

**Monticello/Dove Creek Gunnison Sage-grouse LWG
Meeting Minutes
October 18, 2010
Courthouse, Monticello, Utah**

Attendees

**Guy Wallace, UDWR
Todd Black, USU
Terry Messmer, USU
Jim Keyes, USU
Sue Bellagamba, TNC
Chris Kloster, CDOW
LeRoy Meade, UDWR**

By Teleconference

**Dave Olsen, UDWR
Jason Robinson, UDWR**

Agenda

1. Review of previous minutes – Terry Messmer

Feb 2010 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved

2. Status Review – Chris Kloster

Gunnison sage-grouse designated a candidate species – level 2. Annual status review will be held August 2011. The status was warranted but precluded. At this time no lawsuit has been filed.

3. NFWF Proposal – Chris Kloster

The CDOW has received a signed National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) contract and the money. The CDOW will use a RFP and call for proposals based on priorities established by the range wide prioritization committee. Guy Wallace represents Utah. The call for proposals has not been released.

Terry asked where the priorities are published. Chris stated they would be added to the proposal notice sent out.

\$400,000 is available through NFWF and the CDOW has set aside \$400,000.

Jim asked what can the money be used for?

Chris stated – cost-share on CRP in core area as a joint proposal with Utah as a joint working group project. Chris suggested warehousing seed and providing the seed.

Guy stated the problem is they (Utah) are already buying seed. Guy suggested the possibility of adding new species mix.

Terry reviewed the 2009-2010 LWG plan of work. The priorities align with the range-wide plans

CDOW is purchasing a drill to seed sagebrush. A proposal to NFWF might be to buy a drill. Leroy discussed the applications for using the drills. The DWR flies the seed on. It costs \$4-\$12 an acre.

Chris stated there will be a proposal on the table to do a study and operational program on predator control. This would be a possible cost-share item under the NFWF.

Guy asked Jason how the WS predator control funding have been funded. It has been funded through the Habitat Council. It would not apply to Colorado. Jason will follow up with Michael Linnell.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1. Chris will provide Terry with the NFWF RFP and he will distribute it to the LWG**
- 2. Jason will contact Mike Linnell to determine if Utah WS can work in Colorado to address predation issues in Dove Creek**

4. CRP Status – Doug Christensen/Don Andrews

Guy reviewed the Utah CRP sign-ups. Everything that was submitted was accepted. The total is around 25,000 acres. New cropland was bid in. Guy discussed maintenance issues in CRP. It is not finalized as to what will qualify as maintenance.

Sue mentioned that other will come up next year. The Hines property is an example. Most of landowner that will be eligible are interested.

Grayson-Redds property was sold. It was not bid into CRP. The total acreage was 960. It is in the process of being plowed. It was previous CRP. The current landowner is Fred Snyder.

Chris reviewed Dove Creek. Everything that was offered was accepted. Given the signups probably over 10,000 acres. Most of the new acres were picked under the SAFWE program.

For new acres, Chris and Guy are reviewing seed mixtures. There are broad seed requirements. In CO there is requirement for shrubs.

5. Conservation Easement Updates - Sue Bellagamba and Guy Wallace

Sue and Guy are continuing to work on the easements. Sue reviewed requirements; willing landowner, no-CRP, and mineral clauses. They identified 4 properties. One was plowed, 1 entered into CRP, 1 is pending CRP (is out for the time being), and the other is property surrounded by BLM.

Sue asked the group to broaden the areas of concern. TNC would like to sign up 3-4 at one time. Todd suggested looking at the core areas and connecting habitat. Guy said most of these are BLM. Jim asked about looking for potential property owners. Guy and Jim discussed some property owners. Sue presented a map with possible properties. Sue and Guy will continue to look for other properties.

Chris stated they had 2 proposals. Both were offered but not funded. One approached NFWF on their own. The site is 1100 acres. This one will be submitted to CDOW NFWF prioritization committee.

Sue said one of the biggest issues is mineral rights. We need some type of plan that would allow subsurface development with minimal surface disturbance. Sue has been reviewing the appendix in Wyoming regarding suitable stipulations to mitigate the effects of energy development.

6. NFWF Pre-proposal

Terry reviewed the proposal that we have been invited to submit. Terry will submit. He will revise it to include shrub/forb mixtures and add CO. Terry will clarify with FSA if it could be applied on a large scale. Terry will follow up with Bob Newhall to see what he did previously.

ACTION ITEM: Terry will work with Jonathon Paulding, USU CNR development director to submit a full NFWF proposal. A copy of the pre-proposal is attached. The total cost of the proposal may change based on administrative overhead requirements. We anticipate the cost of the project over 4 years will be in the range of \$200,000. The match will come from waived overhead and the cost of doing the treatments. Funds to do the work may be solicited under the RFP. LWG members may be asked to review the NFWF proposal.

7. Other Business

Chris provided an update of CDOW reorganization. The CDOW subsequently will hire a coordinator for GUSG/Greater sage-grouse.

Chris updated the group on the translocations. Brought 15 birds to Dove Creek this fall and 15 next spring, with 30 more next year. Of the 15 released this fall 13 are alive, one in Utah. The birds are remaining close to the release sites.

Tony Apa is finishing his handbook on raising Gunnison sage-grouse. Chris said he would provide a copy to the group.

8. Next Meeting Date

January 19, 2011 - 1 pm Dove Creek

January 19, 2011 – 6:30-8:30 pm - Landowners meeting in Monticello, UT

ACTION ITEM: Terry Messmer will invite Renee Chi, USFWS, to come in to discuss the Gunnison sage-grouse decision

Submitted by

Terry Messmer