

C O L O R A D O P A R K S & W I L D L I F E

Habitat Partnership Program



2023 Annual Report



Photo provided by Rachael Gonzales / CPW



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources
Northwest Regional Office
Habitat Partnership Program
711 Independent Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81505

TO: Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission; Dan Gibbs, Executive Director, Colorado Department of Natural Resources; Members Agriculture Livestock, Natural Resources Committee, Colorado House of Representatives Members; Agriculture Natural Resources, and Energy Committee, Colorado State Senate

FROM: State Council, Habitat Partnership Program
Jeff Davis, Director, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

DATE: October 31, 2023

RE: Habitat Partnership Program Annual Report – FY 2023

Attached is the FY 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) report for the Habitat Partnership Program (HPP). In FY2023, HPP revenue was \$ 3,216,767, of which \$3,098,065 was derived from 5% of big game (deer, elk, pronghorn, and moose) license revenues used within HPP committee boundaries, as provided for in 33-1-112 (8) (e) (1) CRS. The difference in these figures represents the interest earned.

The program is comprised of 19 local committees and the State Council, encompassing nearly 150 volunteers representing agricultural producers, sportspersons, federal land management agencies, and CPW staff. Operating under CPW Commission-approved distribution management plans, the program expended \$4,435,072 and leveraged cash contributions of \$3,638,133, in-kind services valued at \$9,631,565, and 46,960 hours of labor from our partners in efforts to reduce conflicts and meet game management objectives. With matching funds from project applicants, HPP contributed to the following efforts statewide:

- Strengthening CPW's relationships with the Agricultural Community
- Habitat Improvements: seeding, water development, weed control, mechanical habitat treatments
- Fence Improvements/repair – wildlife-friendly construction, including virtual fencing
- Game Damage – deer, elk, moose, and pronghorn conflict reduction
- Conservation Easements - transaction costs
- Research and Monitoring
- Enhancement of Migratory Corridors
- Assistance with Conservation Efforts on Private Land
- Information and Education



Challenges:

HPP committees are finding ways to use their budgets as efficiently as possible. The increasing cost of materials and contractors is often a limiting factor. Committee representatives are spending more time making difficult decisions as they prioritize the best use of their funds for accomplishing the goals of HPP.

HPP remains committed to strengthening CPW's crucial working relationship with the agricultural community. Private land habitat is vital to Colorado's wildlife species, and HPP strives to maintain and build the tolerance of wildlife in agricultural operations.

Please reference the pages below for the Habitat Partnership Program's FY 2023 accomplishments, further details about the program organization, and the updated statute. For more program information, please visit the HPP website: <http://cpw.state.co.us/HPP>. If you have any further questions or require additional information, please contact the HPP Manager, Michael Blanck, at (970) 260-9855 or michael.blanck@state.co.us.

Habitat Partnership Program State Council Members 2023:

Ty Bevan – Livestock Grower Representative, Molina

Casey Cooley – Colorado Parks and Wildlife Representative

Greg Jungman – Sportsperson Representative, Dillon

Sheila Lamb - US Forest Service Representative, Pike/San Isabel National Forest, Fairplay

Robbie LeValley – CO State University Range Extension Service Representative, Delta

Riley May – Agricultural Crop Producer Representative, Lamar

Todd Peterson – Sportsperson Representative, Walden

Hunter Seim – US BLM Representative, Little Snake Field Office, Craig

Gary Visintainer – Livestock Producer Representative, Craig

Habitat Partnership Program



2022 PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

Northwest Colorado Winter Operations

The Habitat Partnership Program (HPP) was proud to contribute to reducing wildlife conflicts throughout the harsh winter conditions in the Northwest corner of the state. Early in the winter of 2023, it became apparent that conditions in Moffat, Rio Blanco, and Routt Counties would significantly impact wildlife and agricultural operators. Through collaboration with Financial and Capital Services Branch members, HPP made significant funding available while adhering to fiscal guidelines.



HPP helped fund a Parks and Wildlife Commission-approved baiting operation, provided 1,350-tons of replacement hay, and used heavy equipment to clear snow from baiting locations and hay stacks. This helped CPW staff build upon their positive working relationship with the agricultural community; impacting 99 producers and 4,820 elk. Ultimately HPP contributed \$395,462 to reduce conflicts in this effort.



