**Date:** **January 26, 2023**
**Time:** **5:00 PM – 8:00 PM**
**Location:** **Larimer County Loveland Campus Building, 200 Peridot Avenue, Loveland, CO 80537, Poudre River Room & Zoom Webinar**

# OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

| MEMBERS | | STAFF | | GUESTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Paul Hudnut | V | Daylan Figgs | I | |
| David Marvin | I | Meegan Flenniken | I | |
| Gale Bernhardt | I | Zac Wiebe | I | |
| K-Lynn Cameron | V | Justin Core | I | |
| Linda Stanley | I | *Jody Shadduck-McNally | I | |
| Mark DeGregorio | A | Andrea Weber (minutes) | I | |
| Gary Miller | I | Jennifer Almstead | I | |
| Peter Kelly | V | Alex Swartz | V | |
| Ward Nelson | I | | | |
| Mike Carter | I | | | |
| Steve VanderMeer | I | | | |
| Tom Shoemaker | I | | | |

V = virtual attendee I = in-person attendee A = absent *commissioner

**Call to Order – 5:02 pm**

**Public Comment**

None

**Agenda Review**

Moved “Review of 25-year financial model process” to beginning of Discussion section followed by “Review of Acquisition Strategy”.

Separated “Grant Funding and Partnerships Update” under agenda item “Presentation of 2022 Small Grants Award”.

Included two additional items under “Information and Announcements”

- Our Lands, Our Future Survey Kick-off
- Larimer County Pollinator Project

**Review and Approval of Last Minutes**

Gary moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Steve seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Information and Announcements**
Natural Resources events for this month: https://larimer.org/naturalresources.

To sign up for Open Lands Advisory Board updates, go to https://apps.larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm, enter your email, click "Subscribe," and check the "Open Lands Advisory Board" box.

Estes Valley Land Trust, with transaction cost funds from Larimer County, closed on the 195-ac Cheley CE in December 2022.

- Daylan explained the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) assisted the Estes Valley Land Trust with the transaction cost for a conservation easement (CE) purchase.

Larimer County Natural Resources received a $660,000 GOCO grant towards a conservation project in the Buckeye Area (currently under negotiation). As well as a $32,000 GOCO grant to pay the Larimer County Conservation Corps to assist with trail maintenance/construction at Horsetooth Mountain Open Space.

- Daylan noted DNR is partnering with the City of Fort Collins on the Buckeye Conservation project that received GOCO funds – still confidential and in negotiations.

September 2022 Open Space Tax Distribution Letter

October 2022 Open Space Tax Distribution Letter

November 2022 Open Space Tax Distribution Letter

Our Lands, Our Future Survey (OLOF)

- Daylan said DNR kicked off the OLOF survey project being led by Zac Wiebe and Jenn Almstead. The survey will ask Larimer County communities how they would like DNR to spend open space tax dollars within the allowable uses. The project is a collaboration with DNR's partner municipalities and is anticipated to go out later this year.

Larimer County Pollinator Project

- Daylan said in addition to the Pollinator Resolution the BOCC adopted in 2022, they would also like to do further work on pollinators in 2023. He requested a board member to be a representative from the Open Lands Advisory Board for this project. A member from County's Land Stewardship Advisory Board, Ag Advisory Board and Environmental Sciences Advisory Board will also be requested. A goal of this project is to identify how Larimer County wants to approach conservation of pollinators and identify work that can be done that will have tangible benefits and outcomes. DNR is already doing much work that is related to this project including land conservation and landscape health. This project will investigate other options such as land use code revisions. The board member who volunteers at the end of the meeting will be participating in a project that does not require extensive work but is extremely important.
  - Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked who would be attending these meetings? Daylan replied that it will be staff attending, but the project will be brought to the BOCC for direction after a general structure has been identified. Matt Lafferty will build the framework for the project.
  - Commissioner Shadduck-McNally said a new water conservation easement bill was brought to her attention by the Attorney General. Other counties are participating, and she would like to know more about it and discuss applicability for Larimer County. Daylan agreed this will be a topic that can be further investigated and discussed.

**Update and Reports**
Board of County Commissioner update

- Commissioner Shadduck-McNally attended a Forest Health Council Bill Meeting. The meeting was focused on development of workforce through degree and certificate programs in order to increase the number of "boots on the ground" for mitigation work. Funding through the Colorado Swap Bills is available however there is a shortage in the workforce. A discussion around woody debris and biomass will be coming soon.

