



Date: August 15, 2024
Time: 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM
Location: Horsetooth Area Info Center - 4200 W. County Rd. 38E Fort Collins, CO 80526 - Mountain Lion Room & Zoom Webinar

LAND STEWARDSHIP ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

MEMBERS		STAFF		GUESTS
Patrick Bickley	V	Casey Cisneros	I	Lesli Ellis
Ryan Blake	A	Daylan Figgs	I	
Ronald Harris	I	Meegan Flenniken	I	
Jesse Dillon	V	Jody Shadduck-McNally*	I	
Michael Hayes	I	Zac Wiebe	I	
Brenda Engles	I	Andrea Weber (minutes)	I	
Janae Malpas	I			

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

A = absent

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:05 pm

Public Comment

Agenda Review

Review and Approval of Last Minutes

Mike moved to approve the minutes from the February meeting, Janae seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Mike moved to approve the minutes from the May meeting, Janae 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

2024 Quarter 2 Board Report

Updates/Discussion Items

Board of County Commissioner Update

- Recent wildfires have triggered recovery and restoration efforts, with commendations for quick response and collaboration.
- The BOCC is working on the budget, with potential impacts from uncertain state legislature actions and a possible special session.
- Forest Health Council Workforce Bill with an emphasis on training future foresters. For every \$1 spent on mitigation, \$13 is saved in fire suppression.

Annual LC Boards and Commission Policy and Code of Conduct Review

- Daylan provided an overview of the new county policy and code of conduct, emphasizing the board's advisory role to the BOCC, not decision-making authority.
- The code includes guidance on conflicts of interest and board member behavior.
- Janae inquired about access and costs of public information requests. Daylan clarified the processes of the Freedom of Public Information and Colorado Record Request Act, noting the intention of fees is to cover administrative costs without deterring requests while also buffering the public from covering any financial burden.

Adding Meadow Hawkweed to LC Noxious Weed List

- Casey reported that Meadow Hawkweed is currently on Colorado's watchlist but is not officially listed as a state noxious weed. Its close relative, Orange Hawkweed, is already a high-priority, early detection species in locations such as Drake, Estes Valley, and the Laramie River Valley.
- Meadow Hawkweed was recently discovered on Highway 7 near Boulder County land. It was found during a conservation easement monitoring and reported to EVLT and DNR. Following confirmation by the state, Larimer County's Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) specialist conducted a survey and performed initial treatments.
- This species is prevalent in the northwestern U.S., including Montana, and in parts of Boulder and Jefferson counties.
- The Montana Department of Agriculture's EDRR team warned of Meadow Hawkweed's high invasiveness and aggressive spread, potentially even more challenging than Orange Hawkweed.
- Larimer County will continue collaborating with Boulder County on EDRR and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) efforts to manage this weed.
- Currently, Meadow Hawkweed is not listed as a state noxious weed, which limits enforcement on non-cooperative landowners. However, Larimer County has authority under the Noxious Weed Act to add species to its own local list.
- Proposal: Add Meadow Hawkweed to the county's noxious weed list by May/June 2025.
- Casey emphasized the DNR's commitment to prioritizing education and outreach as the first step before enforcement. He added, recent amendments to the Colorado Noxious Weed Act now permit issuing citations if landowners fail to control designated weeds.
- Discussion:
 - Janae raised concerns about the impact of herbicides on pollinators and overall biodiversity, questioning if treatments ultimately yield desired outcomes.
 - Casey confirmed biodiversity and conservation are the main objectives. Controlling Meadow Hawkweed prevents it from spreading into high-value areas like Rocky Mountain National Park. While herbicide treatment may initially reduce species variety, these communities will become more diverse than the site prior to treatment.
 - Ron requested further details from Casey on the ecological benefits of herbicide use versus the consequences of not controlling invasive species. Casey noted that Milestone herbicide would be used, which is very selective but can potentially damage other species in the aster and legume families.
 - Meegan noted that we will bring this back as an action item in November – the focus of the question being to add the species to the noxious weed list.

Open Space Restoration Update – Zac Wiebe

- Red Mountain Open Space - Table Mountain Creek (completed April 2024)
 - Goal: Restore ~1000 ft. of perennial stream; develop cattle water source/spring; restore 1.5 miles of roads and house footprint, bank stabilization
 - Outcomes: Riparian and wetland creation (wetlands support 80% of biodiversity but compromise <2% of county land cover), improved habitat for native species, livestock water, carbon sequestration and soil health.
- River Bluffs Open Space – Poudre River Corridor

- Goal: Restore hayfield to native wetland/riparian and grassland habitat
- Anticipated to be completed in phases
- Red Mountain Open Space Boxelder Creek Corridor
 - Goal: Restore hayfield and connect 1 mile of stream channel/riparian habitat
 - Outcomes: riparian and wetland creation, improved habitat for native species, transition to rangeland agricultural use, enhanced use of water rights to instream flows, carbon sequestration and soil health
 - Meegan noted the current agricultural lease (focused on cattle grazing) anticipated the need to remove this hayfield from the lease with a 6-month advance notice.
 - Daylan noted the water rights will likely be dedicated to instream flows.
- Future Restoration
 - Long View Farm Open Space
 - Current dryland wheat farm agricultural lease
 - Short-term goal: partner with lessee to implement practices that align with DNR's land management strategy to improve soil health in preparation for restoration. Funding from NRCS EQUIP grant.
 - Long-term Goal/Outcomes: restore to native grassland, improve habitat for native species, transition from cropland to rangeland agricultural use, carbon sequestration and soil health
- Additional projects
 - DBB Keyhole parcel restoration/revegetation
 - Blue Mountain (previously Heaven's Door Ranch) parcel disturbance and two track restoration

Action Items

Board Bylaws

- The Board recommended "citizens" be changed to "residents". DNR will bring the revised bylaws to the County Attorney with the suggested change.
- Mike made a motion to take the bylaws to the attorney with suggested edits and bring back in November as an action item. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair and Vice Chair Elections

- Michael nominated Ron as Chair; Ron nominated Michael as Vice Chair. Both nominations passed unanimously.

Other Business

Next Meeting Scheduled

November 21, 2024 at Horsetooth Area Information Center (HAIC) at 4200 W. County Rd. 38E, Fort Collins CO 80526

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 – 6:45 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.