



LARIMER COUNTY | DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

1800 South County Road 31, Loveland, Colorado 80537, (970) 619-4570, Larimer.org

Date: February 17, 2022
Time: 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Location: Zoom

LAND STEWARDSHIP ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

MEMBERS		STAFF		GUESTS
Bryan Kraft	x	Casey Cisneros		
Josh Wenz	x	Daylan Figgs	x	
Kraig Peel		Meegan Flenniken	x	
Ronald Harris (Vice Chair)	x	Jody Shadduck-McNally*	x	
Tasha Carr (Chair)	x	Jordan Williams (minutes)	x	
		Maxine Guill	x	
		Lexie Sorenson	x	

x = present

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:01pm

Board members and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff introduced themselves.

Public Comment

Agenda Review

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

Ron moved to approve the minutes from 11/18/2021, Brian seconded, motion approved 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

October 2021 Open Space Sales Tax distribution

November 2021 Open Spaces Sales Tax Distribution

- Daylan mentioned that Help Preserve Open Spaces sales tax revenue remains above projections
- Land Stewardship Program New Facility update: Currently, the Land Stewardship Program operates out of three separate facilities: the shop at Vine Street, a shop at the main admin building and the Mulberry storefront location. With the closure of the Vine Street facility, initially there were plans to include a facility for the Land Stewardship Program at a new combined Fleet, Road and Bridge and Land Stewardship complex at a new county-owned site near the airport. However, a better option became available at The Ranch complex as part of an expansion to an existing building, and therefore

more cost effective. Construction of the facility will begin this year, and DNR has been reserving funds for the move since learning the Vine Street facility would shift. Meegan added that the approximately 9 full-time Land Stewardship Program staff will be able to co-locate at the new facility and it will be able to accommodate existing and projected future full-time and seasonal staff growth over the next 30 years. The new building will include office and meeting space, indoor/outdoor storage, garage, workshop, and a storefront entrance for customer service. DNR staff will bring the building blueprints to the May or November 2022 LSAB meeting.

- Brian commented on current herbicide supply chain issues. Daylan said the building on Mulberry where the current herbicide sales take place could be sold.
- Tasha asked about a final budget presentation on costs of the new building. Meegan said the project will go out to bid later this summer with construction starting in Fall 2022 and a tentative opening scheduled for Fall 2023.

2022 Enterprise Rates – Meegan Flenniken

- Meegan noted that in 2018 the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) gave authority to the DNR Director to increase enterprise rates based on the Denver/Lakewood/Aurora consumer price index (CPI). In 2020, the CPI only increased .02%, so no weed control rate increases were proposed in 2021. However, in 2021 there was a CPI increase of 6.5% so DNR is proposing a commensurate rate increase. Example: From \$77 to \$82 per hour for general labor/backpack sprayers. These enterprise rate increases will be shared with the BOCC next month, and DNR hopes to move forward with changes beginning this year. Tasha recommended noting in the memo that the rates held over two years, 2020 and 2021.

Updates/Discussion Items

County Commissioner Updates

- Commissioner Shadduck-McNally just returned from the National Association of Counties Conference in DC. Locally, the BOCC has finished the land use code updates, finalized the 1041 regulations, and are looking at how to spend the remaining American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Broadband for the whole County is part of the County's strategic plan, and that initiative could see some ARPA funding in support of equity, economic, health, safety, and welfare concerns for areas without internet access. The BOCC also finished interviews for the new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) board, and the Commissioners are happy with the geographic representation of the board applicants.

Compliance and EDRR Data Discussion – Maxine Guill and Lexie Sorenson

- Maxine shared her screen: Maxine oversees the landowner weed management program, with Lexie assisting on weed compliance this past year.
- Maxine reviewed the Noxious Weeds Management plan from DNR's website: She noted when enforcement of compliance is necessary, the noxious weed compliance procedures, priorities for enforcement, and how some species require proactive compliance.
 - Compliance Highlights: 733 noxious weed compliance code cases in 2021, with 441 followed up from 2020, 292 new cases, 20 no violation, 14 no further action, and 94 complied (1,120 total inspections). 152 myrtle spurge monitoring visits were also completed. Myrtle spurge is an Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) targeted species that must be eradicated.
 - 2022 Notes: 643 compliance cases and 119 myrtle spurge monitoring locations for follow up. There have been 4 new cases to investigate in 2022 so far.
 - Focus areas outside the Weed District, which was supported by General Fund dollars, included public complaint responses and EDRR grant-funded species. Priority areas include the Big Thompson Canyon, Laramie River Valley, and Storm Mountain.
 - Maxine shared several bar charts with compliance data from 2021. Noxious weed compliance inspections are broken up by In-district, Estes Valley, outside Weed District, and Cameron Peak

Fire areas. Maxine noted that each blue dot on the map is a compliance inspection with C-dots meaning that a courtesy letter was sent to the landowner.