- She announced she is the new Vice Chair of the General Government Committee for Colorado County.
- If any board members have any questions or concerns regarding the migrant happenings in Larimer County, she said to reach out to her for information. Larimer County is the only county in the State of Colorado that is currently taking migrants in.
- Larimer County is finishing up short-term rental regulations, a very controversial topic across Colorado. She stated she is an advocate for these regulations.
    - She is specifically asking for a buffer zone around these rentals in Larimer County that are near the parks and open spaces.
- She commended Daylan and DNR for the NoCo PLACES 2050 project.
    - The group is working on a couple pilot projects: 1. Create a NoCo regional mapping tool that overlaps maps of endangered species, critical species, migration areas, spring birthing areas, wildlife areas and watershed resources with recreational use. The map has great information and has confirmed for Larimer County, that the areas that have been focused on are the correct areas. This is a great tool moving forward to help guide decision makers and direct policies. Many entities are working in collaboration on this project including National Park Services, DNR and Colorado Parks and Wildlife.
    - 2. Common messaging on leave no trace, the value/importance of conserved lands, etc.
    - Daylan noted that CODEX will be brought to OLAB this Spring. This is a project being headed by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP) and includes topics such as, climate resiliency and equity and diversity. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked what CODEX stands for. Zac said it is the Colorado Data Explorer.
- Announced the Boards and Commissions Spring openings and recruitment begins in April.

**Discussion Items**

Review of 25-year financial model process – Daylan

- Daylan reminded the board that updating the 25-year model every ~3 years was the original intent. The current model was completed at the end of 2019 and will be redone 2023 to address and reassess possible changes in revenues, costs, assumptions, and input variables. A focus of the conversation will look at different strategies around land conservation.
- The current acquisition strategy is built on the Help Preserve Open Space sales tax and informed by many public inputs and adopted plans. DNR is required to spend 35% of the tax on land conservation/acquisition and 50% on long term management and capital development costs. The remaining 15% can go into either fund or be used on capital improvements at the four Bureau of Reclamation owned reservoirs.
- DNR has a goal of conserving 24,000 new acres (over a base of 50,000 acres in 2018), approximately half in fee-title and half in conservation easements (CEs). The model assumes opening ~4 additional stand-alone open spaces, Chimney Hollow being one, and the cost and timing to builds out and manage annually these newly acquired/opened properties.
    - All DNR revenue streams have specific allowable uses. When dollars are earmarked towards management of current and future lands, less funds are available for new capital or replacement capital projects.
    - CIP funds are built slowly over time while acquisitions are front loaded to ensure DNR can buy land while it's still available and at the lowest cost. For example, DNR purchased Chimney Hollow Open Space a while ago though it will be developed under a new sales tax.
    - Linda asked how much of the county sales tax stays with the county and how much goes to the municipalities and what it totals to annually. Daylan said it is about a 50-50 split and roughly $22 million, so $11 million stays with the county.
- Daylan said when DNR frontloads the acquisition of new properties, the pace at which they are opened is very intentional to ensure fiscal sustainability.
    - Chimney Hollow Open Space is anticipated to be opened in 2026 costing around $3-4 million dollars for capital construction. Once open, Chimney Hollow Open Space, will begin incurring

