



Date: December 3, 2024
Time: 5:30 PM – 8:30 PM
Location: Larimer County Natural Resources Administrative Offices: 1800 South County Road 31, Loveland, CO 80537, Bison Room & Zoom Webinar

PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

MEMBERS		STAFF		GUESTS
Bill Prater	V	Chris Fleming	I	Laura Walker (BOR)
Jill Wuertz	I	Daylan Figgs	I	Tara Piper (BOR)
Kathy Maher	I	Steve Gibson	A	
Kristina Kachur	I	Cindy Claggett	A	
Adam Crossan	A	*John Kefalas	V	
Pete Blume	A	Andrea Weber (minutes)	I	
Robert Harris	I	Julie Enderby	I	
Ruthie Rollins	I	Travis Bernstein	I	
Jeannie Mounts	I			
Phil Stout	A			
Joe Bakel	I			

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

A = Absent

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:31 pm

Public Comment

Agenda Review

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

Rob moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Kathy seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Information and Announcements

Natural Resources events for this month: <https://larimer.org/naturalresources>.

To sign up for Parks Advisory Board updates, go to <https://apps.larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm>, enter your email, click “Subscribe,” and check the “Parks Advisory Board” box.

Update and Reports

Park District Updates – Travis (on behalf of Cindy and Steve)

- Rangers responded to a Plane Crash on Storm Mountain.
- Rangers contacted a hunter who illegally harvested a bull elk out at Red Mountain Open Space.
- Horsetooth day use areas to receive 28 new dog waste stations throughout the park and open space.
- Received the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant to purchase six mobile AEDs.

- The new Hermit Shop is expected to be completed by the end of December.
- Text-2-Park pilot program launched throughout Horsetooth district. This allows visitors to purchase permits when the kiosks are out of order.
- Completed a shoreline improvement near the Horsetooth Area Info Center to address shoreline erosion that could have had potential impacts to the east side of the building.
- ANS is closed for the season along with the ramps and docks. South Bay will remain open for fishermen and day use.
- Hermit Park will be closed December 20th.

Volunteer, Outreach Education Program Update – Julie Enderby

- Public Engagement Strategic Alignment Goals 2024
 - Build a confident, well-trained volunteer team to increase capacity for programs
 - Develop a fun, inspiring annual program calendar which engages the community to increase program participation
 - Streamline volunteer recruitment and onboarding process to attract invested volunteers
 - Create a welcoming and inclusive culture within the Education & Volunteer program
- Year to Date Program Numbers
 - Public Programs **(69)** Participants **(750)**
 - Outreach Events **(6)** Participants **(726)**
 - S.E.E.K Stations **(76)** Participants **(7,857)**
 - Special Requests **(13)** Participants **(330)**
 - School Field trips **(20)** Participants **(1,074)** Schools **(14)**
 - DNR can provide a transportation stipend to schools based on need
 - School programs are currently focused on Big Thompson School District, an underrepresented district.
 - Unique Moments: Canyon Edge Open Space public tours, Northridge High School, Get to Know series, Night Owl Adventures, LGBTQIA+ Hiking Together: Building Community Through Nature
- Year to Date Volunteer Impact Numbers
 - Volunteers **(545)** – Ongoing **(169)**, One-Time **(376)**
 - 16,560 hours, \$496,800 economic impact, 8.69 full-time employee equivalent
 - Unique Moments: graffiti removal projects at Devil Backbone Open Space, Clean the Shoreline Boltz Middle School, Bay to Bay trail projects (22 projects), Volunteer Naturalist collaboration with Fort Collins Natural Areas
- Goals for 2025
 - Support Volunteers to be confident, well-trained team members
 - Leverage partnerships to increase capacity and meet goals
 - Inclusivity and accessibility are part of the culture of the Education & Volunteer program
 - Foster stewardship by developing an inspiring and creative annual program calendar
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility (DEIA) Summer Update
 - Began in 2023, aligns with COMPASS (dept. Strategic Plan), two-fold approach (internal & external communities), relationships, partnerships and programs that focus on underrepresented communities, people living with disabilities and indigenous members and relationship to the outdoors, advancing internal training for all staff, efforts are weaved among all levels of department, small steps = meaningful change
 - C.A.S.T For Kids: partnership with Centennial Bass Club, enriching the lives of children with special needs through fishing, reached ~40 families
 - LGBTQIA+ Hiking Together Building Community Through Nature: explore local ecology while connecting with your community, intended to be a safe and welcoming space for members of the LGBTQIA+ community, allies welcome.
 - Host site for ISTAR Camp: support for Native American youth and families in Fort Collins, K-8th grade summer camp, as well as community nights and cultural activities, strong positive relationships that foster belonging and help participants be a source of strength and support for each other

