



## HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

San Luis Valley HPP Committee Meeting

February 13, 2023

Monte Vista

### Committee Members Present:

- Brent Woodward - CPW
- Mark Bechaver - Livestock Grower
- Carol Lee Dugan - Livestock Grower
- Richard Davie - Livestock Grower
- Dale Gomez - Sportsperson
- Eduardo Duran - BLM
- Kevin Duda - USFS
- Dean Lee - USFWS

### Administrative Assistant Present:

Kimberly Berscheid

### Attendees Present:

Suzanne Beauchaine - USFWS  
Meg Armistead - USFS  
Cathy Hagan - BLM  
Rachael Sanchez - USFS

### Introductions

Committee members and guests were introduced. Dean Lee was introduced as the newest committee member representing US Fish and Wildlife Service, replacing Suzanne Beauchaine.

### Budget Report

The available balance at the start of the meeting was \$76,690.

### Old Business

The meeting minutes from September 22, 2022, were approved as written.

### New Business

#### Picnic Park Mastication Project-

Rachel Sanchez is asking the committee for \$46,170 for hydro axe mastication on 3 units, 68.4 acres, within the Picnic Park Project area in the Saguache Ranger District. The project will improve the big game winter and transitional range by thinning dense mixed conifer/ponderosa pine to improve the understory growth and forage opportunity. In addition, the project will improve the overall health of the tree stands by focusing treatment on diseased mixed conifer and over-stocked ponderosa pine. The Forest Service is treating an additional 172 acres in separate units by hand thinning. With the reduced canopy and increased forage opportunity, the project will

help reduce game damage claims on neighboring agricultural fields. The project will be monitored and documented by the USFS.

**The project was approved for \$46,170 for hydro axe mastication on 68.4 acres in the Picnic Park project area. Carol Lee Dugan and Richard Davie were unable to attend and provided their proxy vote in support of the project.**

#### Poncha Pass Vence Tower (cost share with Mount Blanca HPP Committee)-

Cathy Hagen and Meg Armistead are asking the committee for \$5,650 towards the purchase of a VENCE tower to be placed on Poncha Pass East, Alder Allotment. This area was burned in 2019 by the Decker fire and the interior fencing has not been replaced. The towers will enable livestock producers to utilize virtual fencing for their cattle and lessen the need for interior fencing on the landscape. This project will allow wildlife to move more freely and reduce the entanglement risks traditional fencing can produce. The BLM/FS permittee will be contributing funding for the collars for cattle participating in the project. USFS and BLM are contributing to the purchase of additional towers and will be responsible for the installation and implementation. (HPP is contributing a total of \$11,000 split between the SLV and MB Committees).

**The project was approved for \$5,650 for a portion of a VENCE tower to be placed on Poncha Pass East. Carol Lee Dugan and Richard Davie were unable to attend and provided their proxy vote in support of the project.**

#### Remaining Committee Business

##### Meeting Schedule-

The next meeting is scheduled on April 11, 2023, at 6:00 pm, CPW Office - Monte Vista. The committee discussed setting up a project tour in the spring as well as asking Charles Woodward to do a presentation on his Antelope Census data. Kim will work on planning for both.

##### Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 pm.