

Platte River Recreation Access Sub-committee Meeting Minutes

April 6, 2017

Attendance- Matt Rabbe (chair), Justin Haahr (NGPC), Andrew Furman (NGPC), Bruce Sackett (EDO), Jerry Kenny (Executive Director), Tim Smith (on the phone, Crane Trust)

- 1) General Comment- Overall very positive year. Very little issues. PRRA should continue being highlighted as a beneficial component of the PRRIP as the PRRIP seeks to move toward an extension and beyond. DOI Secretary Ryan Zinke supports public lands and access to them, is an avid outdoorsman, and the PRRA will continue to be viewed as a positive component and interface with the American public.
- 2) Review surveys
 - a. Rifle- Generally very little conflict in 2016. One user expressed issue with being ticketed and kicked off PRRA lands for trespassing (will not be allowed back).
 - i. Land owners (e.g. BELF) expressed concern with protecting crops from depredation- are enough does being harvested? Can we improve that? Rabbe indicated over the course of the year, more does are harvested on PRRIP lands than bucks. Local areas may hold a lot of deer but aren't hunted- specifically, the BELF ground could be enrolled into the PRRA and the crop fields in question could have more deer harvested off them, reducing depredation. Bruce will suggest this option to BELF.
 - b. Non-Rifle- Use was steady overall from previous years. Satisfaction is high, positive feedback.
- 3) Review Public Comment Letters received- Two letters were received in advance of the public meeting- both very positive and thankful for PRRA and opportunity.
- 4) Public Comment meeting comments- Four individuals showed up- audio is available on the LAC website. All four were supportive and thankful for PRRA. Question was raised whether they would object to modifying the method of soliciting comments. Specifically, we suggested we are considering having a open public comment period where comments could be mailed or electronically sent but there would be no in-person meeting. The participants indicated they would have no issue with not having a public meeting unless there was an increase in opposing or negative commenters that sent in letters. Those present indicated that they continue showing up only to provide the other side of the story to counter participants in opposition. Sub-committee recommends considering on a case-by-case annual basis whether a in-person meeting is needed. If significant issues arise throughout the year or it is believed an increase in opposition is occurring, the meeting will be held in person.
- 5) Review currently enrolled properties and any proposed additions
 - a. Subcommittee recommends the addition of one property- the Deboer tract with 2 users allowed per day. This site will be open to all uses except deer hunting.
- 6) Modifications to existing properties- All other properties continue to be enrolled as they are.
- 7) Other Recommended Changes

- a. Rabbe- the Service revised its whooping crane dates which were the basis for closure dates in the PRRRA public access policy. The Service will be updating these during the process of the formal consultation for the PRRIP extension. The current dates FWS uses for project proponents are March 6-April 29 and October 9-November 15. Current PRRIP closure dates are March 23-May 10 and October 1-November 15. PRRRA could update its dates now in the policy or wait until the PRRIP extension biological opinion gets finalized and has updated dates in the RPM's and terms and conditions.
- b. Haahr- We continue getting comments on the perception of users that people reserve dates and don't use them. We have investigated all possible ways to address this in the past and explored different options again. The committee still feels this isn't a big issue and that there isn't a good way to fix it if it were. The committee agreed to add a "Q&A" question/response related to this topic on the website so the users understand that we have considered it but don't believe its something that can/should be modified.
- c. Website update- Users do not like Silverlight due to its incompatibility with mobile devices. NGPC is continuing to explore other website options but the subcommittee concluded- no matter what website and whether it is mobile device compatible, the PRRRA users will always be required to have a hard copy paper print out of their signed reservation permission slip.