

FINAL - Minutes – Teton County Wildlife Advisory Committee, Special Meeting 4/26/23

Committee Members in Attendance: Jeff Klausmann, Kathy O'Neil, Tamara Sperber, Mike Lien, Linda Unland, Wray Landon

Commissioner in Attendance: Michael Whitfield

The meeting was called to order at 3:32

The purpose of this Special Meeting was to resolve the final comments on the Wildlife Habitat Assessment document; to take a vote; and to send this final draft to the BOCC.

It was noted that this document will become policy. Jade Krueger is hoping to implement this as a policy with the hope of getting it codified. The committee agreed, for now, to present it as a document until the time it becomes policy.

The committee reviewed the Wildlife Habitat Assessment(WHA) document in its entirety and made remaining edits. Following is a synopsis of the discussion points:

- Considerable discussion was around the inclusion of stream channels throughout the document, as streams should be understood to be Indicator Habitats and should be clearly defined. It was agreed that it is important to make certain that streams outside the NRO(Natural Resources Overlay) are also captured as important habitats. Mike Lien will provide appropriate wording for this in the WHA document.
- Commissioner Whitfield indicated that there is language in the Code for wetlands and flood plains, but felt that it would be a good idea to ammend the NRO to make sure these habitats are included. He pointed out that we know wildlife is using this habitat. Mike Lien agreed to map that out this week and work with Rob Marin on this. Jeff added that he would leave this up to Rob and Mike, indicating that adding streams as an indicator habitat will also address stream resources.
- Verbiage was added clarify the process if there is a possible conflict between the applicant and consultant. "Consultant shall disclose to the county any conflicts of interest with the applicant" was added.
- Jeff thanked Tamara for her work on the Check List piece of the document.
- Stream Habitats are to be included on the Indicator Habitats list.
- Jade approved the Flow Chart.

- It should be notated that the Vegetative Appendix will be added at a later time.

A motion was made to approve the document by Linda. Wray seconded it. All approved.

Next Steps:

- To get on BOCC agenda to present this document and walk through it with them so that they can hand it off to the county
- Suggest that county send out a press release about this public meeting and the WHA
- Host an event to provide a formal introduction of the WHA to the community. It was thought that providing a sample of a WHA on the website might be beneficial so that the community can see real life examples
- Plan targeted outreach to developers, consultants, realtors and all people directly or tangentially who would be involved in this process

Next Projects:

- To make the community aware of how to live with wildlife
- Produce a document on this
- Host a Wildlife Speaker Series that the county can sponsor once/month to get people involved in what it is we want to preserve (Commissioner Whitfield to send notes on this to Jeff Klausmann)
- Discussed when to begin this – summer or fall?
- Could we work with partners in helping to organize this?
- It was pointed out that this discussion should never end. We must recognize that this needs to be a continual discussion
- Kathy O'Neil suggested making an educational video that could be viewed at the GeoTourism Center or on YouTube
- Get the Citizen Science community involved in this. Reach out to Renee and JHWF
- A Bio Blast/ Bio Blitz
- Do we still need to invite the BearWise group to a meeting? They are presenting tonight to the community, and it was agreed that we would see what their presentation will cover, as they appear to be quite well organized. Jeff asked the questions: can we define an overlay that is bear habitat based; do we try to get trash containment regulations

As the first Wednesday is a week away, it was decided that the committee would delay the May meeting until June. Some internal tasks were assigned:

- Kathy and Linda to explore ideas for a living with wildlife publication, published by county but in collaboration with partners
- Get Renee's perspective on establishing a Citizen's Science program in Teton County Idaho
- Recreate notes on the Speakers Series

- Reach out to Fish and Game for help with Series
- We should make a clear tie through all of this to the Wildlife Overlay map – to send a clear message that we are trying to conserve wildlife
- Other suggestions: Committee sponsorship of a Master Naturalist Program(Kathy); form an outreach team for work with the Sandhill Cranes(Tamara)

Jeff directed all of us to do research on the above to “fill out” these ideas before the June meeting. Linda will ask Jade if there is a time that the committee could get on the BOCC schedule to present the WHA document. Kathy is sending Jade both a pdf and a Word document. Kathy will alert Dan Reyes that we are postponing the May meeting.

There was a motion to adjourn by Tamara. Seconded by Wray.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:46 pm