Please use the QR Code to view a video of the operation.



Photos provided by Rachael Gonzales / CPW

Habitat Partnership Program



Statute 33-1-110, 112

HB22 1072 HPP Reauthorization - Colorado Statute: 33-1-110

(6.7) The director shall certify to the state controller that commitment or payment vouchers submitted by local habitat partnership committees are consistent with distribution management plans and guidelines approved by the commission. Such certification is the only requirement necessary to authorize the state controller to disburse funds from the Habitat Partnership cash fund.

(7)(a) The director shall appoint a council of nine persons to act as the “habitat partnership council,” referred to in this section as the “council.” The council shall have statewide responsibility and authority.

(b)(I) The council shall consist of the following members: Two sports persons who purchase big game licenses on a regular basis in Colorado; two persons representing livestock growers in Colorado; one person from the United States Department of agriculture forest service; one person from the United States department of the interior bureau of land management; one person from the Colorado state university range extension program; one person representing agricultural crop producers; and one person from the Colorado division of parks and wildlife. All persons on the council shall be residents of the state of Colorado.

(II) Members of the council who will represent livestock growers and agricultural crop producers shall be chosen by the director from persons nominated by the local habitat partnership committees, pursuant to subparagraph (VI) of paragraph (d) of subsection (8) of this section.

(III) For the initial appointments to the council, the terms of the four members representing sports persons and livestock growers shall be two years for one member of each group and four years for the other member of each group, after which all appointments shall be for four years. The term lengths for the members representing the various agencies shall be at the discretion of the respective agencies. There shall be no limit on the number of terms a member may serve.

(c)The duties of the council are:

- (I) To advise local habitat partnership committees;
- (II) To assist in the dissemination of information concerning the habitat partnership program;
- (III) To review draft plans for compliance with program guidelines established by the commission and to recommend appropriate action by the commission;
- (IV) To monitor program effectiveness and to propose to the commission changes in guidelines and land acquisition planning and review as appropriate;



- (V) To advise the director whether or not payment vouchers submitted by local habitat partnership committees are consistent with distribution management plans approved by the commission;
- (VI) To report to the commission and to the senate agriculture, natural resources, and energy committee and the house of representatives agriculture, livestock, and natural resources committee pursuant to section 33-1-112 (8).
- (VII) To allocate an annual budget to each local habitat partnership committee and submit each committee's budget for the director's final approval; and
- (VIII) To expend money as necessary in areas that are not covered by a local habitat partnership committee formed pursuant to subsection (8)(b) of this section to reduce wildlife and land management conflicts as the conflicts relate to big game ungulate species forage and fence issues, assist with private land conservation efforts, enhance wildlife migration corridors, and implement other management objectives

(d) (Deleted by amendment, L. 96, p. 1727, § 1, effective June 3, 1996.)

(8)(a) The habitat partnership program is hereby created to assist the division in its duties as deemed appropriate by the director;

- (I) By working with private land managers, public land management agencies, sportspeople, and other interested parties to reduce wildlife conflicts, particularly those associated with forage and fence issues related to big game ungulate species;
- (II) By assisting the division in meeting game management objectives;
- (III) By assisting with private land conservation efforts; and
- (IV) In enhancing wildlife migration corridors.

(b) The director may appoint a "habitat partnership committee", referred to in this subsection (8) as a "committee," in any area of the state where conflicts between wildlife and private land owners and managers engaged in the management of public and private land exist, as the conflicts relate to big game ungulate species forage and fence issues.

(c) A committee shall consist of the following members: One sports person who purchases big game licenses on a regular basis in Colorado; three persons representing livestock growers in the area of the state in which the committee is being established; one person from each of the federal agencies that has land management responsibilities in such area of the state; and one person from the Colorado division of parks and wildlife. All persons on any such committee shall be residents of the state of Colorado.

(c.5) Commencing on August 10, 2022, committee members serve for set terms as determined by the director. In setting committee members' terms the director must provide for the staggering of committee members' terms and may allow committee members to serve an unlimited number of terms.



