



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Lower Colorado River HPP Committee

Luark Ranch- Burns, CO

July 11, 2022

10:00 am

Lower Colorado HPP Members Present: Darren Chacon- CPW, Scot Dodero- Livestock Grower, Pat Luark- Livestock Grower, Jim Nieslanik- Livestock Grower, Rick Bumgardner- Sportsperson, Phil Nyland- USFS

Guests: Michael Blanck- CPW, Kristy Wallner- BLM, Samantha Dinar- USFS, Mike Luark

Introductions: Committee members and guests were introduced.

General Public Comments:

Budget Report: The budget at the start of the meeting was \$230,000.00.

Old Business: The minutes from the May 10th meeting were approved as written.

New Business:

1. Fales Weed Control- The committee reviewed a weed control project to target primarily thistle and spotted knapweed. The project would allow for better wildlife and livestock forage availability and reduce noxious weeds in the area. The project was approved for up to \$750.00.
2. Horse Creek Irrigation- Mike Luark presented an annual project for irrigation of approximately 300 acres on BLM. The project area serves as great deer and elk habitat. The project has been supported almost annually since 2008. However, the project was not funded in FY22 but was still completed by the landowner. The committee was willing to pay the annual amount of \$5,000.00 for FY22 and approve the project for the next 3 fiscal years at \$7,000.00 per year. Pat abstained from the approval decision. The project was approved for \$12,000.00 for FY23, \$7,000.00 for FY24, and \$7,000.00 for FY25.
3. BLM Pond Lining Materials- Kristy Wallner presented a project to seal approximately 54 ponds on BLM allotments. The project will include the purchase of salt and bentonite to seal approximately 40 ponds that were cleaned by the Gerard Family that was funded in part by the committee last fiscal year. Additional materials will be utilized by other permittees to seal additional ponds. The addition of these water sources will aid in livestock and wildlife distribution across the landscape. The project was approved for up to \$6,864.00.

4. BLM Stifel Creek Mastication- Kristy Wallner presented a pinyon juniper mastication project on approximately 304 acres. The project area maintains dense pinyon-juniper trees and is located in big game severe winter range. The mastication would help to increase grass production, improve soil health, and provide better winter habitat for big game species. Additionally, the mastication has the potential to reduce wildlife and agricultural conflict on nearby ranches by holding more wildlife in the project area, on public land. The committee noted that the request was for more than a 50/50 match and would not be willing to fund more than 50% of the project. The committee broke down all project costs, including the 2 year grazing deferment from the BLM permittee, Pat Luark. The committee agreed to fund only 50% of total project costs and masticate the associated acreage able to be completed for that amount. Pat abstained from the approval decision. The project was approved for up to \$92,538.88.
5. CPW Basalt SWA Mastication- Darren Chacon presented an oak brush mastication project on the Toner Creek Unit of the Basalt State Wildlife Area (SWA). The Basalt SWA serves as deer and elk winter range and provides big game hunting access. The project would masticate approximately 78 acres and would tie into other projects completed in the area on adjacent properties. The project would open up the landscape to allow for better forage and habitat for wildlife in the area. Darren abstained from the approval decision. The project was approved for up to \$17,600.00

Remaining Committee Business/Other Discussion:

1. HPP Updates- Michael Blanck provided updates regarding the passage of House Bill 22-1072.
2. FY23 Voucher Programs-
 - a. Fence Vouchers- Approved for up to \$15,000 with the following tiers:
 - >160 acres \$ 200.00
 - 161-600 acres \$ 300.00
 - 601-1000 acres \$ 400.00
 - 1001+ acres \$ 600.00
 - b. Herbicide Vouchers- Approved for up to \$10,000.00 with the following tiers:
 - >160 acres \$ 200.00
 - 161-600 acres \$ 300.00
 - 601-1000 acres \$ 400.00
 - 1001+ acres \$ 600.00
 - c. Pond Vouchers- Approved for up to \$10,000.00 with the following update:
 - Ponds can be located on public or private land.
3. Upcoming Meeting- The committee tentatively scheduled the following meeting date and associated location:
August 17, 2022 - Glenwood Springs

Tour: Following the meeting, the committee toured previously completed projects on the Luark Ranch.

Adjournment: The meeting and tour were adjourned at approximately 2:00 pm.