



HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM MEETING MINUTES

HPP State Council Committee
September 26 1- 5 pm & September 27 8 am-12 pm In Person Meeting
Cliff House at Pikes Peak, 306 Canon Ave., Manitou Springs, CO 80829

State Council HPP Members, Manager, Program Assistant Present:

Ty Bevan, Casey Cooley, Greg Jungman, Robbie LeValley, Sheila Lamb, Riley May, Todd Peterson, Hunter Seim, Gary Visintainer (Virtual), Michael Blanck, Teri Polley

Additional Attendees and Guests: Frank McGee, CPW SE Region Manager; Mike Brown, AWM Area 11; Todd Marriott, AWM Area 12; Sean Shepherd, AWM Area 13; Tim Kroenig, AWM Area 14; Katie Doyle, DWM Area 14; Danielle Neumann, CPW NW Land Use Specialist; Trent Verquer, CPW Grassland Habitat Coordinator; Julie Stiver, SE Sr Wildlife Biologist; Erik Glenn, CCA Land Trust; Ray Aberle, Private Lands Program Manager; Kim Berscheid, HPP Administrative Assistant Eastern CO

September 26 1:00 - 5:00 pm

HPP State Council CPW Representative Introduction - Director Jeff Davis appointed Casey Cooley on September 5, 2023, as the CPW representative to the HPP State Council.

HPP State Council Ag Crop Producer Representation Introduction - Acting Director Heather Dugan appointed Riley May on April 20, 2023, as the Ag Crop Producer to the HPP State Council. The May Ranch is located near Lamar, CO. Along with this personal introduction to the Southeast Region staff, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association film crew was present to interview Riley and the State Council livestock producers representatives for a documentary film highlighting Riley and his family's excellent stewardship on the May Ranch. The council members interviewed concentrated on the importance of private lands to wildlife and the strength of HPP in that role.

Discussion with Frank McGee, Southeast Regional Manager - June 2022 Colorado's legislature reauthorized funding for the HPP program and expanded the bill to



include operating statewide outside of historic committee boundaries. Since the reauthorization, the State Council has considered and funded projects in this expansion. Frank and the four Area Wildlife Managers in the Southeast Region had a lengthy eye-opening discussion with the council about issues and opportunities in the southeast part of the state and how HPP can be an effective tool for strengthening relationships with the agricultural community keeping families involved in production agriculture while benefitting wildlife.

Erik Glenn, Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust - Since 1995, CCALT has partnered with nearly 400 families to conserve more than 765,000 acres of Colorado ranch land. With more than 80% of Colorado's private lands owned by farming and ranching families, Erik's presentation and discussion with the council emphasized the importance of stewardship of our agricultural lands.

September 27 8:00 - Noon

Danielle Neumann, Seedmix App Launch - The Colorado seed tool was a joint effort led by CPW Land Use, Avian Research, and the Habitat Partnership program. The tool is a phone application available through the Apple App Store or Google Play. It produces a list of adapted species based on the site's characteristics and management goals. Additionally, an existing seed mix can be verified for its adaptability to an existing site and suitability to the project goals. The tool also produces a PDF that contains detailed information about each species. Prior to the meeting, the council had a chance to download and test the app, and discuss its many benefits with Dani.

CRP/SAFE Sign-up Incentive Project Proposal - Trent Verquer, Grassland Habitat Coordinator - The council approved funding of \$59,000 targeting the Upland SAFE program in Yuma and Phillips counties via the Republican River HPP Committee. Changes in the 2018 Farm Bill have led to a massive decline in CRP acres in these counties from a high of 171,000 acres to 10,300 currently. This decline has negatively impacted mule and white-tailed deer fawning, foraging, and concealment habitat concentrating deer into smaller areas of suitable habitat and resulting in lowered overall populations while increasing the potential for distribution shift caused increase in localized game damage to agricultural crops. The SAFE program converts marginal cropland to diverse mixtures of grasses, forbs, and legumes for 10 to 15-year contracts.



Julie Stiver, Senior Wildlife Biologist Southeast Region - The state council discussed with Julie what the future of wildlife conflicts outside the local committee boundaries in the southeast region might look like and what changes, if any, may be necessary. No decisions were made, but a management plan was discussed.

HPP Manager Discretionary Project Cost Increase - In addition to Michael's discretionary project approval spending limit, the council approved giving Michael the authority to approve 15% over the project cost that honors the original intent of the project.

Draft Annual Report Review - Michael shared a draft annual report with the council prior to the meeting. The final report will be submitted to Garrett Watson, NW Deputy Region Manager, by October 31, 2023

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 24th and 25th in Greeley, with some participation in the Colorado Farm Show.