer and elk to move through and utilize the property. The project was

approved for \$3,600.00 for FY22, and the committee will provide 2 rolls of high visibility wire.

2. Joe Fazzi presented the second phase of weed control for West Divide Cattle Growers Association. The West Divide USFS grazing permits are heavily infested with noxious weeds, and cattle movements are helping to spread infestations to other parts of the forest as well as private lands. The project involves treating weeds with herbicide across ~200 acres in three different areas, and includes matches from USFS for herbicide costs and \$1,000 cash from the association, as well as 40 hours of labor to cut trails. The DWM noted that reducing the presence of weeds and preventing further spread represented a good wildlife benefit, and the committee appreciated the matches from all affected parties. The project was approved for \$2,000.00 for FY22.
3. The committee reviewed a fencing project from Tom Bieser. The property is located in important big game habitat and experiences year round use by elk and deer, with seasonal use by moose and heavy winter elk use. There is no interior fencing between two parcels, and pasture division fencing is needed for improved rotational grazing management. The project involves constructing .5 miles of new wildlife-friendly division fence including high visibility topwire. Better management of the available pasture will increase the amount of forage left for big game. The project was approved for \$4,225.00 for materials, and the committee will provide 2 rolls of high visibility wire.
4. The committee reviewed a pond project from Marjorie Alessandri. The proposal involves cleaning 3 ponds that used to hold water, but have filled in and become ineffective in recent years. A contractor bid came to \$10,000, however the bid was not detailed regarding the level of work required per pond. There were additional questions about mobilization fees and whether some of the work could be coordinated with scheduled USFS projects. The project was tabled for further information.

Next Meeting: TBD