GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 11, 2020

The March 11, 2020 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:
Jonathan Houck, Chairperson, Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)
J. Wenum, Vice-Chairperson, Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
Greg Peterson, Secretary, Gunnison County Stockgrowers' Association (GCSA) (by phone)
Peter Caloger, Public At-Large
Tim Kugler, Recreation At-Large
Sue Navy, High Country Conservation Advocates (by phone)
Theresa Childers, National Park Service (NPS)
Dan Olson, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Ann Timberman, Fish and Wildlife Service
Elijah Waters, BLM

Non-Voting Members
Nate Seward, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Alternate
Kathy Broadhead, BLM

Others in the Audience:
Marcella Tarantino, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies
Sam Liebl, Upper Water Conservancy District
Susie Parker, Forest Service
Leah Waldner, BLM
Rachel Miller, BLM
Mike Pelletier, Gunnison County GIS
Pat Magee, WCU

Staff Members Present:
Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant

Others present as listed in text.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Houck called the December 18, 2019 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to order at 10:11 A.M.

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

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

AGENDA APPROVAL: Agenda approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 18, 2019 MEETING MINUTES: **Moved:** by Navy and seconded by Wenum to accept the December 18, 2019 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

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COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/REPORTS

Waters reported that the BLM has a couple of vacancies with the BLM, including a range management specialist and will hopefully get it out soon. Leah Waldner was hired with the BLM as the sage-grouse coordinator.

Olson reported that they were able to hire on a soil conservation technician with their NRCS Gunnison office, Katie Walsh, who will be focusing on engineering. He reported that they have a cutoff date for 2020 funding for programs, EQIP cutoff date is April 10, 2020 and CSP is April 29, 2020.

Childers reported that they have a new superintendent, Tammy Graco. Their hydrologist, Michael Dale retired. They have the money for north rim sagebrush restoration work. The funds will be for three years for multiple things.

Wenum reported that the Parks and Wildlife Commission approved the changes to the Waunita Watchable wildlife site. It will open April1st through the 30th. There will be a weeklong closure during that time, April 12-18. On March 30, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. they will have their open house to talk about Big Game populations in the basin and proposed licenses for this fall.

Houck reported that he spent a week in D.C. and was able to get some time with Secretary Burkhart, Secretary of Interior. They talked about the balancing of making sure that there are specific enough Recovery Plans for habitat conservation. They need some prioritization of protecting habitat to the best of their abilities. They are coming into road closure season, starting March 15, 2020.

Kugler reported that there are some changes to the closures, including no human use area in Signal Peak. They are moving the signs to WCU property so people see it. He will be meeting with BLM to talk about mud season closure in Hartman Rocks. Wenum reported that the antler collection season will end April 30, 2020.

Seward reported that Tasha Blecha will be back again for lek counts. He is looking for more volunteers to help with the counts. Sandy Guerrieri contacted him and stated that the season is starting off early, with the 30 males at her location. Still expecting early April to be the peak.

COMMITTEE AND SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Tim Kugler and Peter Caloger were reappointed to the committee.

CHEATGRASS EFFORTS UPDATE AND FILM

Liebl showed the film that he was able to produce with the funding from the committee.

MONITORING METHODS AND POGRAMS

Miller, natural resource specialist and monitoring coordinator with the BLM, gave the presentation on the monitoring program. Primary monitoring methods is the AIM (Assessment, Inventory and Monitoring). It is a national standard used in Gunnison. This year they are revisiting the plots that they went to five years ago, with the same points and will also add points. They have been consistently funded each year and have a lot support from the State and National levels.

Peterson asked whether all of the data is compatible to the Gunnison Basin CCA and in addition to it. Miller reported that they are collecting the data to respond to the structural habitat guidelines and additional data that is responding to utilization level and height level requirements.

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DISCUSSION ON PRIORITIZING PARCELS FOR CONSERVATION

Pelletier and Seward went over prioritizing parcels for conservation. Seward reported that a lot of the information is confidential and showed buffers etc. and parcels that were greater than 30 acres and within the quarter mile area. Out of the 116 parcels, 44 of them already have some form of conservation in place or protective covenants. There are only 86 landowners that they are working with, reducing the required outreach for habitat protection. Further discussion followed with the Committee.

I & E SUBCOMMITTEE- UPDATES AND DISCUSSION

Magee reported that their group that has been working on cheatgrass has a meeting March 24, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. They changed the name to Gunnison Basin Sagebrush Ecosystem Alliance**.** Magee has been talking to Ann at the Gunnison Gallery about the mural project and they have an artist that they think will be good but they are still looking for a wall. They may have access to the Blackstock Bistro wall, which isn't ideal. They are still looking at other locations. Ann would like them to pursue the wall at Gunnison Carpet, where the telescope is now on the West end of town. Jonathan was interested in doing to the water towers but there are a lot of logistical headaches. The artist from Florida that contacted them last wanted to do something for the Gunnison Sage-grouse, so they worked with HICCA and helped raise funds for the wetland meadow work by selling prints of a Gunnison sage-grouse drawing. They would like to sell them to help raise funds for the I&E committee. Since Ann doesn't want to sell them at her gallery, since she only wants local artists in her gallery, she was willing to do a show at the gallery in the fall to help raise funds. Magee will contact some old photographers to put some of their work in the show and other local artists. They would like to do another Summit next year in February of next year. Navy requested that topics for the next Summit be discussed 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.

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

ADJOURN: The March 11, 2020 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee adjourned at 12:07 PM.

Minutes Prepared By: Rebecca Ricord, Administrative Assistant

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