GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 15, 2017

The February 15, 2017 Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee meeting was conducted in the Gunnison County Blackstocks Government Center, 2nd floor meeting room, located at 221 N. Wisconsin #D, Gunnison, CO, 81230

Committee Members Present:
Voting Members:
J. Wenum, Vice-Chairperson, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
Sue Navy, High Country Conservation Advocates
Liz With, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Peter Caloger, Public At-Large
Matt Vasquez, United States Forest Service, (USFS)
Elijah Waters, BLM

Alternate Members:
Nate Seward, Alternate, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)

Others in the Audience:
Pat Magee, WSCU
Jim Cochran
Rachel Sobatto, Gunnison County Community Development Planner
Rachel Jones, CPW Lek Access Coordinator
Sam Newman, WSCU Master Program
Marcella Fremger, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (on the phone)

Staff Members Present:
Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant
Brooke Vasquez, Gunnison Conservation District, Wildlife Biologist

Others present as listed in text.

CALL TO ORDER: Vice-Chairperson Wenum called the March 15, 2017 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to order at 10:03 A.M.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM: Wenum confirmed that there was not a quorum present.

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

AGENDA APPROVAL: No quorum to approve. Short update on Investment Action plan to be added.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 15, 2017 MEETING MINUTES: No quorum to approve.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/ REPORTS

Seward introduced Rachel Stone, who will be the lek count coordinator this year.

With reported the SGI Tour is still on for June 13-15, 2017. They were unable to fill the DC position as of right now so it will move on from Ken Davis to Dale Woodberry from Montrose.

M. Vasquez reported that John Murphy is retiring at the end of April as District Ranger, so there will be some changes. Since they are on a hiring freeze they are doing their best to get the position covered. In May they will be starting the _____ revision. It will take approximately four years to revise it.

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Wenum reported that with the weather getting better they will fall back and cease baiting by the end of this week. The deer are moving up in the day time and spending the night at higher elevations. When they distribute the bait the deer are coming to lower elevations and so to stop that they will stop the baiting process. There is going to be some difficulty with access to leks this year so they will have to talk to owners. The temporary regulations they had in place are going to stay through May 15, 2017.

Cochran reported that the Resource Management Plan Amendment process. It is moving forward again. They had a cooperating agency call last week and BLM received 42 comment letters and over 1,400 individual comments. Their new schedule is to have an internal review draft out by the end of the summer.

HABITAT PRIORITIZATION TOOL UPDATE

M. Vasquez reported they met on February 28, 2017 and had some good discussions. They went through the analysis document and they discussed each of the updates and decided on how to move forward on some of the items. They are meeting again on March 28, 2017 and will be far enough along to have the Technical Subcommittee meet in April and will bring information to the Strategic Committee sometime in May. M. Vasquez went over what they have discussed so far.

INVESTMENT ACTION PLAN

Cochran reported that the plan is to have a discussion with the State of Colorado and Fish and Wildlife Service and CPW regarding the updating of the range wide plan. The decision was to take a smaller bite of that project and develop a private lands investment action plan. The project coordinator they had found had some conflicts of interest and wasn't able to continue and there is now an opening for a new Project Coordinator. The initial time frame was six months for the plan to be developed but that was a year ago, it will take a lot longer.

CONSERVATION POSTER UPDATE

Seward reported that Bob Gruss, poster developer and professional photographer, has been out of the country the last two months. He is back now and will start moving forward on it again. Would like to get it to the strategic committee for review soon.

WAUNITA WATCHABLE LEK UPDATE

Magee introduced CJ, the WSCU student who will be coordinating the site. There will be a student training session on March 29 and a field training session on March 31. April 1- April 25 there will be a lot of people coming to view the lek. The closure dates are April 1, 2, 10, 13, 18, 19 26, 27 and May 4 and 5. Wanted feedback regarding manning those dates with a volunteer or whether they will be doing it again this year. It was explained that they had a coordinator to ensure the closed dates were observed and Wenum explained that they are open to ideas on how to deal with the closures and monitoring them.

GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE LEK ACCESS APPLICATIONS

Seward explained that Magee and he are the ones that typically get the requests for access and they send the applicants the applications and ask for more details.

They received two applications this year. One from Frank Commisor, a professional photographer out of Durango. He has an art gallery in Durango and has photographed other grouse species before and he does occasionally do presentations relative to grouse conservation. He has not done anything specific to Gunnison Sage-grouse but he is willing to provide fifty percent of the proceeds if he sells the original photos in his gallery to Gunnison County for any kind of future projects.

The other application is from Jacob Spendelow. He is working on a grouse conservation book called "Dances with Grouse". Seward followed up with him and he does want to promote conservation for all of the North American grouse species. He has on file most of North American grouse species but is missing

a few and hoping to get them this year. The funding for the book would be out of his pocket and would like to use a friend who is a publisher out of Washington DC. Spendelow has said that he is ok with the Committee seeing a draft of the book.

Seward explained that they need to make a decision today on what they are going to do with both applications. Discussion followed regarding the applications and recommendations on what to do from committee members.

Wensum explained since there was no quorum the committee couldn't take formal action on the applications. Wenum asked for a vote on no access versus allowing Jacob access or allowing both access. There was one vote for no access, three votes for Spendelow to have access, and two votes for both Spendelow and Commisor to have access. Wenum stated that Steward should work with Spendelow and have Commisor reapply next year and they can re-evaluate it at that point. They will ratify the vote at the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

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

ADJOURN: The March 15, 2017 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee adjourned at 11:54 A.M.

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Jonathan Houck, Chairperson

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Greg Peterson, Secretary

Minutes Prepared By: Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant

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