GUNNISON BASIN SAGE-GROUSE STRATEGIC COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 14, 2012

The November 14, 2012 Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee meeting was held in the Commissioners' Meeting Room in the Courthouse at 200 E. Virginia, Gunnison CO 81230.

Committee Members Present:
Voting:
Ken Stahlnecker, Chairperson, National Park Service (NPS)
J Wenum, Vice-Chairperson, Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
Chris Bove, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Regular
Elinor Laurie, Saguache County Alternate
Sue Navy, High Country Citizens' Alliance (HCCA)
Greg Peterson, Gunnison County Stockgrowers' Association (GCSA)
Phil Chamberland, Gunnison County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)
Matt Vasquez, United States Forest Service (USFS) Alternate
Peter Caloger, Public At-Large
Eric Ferchau, At Large, Development Community
David Wiens, At-large Recreation Community
Charlie Sharp, United States Fish and Wildlife Service Alternate (USFWS)
Liz With, Natural Resources Conservation Service Alternate

Non-voting:
Lee Spann, Public At-Large Alternate

Staff Members Present:
Jim Cochran, Gunnison County Wildlife Conservation Coordinator
Bobbie Lucero, Administrative Assistant III

Others present as listed in text.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Stahlnecker called the November 14, 2012 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee to order at 10:03 am.

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

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

AGENDA APPROVAL: The hang gliders were unable to attend the meeting; the Committee agreed to replace the agenda item with a discussion on Power Lines.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 17, 2012 MEETING MINUTES: **Moved** by Navy to accept the October 17, 2012 meeting minutes as amended, seconded by Chamberland. Motion carried.

IN THE AUDIENCE:

- Angela Buchanan, County Attorney's Office
- Nathan Seward, CPW
- Kristy Murphy, BLM
- Allen Moores, Gunnison County

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/REPORTS:

LAND PRESERVATION FUND: Navy reported to the Committee that Action Item #5 is completed. The Land Preservation Fund was passed with 81% of the vote.

CITY OF GUNNISON; NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION PLAN: The Committee reviewed an email in the packet from the City of Gunnison Community Development Director Steve Westbay. The Committee discussed that Westbay is inquiring if the Committee is interested in the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. The draft plan will be presented to the Gunnison Trails Commission in January 2013. Cochran recommended that the Committee attend the presentation in January.

CPW: Wenum announced that Griffin has been directed to work on a sage-grouse project and may not be available for the next few months. Wenum informed the Committee that Tom Spezze, CPW Regional Manager, retired the end of September. Wenum informed the Committee that the Assistant Regional Manager is currently in an acting capacity, until the position is filled.

POWER LINES: Jenny Nehring introduced Assistant Field Manager Paul Tigen and Biologist Alisa Ratcliff from the Monte Vista BLM office. The Committee was informed that the power line from Salida to Gunnison will need to be replaced because the existing line does not comply with Department of Energy. The power line has to be replaced within 1 year. The power lines need to be upgraded with new lidar technology and comply with the distance between the ground and slack in the line. There was a discussion that the power line runs through sage-grouse habitat. New holes will have to be drilled, sage brush will have to be mowed or bladed under the right of ways, and predator diversion devices will be installed. Tigen informed the Committee that they have been speaking with Excel Energy to discuss the procedure to be in compliance.

GUNNISON SAGE-GROUSE FESTIVAL: The Committee discussed the time and effort that is contributed to launch the Sage-grouse Festival. The Committee discussed the benefits to holding the Sage-grouse Festival and the impact it is having in the community. There was discussion that it may be beneficial to hire an events planner for the 2013 Festival. There was discussion that last year's turnout was very large and the Festival is grasping the attention of the public, and educating the importance of conservation and protection for the sage-grouse.

The Committee discussed if the Festival was meeting their objectives, and the desire that the Festival become independent on funding sources. The funds generated from the Summit in 2011 became the seed for funds for the 2012 Festival. There were fewer sponsors/contributors for funding in 2012. The Committee discussed that the Mitigation Fund is a potential funding source for the Festival because it was established for education. Sharp mentioned that he will

look into USFWS Preventing Extinction funds. The Committee discussed it might be possible to use funds from the Mitigation Fund for hiring an events planner.

