



Date: November 15, 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	A	Daylan Figgs	I	
David Marvin	I	Meegan Flenniken	I	
Gale Bernhardt	A	Korrie Johnston	I	
Ellis Carpenter	I	Zac Wiebe	I	
Linda Stanley	V	Justin Core	I	
Mark DeGregorio	A	Julie Enderby	I	
Gary Miller	A	*Jody Shadduck-McNally	V	
Peter Kelly	A	Andrea Weber (minutes)	I	
Ward Nelson	I			
Mike Carter	I			
Tom Shoemaker	I			

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

A = absent

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:01 pm

Public Comment

Agenda Review

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

Mike moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Tom 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.

July 2023 Open Space Tax Distribution Letter

August 2023 Open Space Tax Distribution Letter

- Daylan noted revenues remain relatively flat. Staff are redesigning the financial model and investigating new strategies moving forward.

Legislative Rezoning for Fee-Title Conserved Open Spaces to NR-Natural Resources Finalized

- Meegan said moving Larimer County fee-owned open spaces into the new NR zoning designation has been approved by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The zone designation provides setbacks to conserved lands, does not allow oil and gas surface use, and specifies certain allowable uses, building a better landscape relationship of like uses in the county. The O-open designation was broadly inclusive and thus the newly adopted zones in the Land Use Code are intended to provide more specificity for like uses. The new county zoning map will reflect the new zoning changes.
- The next step, in partnership with the Planning Department, is to approach other land management agencies in the county and offer an opt-in/opt-out into the new zone. The third phase will include conservation easement partners.
- Ward asked if there have been any issues with land trusts. Meegan said they have been supportive, and the zoning will aid with adjacent lands, making it preferable for them.

Update and Reports

Quarter 3 Board Report - Daylan

- DNR Trails crew won the Golden McLeod award at the Regional Trails Symposium this fall.
- Fence removal projects provide immediate benefits to wildlife.
- Staff with Historicorp volunteers worked on restoring the historic barn at Red Mountain Open Space
- Meadow hawkweed, a noxious weed, was newly detected in the county (south of Estes Park); staff are working to eradicate it.
- DNR partnering with private landowners who own land in the Cameron Peak fire area to complete restoration and control invasives.

Board of County Commissioner Update

- Proposition HH did not pass. The BOCC will continue to engage in budget conversations. The Governor is holding a special session on Nov. 17th.
- Working on an RFP for the Wildfire Mitigation Grant focused on woody biomass issues and solutions.

Partnership with Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (BCR)– Zac Wiebe

- DNR has been partnering with the BCR for several years. BCR applies for federal grant funding through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act using funds that LCDNR has already spent towards land acquisition/management from the open space sales tax, as match. In return, BCR conducts bird monitoring on LCDNR open space properties as part of this larger regional monitoring effort.
- The BCR has over 20 years of monitoring study data for birds migrating to and from Mexico. The data they collect on LCDNR properties provides DNR with a baseline to observe change over time. The department can note any changes in the birds with changes in management practices (i.e. grazing).
- Monitoring studies have been conducted at Devils Backbone Open Space, Red Mountain Open Space, and Heaven's Door Ranch. Surveys provided expected species and population numbers.
- Tom asked what season the monitoring takes place and if there are raptor surveys. Zac said the bird surveys are done in spring/early-summer during breeding season. DNR conducts a one-time raptor survey with each new land acquisition and then on-going raptor monitoring with volunteers.
- Dave asked the match DNR covers. Zac said \$500,000, give or take depending on the property.
- Ellis inquired about monitoring for recreational disruption. Zac said there is extensive detailed literature based along the Front Range that the department uses to understand recreation and wildlife interactions to inform planning/management. Meegan added, landscape fragmentation is the biggest impact to wildlife habitat and so limiting fragmentation with trails, roads, other activities is a key outcome DNR works towards.

