



Date: October 24, 2024
Time: 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Location: Horsetooth Area Information Center: 4200 W. County Road 38E Fort Collins, CO 80526 – Mountain Lion Room & Zoom Webinar

OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

MEMBERS		STAFF		GUESTS
Jim Wurz	I	Daylan Figgs	I	Lesli Ellis
Gale Bernhardt	I	Meegan Flenniken	I	
Tom Shoemaker	I	Justin Core	I	
Linda Stanley	A	Alex Swartz	I	
Debbie Hayhow	I	*Jody Shadduck-McNally	I	
Gary Miller	V	Andrea Weber (minutes)	I	
Wes Knoll	I	Zach Cook	I	
Ward Nelson	A			
Mike Carter	A			
Ellis Carpenter	I			

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

A = absent

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:03 pm

Public Comment

Agenda Review

The Quarter 3 Board Report was added to the agenda.

Noted the November Meeting is November 20th, not the 28th as posted on the agenda.

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

Debbie moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Wes 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 2024 Tax Distribution Letter

August 2024 Tax Distribution Letter

- Daylan said revenues are down from previous years (~3-4%), but the budgets were built with the expectation that it would happen.

Update and Reports

Quarter 3 Board Report

Board of County Commissioner Update

- Jody Shadduck McNally observed the Larimer County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) wildfire mitigation and protection program.
 - Grants received (approximately 2-3) through OEM, specifically for equipment including a trailer and limb-cutting tools, to support mitigation efforts.
 - In partnership with state and local entities, including community HOAs, Glacier View Fire Department, Colorado Fire Department of Patrol and Safety Division, and Larimer County.
 - Deployment of an air curtain burner capable of processing 3-5 tons of material per day. This equipment will rotate across various locations.
 - A grant from Local Affairs was awarded for a woody biomass study to explore alternative uses for coal and burn materials.
- BOCC budget presentation held on Monday, October 21st. \$12 million in service proposals were submitted, with only \$4 million available for funding. All departments worked strategically and efficiently to narrow proposals within the budget limitations.
- A budget open house/retreat is scheduled for November 2nd at the Loveland Library from 10:15 to 11:45 AM (no virtual option). Budget approval expected in December.
- The ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Fleet Campus will be on November 1st in East Loveland.
- Annual Forest Health Council Report will be published soon, providing updates and insights on forest health in the county.
- Lesli Ellis reported that the Water Master Plan is ready to be reviewed by a consultant. An adoption-ready draft will go to the Planning Commission and then to the BOCC for final approval by the end of the year.

Small Grants for Community Partnering Request for Committee members – Meegan Flenniken

- For 26 years, the program has awarded grants to communities throughout Larimer County using a portion of the Help Preserve Open Space sales tax for outdoor neighborhood and community-based projects.
- DNR sets aside \$30,000 for these projects.
- The program helps address disproportionate access to outdoor spaces, allowing underserved communities to enjoy nature within Larimer County.
- 2024 yielded 18 applications.
- Projects cover various parts of Larimer County, with a strong focus on environmental and nature-based initiatives.
- Grant application criteria and program information are available on the website, and an informational meeting was held for applicants.
- DNR is seeking 2-3 board members to volunteer for the selection committee
- Debbie, Jim and Wes volunteered to be on the committee. Gary and Linda are backup if needed.

Discussion Items

NOCO Places 2050 Update – Daylan

- Larimer County has been involved in NoCo Places since 2019.
- Participants include Arapahoe & Roosevelt National Forest, Pawnee National Grasslands, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Boulder County, Clear Creek County, Denver Mountain Parks, Gilpin County, Jefferson County, and Larimer County.

