

Minutes

Utah State Grazing Advisory Board

Utah Dept. of Agriculture and Food, Salt Lake City, Utah/Google Hangouts Meeting
April 14, 2021, 10:00 AM

Attendance

Board Members:

Jay Tanner-Chairman, Northwest Region Representative
Darrell Johnson-At Large Producer
Butch Jensen-Southeast Region Representative
Tyler Thompson-Acting DNR Representative
Bill Butcher-UCC Representative

Steve Osguthorpe-At Large Producer
Arlin Hughes-Southwest Region Representative
Calvin Crandall-Wasatch Region Representative
Will Talbot-Central Region Representative

UGIP Staff and Partners:

Craig Buttars-UDAF Commissioner
Kelly Pehrson-UDAF Deputy Commissioner
Troy Forrest-UGIP Program Manager
Taylor Payne-UGIP Coordinator
Jan Reinhart-UGIP Biologist
Redge Johnson-PLPCO
Terry Padilla-USFS
Clint Hill-UGIP Coordinator
Ruger Carter-USU Extension
Shane Green-NRCS
Nicole Hanna-UDAF

Ashley Longmore-UGIP Coordinator
Tom Tippets-UGIP Coordinator
Ron Torgerson-SITLA
Nathan Roberts-UGIP Coordinator
Randy Marshall-UGIP Coordinator
Staci Williams-Jones-UGIP Biologist
Terrell Thayne-UGIP Coordinator
Kerry Schwartz-BLM
Abbie Jossie-BLM
Jim Bowcutt-DEQ-DWQ

Minutes

- Will Talbot motioned to approve the minutes from the April 15, 2020 meeting. Calvin Crandall seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

UDAF Report

- Craig Buttars is the newly appointed commissioner of UDAF.
- In the last legislative session, GIP received an additional \$1 million for water development and drought mitigation.

FY22 Budget/Regional Project Rankings

- Troy Forrest gave an overview of the FY22 budget. GIP received just over \$2 million for projects, 10% of which is allocated toward monitoring. Additionally, \$2 million for water development projects that has been allocated to WRI in the past was moved into the Rangeland Improvement Account, and GIP received an additional \$1 million in one-time money for water development and drought mitigation.
- Troy proposed that the board allocate \$100,000 to predator control. He also proposed allocating \$120,000 to the final infrastructure projects on Three Creeks. The remaining funds would be divided among the regions for range projects and water development projects.
- There is \$1.5 billion coming to the state for COVID-19 relief from the federal government. GIP requested \$1.1 million of those funds to allocate to additional projects.
- See page 4 for the funding allocations proposed by the regional GIP boards.
- Troy presented the ranking process for water development fund projects to the board. The Wasatch Region board had discussed removing the maintenance question since all projects received those points. Terry Padilla would like to incorporate ideas from this ranking in the Regional Strategic Range Improvement Action Plan and the Range Improvement Handbook supplement.

- Calvin Crandall motioned to approve the FY22 budget. If additional COVID-19 relief funds become available, projects that were not funded during initial ranking by the regional boards would be funded. Darrell Johnson seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Taylor Grazing Funds

- UDAF can no longer use Taylor Grazing Funds to pay Public Lands Council dues. A directive from the legislature would be needed to continue to do this. The board supports continuing to use these funds to pay the dues. UDAF staff will explore other ways to do this.

PLPCO Report

- The boundaries of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments will most likely be restored to their original sizes. The State wants to keep language in the management plans that allows for active management and keeping roads open.
- The Shared Stewardship program will allow for large-scale projects on national forests with a partnership among Utah Forestry Fire and State Lands, PLPCO, and US Forest Service.
- Jay Tanner mentioned that the State needs to be proactive in looking for ways to quantify carbon sequestration related to grazing on public lands.