management costs, which are anticipated to be around $1.5 million ($350/ac) every year in management costs.
    - Gale asked what the user fee revenues were expected to be for Chimney Hollow. Daylan said between $700,000 and $800,000, covering about half of the management costs. He continued, going to the public every 3 years to increase entrance fees is not sustainable and there will be market cap. State Parks passes will also influence how the department does business.
    - Tom asked if all operating and maintenance costs will be paid for with the sales tax. Daylan said expenses will be covered using sales tax as well as generated user fee revenue.
- The model reflects opening properties approximately every 3 years (2026, 2029, 2032, 2035, 2038). In 2029, two options of new standalone open spaces to open include Red Tail Ridge Open Space or the Heaven's Door property. It depends on how quickly DNR can recharge CIP dollars and how quickly the department wants to begin taking on management costs. One major thing to consider is that if careful steps are not taken, DNR will reach the end of the sales tax and not have the money to manage what it has, let alone open/build out any new spaces.
    - 2032, 2035, 2038 are not filled at this time. These time increments are also subject to change.
    - With Chimney Hollow to open later than expected (was set for 2024), DNR may get a year of long-term management costs back and see potential savings.
    - Dave asked about the property in line for 2029, either Red Tail Ridge or Heaven's Door, and if DNR is far enough along to estimate the cost to open these properties? Daylan explained DNR has a good idea about the cost to open Red Tail Ridge, there are some easements and trails and a bit of inventory, but because it is a small property, it will not require much work or be a cost heavy property. Heaven's Door is very large, requires much inventory work, and will have huge upfront costs. For perspective, it's estimated to cost $1M to add a turn lane off HWY34. This size and style property usually costs around $3-4 million for capital construction and possibly more depending on the oddities.
- Annual expenses are predicted to decrease on a per dollar basis over time as properties receive more capacity. Hopefully the department can drop operating costs from 8% to 5% or 6%.
- DNR's spaces will reach a capacity on growth, either in the number of properties or the capacity on the properties (number of people utilizing them). Parking is one example of an amenity that has a hard max capacity. Revenue streams will eventually flatten, and as DNR gets closer to the last half of the tax, more dollars will be spent on maintenance and capital replacement and less on new capital.
    - The challenge sits with saving dollars for the future, and these assume a healthy grant program which the department is very dependent on.
- Steve asked for clarification around the timing of acquisitions and if, when DNR spreads them out, this allows DNR to recharge funds to put into the CIP? Daylan explained it is less about the acquisitions themselves but more about the kind of properties DNR is looking to purchase. These areas are far and few between thus DNR must quickly jump on the opportunity. DNR is unable to open these properties now because it is not able to incur the long-term management costs within the budget at this moment.
- Steve asked if there is a long-term planning phase (that DNR is considering) where there is no sales tax in place that would change calculus, and if staff are thinking through life without it?
    - Daylan said something DNR has begun talking about now to have a head start before the end of the sales tax in 2043. Running the financial model in 25-year increments is comfortable for the community, but the question becomes if Larimer County is ready and mature enough as a community for a bigger and stronger tax.
    - Tom spoke to two plans of longer range future planning that are underway right now: NoCo 2050 and Climate Smart Future Ready. Conversations are calling for a need to have more access to open spaces.
        - Daylan said there is a cap on how big DNR can grow. The department has identified its limit to 3-4 new standalone properties. These conversations, of what can be done the next 5-10 years, are important to be having now.
    - Linda values the philosophy DNR follows in thinking about these things now and paying attention to the many moving parts.

