



## MINUTES

### Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition

#### Board Conference Call

Wed., April 15, 2009

9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. CST

#### Present on call:

Jim Carr

Lynn Myers

Rod Christen

Sherry Vinton

Scott Cotton

Paul Swanson

Dana Larsen

Bob Broweleit

Twila Phillips

Tamara Choat

Chairman Jim Carr called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. CST. Lynn Myers moved to accept the minutes from the March 9, 2009, meeting. Sherry Vinton seconded. Motion passed. Sherry gave the Treasurer's Report and noted that the advance funds from the Environmental Trust have certainly helped ease our cash flow situation. Lynn moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. Rod Christen seconded.

Tamara Choat provided an overview of the grants and budgets, noting she had emailed a spreadsheet with details expenditures and planned budgets for all five grants. Sherry asked if the NET 08 funds had to be used soon; Tamara reported they would not be due until June 30, 2010, but she was pushing to get Year 1 (08) spent by the end of June 2009.

Rod provided an update on SENG; they plan to have a meeting this Thursday. Jim C. reported the Ranch Management Club had a good meeting with guest speaker Dan Rasmussen from South Dakota. They continue to have a lot of interest in carbon credits.

A discussion followed on the tax situation of the group. The question arose as to whether or not NGLC is actually a formalized non-profit group. Bob and Twila checked the State of Nebraska, and did not find NGLC listed as a registered non-profit group. The questions is then: Is there a need for us to register if we are able to function as is, and obtain grant money the way we currently are? Sherry suggested asking Bob and Twila to continue to look into the tax situation with Susan Moline (accountant from North Platte) and an attorney if needed.

Tamara and Dana reported on the four nominees that were submitted to the Omaha World Herald Master Conservationist award program. They include: Lynn Myers, Rod Christen, Stan Pilcher and Thorval Hansen. It was noted we need to continue to develop nominees in an "application bank" and have them available for future award applications.

Sherry reported on the Grasslands Foundation meeting that was held April 1-2, 2009. Tamara noted the possibility of seeking board representation on the Grasslands Foundation, as they seem interested in opening the doors to involvement with our group, despite the fact that there may be some fundamental differences among the organizations.

Sherry reported on the grassbank need in the Loess Canyons area. She brought up the idea of working jointly with the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture – this group *wants cattle*; the Loess Canyons group is looking for a place to *graze cattle*. Sherry and Tamara will start work on getting the groups aligned.

Tamara reported on the Reeves Ranch graze. She has worked with Michelle and Don to plan a final spring graze with the goats; although there has been a question as to the widespread benefit of this final graze. Tamara has also discussed

with Don the need to record the data and create some sort of final report on the three-year project to increase the widespread benefit. Dana noted she will need to read the monitoring sites before the goats come in. Tamara will continue to work with Michelle, Don and Dana to schedule this final graze and wrap up the project. She will also work with Don to create a report.

The Multi-Species Grazing Project (VAA grant) was discussed. Tamara has spoke with Steve Knesevik, the lead on the project. He presented NGLC with an overall research design plan and a budget of requested funds. At the March 9 meeting, the board had approved offering \$8,500 to put toward this project. Tamara noted her concern with the current research design is it does not include treatments for *multi-species grazing* – only cattle grazing. The support money NGLC is offering comes from the VAA grant, which is specifically for *multi-species grazing*. She plans to meet with Steve and his graduate student, as well as attend a meeting with their entire group of stakeholders next week to discuss our current grant money requirements and the goals of our group in being involved with this project.

Tamara reported on the SE Panhandle Grazing Seminar/Tour, June 16, in Sidney. She is working with Aaron Berger, Extension educator from Kimball, NE, on planning the tour. The agenda is set, and she will be helping with organization and publicity of the event, as well as arranging for a speaker on rangeland monitoring.

Tamara reported on plans for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Ranch Stewardship Live clinic, planned for June 19-20, in Hebron. Vaughn Hinrichs of the Thayer County Cattle Feeders is the lead organizer of the project, and Tamara has committed NGLC support. The 2-day clinic will feature a low-stress cattle handling workshop on Friday with clinician Curt Pate, and a pastureland monitoring program on Saturday with Cindy Tusler and Bethany Johnson. Rod Christen is working to get his SE Nebraska Grazing Association and also the SE Nebraska Cattlemen's groups aligned to take a bus down to the event. Tamara is assisting with designing the flyer, writing a press release and providing other promotion of the event.

Tamara reported that the South Dakota staff had visited the ranches planned for the Joint Bus Tour, which is scheduled for July 21-22 based out of Yankton, SD. She noted that she needs to sit down with Kyle Schell and Judge Jessop and go over the schedule and the budget for this event.

Tamara also noted that her biggest concern right now with the Rangeland Monitoring Project (NET/NRCS grant) is securing the two range technicians. She note she has had some calls of interest, but no one with range science background. The possibility of training the right candidates in range science methods was offered by the board, although it would not be the ideal situation. Tamara is in the process of creating promotional materials for the program to develop more interest.

The job description for the position of Coordinator was discussed. Question was brought up if the qualifications of the position were clear enough to the board's objectives.

Tamara also noted that she will be contacting suggested ranchers to assist with applications to the 4NGC conference in Reno this December. Dana added that she was working to secure speakers for the Nebraska Grazing Conference and that we should be sure to submit applications for these people as well.

The meeting was adjourned by Jim Carr at 11:10 p.m. CST.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamara Choat, NGLC Coordinator