



Date: November 18, 2021
Time: 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Location: Zoom Webinar

LAND STEWARDSHIP ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

MEMBERS		STAFF		GUESTS
Brian Kraft	x	Casey Cisneros	x	
Josh Wenz	x	Daylan Figgs	x	
Kraig Peel		Meegan Flenniken	x	
Ronald Harris	x	Jody Shadduck-McNally*	x	
Tasha Carr	x	Sidney Michl (minutes)	x	

x = present

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:03 p.m.

Public Comment – none

Agenda Review

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

Tasha moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Brian seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Information and Announcements

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

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

Commissioner Shadduck-McNally provided an update from the statewide county commissioner meeting. Currently finalizing the budget and reviewing funding sources for DNR. Phase 2 of the Land Use code changes is complete. Thank you to DNR staff for their hard work on the Kruger Rock fire.

Daylan provided further update on the fire. The Larimer County Sheriff’s Office issued a press release with details of the CO Fire Aviation plane crash and an estimate that the fire had spread 146 acres with 40% containment. Hermit Park Open Space is currently closed. It was noted that while DNR is involved in fire recovery, the Sheriff’s Office leads the incident response. Meegan added it has still not been determined if the fire occurred on county property but if any impact Casey’s team will assess and work on any restoration needs. Additional info and emergency notifications can be found on their webpage: <https://www.larimer.org/sheriff/support-services/emergency-services-and-fire-rescue>

Updates/Discussion Items

2021 Quarter 3 Board Report

- Daylan pointed out the updated financial summary and noted key items in the report.

Department Strategic Plan

- DNR is initiating a strategic planning process in the next couple of weeks. The process will develop an internal document about the delivery of department master plans and key outcomes for the next 3-5 years. An update will be provided at the next board meeting.
- Ron asked if the Kruger Rock fire will be included in the plan, it was noted the strategic plan will include higher level items.

Weed Enterprise Update

- Casey introduced Land Stewardship Tech, Bill Pawleshyn, who supervises the field crew and helps run the Weed Enterprise Program. Bill provided an overview of 2021 Enterprise weed management.
- The 2021 crew includes 2 full-time staff with qualified supervisor licenses, 1 crew lead with a certified operator license, and 7 seasonal staff.
- Funding and rate schedule:
 - Projected 2021 revenue= \$595k
 - Projected 2022 revenue= \$646k (45% increase since 2018)
 - Revenue is generated through grants and partnership agreements, weed control for-hire services, and office sales (herbicides, books, etc.)
- Fees/rates:
 - \$145/hr per single ATV/UTV applicator
 - \$145/hr for tractor/misc. equipment
 - \$215/hr per 2 UTV applicators
 - \$77/hr per backpack applicator and general labor
- The Enterprise Program allows us to achieve watershed-scale beneficial outcomes on key, larger, conserved, or impactful parcels. Examples of strategic partnerships:
 - Big Thompson and Fort Collins conservation districts
 - Generated \$85k in revenue in 2021
 - Assists districts with Healthy Forest Initiative
 - Sites include Pole Hill, McGregor Ranch, Meadowdale, Cheley Camp, Diamond Peak, MRQT, Shambahla Center
 - Colorado state agencies
 - Generated \$70k in revenue in 2021
 - Longstanding partnerships with CDOT, CPW, and State Land Board
 - Assist with noxious weed management in grazing allotments, recreational sites, and wildlife areas
 - Sites include Lory State Park, Cherokee Park SWA, Crystal Mountain, Poudre Land Trust, Meadow Creek
 - Estes Valley and Big Thompson watershed coalitions
 - Generated ~\$30k in revenue in 2021
 - Assist with vegetation management on post restoration efforts from 2013 flood
 - 2021 is final year of Estes Valley funding, ongoing project funding for Big T
 - Estes Valley sites: Upper Big Thompson, Fish Creek, Fall River
 - Big Thompson sites: Sweetheart Winery, Wild, Whitesides, Oxbox, Namaqua
 - Private landowners/corporations
 - Generated ~40k in revenue in 2021

- Criteria around large, strategically located, or conserved lands. Sites include Wright CE, Stepotis CE, Meadowdale CE, Abbey of St. Walburga, Szaloczi property (Blue Mountain), A&H Ranch, Holcim Inc.
- Josh asked who bears the responsibility for restoration activity. Bill explained the responsibility falls on the land manager with assistance from the NRCS. Josh asked a follow-up question about grazing on county open spaces. Meegan explained the county has grazing leases on several open space properties to meet ecological outcomes. Per the lease, DNR staff retain responsibility for weed management.
- Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked how many counties in CO operate a Weed Enterprise Program. It was noted the CO Department of Agriculture oversees and administers the Noxious Weed Act but has not collected significant data on Enterprise Programs or Weed Districts in the past. Casey explained our Enterprise Program is not subsidized from the county General Fund; the program maintains a positive cash flow from contracted weed management work with private landowners, federal/state/local agencies, and grants.
- Commissioner Shadduck-McNally asked about the program's involvement with the NoCo Fireshed Collaborative. Casey explained we partner with several watershed conservation districts and contract with the USFS to perform weed management in the Canyon Lakes District.
- Ron asked if additional staffing requirements are anticipated for fire recovery efforts. It was noted a request to hire a 3-year limited term employee to assist the Enterprise Program was recently submitted.
- Tasha asked about wildlife habitat improvements. Casey explained the program manages weeds and ecosystems for multiple habitat purposes. Supplemental funding, particularly from CPW, is directed towards big game wintering habitat and herd concentrations. Another example is a vibrant response from pollinator species following cheatgrass removal in a native grassland ecosystem.
- Brian asked if grazing might eliminate non-native species. Casey explained it's a balancing act and we receive expertise from the NRCS. Meegan noted opportunities for innovative management tools and weed control.

2022 Budget Submittal

- The 2022 budget is submitted and pending approval from the BOCC. Daylan noted the request for the 3-year contracted position with the Enterprise group and funding for additional equipment.

LC Climate Smart and Resiliency Update

- Climate Smart was initiated by Commissioner Kefalas to address climate change with mitigation and adaptation strategies. A working group of county employees and agency partners dedicated their time and expertise to prepare the framework which contains baseline info about current policies and practices related to environmental responsibility, sustainability, and climate action. [Opportunities for public engagement](#) are ongoing. Further updates will be provided.

Action Items

Board Election of Officers

- Tasha Carr elected as chair; Ron Harris elected as vice chair.

Other Business

Next Meeting Scheduled

February 17, 2022, location TBD

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 – 6:17 p.m.

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 michlsl@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.