



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

White River HPP Committee

CPW Office- 73485 Highway 64 Meeker, CO

March 31, 2022

5:30 pm

White River HPP Members Present: Bailey Franklin- CPW, Jim Brennan- Livestock Grower, Lenny Klingsmith- Livestock Grower, Angelo Theos- Livestock Grower, Rich Parr- Sportsperson, Mary Taylor- BLM

Guests: Terry Wygant- CPW, Wade Cox, Wiley Berthelson, Brett Berthelson

Introductions: Committee members and guests were introduced.

Budget Report: The budget was fully encumbered at the February 24th meeting. All additional budget encumbrances for FY22, through June 30, 2022, will be funded with approval from Michael Blanck, HPP Manager.

Old Business: The minutes from the February 24th meeting were approved as written.

New Business:

1. Cox Ranch Hay- Wade Cox presented a fertilizer project to aid in forage production due to game damage from wildlife consumption. The Cox Ranch is located in an elk migration corridor and the landscape around the ranch creates a pinch point for elk which contributes to elk concentration on the ranch. The landowners have cooperated with CPW year after year in an attempt to reduce the ongoing game damage. Despite continued efforts to haze big game, the damage to the growing crops is still significant. The committee expressed concerns with setting potential precedents by funding fertilizer projects. Instead, the committee proposed the reimbursement of hay to offset game damage costs. The project was approved for up to \$10,000 in hay reimbursement.

*Administrative note- With all committee funds encumbered, the amount needed for this project was approved by the HPP Manager.

2. Berthelson Ranch Fence Crossings- Wiley and Brett Berthelson presented a fence crossing project to implement five wildlife friendly fence crossings. The project had been approved in the previous fiscal year but was unable to be completed due to limited contractor availability. The Berthelson Ranch experiences chronic fence damage in the spring from elk. The property maintains high quality forage in both dryland fields and alfalfa hay fields and is adjacent to the Oak Ridge State Wildlife Area. The project would entail the installation of wildlife crossings in the most heavily used and damaged areas of the fence to reduce the severity and frequency of fence damage and wildlife entanglements. The project was approved for up to \$4,560.

*Administrative note- With all committee funds encumbered, the amount needed for this project was approved by the HPP Manager.

3. Berthelson Ranch Alfalfa Spraying- Wiley and Brett Berthelson presented a spraying project to reduce the amount of alfalfa in their hay fields. The goal of decreasing the alfalfa would be an attempt to reduce game damage caused by elk forage consumption. Due to the nature of the project, the committee did not feel it would be appropriate to fund a project that involved reducing available wildlife forage. The project was denied.
4. Ranch Advisory Partners Habitat Monitoring- The committee discussed the continuation of the third year of the five year contract for habitat monitoring. The committee noted the high cost of the project annually but felt it provided valuable information that is useful for considering future projects. The project was approved for \$50,000 for FY23.

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion:

1. Punchy Cattle Water Tank Inventory- The committee continued the discussion of tank inventory that began at the February 24th meeting. Though the committee considered a purchase for the next fiscal year, after further discussion, the committee decided against the purchase due to the high cost of the tanks and associated freight.
2. Virtual Fence- The committee discussed virtual fence technology and the logistics associated with implementation.
3. Upcoming Meeting- The committee tentatively selected May 31st for the Ranch Advisory Partners monitoring presentation.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30 pm.