**GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE**
**REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

**DATE: Wednesday, June 18, 2014**
**PLACE: Planning Commission Meeting Room, Blackstock Government Center**

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| 1. | 10:00am | ● Call Regular Meeting to Order; Determination of Quorum; Verify Public Notice of Meeting |
| 2. | 10:05 | ● Agenda Approval |
| 3. | 10:10 | ● Approval of May 21, 2014 Meeting Minutes |
| 4. | 10:15 | ● Committee Member Comments/Reports |
| 5. | 10:30 | ● Request to be Appointed to the Signal Peak Recreation Area Planning Subcommittee<br>-Liz With |
| 6. | 10:35 | ● Gunnison Sage-grouse ESA Listing Decision Extension<br>-update on activities |
| 7. | 11:00 | ● USFWS Proposed Critical Habitat Rules and Proposed Policy |
| 8. | 11:15 | ● Signal Peak Recreation Area Planning |
| 9. | 11:30 | ● Predator Control Investigation Subcommittee<br>-report |
| 10. | 11:55 | ● Future Meetings |
| 11. | 12:00pm | ● Adjourn |

NOTE: This agenda is subject to change, including the addition of items up to 24 hours in advance or the deletion of items at any time. All times are approximate. Regular Meetings, Public Hearings, and Special Meetings are recorded and **ACTION MAY BE TAKEN ON ANY ITEM**. Work Sessions are not recorded and formal action cannot be taken. Two or more Gunnison County Commissioners may attend this meeting. For further information, contact the County Administration at 641-0248. If special accommodations are necessary per ADA, contact 641-0248 or TTY 641-3061 prior to the meeting.

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**GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE**
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**
**June 18, 2014**

The June 18, 2014 Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee meeting was conducted in the Gunnison County Blackstock Government Center, 2nd floor meeting room, located at 221 N. Wisconsin # D, Gunnison, Co. 81230

**Committee Members Present:**
**Voting:**
**Ken Stahlnecker**, Chairperson, National Park Service (NPS)
**J Wenum,** Vice-Chairperson, Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
**Sue Navy**, High Country Conservation Advocates (HCCA)
**Peter Caloger,** Public At-Large
**David Wiens,** At-large Recreation Community
**Chris Bove**, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
**Eric Ferchau**, At Large, Development Community
**Brian St. George**-Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

**Non-voting:**
**Paula Swenson**, Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)
**Nathan Seward,** Colorado Division of Parks & Wildlife (CPW) Alternate
**Polly Oberosler-** At- larger Recreation (Alternate)
**Tom Spezze**-Public at-Large Alternate

**Staff Members Present:**
**Jim Cochran**, Gunnison County Wildlife Conservation Coordinator
**Beth Baker,** Planning Services Manager Community Development Department

Others present as listed in text.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Stahlnecker called the June 18, 2014 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to order at 10:00 A.M.

**DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:** Stahlnecker confirmed a quorum was present.

**PUBLIC NOTICE CONFIRMED:** Stahlnecker verified proper legal public notice had occurred.

**AGENDA APPROVAL:** No modifications to the agenda were requested. The agenda was approved as circulated.

**APPROVAL OF May 21, 2014 MEETING MINUTES:** **Moved by;** Navy and seconded by Bove to accept the May 21, 2014 meeting minutes as circulated. The motion carried.

**Committee Member Comments/Reports:**

- Seward said the preliminary lek counts presented at the May 21st meeting were still accurate. There were 811 males in 2014 and 848 males in 2013; the decrease could possibly be due to the lack of access and poor visibility in the viewing areas this year. He was encouraged with the weather conditions this year. There has been approximately a 3% increase in male birds between 2012 and 2014.

- Cochran noted Kathy Griffin CPW, said all populations except Dove Creek had increased this year, including Monticello; Dove Creek remained constant. There has been an approximate 4 % increase trend; it is stable to increasing. There has been a significant male bird increase observed in Crawford.

- Seward said photographer Dave Showalter, had taken photographs of leks at the Peterson Ranch and the Miller Ranch.

- Stahlnecker reported Connie Rudd would be retiring from the National Park Service and would no longer be attending the Gunnison Basin Sage-Grouse Committee meetings.

