GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 20, 2019

The March 20, 2019 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:
J. Wenum, Vice-Chairperson, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
Greg Peterson, Secretary, Gunnison County Stockgrowers' Association (GCSA)
Sue Navy, High Country Conservation Advocates
Erich Ferchau, Development Community At-large
Elijah Waters, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Matt Vasquez, United States Forest Service (USFS)
Theresa Childers, National Park Service (NPS)
Ann Timberman, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Peter Caloger, Public At-Large, by phone
Roland Mason, Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), Alternate

Others in the Audience:
Dale Funka
Tom Grant, Wet Meadows Restoration-Resilience Project Coordinator
Marcella Fremgen
Julie Kibel
John Scott
Brandon Miller, USFWS
Jim Cochran
Dru DeBerry

Staff Members Present:
Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant
Aleshia Rummel, Gunnison Conservation District, Wildlife Biologist

Others present as listed in text.

CALL TO ORDER: Vice-Chairperson Wenum called the March 20, 2019 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to order at 10:00 A.M.

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

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

AGENDA APPROVAL: Agenda approved as presented.

APPROVAL of December 19, 2018 MEETING MINUTES: **Moved:** by Navy and seconded by Mason to accept the February 20, 2019 meeting minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously, Peterson and Childers abstained.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/REPORTS

Waters reported that all the BLM gates are closed, except for Coal Creek.

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Vasquez reported that they received the 2019 Means Across America Award. There will be an award meeting in Washington D.C. in April. He would like an award ceremony during the May, 2019 meeting to give awards to the partners.

Vasquez reported that they have completed the draft Forest Plan and it went to their Regional Office for review and comments and they are incorporating those comments into the plan. Beginning in April they will be working on the analysis of the draft EIS and there will be a draft of the Forest Plan published at the end of April for public comment, with a 90 day comment period, prior to their draft EIS going out. The draft EIS will be released to the public in the fall of 2019, with a 90 day comment period.

Childers reported that three weeks ago the over site committee for the Crawford working group met to go over bringing back the committee. They have an announcement that has gone out for a coordinator to help them work together and leverage some resources. After lek count has been completed they would like to get stakeholders together. She reported that she will be filling a permanent position for wildlife and botany work, with a limit of 50 applicants. The Park Service in Black Canyon are starting the planning and assessment process of the Sandberg property they acquired.

Grant reported that he and Seward are working with the Bureau of Reclamation and Fruitland Irrigation Company related to the salinity control projects on the Western Slope. As they pipe an irrigation ditch they are hoping to do restoration work that will augment water going to some existing meadows and wetlands. Last year they did a field visit to the BLM sites in Crawford. They are hoping to do some maintenance and add new structures to those sites.

Wenum reported that the shed antler closure is in place. They have been working with multiple agencies in regards to current winter conditions in wildlife and highway proximity. Especially the first six to eight miles east of town and the ten to fifteen miles west of Gunnison. There has been an increase in the amount of deer on the roads and road kill. They have been able to get CDOT to use their message boards outside of town to put “watch for deer, high risk”. They are having a public meeting this Monday at the Western Ball Room from 6 to 8 p.m. regarding big game and license requirements.

DEVELOPMENT OF DRAFT RECOVERY PLAN AND SSA UPDATE

DeBerry gave update. They have a Settlement Agreement that says they have to have a draft Recovery Plan by October of 2019. They depend on the Species Status Assessment and based on that information the draft Recovery Plan is pretty simple. They will be starting the draft recovery process as soon as possible. They will have a public meeting at the end of April. They are going to make it wide open and would like as many comments from the public as possible. They have to come up with criteria, estimates of time and costs and a general idea of what the actions will be. After the public listening process they will convene with CPW and the Utah Department of Wildlife Resources. Discussion followed on the process.

UPDATE ON CHEATGRASS PROJECT

Fremgen gave update. They received the Colorado Department of Agricultural Grant, $5,000 which will go to podcasts, the written pieces and on the ground Cheatgrass treatment days in Gunnison. They set up that meeting for May 18, 2019. They also brought in new partners.

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.

04-17-19	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room
05-15-19	10-12	Regular Meeting	Blackstock; 221 N. Wisconsin 2nd floor meeting room

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

ADJOURN: The March 20, 2019 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee adjourned at 11:41 AM.

Minutes Prepared By: Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant

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