



Date: February 26, 2026
Time: 5:00 – 7:00 PM (PUBLIC MEETING) 7:00 – 8:00 PM (EXECUTIVE SESSION)
Location: Larimer County Longview Health Services Building 2260 W. Trilby Road, Fort Collins 80526 – Goldfinch/Sparrow Room & Zoom Webinar
Contact: Andrea Weber, Senior Administrative Specialist, weberan@co.larimer.co.us, 970-619-4462

Open Lands Advisory Board & Parks Advisory Board Minutes

OLAB MEMBERS		PAB MEMBERS		STAFF		GUESTS
Jim Wurz	I	Rob Harris	V	Daylan Figgs	A	
Debbie Hayhow	V	Joe Bakel	V	Meegan Flenniken	I	
Gale Bernhardt	A	Kathy Maher	A	Chris Fleming	I	
Wes Knoll	I	Jeannie Mounts	V	Justin Core	I	
Gary Miller	V	Andy Te Slaa	V	*Jody Shadduck McNally	I	
Ward Nelson	A	Adam Crossan	I	*John Kefalas	A	
Ellis Carpenter	A	Pete Blume	V	Andrea Weber (minutes)	V	
Mike Roccanti	I	Kristina Kachur Webb	I	Lesli Ellis	V	
		Ruthie Rollins	A			

V = virtual attendee

I = in-person attendee

A = absent

*commissioner

Call to Order – 5:00 pm

Agenda Review

1. Recommendation to approve the board bylaws was removed from the action items.

Review and Approval of the Minutes

Mike moved to approve the minutes from last meeting, Wes seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Information and Announcements

1. Natural Resources events for this month: <https://larimer.org/naturalresources>.
2. To sign up for Open Lands Advisory Board and Parks Advisory Board updates, go to <https://apps.larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm>, enter your email, click "Subscribe," and check the "Open Lands Advisory Board" and the "Parks Advisory Board" boxes.
3. December 2025 Tax Distribution Letter

Discussion Items

1. Board of County Commissioners Report
 - a. Commissioner Shadduck-McNally shared recent advocacy efforts at the National Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., where she engaged in discussion around environmental policies, data centers, and wildfire recovery efforts. She highlighted her involvement in the Environment, Energy, and Land Use Steering Committee and her appointment to the Mountain Pine Beetle Outbreak Task Force.
 - b. Additional updates included expansion of dark sky designations in Estes Park, celebrations for Colorado's 150th anniversary, and active legislative efforts to extend the conservation tax credit.

2. 2025 Q4 DNR Board Report
 - a. The 2025 Q4 board report highlights the 30th anniversary of the Help Preserve Open Spaces sales tax and the county's open space program, major achievements in land conservation and the Golden McCleod award for construction of the Blue Sky Trail.
3. Larimer County's Advisory Board Annual Compliance Training
 - a. Staff reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the advisory board members, covered the legal distinctions between advisory and mandated boards, the importance of adhering to open meetings laws, and the necessity of disclosing potential conflicts of interest. Staff stressed the importance of confidentiality during executive sessions and reminded members to avoid discussing board matters outside of official meetings.
4. Land Acquisition Strategy Overview – Meegan
 - a. DNR's land acquisition strategy is informed by the Open Lands Master Plan and extensive public surveys and input to ensure conservation priorities align with community needs. The county has established an ambitious goal to conserve an additional 24,000 acres between 2018-2043, and the department reported steady progress with 14,232 acres currently protected. This strategy prioritizes the protection of wildlife habitat, river corridors, scenic viewsheds, community separators and working farms and ranches through a cost-effective approach that includes cooperative planning areas, fee title acquisitions, and conservation easements. Meegan also outlined the adopted land acquisition process and the advisory board and Board of County Commissioners roles and steps.
5. Conservation Easements 101 – Justin Core
 - a. Justin provided a deep dive into the legal and financial structures DNR has in place to complete conservation easement (CE) projects on private land. CE's are funded through donations (often in exchange for tax credits), bargain sales, and purchase by the county. Conservation easements are individually tailored to the specific property to ensure protection of the established conservation values. The Colorado income tax credit program, currently set to end in 2031, raises concerns that the program may run out of credits sooner, leading to discussions regarding potential legislation to extend the credit by another 5 years.

Department Key Updates

1. Key Department Updates
 - a. Chris reported an uptick in visitation due to warmer weather and ranger prep for red flag days.
 - b. Meegan shared an update on progress on major capital projects, most notably the completion of the Poudre River Trail set for April and an updated schedule on paving projects associated with Horsetooth and Carter reservoirs as well as the Soderberg Trailhead at Horsetooth Mountain Open Space.
 - c. Meegan noted that DNR received a \$230k grant to help fund aquatic nuisance species inspections.
 - d. Meegan reported that Larimer County is working with municipal partners on the cooperative planning area between Wellington and Fort Collins identified as a community separator to ensure alignment. And in addition, DNR is working to nominate several key State Land Board parcels to the Stewardship Trust program to ensure their enhanced protection and stewardship given proximity to county conserved lands.

Next Meeting Scheduled

March 26th, 2026 – Larimer County Longview Health Services Building 2260 W. Trilby Road, Fort Collins 80526 – Goldfinch/Sparrow 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 –6:43 pm

Larimer County's Department of Natural Resources Vision, Mission, and Values: Healthy Landscapes, Healthy People; Connect People, Nature, and Place; Pursue Excellence, Act with Integrity, Trust, & Respect, Focus on Collective Good, Commit to Staff Well-Being, Demonstrate Courageous Leadership.

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.

These meeting minutes were prepared with the assistance of AI technology. All content has been reviewed by staff for accuracy.