



Date: May 28, 2026
Time: 5:00 – 7:00 PM (PUBLIC MEETING) 7:00 – 8:00 PM (EXECUTIVE SESSION)
Location: Larimer County Longview Health Services Building 2260 W. Trilby Road, Fort Collins 80526 – Goldfinch/Sparrow Room & Zoom Webinar
Contact: Andrea Weber, Senior Administrative Specialist, weberan@co.larimer.co.us, 970-619-4462

Natural Resources Advisory Board Minutes

BOARD MEMBERS		BOARD MEMBERS		STAFF	
Andy Te Slaa	V	Kristina Kachur-Webb	I	Andrea Weber (minutes)	I
Debbie Hayhow	I	Mike Roccanti	A	Daylan Figgs	I
Ellis Carpenter	I	Pete Blume	I	Meegan Flenniken	I
Gale Bernhardt	A	Rob Harris	V	Jody Shadduck-McNally*	I
Gary Miller	V	Ruthie Rollins	V	Justin Core	I
Jim Wurz	A	Ward Nelson	I	Chris Fleming	I
Joe Bakel	A	Wes Knoll	I	Zac Wiebe	I
Kathy Maher	V				

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

A = absent

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:00 pm

Agenda Review

Review and Approval of the Minutes

Wes moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Debbie seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Information and Announcements

- [Natural Resources events for this month.](#)
- To sign up for Natural Resources Advisory Board updates, go to https://larimercoco.portal.civicclerk.com/?category_id=52, enter your email, click "Subscribe," and check the "Natural Resources Advisory Board" box.
- February & March 2026 Tax Distribution Letters
- News Release Coloradoan & Reporter Herald: Red Tail Ridge Additions

Board of Commissioners Report

- Board of County Commissioners Report
 - Commissioner Shadduck-McNally shared updates about upcoming events, including a community celebration for the Poudre River Trail completion on June 13th and commemorations for the Big Thompson flood anniversary on July 31st.
 - She reported on her recent attendance at the Western Interstate Conference for the National Association of Counties where she participated in a local panel focused on community resiliency, recovery, and watershed protection. She shared insights from land trust efforts in Hawaii following the Lahaina fire.

Discussion Items

1. Quarter 1 Board Report
 - a. Staff reported an increase in permit revenue following the implementation of the new text-to-pay system. Staff are currently addressing ongoing connectivity challenges, including installing cell phone boosters where possible to improve system reliability.
2. Open Space Land Development & Management Policy Overview – Meegan/Daylan
 - a. Meegan presented a policy that has been underway for several years to establish measurable metrics for facility development within county-owned open spaces. The policy aims to balance high-quality public access with the preservation of intact habitats and wildlife corridors, drawing on frameworks from Colorado Parks and Wildlife and neighboring open space agencies. Utilizing existing properties as a baseline, the policy establishes specific metrics for total acreage, patch sizes, trail mileage per acre, and parking capacities across both near-urban and remote open spaces.
 - b. The framework was successfully tested during the Chimney Hollow Open Space management plan, and received positive public feedback. The policy also guides ecological outcomes for land management activities, such as utilizing grazing primarily as a tool for grassland health. This ecological focus is currently being integrated into the upcoming 10-year grazing lease RFPs for Eagle's Nest and Red Mountain open spaces, which will clarify lessee responsibilities and balance cattle grazing with native species management, such as favoring prairie dog colonies. Ultimately, these metrics will define the community's desired "balance" between conservation and recreation, serving as a foundational framework for the upcoming Department master plan.
3. Land Acquisition Policy Overview – Meegan/Daylan
 - a. Meegan presented an update on the Land Acquisition Policy, noting the policy will be integrated into the upcoming master plan process for public review and ultimate adoption by the Board of County Commissioners. A key tenet of the policy is establishing reciprocal conservation easements on county-owned properties. Staff completed an evaluation identifying specific open space parcels that do not yet have conservation easements. The department plans to partner with other entities to implement these reciprocal easements as staff capacity allows. Board discussion on this policy will resume as part of the broader community conversations during the master plan process.
4. Legislative Update – HB26-1230 Conservation Easement Tax Credit Extension – Justin
 - a. Justin provided an update on the state Conservation Easement Tax Credit Program. The legislature recently passed a bill extending the program through 2036, addressing a critical upcoming shortfall; while the program was previously set to expire in 2031, high demand has already exhausted available credits through 2029. Under the new legislation, the annual cap remains unchanged, and the credit rate will be maintained at 80% between 2027-2036 (following a scheduled drop from 90% to 80% in 2027 from prior legislation). Long-term challenges remain, including multi-year wait times for landowners due to the program's high demand. Structurally, the bill's fiscal note is offset against potential TABOR overpayments, meaning that if state revenues exceed the TABOR cap, the program's projected fiscal impact is reduced. The bill awaits the governor's signature.