- Mike asked if, from the surveys to the community, DNR were to receive feedback that people want more and faster buildout, there was mechanism to add to the ballot and vote for it?
    - Commissioner Shadduck-McNally said there are two ways to go about it, one can start a petition and collect signatures, or they can approach the BOCC and request it be added to the ballot. Currently, the City of Fort Collins is looking to add a new sales tax, and Larimer County does not want to be competing with its partners. There tends to be a 10% sales tax tolerance limit. Estes Park also passed lodging tax this year which is all going to workforce housing and childcare. There are many avenues that funds are available, and the county is always looking in different places for money. ARPA, for example, was an important funding source for the county.
    - She appreciates DNR having this conversation now. Unfortunately, TABOR language is not the county's friend. Renewing a tax is different with wording, "Would you want to continue this tax?" versus "Do you want to raise the tax?". Wording impacts the comfort of the community.
- Mike asked if there are things that peers in other counties are having success with? Daylan said the common model in Colorado is sales tax. There are some other types of taxes and levy-based revenue sources the mountain communities tend to use, but Colorado mostly uses sales tax.
- K-Lynn said it is a good strategy to get people to vote to extend the tax and provide information on the need. The community sees that DNR has the lands in hand but would then understand the need for funds to be able to develop them and keep them open for public use.
- Dave noted there are stakeholders that appreciate a say through avenues such as the OLOF survey and the management plans. There are many reasons DNR acquires lands, for preservation, conservation, wildlife habitat and public access. It can be a challenge for the public to understand and know how to look forward. When the department purchases a new property, the expectation is that there should be immediate access. This suggests DNR has a responsibility to inform the public and explain how and why DNR needs the money to first develop the property, then to maintain it.
    - Daylan agreed DNR needs to be better about telling its story. One of the first conversations is talking openly about long-term management costs and budget limitations. One reason DNR has spaced out the CIP every 3-5 years is to keep things moving and opening. DNR is one of several entities within the county that is acquiring and managing open spaces and natural areas for recreation. Part of what DNR is homing in on is how can the department work and partner with others and to help alleviate some maintenance and money stresses.
- Tom asked if there were any models out there for special districts on handling maintenance? Daylan said there is one somewhere in California that Jefferson County looks at often, but he is uncertain.
- Gale noted it's good to get land now while its "cheap" and wait to develop, but it is hard for many people to understand the entire process. If DNR shares more timelines and explains the 3-5 year process, it would make it much easier for the public to understand and accept.
- Linda noted the public doesn't always know what it costs to purchase, open, and maintain these spaces. She asked if there is there a way to provide better education for the users? She suggested using S.E.E.K stations and social media with a "Did you know?" format.
    - Daylan said DNR started this outreach with the fee implementation at Devils Backbone Open Space. Once an open space is opened, the department must commit to a heavy cost incurrence every year to maintain it. Commission Shadduck-McNally agreed Larimer County needs to tell its story, so others do not. She would like to see more information shared about the maintenance piece and more education to elected officials and the public.
- Daylan said because this is how DNR is doing it today, does not mean that is what must be done in the future. There might be other ways to do things as the DNR readjusts the model. The goal is to test assumptions, different strategies, and get new thoughts and approaches.
- Dave noted as DNR moves to the next step, it is helpful to establish a level of patience for what the department does. Daylan said DNR has this model and built into it how much patience and flexibility can be afforded with the budget.

Review of Acquisition Strategy – Meegan

- Meegan shared her screen presentation on “Land Acquisition Strategy & Opportunities”.
  - She said this presentation was intended as a refresher of the strategy created as a staff and board together in 2019, and where and how DNR is doing.
  - Our Lands, Our Future Survey from 2014 is a statistically valid survey which included 7,500 residents. This survey is one example of the type of data that was collected to go into creating the strategy.
  - Spectrum of acquisition type and management costs across DNR’s portfolio reflects a balance.
    - In 2020, the average management cost per acre across all categories (ex. High recreational use open space versus conservation easement) was $138. The portfolio reflects heavier use properties/close in open spaces cost more to manage at around $300/acre at one end of the spectrum and CEs incur primarily monitoring costs at around $2/acre to manage. There is a significantly lower cost to conserve CE’s up front as well vs. purchase of fee-title.
  - To keep pace with the current level of service DNR provides per Capita out to 2043, DNR (with partners) would need to conserve an additional 24,000 acres.
    - DNR takes a strategic, proactive approach to identify key parcels for land acquisition within its Master Plan priority areas. The department prioritizes parcels that buffer other conserved lands, represent conservation values of interest and best meet future public access goals. Across the 12 priority areas identified in the Open Lands Master Plan, approximately 100parcels were identified that best meet these goals.
  - She provided a visual comparison of fee simple acreage to conservation easement acreage conserved annually from 1982 to 2022.
    - Some properties are acquired in one large parcel, while most are added to over time to become the large areas they are today. For example, Devil’s Backbone Open Space as it stands today was purchased over 20 years and 15 separate acquisitions.
    - Some years more acres are fee-title and others CE’s. Currently DNRs portfolio is at 40% CE’s and 60% fee-title. This varies year to year but the goal over the life of the tax is around a 50-50 balance.
  - Status update of key acquisitions over past 5 years (2018-2022).
    - Goal: Conserve 24,000 acres by 2043. By end of 2022 (5 years in): ~27% goal met (added 6,444 ac) with 11% of the acquisition funds available. Some funds were carried over from the previous sales tax. Attributable to this low percentage spent is; success with grant writing/funding, good partnerships, and substantial donations, primarily of CEs.
      - Fee purchase/Public access (17 projects; 4,585 ac; 70% of projects)
        - Laramie Foothills: 2 additions to Red Mountain OS
        - Poudre River: 3 trail easement acquisitions (1 donation)
        - HT/DBB Foothills: White; Bobcat Ridge Addition; Dakota Ridge
          - Linda asked how the Bobcat Ridge addition is split or calculated as the property is shared between Larimer County and the City of Fort Collins. She asked if DNR includes all acreage or prorates them? Meegan said the numbers provided are inclusive of both entities’ acreages.
          - Tom asked if there has been any aggregation of this data across all entities? Meegan said CODEX does this and there is a setting that can be selected to show areas without double counting acres.
          - Linda thinks it would be useful if all entities were to get together and identify a joint acreage goal for all of Larimer County.
        - Blue Mountain: Heaven’s Door Ranch
        - Big T: 6 parcel additions to Forks & Cedar Cover; Wagner/Bonser
        - Little T: Red-tail Ridge TH and trail easements; Lewis Farm TE/TH