Volunteer and Education Program Update – Julie Enderby

- DNR's Public Engagement Team (Communications, Education and Volunteers) supports the department through education programs, volunteers, external and internal communications, media and website, public feedback/engagement, and outreach and events.
- 2023 Priorities:
 - Build stronger connections between people, nature, and place, that support stewardship of landscape diversity, equity and inclusion, open communication, and responsible recreation.
 - Provide meaningful education that meets the diverse needs of visitors.
 - Cultivate engagement, education, appreciation with staff to build strong, unified ambassadors.
- Education Program
 - Types of programs: Public education classes, field trips, outreach, and non-personal media.
 - Year-to-date numbers
 - Public programs: 61 programs, 699 participants
 - School trips: 10 programs, 573 students, 9 schools
 - Outreach: 72 stations, 8,740 visitors contacted
 - Special requests: 13 programs, 134 participants
 - Outreach at events such as NoCo Pride, Poudre River Fest, "Bike to Work" Day and Nueva Vida, in collaboration with other county departments.
 - Public Programs:
 - Field Trips
 - 8 programs per semester
 - Reinstate transportation subsidy – updated application.
 - Focus on Thompson Valley School District – closer opportunities.
- Volunteer Engagement Program - Volunteers work alongside staff to meet department needs.
 - Key roles: Trail maintenance projects, raptor monitors, photographers, litter clean up, campground hosts, volunteer ranger assistants, nature educators
 - Value of Volunteer Time
 - \$28/hour national average, \$30/hour in Colorado for volunteer time
 - LCDNR has 656 active ongoing and one-time project volunteers with 19,099 hours. They are worth 10.02 full time employees at \$573,000 dollars.
 - Cost to volunteer is their time, to staff is training, supervision, and planning.
 - Public Projects (open to all)
 - Earth Day: Trail maintenance project and litter cleanup - 51 volunteers.
 - Natl Public Lands Day: Trail maintenance, litter cleanup, fence removal - 34 volunteers.
 - Natl Trails Day: Trail maintenance - 31 volunteers.
 - Clean the Shoreline: Partnership with Centennial Bass Club - 30 volunteers.
 - Fence removal at Red Mountain and Horsetooth Mtn open spaces – 6 project days; 6,901 feet remnant fencing removed
 - Group Volunteer Projects (community and corporate group requests)
 - Trail Maintenance, litter clean up, fence removal, Hermit Park Open Space cabin cleaning, tree mulching and planting. 1,713 volunteer hours.
 - Leveraging Partnerships for Greater Access
 - CAST for Kids with Centennial Bass Club: Fishing for kids with disabilities
 - Fort Collins Natural Areas: VRAs and naturalists (hoping to have new partnership with naturalists in 2024)
 - Local library districts and CSU: Discover packs include parking tag for 7 days.
 - Dave asked what trailhead outreach was. Julie said these are S.E.E.K stations at trailheads. from 8:30 am – 2 pm weekends to intercept visitors on key leave no trace messaging.
 - Tom asked how a contact was defined. Julie said a contact is anything more than a greeting, such as sharing messaging as the visitor walks by or having a conversation.
 - Ward asked if the stations received feedback from visitors about trail etiquette. Julie said they do not receive much feedback about trail etiquette at the stations.

- Zac said the OLOF survey is being done in collaboration with DNR's municipal partners that share in the open space sales tax funds.
- The statistically valid survey has been distributed by RRC (consultant) with ~250 respondents already. Responses will be collected through November and a final report in January 2024.
- Once the statistically valid survey concludes, an open link (non-statistically valid) survey will open for all county residents (those who did not receive the statistically valid survey) to provide feedback.
- There were 10,000 surveys sent out via mail, and the goal is to receive back at least 1,000. There are similar questions to the 2013 survey, but some new additions.
- Daylan noted the survey will help staff understand how the community wants DNR to spend tax dollars and it will provide guidance to update the master plan in 2025.
- Dave suggested quick targeted surveys as they are a short commitment for respondents. Zac said DNR has used these in the past. Linda added, the longer surveys get responses from those most interested. She would be curious to compare shorter survey answers to the longer surveys.

Discussion Items

Action Items

Other Business

Next Meeting Scheduled - December 14th, 2023, 5 pm – 6 pm via 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 – 6:25 pm

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.