GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 16, 2017

The August 16, 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)
Peter Caloger, Public At-Large
Theresa Childers, National Park Service (NPS)
Ann Timberman, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Matt Vasquez, United States Forest Service (USFS)
Erich Ferchau, Development Community At-large (here at 10:23 a.m.)
Don Sabrowski, Gunnison County Stockgrowers' Association, Alternate

Others in the Audience:
WSCU Master's student
Jim Mendonca
Tom Grant, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Nate Seward, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
Dan Olson, NRCS District Conservationist
Aleshia Rummell, National Park Service

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 August 16, 2017 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to order at 10:02 A.M.

DETERMINATION OF QUORUM: Wenum confirmed that there was no quorum. Quorum was determined after Ferchau showed.

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

AGENDA APPROVAL: Agenda was not able to be approved due to no quorum. Wenum requested that the Waunita Lek Update be removed because key players for the discussion were not at the meeting and requested that it be on the next agenda.

APPROVAL of MAY 17, 2017 MEETING MINUTES: No quorum present. Quorum present after Ferchau showed up. Motion to approve May 17, 2017 meeting minutes as amended. Moved by Ferchau, seconded by Timberman to approve. The Motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/ REPORTS

M. Vasquez reported that they will have a new District Ranger, Matt McCombs, coming the end of August. He will bring McCombs to the next meeting to be introduced and put on the board as a regular or alternate member. They are continuing the forest plan revision and have been holding public meetings the last couple of weeks in all of the Counties involved. They are identifying what they know, what works well and what doesn't, and getting comments from the public. Sage-grouse will be an important part of the plan. 50 plus people have shown to most of the meetings.

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Timberman talked about ESA Conservation options for funding. She explained how people can go about applying for them and handed out a spreadsheet with the information. She wants Mark Brennan in her office to be the keeper of the spreadsheet and have it updated each year. Discussion followed regarding the different grants.

Seward reported that he has worked with B. Vasquez and Pat Magee to revise the lek access application. He stated that Jacob Spendelow came and went out to the lek site two mornings. Spendelow was able to get quality photos. During recognizance, they found a dead male grouse that appeared to have collided with a fence. Spendelow took photos and documented the possible collision. Seward has a copy of the photos that were taken by Spendelow. They are starting to get a good database of high quality photos. Seward believes they can be a little more stringent on applications in the future due to the database. There has been a lot of interest in the lek count this Spring. Seward stated that he has some draft lek count numbers. They visited 82 leks in the Spring of 2017 and the approximate high male count was 755, a decrease from roughly 928 males in 2016. The approximate high female count increased to 254 in 2017, from 235 in 2016. Seward believes that the snow conditions this past winter may have caused sage-grouse to be more susceptible to predation and that may be why the male counts were down. The 2017 population estimate for the Gunnison Basin area is approximately 3,705 birds.

SGI CONFERENCE UPDATE

Olson gave the update. They had 170 attendees at the conference. Olson felt it was a good and informative workshop. Seward stated that the attendees came from all across the West and it was a great platform to show the work that has been done for sage-grouse. The conference got a lot of people excited about sage-grouse work. Further discussion followed about the conference. Wenum reported there was a lot of positive feedback.

WEED DISCUSSION

M. Vasquez asked that the weed discussion be on the next agenda also. He stated that each year they are seeing more and more weeds in the Gunnison Basin. With the increase in recreation, there is pressure to deal with weeds. With more recreation there is an increased potential for weeds to spread (such as cheat grass). It is a concern for sage-grouse and all wildlife. He'd like to ask the committee to work on ideas of how to bring awareness to the public on why it is a concern. M. Vasquez would like to go to a weed commission meeting to see how weeds are being dealt with in Gunnison County. He would also like the Strategic Committee to go to the City Council and see how the Committee can work on weed issues in the City too. M. Vasquez would like to see a collective effort from all agencies in addressing weeds. B. Vasquez suggested that Jon Mugglestone (Gunnison County Weed Coordinator) be invited to the next meeting to join the weed discussion.

WET MEADOW RESTORATION-RESILIENCE PROJECT COORDINATOR

Tom Grant gave presentation on wet meadow restoration work in the Gunnison Basin.

WAUNITA LEK UPDATE

None of the key players were available to give the update. Wenum requested that a meeting be set up for the Waunita Subcommittee and have a presentation/update ready for the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mendonca requested that they spend as much time discouraging the use of the lek as much as they are encouraging it. Stated that you should let everyone know they are not likely to see a bird there.

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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
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 August 16, 2017 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee adjourned at 11:47 A.M.

Minutes Prepared By: Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant

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