Action Items

1. Final Review Childers CE
 - a. Justin presented a proposal for the county to accept the assignment of a 161-acre conservation easement (CE) on the Childers property, located in the Estes Valley near Highway 7 and Longs Peak Road. Originally acquired by the Estes Valley Land Trust (EVLTL) in 1996, the CE protects wildlife corridors, a perennial stream, and wetland habitats.
 - b. EVLTL plans to purchase the underlying fee-title ownership of the property in June for uses such as habitat restoration and educational programming. Because EVLTL cannot simultaneously hold the CE and own the land, they are requesting to transfer the CE to the county. The core conservation restrictions will remain unchanged, and no funds will be exchanged. Staff requested a recommendation to move the assignment forward to the Board of County Commissioners for formal approval.
 - c. Ward Nelson recused himself from the vote. Kristina made a motion to recommend approval of the CE transfer to the Board of County Commissioners. Wes seconded. Motion passed.

Department Key Updates

1. Key Department Updates
 - a. Meegan gave key capital project updates, including Skyline Day Use Area drainage and ADA parking improvements have been completed. Additionally, the reservoir paving project (FLAP) remains nearly a year and a half ahead of schedule, with remaining sections, including the South Bay Swim Beach at Horsetooth Reservoir, projected to open in phases over the next few weeks.

- b. Meegan noted that given mountain pine beetle activity remains at endemic levels in Larimer County, the department is proactively deploying pheromone packets on ~290 high-priority "signature" trees at trailheads, campgrounds, and picnic sites. If an outbreak occurs, staff plan to utilize internal crews for future preventative spraying. Currently, 80% of county-managed forests have received fuel mitigation and restoration treatments, placing them in an optimal position to withstand wider regional outbreaks.
- c. The Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for the 10-year grazing leases at Eagle's Nest and Red Mountain open spaces will be released shortly. Staff maintain a qualified list of interested parties, including high-performing incumbent lessees, and expect to award the 10-year contracts by the end of the year.
- d. Chris shared that Ranger Excellence School hosted 55 attendees in May. Staff recorded one successful quagga/zebra mussel boat interception.
- e. Staff are partnering with Colorado Parks and Wildlife to host "Rangers and Reels", a youth outreach event, at Flatiron Reservoir.

Other Business

- 1. Larimer County, alongside the City of Fort Collins, Timnath, Windsor, and Greeley, will host a celebration on June 13th to mark the completion of the Poudre River Trail. Spanning 45 miles from Bellvue to Greeley, the contiguous trail project has been under development for more than 40 years.
- 2. Daylan announced the NRAB meetings will return to the Horsetooth Area Information Center beginning in June. The upcoming agenda will clearly specify the exact room or location details.

Next Meeting Scheduled

June 25th, 2026 – Horsetooth Area Information Center: 4200 W County Rd 38E, Fort Collins, Mountain Lion Room & Zoom Webinar

Executive Session

Pursuant to C.R.S. (24-6-402(4)(a)) for discussion pertaining to the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real, personal or other property interest.

Adjournment – 6:36 pm

Larimer County's Department of Natural Resources Vision, Mission, and Values: Healthy Landscapes, Healthy People; Connect People, Nature, and Place; Pursue Excellence, Act with Integrity, Trust, & Respect, Focus on Collective Good, Commit to Staff Well-Being, Demonstrate Courageous Leadership.

Per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Larimer County will provide a reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with a disability who need assistance. Services can be arranged with at least seven (7) business days' notice. Please email us at weberan@co.larimer.co.us, or call (970) 498-7719 or Relay Colorado 711. "Walk-in" requests for auxiliary aids and services will be honored to the extent possible but may be unavailable if advance notice is not provided.

These meeting minutes were prepared with the assistance of AI technology. All content has been reviewed by staff for accuracy.