- About 400 courtesy letters and 107 enforcement letters were sent in 2021 with 18 right of entries required. Maxine noted that most landowners take management action after a letter is sent and that more EDRR grant letters were sent outside the Weed District.
 - 5 enforcement management actions were taken in 2021: 1 Leafy spurge in Fort Collins, 3 Myrtle spurge in the Horsetooth area, and 1 in Storm Mountain for thistles
 - There were 179 responses to the noxious weed letters and 42 took up DNR's offer of services through a grant, site visit, or herbicide order.
 - Any landowner can sign up for a Weeds staff site visit, with most site visits taking place in district (120 total visits in 2021)
 - Herbicide sales: \$42,490 total in 2021.
- Ron asked about the 2017 start date for the data and if staff are experiencing supply chain constraints. Maxine said that the new compliance procedures started in 2017, so that is when data was first collected. With the supply issues, DNR is working with the County's purchasing department to order large quantities early in the season.
 - Brian asked about Weed Management at Soapstone. DNR Staff noted that the City of Fort Collins owns Soapstone Prairie Natural Area, so they manage any weed issues on that property. Meegan noted that DNR has staff dedicated to manage weeds on the 25,000 acres of parks/open spaces owned by the County using diverse methods. DNR uses Open Space tax dollars and park revenues to cover the costs of maintaining their own properties even if they are located outside the Weed District.
 - Tasha expressed concern for landowners not in compliance and asked why they do not comply. Maxine noted that EDRR funding is county-wide, but only available for certain species. Inside the Weed district there are cost-share funds of 25% available to landowners to help with compliance. Maxine said the main issue with non-compliance is often with landowners who live out of state, and it can be hard to get ahold of them with only their property tax associated mailing address.
 - Tasha asked about ways to improve the program and avoid violations through other positive incentives. Maxine noted the various positive incentives including education opportunities, cost-shares, and EDRR grant funding for private landowner assistance.

Strategic Plan Update

- Daylan explained how the DNR Strategic Plan will look to integrate the three existing Park, Open Space, and Land Stewardship master plans. The goal is to align staff internally with how the department interacts with the community. It will not change DNR's business model, but it will impact how work gets done. The plan will be brought to LSAB for comment when finished, which should be before the next meeting in May. Currently, staff is about 2/3 done and the core team is going through Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goal updates. The budget process for 2023 will be driven by the Strategic Plan and it will connect with the County-wide Strategic Plan as well.
- Ron asked about how often staff plans to revisit the Strategic Plan. Daylan said it is a 3-5 year process, but he doesn't anticipate the Mission and Vision changing frequently. Hopefully goals will get completed though and then new objectives will come up.

LC Boards and Commissions: Pilot Stipend Program – Daylan

- The goal of the program is to remove financial barriers for members of the public to participate on a board or commission. Stipends are available by application, which will be reviewed by the BOCC, and can then be used to help defray costs associated with childcare, transportation, etc.
- Ron asked about a public awareness initiative for this program so that people hear about it prior to applying for a board/commission. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally said that the DEI board will be looking at these policies to see how to best advertise board/commission openings alongside the stipend program. Zoom/virtual meetings have helped break down participation barriers, and staff does not want geographic areas to be a hindrance for attendance.

Action Items

Other Business

Next Meeting Scheduled

Board members and staff discussed in-person, hybrid, and virtual meeting options going forward. Tasha asked about a potential mask requirement and Daylan noted that wearing a mask would be up to the individual since the County dropped its mask requirement. Ron asked about hybrid meetings options, and staff noted that Zoom rooms at 200 W. Oak Street and the Bison Room at the Administrative Offices are being set up. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally commented that she would like to see hybrid meeting options continue. Brian likes the hybrid option since participation should be the main goal. Tasha said she is good for meeting in-person but likes the hybrid option as well. Ron is in favor of a hybrid meeting option at 200 W. Oak Street.

Next Meeting: May 19, 2022, at Larimer County Courthouse, 200 W. Oak St., Fort Collins, CO, 2nd Floor, Lake Loveland Room (Zoom/hybrid options will be available)

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 – 6:28pm

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 williajo@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.