



## HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Northwest Colorado HPP Committee Meeting

April 2, 2024 at 6:00 pm

Craig Chamber of Commerce

### Committee Members Present:

- Evan Jones - CPW
- Sean Durham - Livestock Grower
- Chad Green - Livestock Grower
- Gary Visintainer - Livestock Grower
- Gary Nichols - Sportsperson
- Jill Carlson - BLM
- Curtis Keetch - USFS

### Attendees Present:

Jared Lamb, Mike Swaro,  
Seth Schwolert, Ross McGee,  
Darby Finley, Becca Devergie,  
Stormy Concoby, Doug,  
Dave Simione, Jesse Schroeder,  
Daryl Steele, Don Cook

### Administrative Assistant Present:

Kale Watson

### Introductions

Committee members and attendees were introduced.

### Budget Report

The budget was fully encumbered. The committee approved FY25 budget.

### Old Business

Minutes- The minutes from the December 21st meeting were approved as written.

7 Springs Ranch Pond Lining- Scope of project change. Wanted to try cheaper route, polymer instead for \$190.58 and unencumber \$26,209.42. Committee approved.

### New Business

Butler White Wire- The committee approved 20 rolls of white wire to replace woven wire and create a wildlife friendly fence.

Pagoda Ranch White Wire- The committee approved 16 rolls of white wire to rebuild fencing.

Steele Well- The State Land Board (SLB) and Darryl Steele proposed installing a well as another water source for grazing elk, deer and pronghorn. The committee approved the project up to \$15,000 with the following contingencies: 1) SLB

contribution 2) Obtaining a well permit and 3) If water was not hit when drilling, HPP will not be able to contribute to the project.

Robinson Well- William Robinson presented a water development project to implement a well that would provide a year-round water source for resident Sage Grouse. The property does see elk, deer, and pronghorn during the winter and deer and pronghorn during the summer. NRCS will contribute to the project. The committee is worried this is for the household and not fully benefiting wildlife. The committee tabled the project and encouraged the landowners to look at other funding and/or resubmit with additional information.

Cook Well- Don Cook presented a water development project to establish a well to provide a reliable source of water to migrating elk and deer. The property currently has a shallow pond that fills during the wet years but will be limited or nonexistent during the dry years. The property has been used for Ranching for Wildlife the last 30 years but chose not to do it this year in order to relieve some pressure. The committee approved the project for \$12,511.25 with HPP funding ½ of the drilling costs contingent upon hitting water.

Bakers Peak Weed Control- The committee approved \$5,000 for herbicide to treat large leafy spurge infestation. The landowner will be responsible for half of the herbicide.

Moffatt County Weed Control- The committee approved \$5,000 for herbicide to mitigate weed spread and reduce noxious weed stands. HPP contribution is only for herbicide, not insecticide.

CPW Wiggins/Indian Run SWA & Freeman Reservoir Dam Weed Control- Mike Swaro presented a weed control project for the second year for treatment on the Indian Run and Cold Springs State Wildlife Areas (SWA). The project aims to double the work accomplished annually by CPW staff by hiring a contractor to conduct horseback treatments. The Cold Springs treatment would occur in the Wiggins unit that had been affected by a fire. The committee confirmed that CPW would provide the match in labor and materials and that this project serves to increase and provide supplemental noxious weed control. The committee approved the project for \$12,150.00 in SWA funds for FY25.

USFS South Fork Williams Fork Weed Control Phase II- Evan Jones presented phase II of the weed control project to treat severe infestations of houndstongue, canada thistle, and yellow toadflax along the South Fork of the Williams Fork River. The project proposed 10 days of horseback and backpack weed spraying with HPP paying for 5 days. The Good Neighbor Authority Agreement was extended. Evan abstained from the approval decision. The project was preapproved for up to \$6,000.00 for FY25.

FY25 Voucher Programs- The committee discussed having vouchers sent out in the spring instead of the fall and winter months to keep them from getting lost. They



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agreed to have them sent out January 10<sup>th</sup> and having the cutoff be March 31<sup>st</sup> as a soft deadline with flexibility. They also discussed potentially higher base budgets.

FY25 Fence Vouchers- The committee approved the FY25 fence voucher budget for \$88,000.00

FY25 Herbicide Vouchers- The committee approved the FY25 herbicide voucher budget for \$35,000.00

### Remaining Committee Business

#### Herd Management Plans

E2 Population Objective: status quo, 15,000-18,000

Sex Ratio: slight increase from 20-25 bulls to 15-25 bulls per 100 cows

E1 Population Objective: slight increase from 700-1,700 to 1,000-2,000

Sex Ratio: status quo, 40 bulls per 100 cows

E47 Population Objective: status quo, 1,000-2,000

Sex Ratio: status quo, 40 bulls per 100 cows

Conservation Easement Guidelines- The committee would like to limit the amount HPP contributes to conservation easements. They set a cap of \$5,000.00 moving forward.

2023/2024 Distribution Management Hunt Update- The committee asked for 200 hunts and 32 were used. The committee discuss this being a good tool and would like to ask for 200 in the future just in case.

#### Retirement

-Evan Jones will be done June 30<sup>th</sup> with Seth Schwolert taking over.

-Gary Nichols, sportsman, will be retiring July 31<sup>st</sup>. The vacancy will be posted May 1, with interviews taking place at the next meeting.

Upcoming Meeting- The next meeting was scheduled for June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00pm.