



Platte Valley Habitat Partnership

Workshop 2
June 22, 2012



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Overview for June 22nd Meeting

- Summary of Previous Meeting and outcomes.
- New Information: PVHP Website, WGFD budget allocation for location and lunch costs, other.
- Create a common understanding of Platte Valley Mule Deer Habitat
- Exploratory Discussion for Habitat Plan Objectives
- Process fine-tuning
- Logistics for July 20th field trip and other next steps.



Situation Assessment –

Main Issues

- Habitat protection in all its many forms (need undisturbed areas; better monitoring of plant species; land fragmentation)
- Animal population dynamics, including elk numbers, predators, and whitetail deer.
- Adequate forage especially in transition zones.
- Periods of drought and hard winters – weather related.

Consequences regarding not addressing habitat.

- Mule deer herd would decline.
- Some stakeholders are not convinced habitat focus would make a difference to deer/fawning numbers.

Would you be willing to participate in this collaborative effort?

- Yes (all stakeholders)

Situation Assessment

Reasons for Participating in PVHP

- Love of place and wanting to keep its wildlife populations viable for future generations.
- Feeling that mule deer are an essential species in the Platte Valley.
- If you're concerned about the problem, don't sit out on the process.

Situation Assessment

Best Possible Outcome – After 1 year

- Have everyone still at the table.
- Improved communication and finding common ground.
- Habitat plan (90%).
- Identify uncertainties.
- Find measures to track change in habitat conditions and mule deer population.
- Other

Situation Assessment –

Best Possible Outcome after 10 years

- Identify real problems and doing something about them (plan and action).
- Land management agencies, WGFD and private landowners find ways to cooperate on a large scale.
- Improved forage conditions.
- A ten percent improvement rate in overall fawn survival.

Worst Possible Outcome

- Important stakeholders leave the table.
- We become another Pinedale.

Situation Assessment – Necessary factors for effective process

- Stakeholders remain at the table.
- Stakeholders' willingness to be open, listen and learn.
- A strong learning component and looking at all the science.
- A leader/moderator who ensures the process stays on track and everyone is heard.
- Transparency is important.

Stakeholders who need to be at the table:

Everyone but especially private landowners.

Collaboration and Collaborative Learning



Fundamental Paradox

“People want to have a voice in public decisions that affect their lives but how can that voice be meaningful if the terms, concepts and technical trade-offs are new or distrusted by them?”

(Daniels and Walker, 2001)



Collaboration

- Collaboration: To work together on a joint intellectual effort (Webster's). To “co-labor”.
- International Association for Public Participation:”Lead agency works directly with other agencies and interested participants to work through issues and seek agreement on as many issues as possible. Agency agrees to implement any consensus-based recommendations.

What is Collaborative Learning?

Collaboration is an iterative process and Collaborative Learning is the mechanism that facilitates each iteration.

- A framework and set of techniques intended for multi-stakeholder learning and decision situations. Everyone learns from everyone.
- It means designing and implementing events (meetings, field trips, etc.) to promote creative thought, constructive debate and effective implementation of proposals.
- Appropriate when there are multiple stakeholders who are interdependent and independent.
- Suitable for NRM situations that contain :
 - a. conflict and
 - b. complexity (wicked).

Characteristics of Collaborative Learning Process

- ❖ Stresses improvement rather than solution.
- ❖ Focuses on concerns and interests not positions.
- ❖ Encourages interrelated systems thinking rather than linear thinking.
- ❖ Recognizes that considerable learning (about science issues and value differences) will have to occur before implementable improvements are possible.
- ❖ Emphasizes that learning and progress occur through communication and negotiation interaction.

