GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 20, 2015

The May 20, 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:
Voting Members:
Ken Stahlnecker, Chairperson, National Park Service (NPS)
Russ Japuntich, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Sue Navy, High Country Conservation Advocates (HCCA)
Matt Vasquez, United States Forest Service (USFS)
Greg Peterson, Gunnison County Stockgrowers' Association (GCSA)
Nathan Seward, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) (departed at approx. 10:45am)
Peter Caloger, Public At-large
Polly Oberosler, At-large Recreation Community
Eric Ferchau, At Large, Development Community (arrived at 10:20am)
Jonathan Houck, Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC)
Elinor Laurie, Saguache County Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) (by teleconference)

Alternate Members (non-voting):
Tom Spezze, Public At-large

Others in the Audience:
John Scott
Jim Mendonca
Justin Abernathy (Acting BLM Gunnison Field Office Manager)
Brian Wilds (WSCU)
Mike Pelletier (Gunnison County GIS Department Manager)
Tyler Abbott (Acting USFWS Colorado Field Supervisor)
Creed Clayton (USFWS Grand Junction) (by teleconference)
Leigh Espy (BLM GuSG EIS RMPA Project Manager) (by teleconference)

Staff Members Present:
Jim Cochran, Gunnison County Wildlife Conservation Coordinator

Others present as listed in text.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Stahlnecker called the May 20, 2015 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to order at 10:00 A.M.

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

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

AGENDA APPROVAL: Agenda approved as distributed.

APPROVAL of March 18, 2015 MEETING MINUTES: Moved by Navy, second by Japuntich. Approved as distributed.

APPROVAL of April 15, 2015 MEETING MINUTES: Moved by Navy, second by Japuntich. Approved as distributed.

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COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/ REPORTS:

Abbott reported that Gina Glenn is now the Supervisory Wildlife Biologist in the USFWS Grand Junction Field Office. Ann Timberman has been hired as the Assistant Colorado Field Supervisor, based in Grand Junction. She will assume her position on June 1, 2015.

Abbott reported that the draft Gunnison sage-grouse 4(d) rule is now under internal USFWS review. It is scheduled for publication in the Federal Register as a proposed rule the week of June 15. The rule cannot be finalized until at least October 1, 2015 due to Omnibus Funding Bill rider restrictions. There will be a 90-day comment period. USFWS is also planning on having a series of public meetings on the proposed rule. They will be scheduling those soon. They are also willing to meet with specific groups to discuss the proposed rule.

Seward reported that the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission will be meeting in Gunnison on June 11 and 12, 2015.

Seward provided an update on the 2015 Gunnison Basin lek counts. Not all data sheets are in yet. The high male count was 900+, up from 2014. Rangewide preliminary data indicates that the San Miguel and Pinon Mesa counts are up, and that the Poncha Pass, Cerro Summit and Dove Creek counts are down slightly.

Peterson initiated a discussion on the translocation program by asking when is it not worth taking birds to a population where the resultant mortality of the translocated birds is high.

Navy asked about lek count data for the Waunita Lek that had been collected and distributed by Jim Mendonca. The Committee will address this data and the Waunita Watchable Wildlife Site at a future meeting.

Seward distributed a notebook of photographs taken by Mr. Gress for viewing by the Committee. The notebook included information on development and pricing of posters.

LITIGATION UPDATE:

Cochran presented this update. The federal judge consolidated the three lawsuits on May 1, 2015. This judge has allowed intervention by Gunnison County into the two “environmental group” lawsuits. The State of Colorado filed an amended Notice of Intent restarting the 60-day notification period for that lawsuit. Gunnison County is drafting a motion to intervene and associated documentation for the State of Colorado lawsuit.

BLM RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT EIS:

Espy reported that the EIS is approximately 70% drafted and that component is out for Cooperating Agency review and comment. Their comments are due by May 29, 2015. BLM is planning on publishing a public review draft in October, 2015. There will be a 90-day comment period. BLM will hold a series of public meetings on the draft.

TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE HABITAT PRIORITIZATION TOOL UPDATE REPORT:

Vasquez provided this update. The Technical Subcommittee met on May 14. The first half of the discussion was primarily to review the current Tool and provide USFWS staff with orientation and information on the use of the Tool and the information used to develop it. The second half of the meeting was utilized to discuss what updates were appropriate and necessary to keep the Tool current and useful. Items discussed included: 1) base layers; 2) improved documentation; 3) update protocols.

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GUNNISON SAGE- GROUSE BROCHURE:

The Committee provided a number of edits to the draft brochure in addition to those provided during the email distribution review. These were agreed upon and incorporated. Two new photographs were discussed. Navy will work with Seward and others to acquire these.

Moved by Houck, second by Peterson: Approval of the brochure as amended today with a final printer's proof to be reviewed by the Committee. Motion passed.

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
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: Stahlnecker adjourned the May 20, 2015 Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee meeting at 11:45am.

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Ken Stahlnecker, Chairperson

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Greg Peterson, Secretary

Minutes Prepared By:

/S/ James Cochran
Gunnison County Wildlife Conservation Coordinator

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GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

DATE: Wednesday, May 20, 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 March 18, 2015 Meeting Minutes
4.	10:15	● Approval of April 15, 2015 Meeting Minutes
5.	10:20	● Committee Member Comments/Reports
6.	10:30	● Litigation Update
7.	10:40	● BLM Resource Management Plan Amendment EIS -status report
8.	10:50	● Technical Subcommittee Habitat Prioritization Tool Review Update
9.	11:00	● Gunnison sage-grouse Brochures
10.	11:25	● Future Meetings
11.	11:30	● 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.

Teleconference Information:

Dial In Number: 970-641-7698
Access Code: 0130408

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