        - Conservation Easements (6 CE's; 1,859 ac; 30% of projects)
            - Blue Mountain: Pittington CE & Banker CE (full donations)
            - Laramie Foothills/Livermore: Steputis CE (partial donation) & Hansen CE
            - Partnerships: Hazelhurst CE & Dixon Station CE
- Meegan provided a summary table of 2018-2022 acquisitions by priority area, type (fee, CE, or both), primary values, and total acres conserved. It includes DNR's 8 priority areas where Larimer County is the lead.
    - She reviewed on example: There are ~20 parcels in the Blue Mountain Conservation Priority Area of 100 acres or more that meet the goals of DNR's master plan. There is both fee and CE potential. The 20 parcels comprise about 7,000 acres in total. In the past 5 years, DNR has conserved about 28% of these priority parcels in this area. Unfortunately, funding limits the number of parcel acquisitions DNR can make.
- 25-year model public access
    - Chimney Hollow Open Space – Projected Opening: 2026/2027 User Fees: Yes
    - Rural – low use/cost of management – Projected Opening: 2029 User Fees: Yes
    - Urban – high use/cost of management – Projected Opening: 2032 User Fees: Yes
    - Urban – high use/cost of management – Projected Opening: 2035 User Fees: Yes
    - Urban – high use/cost of management – Projected Opening: 2038 User Fees: Yes
    - Acquiring but postponing public access on the first new public access property saves $700,000 to $1,000,000 annually.
- Planned or coming future public access by DNR and partners.
    - HTMOS trail/trailhead improvements per plan update (2022-24), Poudre River Trail (2023), Inlet Bay to South Bay trail (2024), Dakota Ridge (2024 – Loveland), Bobcat Ridge Add. (2025 – Ft. Collins), Big T. Trail East (2025 – Loveland), Chimney Hollow Open Space (2027), Blue Mtn Property – HDR (TBD), Glade Reservoir (TBD).
    - DNR is talking with partners on how we can communicate on a more regional level on both conservation and recreation outcomes that are occurring collectively. Luckily Larimer County isn't the only player in the game in the region and county and thus not all services or acres, miles of trails, etc. are bourn on Larimer County alone.
- Questions and Discussion
    - Daylan explained capital projects are projected to be built out many years in the future because if the build out for one project is sped up, another project must be removed or postponed. DNR is very careful but aggressive with its budget.
        - Meegan said a growing portion of DNRs capital dollars must be spent on capital replacement of aging infrastructure - replacing vault toilets and fixing asphalt parking lots.
    - Gale cited a study she'd heard of but couldn't confirm that noted a standard for miles of trails per person. She asked if this was something DNR was considering or if what is being done is enough?
        - Meegan said she is interested to see what that threshold is and to see how Larimer County compares with the trail systems that are currently in place across all entities.
        - Daylan said each open space is unique. In more urban systems, trail density number would change and there would be less of a conservation impact.
        - Gale said DNR needs to tell its story by using all the different contributors/entities to the regions' trails system. Daylan said DNR is discussing with partners how to better work together and tell these important stories. Much thought is given to the spectrum of recreational opportunities available to the "everyday" person living in Larimer County. It's not always about who owns it, but more about how people get there, and this is inclusive and expansive of all entities.
    - Tom thinks DNR could do a stronger job talking about CE's, not just in terms of acres but speaking to the importance of them to meeting many of the master plan goals. He would

like to hear about the benefits the community receives from these lands that are not open to the public. He asked if it would be possible to capture this interest in the survey.
    - Dave inquired about DNR's desires to maintain the same level of service and to do so, must add 24,000 acres. He asked if this number assumes that these acres are available to the public? Meegan said the current level of service is 50,000 acres conserved and about 60% are in fee-title and open to the public, and 40 CEs. If DNR continues to align with these percentages, about half of the newly conserved acres will be fee-title with public access and half will be conservation easements.