This can work if:

- We can create an equitable, legitimate process that serves as our agreed method to create a habitat plan.
- We take an iterative approach. Need to create a first iteration of a habitat plan that starts exploring science, starts creating monitoring measures, starts to create agreement on effective projects to improve habitat.
- Don't reinvent the wheel: use a process that works, look at existing data (USFS, BLM, Conservation District, WGFD, UW).
- One outcome is that real action is taken on the ground to serve as demonstration sites, in summer 2013.
- The process is rooted in the principles of Collaboration and Collaborative Learning.
- Each stakeholder will use respect for the process and each other's viewpoints through active listening and active participation.
- This will require time, energy, resources and commitment.

Other thoughts:

- Opportunity to learn from the past and move into the future, in relation to communications, process and methods/management.
- Need for flexibility, adaptability.
- Consider that there is a great deal of uncertainty – this is an exercise in reduction of uncertainty, not always of creating absolutes.
- My relationship with WGFD:
 - # 1 Priority: I am responsible to this process and to this group.
 - # 2 Priority: Work with WGFD to allow this process and this group's work to integrate into their processes and deliberations.
- Mule deer needs (the original incentive for this process) will primarily inform this first habitat plan. Funds are connected to the collaborative guidance created in the plan for WGFD and other partners to act on. Other species may be included now and in the future.

PVHP Process to create a Habitat Plan





Does the Group want to work together for a year to learn about habitat issues in the Platte Valley and find agreement on strategies to improve habitat for 2013 and beyond?

Decision-Making Method

Before the group decided on process, we discussed a simple decision-making methodology to discover the level of agreement for any aspect of PVHP's future deliberations using thumbs:

- ❖ Thumbs up – the participant agrees to what is proposed
- ❖ Thumbs level – the participant may be able to live with what is proposed but needs more information.
- ❖ Thumbs down – the participant cannot agree to what is proposed.
- ❖ If there is even one thumb down, whatever is proposed cannot (yet) be enacted by the group. If there is a mixture of thumbs up and level, more discussion is encouraged to allow more learning, and possibly more agreement to be established. A majority of thumbs up, with some level, none down, means the proposal can move forward.

Outcomes of Workshop 1, May 18, 2012

1. Create a Platte Valley Habitat Partnership that serves as a long-term, place-based collaborative effort that learns about habitat issues for mule deer and other species in the Platte Valley and agrees on methods and projects that will improve habitat. (Situation Assessment).
2. Create a first iteration of a habitat plan, which serves as a living document and a tool that documents the learning over time from project implementations and monitoring using adaptive management to discover what works, what does not work and new initiatives undertaken as a result.
3. Use the Process proposed by Jessica with amendment to create the first Plan. (Thumbs up, one thumb level).

Platte Valley Habitat Plan Collaborative Process As Amended by PVHP June 22, 2012

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Gain common understanding of issues, definitions and process.	Collaborative Learning: Mule Deer Nutritional Needs, Vegetation Ecological Dynamics, Potential Improvement Actions	Determine what steps PVHP wants to take to address habitat improvement in Plan #1	Determine Monitoring Variables to track change. Monitoring logistics. Create Adaptive Management Feedback Loops in PVHP	Draft Plan Review Publish Plan May 2013 New: Step 6 Implement Plan and Collaboratively Adapt
August	December	February	Late March	

Guidelines

1. We all have an interest in the Platte Valley and its wildlife and will use respectful behavior.
2. It's okay to disagree.
3. We will not interrupt others or distract others with side conversations.
4. We will seek to understand before seeking to be understood.
5. We will all participate in making this a successful meeting – no one dominates or withholds information.
6. We will follow the agenda and honor time limits.
7. We welcome all ideas and comments that build or clarify ideas etc., but not negativity.
8. If possible, we will turn off cell phones, laptops and pagers. If we can't, we will take the call outside the room.



Next meeting:

Create common understanding of habitat conditions, what has been done before, what worked and what did not work (unintended consequences).

- Locations to visit
- Lunch
- Transportation
- Times
- Readings

August Meeting:

- Date
- Pam Motley from Uncompahgre Plateau will present
- Decide on First Plan's objectives
- Decide what learning is necessary over next three months.

