



## HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

### North Fork HPP Committee

Phone Conference Call  
July 29th, 2021  
7:30 p.m.

**North Fork HPP Members Present:** Cody Purcell, CPW; Ken Holsinger, BLM; Steve Kossler, Livestock Grower; Ross Allen, Livestock Grower; Adam Gall, Sportsperson

**Guests:** Valerie Horncastle, USFS

**Introduction:** Committee members were introduced and the budget was reviewed. The budget at the start of the meeting was \$115,500.00.

#### **New Business:**

1. Ken Holsinger presented a thinning project for McCluskey SWA. The project area receives significant use by big game and is primarily dominated by pinion juniper, which has become overgrown and crowded out understory vegetation. Forage quantity and quality has been severely decreased, causing deer and elk to utilize nearby private agricultural operations for grazing and resulting in damage to fences and forage. Lack of forage also negatively impacts big game distribution throughout the area. The proposal consists of treating 69 acres by hand to thin the PJ in a mosaic pattern. Mature trees will be left to provide cover, and the canopy will be reduced allowing the understory forage and grasses to reestablish. The work could be completed prior to first rifle season. Increasing forage quality and availability will help hold big game on public lands for longer periods of time, which should decrease big game damage to nearby private lands. Future work of the same nature is planned for adjacent BLM lands. The committee discussed cooperator matches, which were not confirmed by the time of the application. The project was approved for \$15,343.00 for contractor costs.

**Admin note:** Area 16 provided \$4,000 in matching funds and the private landowner will provide an additional \$1,000. HPP's cost was reduced to \$10,343.00.

2. The committee reviewed an annual seeding proposal from Lazy H Ranch. The project area is located in winter range for elk and experiences year-round use by deer; and includes irrigated hay fields with adjacent areas of thick oak brush and pinyon juniper. There is very little forage available outside of the fields, and so deer and elk utilize the fields for forage which severely reduces the amount of hay produced for livestock. 95+ acres of the project area has been masticated to reduce the oak brush and PJ communities and open the canopy. The project consists of seeding the treated area to

improve reestablishment of native forage species, and prevent noxious weed reemergence. Increasing the amount of forage available throughout the property should improve big game distribution and reduce big game pressure on the hayfields. The project was approved for \$5,000.00 for seed purchase.

**Next Meeting: TBD**