Next meeting the Committee will discuss if they would like to request money from the Mitigation Fund. The Committee pondered the possibility of making this an internship opportunity for Western State College University (WSCU). Wiens will research the internship details with WSCU. The Committee designated April 13, 2013 for the 2013 Sage-grouse Festival. Wiens will work on securing WSCU for the event location.

MOSQUITO CONTROL INSECTICIDE IMPACTS ON SAGE-GROUSE: Navy commented on an article in the Gunnison Times regarding the insecticide used for mosquito control. The article claims the insecticide killed off a large number of stone flies. Navy inquired if the insecticide may be impacting the sage-grouse as well. The Board of County Commissioners will be discussing this issue at their meeting on 12/11/2012. Wenum informed the Committee that the CPW will be attending the work session. Wenum informed the Committee that there are specific areas of Gunnison that are aerially sprayed, and one of the applications is performed right before 4th of July and Cattlemen's events. Each year after the aerial application CPW received reports from public that there have been aquatic impacts. Last year there was noticeable impact to fish from the result of the stone flies. Wenum commented that the same product, Permethrin, has been used every year. There is question to why and what may have been done differently, and this is what will be discussed at the work session.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SURVEY: Western Governors Association performed a local government survey this past summer. CPW performed a local survey for the Greater Sage-grouse this past September. This survey is to determine what regulations may be appropriate for being renewed for sage-grouse conservation. CPW was asked if they would perform a Gunnison Sage-grouse survey. There is a new employee that is in the process of renewing the survey to be specific to the Gunnison Sage-grouse. The goal is to receive responses to the survey and provide the responses to the USFWS during the 60 day response period.

LOW STANDARD RURAL ROADS: Caloger discussed with the Committee how to maintain low standard rural roads, and what you do to bring the road up to optimal performance for water harvesting. Caloger inquired if the Committee would be interested in holding a workshop to upgrade existing roads to maintain water runoff. To maintain water runoff the middle of the road would need to raise high enough to capture water runoff, but low enough to not high center your vehicle. The high middle of the road will divert water to an area that can handle the runoff. Maintaining the water runoff will improve habitat next to the road. Cochran and Caloger will contact groups that may be interested in participating in the workshop.

GUNNISON BASIN DEER MANAGEMENT PLANS: Wenum gave a presentation on the Gunnison Basin Deer Management Plan. He handed out executive summaries to the Committee. Wenum informed the Committee that CPW is updating the Data Analysis Unit Plan, and it is intended to be a 10 year plan. He informed the Committee that CPW collects an annual census aerially, along with harvesting surveys to determine the harvest for the year. The current model used to determine population is outdated and not as accurate as newer models. Wenum explained that the population models are just an estimate of population. He informed the Committee that in September the draft plan was created, and they are currently in the

comment phase. The CPW would like to have the plan approved in January 2013, so that the new model can be used for license setting for the Fall 2013 hunting season.

PREDATOR CONTROL: Moores informed the Committee that he researched adding the Committee to the Gunnison County permit, and it was not a good idea because it opens Gunnison County to liability issues. He informed the Committee that Dave Moreno suggested that the permit be held by someone else, other than Gunnison County. The Committee discussed that the CPW held the permit for Miramonte. The Committee discussed the letter that was sent in the past to Griffin. Stahlnecker commented he does not recall this letter being distributed to the Steering Committee at their latest meeting. Spann requested this discussion be added to the next meeting's agenda, and discuss the role of this Committee.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

Date	*Time*	*Notes*
December 19, 2012	10-2	Regular Meeting

ADJOURN: **MOVED** by Stahlnecker to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The November 14, 2012 meeting of the Gunnison Basin Sage-grouse Strategic Committee adjourned at 2:34 pm.

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL:

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Ken Stahlnecker, Chairperson

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Greg Peterson, Secretary

Minutes Prepared By:

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Bobbie Lucero, Administrative Assistant III