



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Northwest Colorado HPP Committee

Craig Chamber of Commerce - 775 Yampa Ave Craig, CO

August 16, 2021

5:00 pm

Northwest Colorado HPP Members Present: Evan Jones- CPW, Sean Durham- Livestock Grower, Chad Green- Livestock Grower, Gary Visintainer- Livestock Grower, Toni Toelle- BLM, Curtis Keetch- USFS

Guests: Michael Blanck- CPW, Katie Richman- CPW, Jeff Goncalves- CPW, Johnathan Lambert- CPW, Giles Poulson, Kenny Kawcak, Stan Sjostrum, Ian Duzik, Colton Murray, Darrell Camilletti

Introductions: Committee members, new staff, and guests were introduced.

Budget Report: The budget at the start of the meeting was \$211,000.

Old Business: The minutes from the April 13th and May 4th meetings were approved as written.

New Business:

1. Duzik Water Development- Ian Duzik presented a water development project that would implement 3 new wells in an area of the county that has very little water availability. The additional water sources in this area would greatly benefit wildlife in water accessibility but also aid in the prevention of unnecessary highway crossing to access the limited water sources currently available. The committee acknowledged it would be a great area to fund water developments but noted the high cost associated with the project. The committee approved the water development project for up to 50% of total cost up to \$65,757.00 contingent upon successfully drilling producing wells.
2. Spring Gulch Ranch Water Development- The committee reviewed a water development project for the Spring Gulch Ranch that would pipe water from an existing storage tank to 12 new water sources on the ranch. The project would pipe water out of the valley bottoms and provide for water on ridges that previously have lacked water sources. This will eliminate the increased competition for water and forage near the existing water sources and allow for better wildlife and livestock distribution on the landscape. The project was approved for up to \$23,930.50.
3. Poulson Water Development- Giles Poulson presented a water development project for the addition of a storage tank and 2 new tire tanks on the Lay Creek Ranch. The ranch is located within a heavily used migration corridor and critical winter range for significant populations of deer and elk and used year-round by resident deer and pronghorn. This project would aid in better distribution across the landscape that has been largely underutilized and also provide for increased water availability to the agricultural fields on the property. In addition to the better utilization and distribution of livestock and wildlife, the additional water sources in their respective locations also

have the potential to draw wildlife further away from Highway 40. The committee shared concerns about funding this project based on recent habitat work that had been completed on the ranch that removed a significant amount of brush. After further discussion, the project was approved for up to \$14,355.00.

4. Warneke Seeding- The committee reviewed a seeding project for a 100-acre field in which overgrazing has occurred, weeds have taken root, and produces inadequate forage production. The field serves as deer and elk habitat that experiences year-round use. The project would treat the field with herbicide, prep for seed, and then be seeded with a diverse grass and forage mix that is ideal for both livestock and wildlife. The seeded area would allow for better utilization and distribution of both livestock and wildlife. The project was approved for up to \$4,000.00.
5. Kawcak Water Development- Kenny Kawcak presented a water development project that would consist of cleaning out 3 existing ponds, the development of 2 small ponds at spring seeps, and the development of 1 spring. These water developments will allow for more rotational livestock grazing and the dispersal of big game species across the property. The addition of these water sources will address the existing pressure where water access currently exists as well as provide for better grazing practices and big game movement. The project was approved for up to \$7,393.26.
6. Camilletti Water Development- Darrell Camilletti presented a water development project that would pump water from the deep cut ditch to 4 water tanks. The project would require multiple pump stations due to the elevation changes. The system would allow different tanks to be running at different times to aid in the distribution of wildlife and livestock across the property. The committee expressed concerns about the water rights for stock use on ditch and asked if alternative water sources existed. Without an alternative source, the project was approved for up to \$24,065 contingent upon proper approvals received for ditch use.
7. Colorado First Conservation District Seed- Colton Murray presented a project on behalf of the Colorado First Conservation District to purchase a diverse seed mix that would reseed pastures or expiring CRP lands. The addition of better forage should assist in the dispersal of big game herds to greater areas where quality forage wasn't previously available. The seed would be provided to landowners on a first come first serve basis for approximately 400 acres with eligibility requirements consisting of land located inside of the Committee boundary, hunting allowed on property, permitted access to Colorado First Conservation District for follow up work, and a preference for fall drilling. CPW will provide a no-till seed drill for landowners to complete the seeding project. The project was approved for up to \$22,000.00.

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion:

1. FY22 Voucher Programs
 - a. Herbicide Vouchers- The committee approved \$10,000.00 for FY22 vouchers.
 - b. Fence Vouchers- The committee approved \$40,000.00 for FY22 vouchers. Conflict forms would no longer be required.
*Administrative note- The committee had encumbered all available budget funds. The additional \$500.76 needed for this voucher program was approved by Michael Blanck, HPP Manager.
 - c. Pond Vouchers- The committee discussed the need for water projects and developments, especially during such a dry year. The committee approved the implementation of Pond Cleanout Vouchers for a total of \$10,000.00 for FY22 with the following requirements:
 - a. \$1,000 per voucher for a minimum of 2 ponds cleaned
 - b. Up to 5 vouchers per landowner each fiscal year

- c. For use on allotments only unless DWM pre-approves ponds on private land
 - d. Ponds must receive significant wildlife use
 - e. Before-and-after photos and GPS locations required before payment
- *Administrative note- The committee encumbered all available budget funds. The \$10,000.00 needed for this voucher program was approved by Michael Blanck, HPP Manager.

2. White Wire Inventory- The committee discussed the purchase of 25 rolls of white vinyl wire for committee inventory. The committee was made aware of the potential for State Council to purchase and provide wire for all local committees at the upcoming meeting. The committee decided to table the idea of the wire purchase for inventory and await State Council's decision.
3. Distribution Management Hunts- The committee discussed doubling the amount of hunts and amending the start date to September 1st.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:50 pm.