GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

DATE: Wednesday, March 18, 2015
PLACE: Planning Commission Meeting Room, Blackstock Government Center

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 February 18, 2015 Meeting Minutes
4.	10:15	●	Committee Member Comments/Reports
5.	10:30	●	Litigation Update
6.	10:45	●	BLM Resource Management Plan Amendment EIS -status report
7.	10:50	●	CPW Ranching for GuSG Workshop Report
8.	11:00	●	Gunnison Sage-grouse Stewardship Award Presentation
9.	11:30	●	Reception and Lunch
10.	12:00pm	●	Gunnison Climate Working Group - 2015 projects update, Betsy Neely, TNC - GuSG Brood Rearing/Riparian Resiliency - Southwest Colorado Social-Ecological Climate Resilience (SECR) Project, Sagebrush Landscape
11.	12:30	●	Post Listing Issues – Immediate Concerns - Gunnison Basin Weed Management Program - Update
12.	12:45	●	Fox Control Proposal Discussion -Peter Caloger
13.	1:00	●	Future Meetings
14.	1:05	●	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.

GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 18, 2015

The March 18, 2015 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:
Regular Members:
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
Matt Vasquez, United States Forest Service (USFS)
Greg Peterson, Gunnison County Stockgrowers' Association (GCSA)
David Wiens, At-large Recreation Community
Eric Ferchau, At Large, Development Community
Jonathan Houck, Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)

Alternate Members:
Nathan Seward, Colorado Division of Parks & Wildlife (CPW) Alternate
Elinor Laurie, Saguache County -Alternate by phone
Polly Oberosler, Recreation Community At-Large-Alternate
Liz With, (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service- Alternate
Russ Japuntich, BLM- Alternate

Others in the Audience:
Leigh Espy (BLM by phone)
David Baumgartner, Gunnison County Attorney
Creed Clayton (FWS)
Elijah Watters (BLM)
Pat Magee (WSCU)
Bryant Jones
John Scott (NRCS-Retired)
Tyler Morrison
Bryant Wiles
Charlie Pelizza (Acting USFWS Colorado Field Supervisor)
Betsy Neely (TNC)

Staff Members Present:
Jim Cochran, Gunnison County Wildlife Conservation Coordinator
Michelle Spain, Administrative Assistant
Others present as listed in text.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Stahlnecker called the March 18, 2015, meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to order at 10:00 A.M.

10:00:04 AM **DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:** Stahlnecker confirmed that a quorum was present.

10:01:04 AM **PUBLIC NOTICE CONFIRMED:** Stahlnecker verified that proper legal public notice had occurred.

10:02:04 AM **AGENDA APPROVAL:** No modifications to the agenda were requested. The agenda was approved as circulated.

APPROVAL of February 18, 2015 MEETING MINUTES: **Moved** by Navy and seconded by Wenum to accept the February 18, 2015 meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried. Peterson, Ferchau abstained.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/ REPORTS

10:03:04 AM

Laurie indicated that she monitored the Poncha Pass lek area early this day and observed three males.

Sage-grouse road closures are in effect reported Japuntich. He indicated that only one gate has been torn down. Cochran thanked him for all of his efforts.

Houck reported that the process for land use related reviews is in place. The Community Development Department of Gunnison County is still following standard procedure for all reviews. Cochran reviewed the procedure that his office utilizes.

Wenum indicated that there are numerous requests about the Waunita Wildlife Viewing Area.

The Gunnison Sage-grouse brochures were reviewed and discussion of an update or revision/reprint occurred. Review and make corrections and then reprint? Discussion ensued. Members will review and make recommendations at the next meeting.

New terrestrial biologist is Kevin Blecha. He will be on board with CPW in April 2015. Big game open house is coming up April 2nd, 4:30pm to 7pm.

Antler collection activity has been significant this year. CPW Staff witnessed large numbers of collectors and there was concern about movement of wildlife in these areas. This may need to be reviewed at a later date.

Lek counts will start soon. Volunteers will be monitored and data collected for a review. Number of birds, people counting birds on the leks, and hours of data collection are all part of the data collected. Various lek areas were discussed.

Caloger asked about the bag limits on shed collection. This has turned into a commercial enterprise. Will CPW make this a regulated item? Wenum indicated that this has been brought up to the CPW office for review. This is a possible revenue source for the department.

Cochran indicated that the interest is enhanced by media coverage and new reality television programs. Cause and effect of collection will need to be reviewed.

Wenum indicated that more discussion from other jurisdictions will take place prior to any fees put in place.

Cochran reviewed the last time the Sage-grouse summit was held. He indicated that it was nearing the fourth year since the last summit.

McGee responded that WSCU has interest in taking the lead organizing the next Summit. Timing of the Summit was discussed. Fall of 2016 was discussed. Gunnison Sage-grouse research, habitat and climate issues are possible subjects. The Summit would tie into these and it would be a good time to introduce the Gunnison Sage-grouse / sagebrush ecosystem atlas. They would like to get a graduate student to begin development of the atlas. Public Works Director, Marlene Crosby was contacted and there are no Landfill Mitigation funds available in this budget cycle. Seed money of $5,000 to $15,000 would need to be raised to start this program.