- Partnership with American Adventure Sports Club: non-profit providing free year-round adventure sports training camps for underrepresented communities, includes youth and adults from low-income households, Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, Asian, and Pacific Islanders, multicultural folks, people with disabilities, and the LGBTQIA+ community.
- Future Advancement: focus on relationship building to strengthen partnerships, programs, impact, leveraging regional resources, learning from training and activating strategies in diverse areas of department (trails, planning, communication, engagement)

Board of County Commissioner Update (Provided via Daylan Figgs on behalf of Commissioner Kefalas)

- BOCC is moving toward approving the county budget in mid-December. The budget will be very little growth from the 2024 budget.
- Water Master Plan will be adopted soon.

Discussion Items

Action Items

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Update

Wildland Fire Management Program (WFM) – Laura Harger

- Office of Wildland Fire (OWF) (program runs at the national level)
 - The Department of Interior (DOI) is the main entity that oversees these four departments, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), National Park Service (NPS), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).
 - \$1.33 billion: 2024 DOI budget appropriation from congress for wildland fire management (discretionary funding and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) added millions more).
 - 5,800 DOI full time employees dedicated to wildland fire management (2023).
 - 38 employees in the office of Wildland Fire.
 - The Office of Wildland Fire was established in 2001.
- National Preparedness Level 1-5 (Severity)
 - Nationally, in 2024, the US spent 80 days at a Level 5, which is the highest level.
- Reclamation and Wildland Fire – Why does it matter to Reclamation?
 - 7.8 million acres of land, majority burnable and in Wildland Fire Urban-Interface (WUI)
 - Risk and impacts to critical infrastructure and facilities
 - Western drought continues and bringing largest fires in recorded in history
 - Formalized in FY21 unique needs/policies
 - BIL creating 5-year window of funding opportunities for wildland fire activity
- Reclamation is Unique
 - Non-traditional Fire Bureau
 - Risks to land, water supplies and hydropower facilities
 - Have departmental wildland fire management responsibility (Department Manual Part 620)
 - Critical infrastructure to protect (60% national portfolio)
 - World class engineering expertise and other technical support capabilities needed in fire world
 - Reclamation does not have land east of the Mississippi. Interest is centered around water and water resources.
- 2024 DOI Fire Season
 - 80+ days at 4/5 Preparedness Level
 - 2,533,957 DOI acres burned
 - 5,272 incidents recorded
 - CPN is the most active region in Reclamation and the nation
 - 2,200 Reclamation acres burned
 - 91 Reclamation fires
 - Reclamation officially participated in 16 incidents
- WFM Program Organization
 - Reclamation WFM Program office is in Denver (formalized in 2021)