- Cochran noted U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representative Charlie Sharp has resigned from the USFWS. He recommended appointing a replacement member as soon as possible; St. George agreed an appointment should occur soon, to maintain consistency and ensure the new member will understand the workings of the Committee.

- Cochran reported that the County Coalition met June 12, 2014. Lisa Dale, Colorado Department of Natural Resources, will be compiling all information submittals and "repackaging" it for resubmittal to the USFWS. Swenson expressed frustration that the USFWS is going back to the old regime; not taking into consideration all the conservation easements and other conservation actions. It was noted the County Coalition is the only entity moving this forward at this point. Cochran reiterated the County Coalition and the State are working closely on the repackaging of information to be submitted.

**Liz With Request -Appointment to the Signal Peak Rec. Area Planning Subcommittee;**

Chairman, Ken Stahlnecker, appointed Liz With to the Signal Peak Recreation Area Planning Subcommittee.

**Gunnison Sage-grouse ESA Listing Decision Extension-Update on Activities;**

Brian St. George outlined three items;

- The updated BLM policy on the management of the Gunnison Sage-grouse is on the BLM website. It covers both Colorado and Utah. There are few updates that are not in the current policy. The new policy emphasizes what the BLM will and will not do with the management of the Gunnison Sage-grouse. The new policy is more broadly applied to habitat across the range, not just the Gunnison Basin.

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- The planning effort is directed at amending all the Resource Management Plans across the range of the Gunnison Sage-grouse. The intent is to update the Resource Management Plans to incorporate the Rangewide Conservation Plan. The BLM is kicking off the effort and Gunnison is included. The BLM has a very aggressive two year timeline for the completion of the Resource. Management Plan amendments. It is designed to manage and conserve the Gunnison Sage- grouse, regardless of the listing status.

- Proposed dates of meetings- BLM public meeting, Gunnison - July 16, 2014.

**USFWS Proposed Critical Habitat Rules and Proposed Policy;**

Cochran said the 60 day comment period will expire, July 11, 2014. County staff will make recommendations to the BOCC. Staff will recommend amending procedures and criteria. They will address the existing definition of destruction, and the policy dealing with exclusion of critical habitat.

**Signal Peak Recreation Area Planning:**

Seward said Western State Colorado University is enrolled in the CCAA program. The University has agreed to seasonal recreation restrictions on the parts of the campus that are adjacent to BLM land.

There was a discussion concerning the negotiation between the University and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW.) It was noted that the University is the gateway to the Signal Peak recreation area.

**Predator Control Investigation Subcommittee-Report:**

Caloger suggested a more aggressive road-kill carcass removal process and possibly incinerating the carcasses to limit the number of ravens using the carcasses as a food source. This suggestion was discussed and it was noted that incineration is possible but can be very expensive and it is questionable if it is effective enough to justify the cost.

Caloger said that restaurants segregating out food waste is a popular idea.

Cochran suggested that the Predator Control Investigation Sub-Committee speak with Assistant County Manager Marlene Crosby about covering the trash at the landfill. This could help deter the ravens by limiting one food source.

**FUTURE MEETINGS:** Future meetings will occur on the 3rd Wednesday of the month in the Planning Commission meeting room, located at 221 N. Wisconsin, Gunnison, Co. 81230, unless changed for a specific reason.

| Date | Time | Notes | Building and location |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7/16/14 | 10-2 | Regular Meeting | Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room |
| 8/20/14 | 10-2 | Regular Meeting | Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room |
| 9/17/14 | 10-2 | Regular Meeting | Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room |
| 10/15/14 | 10-2 | Regular Meeting | Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room |
| 11/19/14 | 10-2 | Regular Meeting | Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room |
| 12/17/14 | 10-2 | Regular Meeting | Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room |

**ADJOURN: MOVED** by Stahlnecker to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The June 18, 2014 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committed adjourned at 12:20 P.M.

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Ken Stahlnecker, Chairperson

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Greg Peterson, Secretary

**Minutes Prepared By:**

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/S/ Beth Baker
Planning Services Manager
Gunnison County Community Development

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