- The front range will grow by a million plus residents over the next handful of years. Partnering and collaborating with communities around recreation and open spaces creates better access for equity, hunting, fishing, etc. Things that couldn't be done alone.
- Allows partners to work together in a way that is seamless and builds on the success of each other's programs and understand needs across the landscape.
- History:
 - Increased visitation to public lands in the Northern Colorado region was impacting wildlife, environment, and threatening outdoor experiences.
 - United by a desire to protect and preserve what makes this region so special and a recognition that the solution requires landscape scale collaboration between all land agencies.
 - Formally signed MOU in 2019; updated in 2024
- Mission Statement: NoCo Places collaborates to protect and conserve natural and cultural resources while providing equitable access and a quality recreation experience for current and future generations.
- Current Funding Strategies: Grants for program funding, member agency funds, member agencies' in-kind services, funding is an ongoing challenge. About \$15,000 in agency funds and \$100,000 in grant funding per year
- Areas of Focus - Conservation and Recreation Vision and Action Plan
 - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
 - Communications and Common Messaging
 - Unauthorized Trails Pilot Project
 - There are several illegal/undesirable (for wildlife, managers, etc.) trails and this project mapped these in Boulder County to see where and how many there were, using cell phone data. This allows managers to understand the use in these areas and mitigate impact to the natural environment.
 - Exploring additional pilot projects
- Conservation & Recreation Vision
 - Desired future conditions: a common vision for the NoCo region
 - Forward-thinking shared management principles that guide future management of the region to achieve those desired conditions
 - Action plan with near and mid-term priorities
- Conservation Summary Map (Colorado Natural Heritage Program data)
 - Shows ecological hotspots, conservation and recreation
 - Helps understand where the ecologically important places are, areas to focus on conservation and areas that are better to build out
- NOCO Region Cell Phone Data assists in understanding where people come from and go to, and how people interact with these spaces. This data can be shared across the NoCo Region.
- Stakeholder Focus Groups: 16 focus groups, 140 participants from a large variety of industries
- Desired Future conditions
 - Ecosystems: Landscapes and biodiversity are conserved, restored, and climate resilient
 - Experiences: Outdoor opportunities are high quality and inclusive of diverse visitors
 - Sustainability: Management balances environmental, social, and economic needs
 - Stewardship: Visitors care for lands, honor rules, and are courteous of each other
 - Diversity: Cultures and histories are valued and celebrated
 - Collaboration: Managers, partners, communities, and the public work together
- Common messaging campaigns are used to feed appropriate information to visitors. One example is a QR code sticker program that allows visitors to see different recreation areas.

Action Items

Final Review Arrowhead Fee Purchase – Alex Swartz, Land Agent

- Larimer County is under contract with the landowner, Arrowhead Properties, for a 204-acre land acquisition in the Blue Mountain and Little Thompson River priority conservation areas areas.

- The property has no existing improvements and lies adjacent to other conserved lands, connecting to Red-tail Ridge Open Space and Rabbit Mountain Open Space through an existing trail easement.
- Total acquisition cost is \$1.8 million. Contributions: Larimer County - \$1.55 million, City of Loveland - \$200,000, Private individual - \$50,000.
- Expected to close at the end of January 2025.
- Meegan noted that the property is in excellent condition and represents a valuable conservation opportunity. She highlighted the property aligns with the conservation vision from "NoCo Places" and is within an ecological hotspot within Larimer and Boulder counties.
- Discussion/Feedback:
 - Gary inquired about the choice of fee simple acquisition versus a conservation easement (CE) with a trail easement.
 - Meegan explained that the county's initial interest was a CE since we already have a trail easement in place, however the landowner was not interested in a CE and eventually had listed the property for sale.
- Tom made a motion to recommend the purchase of the Arrowhead Property to the Board of County Commissioners. Debbie seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Bylaws

- Daylan noted a language update was requested to change "citizens" to "residents", to be more inclusive.
- Wes made a motion to recommend adoption of the latest revision of the Open Lands Advisory Board Bylaws to the BOCC. Ellis seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

Next Meeting Scheduled

November 20th, 2024 - Horsetooth Area Information Center: 4200 W. County Road 38E Fort Collins, CO 80526 – 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 – 6:25 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.