DNR/WRI Report

- Mike Fowlks retired as director of the Division of Wildlife Resources, and Rory Reynolds is currently acting. Forestry Fire and State Lands is currently looking to fill director and deputy director positions.
- Tyler Thompson gave an update on the Watershed Restoration Initiative. The program reseeded over 50 fires this year, and new fires are already starting. There have been 155 proposals submitted for FY22, with about a dozen partnerships with GIP and UDAF water development funds. There are also 11 Shared Stewardship projects which are forestry-related projects.

BLM Report

- Kerry Schwartz reported that BLM is continuing to work on water rights issues on the Three Creeks project. Grazing reductions on BLM allotments due to drought are voluntary at this time. There are a few horse gathers scheduled for this summer. Jay Tanner requested that the BLM continue to communicate with the regional GIP boards about projects using Taylor Grazing funds.

USFS Report

- Terry Padilla reported that the US Forest Service is currently working on drought adjustment determinations, which should be completed within the next few weeks. Annual Operating Instruction meetings are currently underway. Steve Beverlin is retiring as Director of Natural Resources, and Elise Boeke will be acting until the position is filled. The Forest Service is requesting an increase in funding for their wild horse and burro program.

SITLA Report

- Ron Torgerson reported that SITLA increased grazing fees \$0.30/AUM according to their formula. They are working on getting land exchanges in place in anticipation of the Bears Ears National Monument boundary change.

NRCS Report

- Shane Green reported that the National Grazing Lands Coalition will be holding their conference December 6-9 in South Carolina.

DWQ Report

- Jim Bowcutt reported that Kim Shelley is the new Executive Director for the Department of Environmental Quality. DWQ has been working with GIP on water development projects that affect the San Juan river using funding that became available due to the Gold King Mine spill.

Other Issues

- Rex Sacco may need to resign from the board. Lowell Braxton also resigned, and the board needs to fill his position representing the oil and gas industry.
- Bison are still a major issue in Range Creek and on the Tavaputs Plateau.
- Highway 18 has become very busy, and there are a lot of deer and cattle being hit by cars. The right of way needs to be fenced on allotments that the highway passes through. Troy will find a contact at UDOT that may be able to help. Tyler suggested contacting Kevin Bunnell or Gary Bezzant with the DWR.

USU Extension Report

- The Central Utah Grazing Expo will be held in September. The tour associated with the expo will be held May 24 in Box Elder County.
- The Sustainable Grazing Institute will be held June 7-9 in Panguitch.
- Extension received a grant to study drought. The study will look into the lessons learned from the last drought and how producers can prepare for these conditions in the future. They will be developing tools and other information to help producers, and holding educational workshops next spring.
- Extension also received a grant for Young Ranchers workshops.

Calvin Crandall motioned to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.

GIP Proposed Project Budget FY 2022

Ongoing Appropriations

Rangeland Improvement Account	\$1,500,500.00
Albrecht Ongoing	\$500,000.00
Monitoring 10%	-\$200,050.00
Water Development Funds	\$2,000,000.00
	-\$200,000.00
One Time Water Development	\$1,000,000.00
Total to Be Allocated to Projects	\$4,600,450.00
10% over allocate	\$460,000.00
Max to allocate	\$5,060,450.00

Money used for Monitoring Program

For Monitoring Personnel

Proposed Allocations	
State Board	\$0.00
State Board Predator Control	\$100,000.00
State Board Three Creeks	\$120,000.00
Northwest Region	\$295,947.00
Northwest Water Development	\$398,976.50
Northeast Region	\$210,000.00
Northeast Water Development	\$167,953.50
Wasatch Region	\$285,000.00
Wasatch Water Development	\$674,079.80
Central Region	\$324,127.00
Central Water Development	\$91,570.50
Southwest Region	\$290,000.00
Southwest Water Development	\$602,214.00
Southeast Region	\$290,820.00
Southeast Water Development	\$1,147,142.70
	\$4,997,831.00

Unfunded Projects by Region	
Northwest	\$205,168.00
Central	\$228,955.00
Wasatch	\$182,905.50
Southeast	\$129,500.60
Southwest	\$259,237.00
Northeast	\$95,215.63
	\$1,100,981.73