The summit actually generated revenue. Fees and costs were discussed.

Peterson asked about the atlas project. Is it cause and effect or cumulative data? Cumulative data is what would be acquired with this atlas. Consensus was positive for this program but funding needs further discussion.

Vasquez indicated that USGS has a Sage-map now and asked if this could this be of some help for this project.

Cochran indicated that social information was not in the USGS Sage-map. Protocol for data collection was not determined. Data collection was discussed.

Navy reviewed the Summit. The fall of 2015 would be a good time. The WSCU participants are looking for a later date. Navy would like to see a field trip as a component of the summit.

Seward indicated he is exploring a field trip for other projects. This could be combined at a future meeting or schedule an additional day.

10:45:21 AM **LITIGATION UPDATE**

Cochran commenced the review. BoCC approved two separate actions.

1) Intervene in the two lawsuits filed to date by pro-listing groups.

2) Approved intervening in the state of Colorado lawsuit challenging the threatened listing.

Mesa County filed a 60-day notice of intent to file a law suit.

Other counties that have filed Notices of Intent are Montrose County and San Juan County, Utah.

10:48:57 AM **BLM RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT EIS- Status Report**

Espy by phone: They are currently working on the document**.** They are looking at an extension for editing purposes. Several sections are drafted at this point. Japuntich is back to the Gunnison Field Office as the full time biologist. More information will be available next month.

10:51:21 AM **CPW RANCHING FOR GuSG WORKSHOP REPORT**

Cochran commenced his review. On February 19, 2015 they had excellent attendance at the meeting. This information and materials are on the BLM and CPW websites.

Various subcommittees were discussed.

Additional vacancies in various positions were discussed.

11:07:07 AM **GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE STEWARDSHIP AWARD PRESENTATION**

Rufus Wilderson and Brett Redden were introduced and recognized for their many years of allowing Sage-grouse protection on their land. Neely thanked the recipients for opening up their land for this project. Navy presented each with the reward. Photos were taken with various members.

11:14:10 AM **GUNNISON CLIMATE WORKING GROUP**

GuSG Brood Rearing/Riparian Resiliency
Southwest Colorado Social-Ecological Climate Resilience (SECR) Project, Sagebrush Landscape

Betsy Neely presented updates on these projects. No minutes taken.

11:32:25 AM **Break for Lunch**

12:06:10 PM **Reconvene: GUNNISON CLIMATE WORKING GROUP**

Continued presentation by Betsy Neely (TNC). No minutes taken.

12:35:25 PM **POST LISTING ISSUES – IMMEDIATE CONCERNS**

Gunnison Basin Weed Management Program
Update

Cochran initiated this review. A USFWS letter was submitted for Committee review. There was a question if private applicators will be covered by this letter. Clayton responded that no permit is needed as long as the guidelines provided in the letter are followed. Clayton indicated that they recognize the importance of weed control. There is a weed management workshop on April 10th. John Scott is monitoring the herbicides and pesticides labels for proper application of these items. Nothing was found to be hugely problematic.

12:41:37 PM **FOX CONTROL PROPOSAL DISCUSSION**

Peter Caloger

Fox population and coyote populations were discussed. Caloger had contacted some stockgrowers on coyote take and if there is no danger to stock let the coyotes remain. He would like to monitor the lek counts with the population of fox vs. coyote. Populations of both species were discussed on private lands. Foxes adapt to other environments. Coyotes seem to be the major predator of the foxes.

Oberosler indicated that the fox also have eagles and owls as predators.

Seward encouraged Caloger to set up a protocol for this study. A large treatment and control area would be needed.

Caloger indicated that a rancher would need to participate in this study. Taken animals then need to be sent to a facility for review of stomach contents to determine what these animals had eaten.

Seward indicated that this needs to be a scientific study. There really are two separate controls; Red Fox take and sage-grouse numbers.

Peterson indicated that this is a good idea but the mechanism needs to be set in place. The predator issue needs to be analyzed in the future.

Caloger stated the raven population in Utah was put under control. Gunnison County has an enormous raven population and it is not being addressed. The cost of processing samples by CSU was discussed. Cost of land owner participation was discussed. Caloger will contact landowners first.

Magee indicated that maybe the stomach contents from fox need to be sent to CSU and tested first.

Houck asked for more information from Caloger to review this request.

Stahlnecker agreed on the issue but needs to fill in the blanks that were discussed.

1:09:03 PM **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
04-15-15	10-2	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room
05-20-15	10-2	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room
06-17-15	10-2	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room
07-15-15	10-2	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room
08-19-15	10-2	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room
09-16-15	10-2	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room
10-21-15	10-2	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room
11-18-15	10-2	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room
12-16-15	10-2	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room

ADJOURN: **MOVED** by Stahlnecker to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The March 18, 2015 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committed adjourned at 1:09:59 PM P.M.

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Ken Stahlnecker, Chairperson

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Greg Peterson, Secretary

Minutes Prepared By:

/S/ Michelle Spain
Administrative Assistant
Gunnison County Community Development Department