(d) The duties of a committee are the following:

- (I) To develop big game distribution management plans to resolve rangeland forage, growing hay crop, harvested crop aftermath grazing, and fence conflicts subject to commission approval;
- (II) To monitor program effectiveness and to propose to the council changes in guidelines and land acquisition planning and review as appropriate;
- (III) To request for the committee, on an annual basis, funds from the council consistent with the distribution management plan developed by any such committee;
- (IV) To expend funds allocated by the council or acquired from other sources as necessary to implement distribution management plans;
- (V) To make an annual report of expenditures and accomplishments of the committee to the council by August 15 of each year;
- (VI) To nominate a person to act as a representative of agricultural livestock growers or crop producers to the habitat partnership council for the area of the state where such committee is organized;
- (VII) To reduce wildlife and land management conflicts as the conflicts relate to big game ungulate species forage and fence issues, assist with private land conservation efforts, enhance wildlife migration corridors, and achieve other management objectives.

(e)(I) A committee may procure from land owners, land managers, or other providers materials or services as are necessary for carrying out activities identified in the distribution management plans pursuant to subsection (8)(d)(IV) of this section; except that a committee shall certify that a procurement is within the scope of the activities and funding levels authorized in a distribution management plan before procuring the materials or services.

(II) For purposes of purchasing, accounting, and all procurement-related issues, the council and each committee is a separate, distinct, and independent organizational unit.

33-1-112

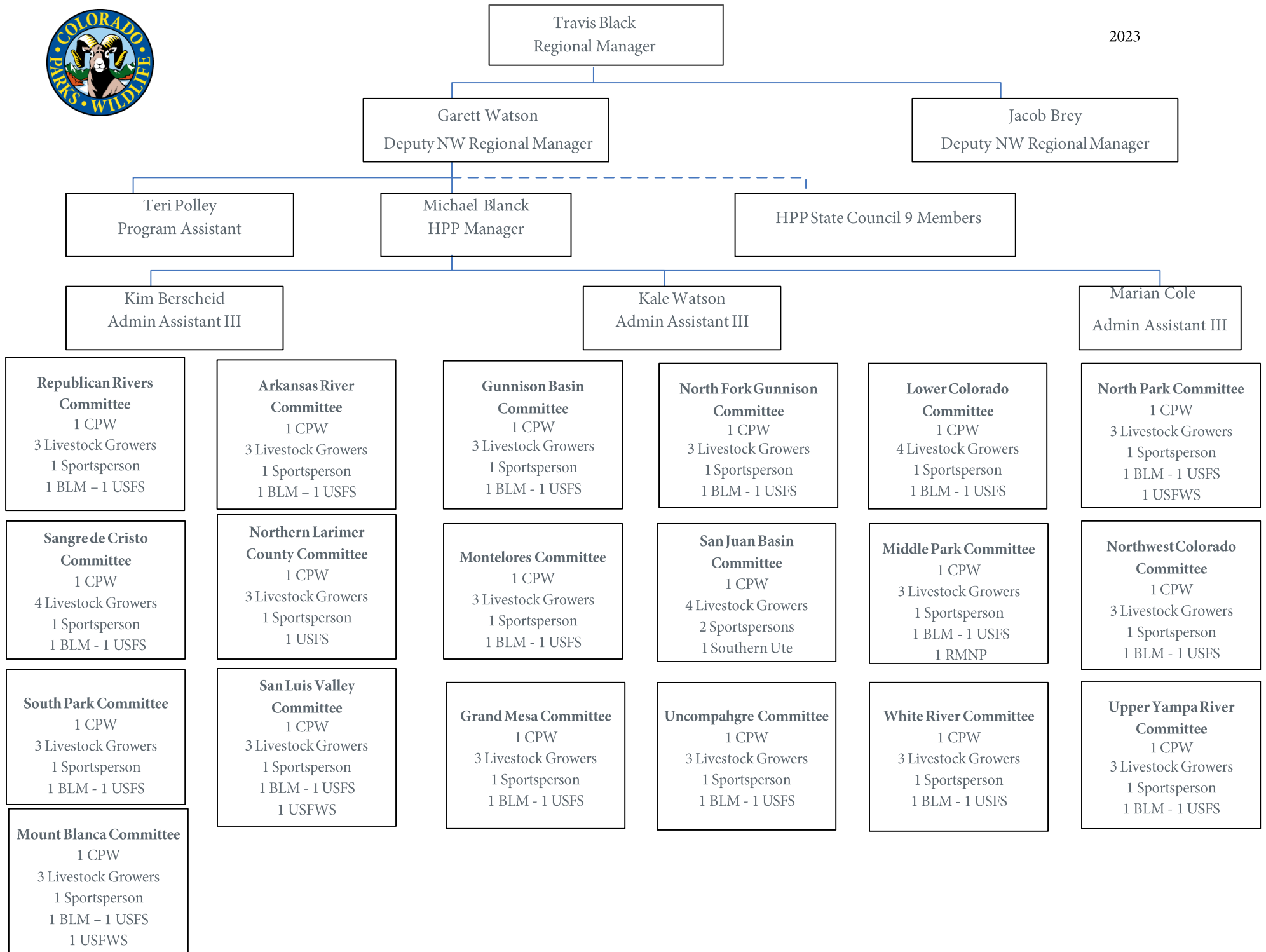
(8)(a) There is hereby created in the state treasury the habitat partnership cash fund. The moneys in the habitat partnership cash fund shall consist of those moneys annually transferred from the wildlife cash fund in accordance with paragraph (e) of this subsection (8) for the partnership program and any gifts, grants, donations, and reimbursements made to the program from other sources. The moneys in the fund shall be used in accordance with the duties of the habitat partnership council as specified in section 33-1-110 (7) and (8), including, but not limited to, reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by council members in the fulfillment of their duties, as approved by the director. All interest derived from the investment of moneys in the habitat partnership cash fund shall be credited to the fund. Any balance remaining in the fund at the end of any fiscal year shall remain in the fund subject to the limitations provided in paragraph (e) of this subsection (8).