- 5 Regions – 3 full time and 2 collateral regional WFM coordinators
- Area/Field Offices points of contact, 21 collateral staff positions: Natural Resource Specialists, Land & Water Specialists, Archeologists, O&M, Park Ranger, Resource Chiefs
- WFM Program Community
 - National Office: Laura Harger/Jeanna Demorest, MB-ART Region: Bob Farrell, ECAO Area Office: Patrick McCusker, CPA Region: David Harper, CBG Region: John Hutchings, LCB Region: Justin DeMaio, UCB Region: John Nichols/Adam Howes
- WFM Policy, Directives and Standards
 - Ensure protection of critical project facilities and land in compliance with existing laws and the DOI Policy regarding WFM. Strive for consistency with other DOI Fire Bureaus
 - Implementation of WFM Activities following Reclamation Fire Management Plans, Reclamation Policy, Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, and DOI Departmental Manual Part 620
- Wildland Fire Management Activities
 - Preparedness: fire management agreements/plans, fuels management/prescribed burns, risk assessment/education
 - Active Fire: inter/intra agency coordination
 - Post Fire: burned area rehabilitation, ongoing sediment research
- Planning: Reclamation Wildfire Risk Assessment Dashboard (all little pieces but nothing available on a national level), Strategic Plan for Managing Wildland Fire on reclamation land (2024 – 2029)
- Major Program Accomplishments
 - Regional WFM Coordinators now a permanent Reclamation wide network
 - Transferred over \$11 million to regions for fuels management and fire support agreements to Reclamation regions
 - Chartered to the Interior Executive Fire Council (main governing body in DOI fire)
- Advisory Incident Support
 - DOI “All Hands” memo encouraging non-traditional fire agencies to participate
 - Advise firefighters on fighting fires, GIS, resource advisors, lunch transportation
 - Reclamation approved use of selected support positions to participate in wildfire incidents
- Ways Reclamation & Partners can coordinate
 - Develop relationships for cross-boundary risk reduction, sharing fire management plans, defined roles and responsibilities, annual meetings/planning, water use permissions, coordinating on existing/planned projects, grant dollars on federal land
- Funding opportunities relevant to partners (All opportunities are coordinated with Area Office):
 - Allocated funding for the WFM program is spent on Reclamation-owned land.
 - There are also federal, state and local grant opportunities that allow work on federal land and non-federal land.
 - Other federal funding such as DOI WFM BIL Allocations – 2026 final year of funding opportunity. Post-fire work if focus for Reclamation.
 - BOR does not get fire dollars from the federal/state fire disaster funding. BOR must use BOR water funding to cover costs.

Northern Water Conservancy District Update

Board Member Reports

- Jill Wuertz resigned from serving on the Parks Advisory Board.

Director’s Report – Daylan Figgs

- DNR’s budget will be approved this month. Staff will present the 25-year projections and budget in 2025.
- T2 Text-2-Pay program is working well. Could be a preferred option for visitors to use. It allows the department to mitigate revenue loss when Kiosk pay stations are down. The system has already paid for itself.
- Chimney Hollow project coming along. Spring/summer 2025 will likely begin to fill.

- DNR does fire mitigation on its properties (not BOR property): Horsetooth Mountain Open Space, Ramsey Shockey using USFS grant funding. DNR also assists private landowners with post fire weed control through DNR's Land Stewardship Program.
- Chris noted DNR has posted the full-time Aquatic Nuisance Species position to start mid-January 2025.
- The Special Events Eproval program is being built out and should launch in 2025. All events will be processed through this program. Meeting with past event holders to make sure all parties are educated and can provide feedback.
 - Jill inquired about plans to fix the roads and build bike lanes around Horsetooth reservoir in the future. Daylan and Chris noted this would be a challenge to build bike lanes around the reservoir. The focus is to reduce the number of events to allow them to be more manageable. Carter has historical blackout dates that have been in place for over a decade because it's not safe for bike events.
 - Rob noted that education provided to motorists that an event happening (on signage boards) and how to drive safely with bikes on the road during events is beneficial.

Next Meeting Scheduled - January 7th, 2025 – at Horsetooth Area Information Center: 4200 W. County Rd. 38 E. 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 – 6:56 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.