Grant Funding and Partnerships Update 2018-2022 – Jenn

- Funding categories
    - DNR has brought in $25.7 million in last 5 years through partnerships including anyone, government, nonprofits, or organizations that contribute financially to a specific project. Contributions are often in matching dollars.
    - Between 2018 to 2022, $25.7 million was brought into the department through grants (63%), landowner donations (30%), and partnerships (7%). This is nearly equal to a year of revenue brought in by the department through all other revenue channels.
- Grants versus Partnerships
    - Annual funding totals vary year to year and often depend on the type of project. Funding might be secured by whether it is more attractive to a grant or a partnership.
- Landowner donations total: $1,675,000
    - 2018 Pittington CE donation $320,000
    - 2019 Rimrock OS mineral rights donation $5,000
    - 2020 Steputis CE donation $300,000
    - 2021 Banker CE donation $1,050,000
- 2021-2022 Key Funding Partnerships
    - Laramie Foothills Mountains to Plains 2020 Expansion Project
        - Steputis (CE) 884 acres.
            - *City of Fort Collins* ($393,167) *GOCO* ($218,000) *Larimer County* ($734,868) *Landowner* ($300,000) *Friends of Larimer County* ($1,000)
        - Hawk Canyon (Fee) 1,091 acres.
            - *City of Fort Collins* ($1,077,884) *GOCO* ($450,000) *Larimer County* ($2,000,285) *Landowner* ($0) *Friends of Larimer County* ($1,500)
        - Quarter Circle Lazy H Ranch (CE) 428 acres
            - *City of Fort Collins* ($526,762.50) *GOCO* ($144,475) *Larimer County* ($556.192.50) *Landowner* ($0) *Friends of Larimer County* ($1,000)
        - <u>Partner totals:</u>
            - City of Fort Collins - $1,997,814
            - GOCO - $812,475
            - Larimer County - $3,291,345
            - Landowner - $300,000
            - Friends of Larimer County - $3,500
        - Banker CE, 272 acres - $1,980,000 in value that was 100% donated to DNR.
    - Heaven's Door Acquisition 2022 Total - $9,000,000
        - City of Fort Collins - $750,000
        - Loveland - $500,000
        - LCDNR - $7,750,000
        - Fort Collins and Loveland will be co-holders of CE.
    - Poudre river regional trail initiative (Larimer County and Timnath trail gap)
    - Northern Colorado Big Game Critical Winter Range Restoration Project
        - National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) - $328,875
        - Partner Agencies (CPW, Boulder County, Fort Collins, JeffCO) -$61,972

- LCDNR - $52,375
- The project is focused on cheatgrass control using a scientifically backed treatment called Indaziflam. DNR is working with other counties on this project.

  - Satanka Bay ANS Shelter at Horsetooth Reservoir
    - Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) – $150,000
    - DNR - $6,000
    - Steve asked what ANS is? Jenn said Aquatic Nuisance Species.
  - DNR Water Infrastructure Projects
    - American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) will fund water infrastructure projects across DNR areas that are much needed. DNR received ~$2 million.
  - Chimney Hollow Open Space Recreation Improvements
    - Northern Water - $2,200,000
    - DNR - $800,000
    - Meegan said she worked closely with Northern Water to find places to save costs. DNR is space and terrain limited in the area and took advantage of Northern Waters staging platforms as future parking lots. This saved DNR ~$2.2 million dollars. There will be an additional $3.5 million spent on capital costs for Chimney Hollow to finish remaining infrastructure.
  - Funding partner totals:
    - DNR has a large list of funders that have supported the department over the last few years. New and diverse funding is great and needed, but it's very important to maintain current and previous relationships and partnerships. It's important for DNR to do its due diligence by first getting the grant but also keeping up with the work that follows.
    - Collectively, across these 8 projects, 47 cents of every dollar was leveraged through grants, partnerships, and donations.
- Fiscal partnerships
  - The department is positioned to assist partners across the entire county with projects that advance conservation and recreation. Currently DNR is doing this for three organizations that cannot apply directly for funding. These partners include The Ember Alliance (GOCO) for $751,680, NoCo PLACES 2050 (CPW) for $150,000 and Colorado State University (CDOT) for $466,677.
- Questions and Feedback:
  - Steve asked if DNR has or does partner with the Land & Water Conservation Fund?
    - Zac said the fund has been appropriated in perpetuity and each state determines how to distribute it. Colorado has recently been directing the majority to fund trail based projects.
    - Linda asked who makes the decision and if it was legislation? Zac said it would be within DNR.
  - Gary asked if there was any potential funding from the infrastructure bill that passed with last congress. Jenn noted we actively look at opportunities that match DNRs needs for acquisitions, maintenance, and capital replacement plan projects.