- (b) Notwithstanding section 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I), the council shall submit an annual report to the commission, the senate and house agriculture committees, and the executive director of the department of natural resources specifically stating the items for which it has expended money from the fund and the purpose of such items.
- (c) If the council ceases to exist, all moneys in the habitat partnership cash fund shall revert to the wildlife cash fund.
- (d) (Deleted by amendment, L. 96, p. 1729, § 2, effective June 3, 1996.)
- (e) (I) On July 1, 2002, and each year thereafter, there shall be transferred from the wildlife cash fund to the habitat partnership cash fund an amount equal to five percent of the net sales of big game licenses used in the geographic areas represented by local habitat partnership committees from the previous calendar year.
- (II) All moneys in the Habitat Partnership cash fund shall be continuously appropriated to the division of parks and wildlife for the purpose of funding the habitat partnership program.
- (III) The balance of unexpended and unencumbered money in the habitat partnership cash fund at the end of each state fiscal year must not exceed the total amount of the wildlife cash fund transfer from the beginning of that state fiscal year. Any amount of unexpended and unencumbered money in the habitat partnership cash fund at the end of a state fiscal year that exceeds the amount transferred to the fund at the beginning of that state fiscal year reverts to the wildlife cash fund.
- (IV) This paragraph (e) is repealed, effective July 1, 2023.



2023





Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Habitat Partnership Program Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2023 Summary of Committee Finances

