



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

Arkansas River HPP Committee Meeting
May 1, 2023 at 10:00 am
Canon City, CO

Committee Members Present:

- Sean Shepherd - CPW
- Aaron Atwood - Livestock Grower
- Brett McMurry - Livestock Grower
- Joe More - Livestock Grower
- Ron Goodrich - Sportsman
- Jeff Williams - BLM
- Kelsey Crane - USFS

Administrative Assistant Present:

Kimberly Berscheid

Attendees Present:

Paul Atwood - Landowner
Bryan Lamont - CPW
Dave McNitt - BLM
Jacob Reimer - CPW
Chrissy McFarren - Landowner
Vickie Russo - USFS
Abby Hutchinson - Landowner
Tom Grette - Project Manager
Kale Watson - CPW

Introductions

Committee members and guests were introduced.

Budget Report

The budget balance at the start of the meeting was \$17,524.

Old Business

The meeting minutes from November 15, 2022, were approved as written.

New Business

Badger Creek Ranch Vence Project-

Chrissy McFarren is asking the committee for \$10,000 to pay for a Vence Tower that will allow her to utilize virtual fencing capabilities. The tower can be stationary or mobile, depending on the recommendation from Vence. She will contribute labor to install, implement, and maintain the virtual fencing. Additionally, she has been awarded a grant for the rental cost of the livestock collars as an experimental project. The project will promote better livestock distribution, reduce the need for traditional fencing, reduce potential game damage claims, and enable the protection of critical riparian areas.

The project was approved for \$10,000 to purchase one VENCE base tower.

Cow Gulch/Herring Park Well-

Brett McMurry is asking the committee for \$6,200 for pipe and pump installation, plumbing materials, one tire tank from the committee stockpile, and concrete for a water development on his property in Park County. The water development will provide a better water source for livestock and wildlife in the area. Brett has secured funds from the Central CO Conservancy District, neighboring landowners, and the USFS. The development will encourage upland grazing and allow for the preservation of critical riparian areas. **The project was approved for up to \$6,200 for materials and one tire tank from the committee stockpile. Brett McMurry abstained from voting on the project.**

Upper Arkansas Elk Movement and Seasonal Use Study -

Bryan Lamont is asking the committee for \$10,000 for collars and airtime fees for an Elk movement study in upper Arkansas. The project aims to understand better production areas, migration, public vs. private land usage, and winter and summer ranges. The funding contributors include Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Chaffee County Common Grounds, BLM, USFS, and CPW Auction/Raffle. **The project was approved for up to \$10,000 to purchase elk collars and air time.**

Hutchinson Vence Tower Project-

Abby Hutchinson is asking the committee for \$12,500 for a Vence Tower to be placed on the Little Cochetopa Allotment, San Isabel Forest. **The committee did not approve the project due to insufficient funding contributors.**

Pike National Forest Invasive Species Bug Release-

Vickie Russo is asking the committee for \$1,000 to purchase ten releases (species-specific for the targeted plant; the number of Biocontrol agents varies) from the Palisade Insectary. The Insectary has specific species (considered Biocontrol) that will target the three noxious plants identified. Biocontrol can be very effective and will target musk thistle, yellow toadflax, and leafy spurge on USFS lands. It is estimated that the ten releases will treat 540 acres. Vickie will monitor the project and present data to the committee later in the year. **The project was approved for \$500 from FY23 and \$500 from FY24 to purchase ten releases of Biocontrol agents.**

Tom Grette Project Update-

Tom Grette discussed his work over the past year as a consultant for the committee. He is willing to do one more year of work with HPP and would like feedback on where to focus his efforts. **The committee approved the project for up to \$8,000 for FY24 to pay for labor, mileage, and materials for parcel layouts for new projects and flagging, pre-seeding hydro-axe parcels, supervising hydro-axe operators, and post-manipulation mapping on current habitat improvement projects throughout the Arkansas River HPP area.**

Fence Voucher Reimbursements-

This project has been done annually and provides landowners with reimbursements for fencing materials to repair damages from big game. DWMs can approve and hand out vouchers to eligible landowners. Eligible landowners must be engaged in agricultural production or livestock operations within the ARHPP boundaries, and they must allow some hunting access

(they cannot charge more than \$500 per gun for hunting access, vouchers, or services). Landowners are allowed one voucher per year, with a maximum of \$600 per voucher. Vouchers can only be used once, and any unused funds are forfeited. Only eligible materials will be reimbursed. **The committee agreed to continue the fence voucher program with a limit of \$600 per voucher. Landowners are allowed up to \$600 reimbursement for fence materials to fix damage caused by big game. The total project limit is \$9,000 for the Fiscal Year 2024.**

Materials Stockpile Order-

The committee has agreed to allocate up to \$5,000 to purchase materials for the stockpile, including tire tanks, escape ramps, and white vinyl wire, as needed.

Committee Operating Expenses and Meeting Meals-

The committee approved allocating \$500 for working meeting meals and \$500 for committee operating expenses, including committee member recognition.

Roundtable

Aaron Atwood notified the committee that he would be retiring from HPP after 29 years. The committee thanked him for his dedication to the program. Kimberly will create a vacancy announcement to distribute throughout the committee area. Formal interviews will be conducted at a later date.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.