Presentation of 2023 Small Grants Award Recommendations – Jenn

- 2023 Small Grant Award Recommendations
  - Jenn said DNR launched a new website for the 25th anniversary of the Small Grants Program. The website includes map features that show the programs funded over the last 25 years.
  - The program added $5,000 to grow the annual grant awards available to $25,000. Individual grant awards were raised to $3,500 per applicant.
  - Since its inception, the program has awarded $400,000 to communities around Larimer County. 232 neighborhood and community projects have benefitted.
  - She thanked Gale Bernhardt, Gary Miller, and Linda Stanley for being subcommittee members.
  - 2023 Applications

- The program was extensively promoted through press releases, Facebook, and the new website, but still required an application deadline extension.
- Applications Received: 13
- Total Amount Requested: $32,856
- Recommended projects: 10 projects
- Funding Recommended: $25,066.60

- Projects:
    - 21st century gardens - $850.00 requested.
        - Expansion of the growing season of the garden by building and installing custom designed growing shelves with heat mats and thermostat. Location in Fort Collins.
    - Colorado State University - $2,215.60 requested.
        - Research projects at Eagles Nest Open Space: Testing responses of Native Wildflowers and pollinators post invasive cheatgrass treatment with Indaziflam. Location in Livermore.
    - Estes Valley Watershed Coalition - $1,680 requested.
        - Wandering Wildlife Society Program and Talks: expansion of educational outreach. Location is Estes Park Valley and surrounding areas.
    - Homeward alliance - $674 requested.
        - Murphy Center Garden Beautification and Accessibility Project: Increase seating surfaces on raised garden beds and adding beehives. Located in Fort Collins.
    - Ivy Stockwell PTO – $3,000 requested.
        - School outdoor classroom: community education and engagement project. Located in Berthoud.
    - No barriers USA - $2,970 requested.
        - Fire mitigation project by removing overgrown and unhealthy trees. Located in Laporte.
    - NoCo wildlife center - $3,500 requested.
        - Increasing the capacity of new environmental education classroom. Located in Fort Collins.
    - Red feather lakes community library - $3,500 requested.
        - Close-to-home educational classes and workshops. Located in Red Feather Lakes.
    - Sproutin' up – $3,200 requested.
        - Solar installation at vegetable farm for generating power and for educational purposes. Located in Fort Collins.
    - Wolverine farm Publick house - $3,477 requested.
        - Poudre river pollinator project: public educational project highlighting important pollinators and pollinator plants of the river's ecosystem. Located in Fort Collins.
- The Small Grants for Community Partnering Subcommittee is Recommending the Open Lands Advisory Board to approve the proposed 10 projects for funding for the 2023 grant cycle, totaling $25,066.60.
- Questions and Feedback
    - Steve noted there were no HOA applications for 2023 and questioned the possible reasoning for this. Jenn said there was one HOA application. Each year there is always a different variety of who is applying. Some years are heavier on HOA applicants.

**Action Items**
Approval of Small Grant Awards – Jenn

- Dave asked for a motion to approve the recommendation that Jenn Almstead and the subcommittee have made regarding the 10 projects totaling $26,066.60.
    - Steve moved to make a motion, Linda seconded, motion passed unanimously.

**Other Business**
Larimer County Pollinator Project Volunteer Selection

- Linda volunteered to be the OLAB representative.

**Next Meeting Scheduled**
February 23, 2023 at the Larimer County Loveland Campus Building, 200 Peridot Avenue, Loveland, CO 80537, Poudre River 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 – 7:50 pm**

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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.