Committee	HPP Cost	Match Amt	In-Kind Amt	Total Expenses	Private Cost	Public Cost	In-Kind Hrs
Arkansas River	\$99,142.05	\$96,153.00	\$48,412.65	\$243,707.70	\$31,675.33	\$64,812.09	1638
Grand Mesa	\$99,072.81	\$39,182.59	\$21,000.00	\$159,255.40	\$88,497.23	\$10,000.00	2144
Gunnison Basin	\$142,220.06	\$288,359.27	\$35,692.00	\$466,271.33	\$16,020.31	\$126,083.54	337
Lower Colorado River	\$294,943.31	\$194,272.00	\$172,628.68	\$661,843.99	\$9,989.58	\$284,597.03	270
Middle Park	\$110,833.90	\$47,790.90	\$6,570.97	\$165,195.77	\$105,317.67	\$5,035.00	1356
Montelores	\$42,745.87	\$9,604.44	\$3,300.46	\$55,650.77	\$42,608.63	\$0.00	89
Mount Blanca	\$123,001.51	\$114,280.00	\$134,217.96	\$371,499.47	\$96,935.45	\$5,780.50	1380
North Fork Gunnison	\$221,208.07	\$478,580.58	\$208,807.07	\$908,595.72	\$59,703.35	\$161,330.55	12737
North Park	\$35,789.60	\$9,817.50	\$0.00	\$45,607.10	\$35,495.60	\$0.00	108
Northern Larimer County	\$50,541.66	\$70,903.03	\$53,800.00	\$175,244.69	\$32,328.97	\$17,952.00	263
Northwest Colorado	\$273,317.26	\$915,178.71	\$992,100.00	\$2,180,595.97	\$232,456.37	\$0.00	684
Republican Rivers	\$80,129.92	\$45,761.00	\$32,476.10	\$158,367.02	\$41,826.21	\$38,025.28	594
San Juan Basin	\$131,456.69	\$30,652.75	\$68,811.46	\$230,920.90	\$80,860.62	\$45,510.00	639
San Luis Valley	\$103,472.67	\$295,336.00	\$51,789.40	\$450,598.07	\$18,107.30	\$82,643.40	444
Sangre de Cristo	\$95,684.92	\$252,908.00	\$5,101,600.00	\$5,450,192.92	\$16,704.38	\$58,104.00	21120
South Park	\$22,089.76	\$86,016.70	\$15,030.78	\$123,137.24	\$15,008.90	\$6,901.86	263
State Council	\$1,937,880.00	\$35,875.00	\$19,769.40	\$1,993,524.40	\$450,951.36	\$318,554.33	990
Uncompahgre	\$96,066.97	\$44,779.73	\$61,725.00	\$202,571.70	\$53,273.94	\$42,177.78	937
Upper Yampa River	\$102,747.58	\$145,800.05	\$8,750.00	\$257,297.63	\$53,526.51	\$48,825.93	365
White River	\$383,382.41	\$436,882.07	\$2,595,083.00	\$3,415,347.48	\$209,409.50	\$113,600.00	602
HPP Program Totals:	\$4,445,727.02	\$3,638,133.32	\$9,631,564.93	\$17,715,425.27	\$1,690,697.21	\$1,429,933.29	46960

FY23, \$2909.95 of materials were charged to the Arkansas River committee, returned, and credited to the San Luis Valley committee. \$3640.42 Game damage materials for a Sangre de Cristo project were charged to the Mount Blanca committee. Additionally, the difference between this report and CORE is \$5,248.56 due to a double valid accrual request that will be credited in FY24. Aside from these five data entry errors, all HPP cost totals agree with CORE totals.

ADM costs include \$499,153.33 Statutory transfer from F4230 to F4100 for FY23 reversion to wildlife cash fund 33-1-112 (8) (III) and \$474,544.54 CPW personal services.



CPW Habitat Partnership Program Accomplishments

HPP and Cooperators, Fiscal Year 2023

Units	Description	Accomplishments
Acres Burned	Habitat Improved	2400
Acres Fertilized	Habitat Improved	12352
Acres Irrigated	Habitat Improved	300
Acres Mech. or Hand-Treated	Habitat Improved	1313
Acres of Weed Control	Habitat Improved	14865
Acres Seeded / Planted	Habitat Improved	2237
Baiting	Projects	6
Cattleguards, Gates, etc	Constructed	1
Fertilizer Vouchers	Projects	6
Hunt Coords	Hired	2
Miles of Fence Removed	Projects	5
Miles of New Fence	Built	45
Plans	Written	4
Pounds	Seed Purchased	505
Proj-repair,vouchers,etc	Minor Fence Repair	281
Seeding/Planting	Projects	25
Stackyard Repair	Projects	2
Stackyards	Materials Provided	3
Tons	Forage Purchased	1062
Vinyl Rolls	Provided	302
Virtual Fence Base Stations	Projects	6
Water Dev	Built and/or Maintained	209
Weed	Projects	122



CPW Habitat Partnership Program

Program Accomplishments, HPP and Cooperators, Fiscal Year 2023

Type	#Projects	Detail
Information/Education	6	
Monitoring/Research	8	
Other	5	Conservation Easements - 4754.59 Acres Conserved

‘Acres of Weed Control’ is used when a treatment has been applied to a specific area and the acreage can be accurately determined.

