



## HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Sangre de Cristo HPP Committee Meeting

August 14, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

Lathrop State Park

### Committee Members Present:

- Cody Purcell - CPW
- John Stroh - Livestock Grower
- Kenn Lutz - Livestock Grower
- Warren McDonald - Livestock Grower
- Paul Coe - Sportsperson
- Glenda Torres - BLM
- Jeff Outhier - USFS

### Administrative Assistant Present:

Kimberly Berscheid

### Attendees Present:

Michael Blanck - CPW  
Mike Brown - CPW  
Patty Knupp - NRCS  
Zoe Moffat - Bird Conservancy  
Destiny Chapman - USFS  
Dylan Thomsen - CPW  
Spencer Gerck - CPW  
John Barkowski - CPW  
Allen Vitt - CPW  
Zach Holder - CPW

### Introductions

Committee members and guests were introduced.

### Budget Report

The remaining budget at the start of the meeting was \$70,000.

### Old Business

The meeting minutes from February 21, 2024, and June 14, 2024, were approved as written.

### New Business

#### Term Limit Policy Discussion-

Michael Blanck presented the Term Limit Policy and explained how the process would work. John Stroh's position is up for renewal. John announced that he is ready to retire after serving 33 years as the Livestock Grower Representative. The vacancy will be announced, and interviews will be conducted at the next committee meeting.

### Project Applications:

#### Bear Gulch STL Well Project-

Tom Laca asked the committee for \$20,000 for a well project on the Bear Gulch STL. The parcel has minimal seasonal water sources, causing livestock to concentrate in a nearby riparian area. A reliable water source will improve livestock distribution on the landscape, increase grazing rotation capabilities, and reduce game damage on neighboring private

lands by holding big game on the public parcel. The State Land Board will contribute \$20,000 to the project.

**The project was approved for \$20,000 for a water development on the Bear Gulch STL.**

#### Manzanares Creek STL Habitat Improvement Project-

John Barkowski presented a Mastication project on the Manzanares Creek STL in Huerfano County. The project is the first phase of a large scale habitat improvement project in the area. The STL provides habitat for elk, deer, bear, and small game throughout the year. The project will thin and remove overstocked pinion pine and juniper to increase forage capacity for big game. The project will reduce big game conflicts on neighboring hay fields by holding big game on the property for extended periods. CPW will contribute \$25,000, and the Trinchera Blanca Foundation contribution is \$100,000 (pending award approval). \*If the Trinchera Blanca Foundation grant is not awarded, the project will proceed on a smaller scale.

**The project was approved for \$25,000 from the Sangre de Cristo HPP Committee and \$50,000 from the HPP Manager's discretionary funds. The total funding award for mechanical treatment on the Manzanares Creek STL is \$75,000.**

#### FY25 Voucher Program-

##### **Fence Vouchers:**

This program is funded annually and provides landowners with reimbursements for fencing materials to repair fences damaged by big game. DWMs or committee members can sign and distribute vouchers to eligible landowners. Landowners must be engaged in agricultural production or livestock operations within the SDCHPP boundaries, and they must allow some hunting access (cannot charge more than \$500 per gun for access, vouchers, or services). Landowners are allowed one voucher per year with a maximum of \$800 per voucher. Vouchers can only be used once; unused funds are forfeited, and only eligible materials will be reimbursed as listed on the voucher.

**The committee approved to continue the fence voucher program with a limit of \$800 per landowner. The total project amount is \$10,000 for Fiscal Year 2025.**

#### FY25 Stockpile Materials Order-

**The committee approved allocating \$15,000 to purchase tire tanks, escape ramps, and high-visibility wire for the stockpile.**

#### FY25 Committee Operating Expenses-

**The committee approved \$500 for operating expenses, including committee retirement recognition awards for FY25.**

#### FY25 Meeting Meals-

**The committee approved \$500 for working meeting meals for FY25.**

### Remaining Committee Business

#### Meeting Schedule-

The next committee meeting is on December 4, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., at the Pueblo Hunter Education Building.

## Roundtable

- John Stroh welcomed the opportunity to retire from the committee. His last year has been challenging, and he wants to reduce his commitments.
- Michael Blanck thanked the committee for accepting the Term Limit Policy.
- Patty Knupp discussed that NRCS is finishing allocating Farmer Dollars for the 2024 EQUIP.
- Zoe Moffat thanked the committee for supporting the Manzanares STL project.
- Destiny Chapman discussed the District vacancies and how they limit what they can accomplish.
- Dylan Thomsen thanked the committee for supporting the Manzanares STL project and mentioned he may have a future project for the committee.
- Mike Brown discussed the influx of solar projects in the area and the complete loss of habitat associated with them.
- Glenda Torres informed the committee that Tom Grette has retired from HPP.
- Allen Vitt discussed the Bighorn Sheep die-off on the Culebra and the ongoing work on the East Slope Mountain Lion Plan.

## Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:15 p.m.