‘Weed control projects’ is used when a treatment has been applied over a large area and the acreage cannot be accurately determined and if used, would inflate the actual number of acres treated. Costs vary greatly depending on scope of the project.

‘Water Dev’ denotes many types of water projects, such as the cleanout of an existing pond, well drilling, solar pump installations, new pond creation, spring development, pipeline installation, holding tanks and tire tanks. Costs vary greatly depending on the scope of the project.

Note:

Project accomplishments are shown as whole units but may have been rounded from actual project numbers.



Colorado Parks and Wildlife
Habitat Partnership Program

HPP Program Costs and Hours by GBL, Fiscal Year 2023

GBL	Description	Total Cost	HPP Cost	Match \$	In-Kind \$	In-Kind Hrs
ADM	Administrative	\$1,032,986.40	\$1,032,986.40	\$0.00	\$0.00	1160
FEN	Fencing	\$1,273,875.91	\$709,865.32	\$360,886.50	\$203,124.09	27683
GDM	Game Damage	\$528,249.98	\$518,051.51	\$9,817.50	\$380.97	1063
INF	Information/Education	\$34,360.38	\$34,360.38	\$0.00	\$0.00	0
MAN	Habitat Manipulation	\$5,010,401.55	\$1,889,248.36	\$2,362,198.32	\$758,954.87	16742
MTC	Maintenance	\$6,499.20	\$6,249.20	\$0.00	\$250.00	12
OTH	Other	\$9,638,568.00	\$90,000.00	\$899,713.00	\$8,648,855.00	0
RES	Monitoring & Research	\$190,483.85	\$164,965.85	\$5,518.00	\$20,000.00	300
Totals:		\$17,715,425.27	\$4,445,727.02	\$3,638,133.32	\$9,631,564.93	46960



Colorado Parks and Wildlife Habitat Partnership Program

Project Cooperators, Fiscal Year 2023

HPP Program Totals

Cooperator Name	HPP Cost	Match Amt	In-Kind Amt	In-Kind Hrs
		\$0.00	\$0.00	0
BLM		\$473,069.58	\$125,335.80	12222
BLM Grazing Adv Board		\$10,000.00	\$0.00	0
College/Univ		\$0.00	\$8,750.00	0
County Gov't		\$126,302.22	\$15,000.00	40
CPW		\$243,507.82	\$175,761.90	968
CSFS		\$0.00	\$0.00	0
HPP Committee Members		\$0.00	\$20.00	1180
HPP State Council		\$15,000.00	\$0.00	0
Indian Tribe		\$5,518.00	\$0.00	0
Local Govt		\$0.00	\$5,625.00	25
Local Land Trust		\$0.00	\$0.00	100
Local Soil Cons. Dist		\$19,500.00	\$6,000.00	85
Local Weed Control Dist		\$2,000.00	\$7,200.00	66
MDF		\$0.00	\$0.00	0
NPS		\$0.00	\$0.00	300
NRCS		\$753,283.00	\$15,000.00	20
Other Wildlife Group		\$78,157.27	\$9,612.80	756
Private Business/Org		\$155,060.00	\$115,288.65	1140
Private Landowner/Permittee		\$1,092,907.00	\$8,896,472.13	27888
Private Local Assoc.		\$50,000.00	\$0.00	0
RMEF		\$150,400.00	\$0.00	0
SLB		\$28,000.00	\$0.00	0
State Gov't		\$35,000.00	\$0.00	0
TNC		\$25,000.00	\$0.00	0
USFS		\$375,428.43	\$251,498.65	2170
Totals	\$4,445,727.02	\$3,638,133.32	\$9,631,564.93	46960