



Colorado State Conservation Board
Meeting Minutes
Broomfield, CO
January 27-28, 2016

Meeting was called to order by President Unwin January 27, 2016 at 1:04 pm. At the request of President Unwin, those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Harold Unwin: Lower Arkansas River Watershed
Karen Salapich: Upper Arkansas River Watershed
Vernon Lerette: San Juan River Watershed
Margaret Lenz: Member-at-Large
Chester Zwirn: Republican River & Lower South Platte River Watersheds
Danny Neufeld: Rio Grande River Watershed
Larry Sweeney: Colorado River & Gunnison-Dolores River Watersheds

CALLED IN:

Karin Utterback-Normann: North Platte, Yampa, White River Watersheds

OTHER ATTENDEES

Cindy Lair: State Conservation Board Program Manager
Tammra Straub: Conservation Specialist
Nikki Reed: Conservation Specialist
Mark Cronquist: Conservation Specialist
Karen Wolf: Conservation Specialist
Rachel Theler: Conservation Specialist
Sharon Pattee: Colorado Association of Conservation Districts, Executive Director
Clint Evans: NRCS State Conservationist
Chris Wiseman: Colorado Department of Agriculture Deputy Commissioner

ABSENT

Joe Lindsay: Upper South Platte River Watershed



Meeting Summary of Motions

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: **Danny Neufeld** moved to approve the agenda as is, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: **Margaret Lenz** moved to approve the minutes of the November 2015 board meeting as presented, **Karen Wolf** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

APPROVAL OF ATTENDANCE: **Larry Sweeney** moved to approve **Joe Lindsay** absence as excused. **Karen Salapich** seconded, all in favor motion passed.

COMPUTING MATCHING GRANT: **Margaret Lenz** moved to have 75% or \$750 cap for each applicant, **Larry Sweeney** seconded. All in favor, motion passed. **Larry Sweeney** moved to increase overall funding to \$12,000 and **Vernon Lurette** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

MATCHING GRANT GUIDELINE DISCUSSION:

1. **Larry Sweeney** moved to name the program “CSCB Matching Grants”, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
2. **Danny Neufeld** moved to remove mini grant option and lower limit to \$1000-\$25000, **Vernon Lurette** seconded. Discussion on still encouraging small applications. All in favor, motion passed.
3. **Margaret Lenz** moved to limit that any one project not receive any more than 10% available of funds. **Karen Salapich** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
4. No motion
5. **Larry Sweeney** moved to accept the proposal with additional wording with ‘decision being voted on by the board and recorded in official approved minutes’. **Vernon Lurette** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
6. **Larry Sweeney** move to table this discussion until we have more information, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
 - a. **Karen Salapich** moved to remove the prairie dog language from the ineligible funds, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
7. **Danny Neufeld** move to accept the proposal, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
8. **Larry Sweeney** moved that we accept #8 and #9 as proposed, **Karen Salapich** seconded. Discussion. All in favor, motion passed.



9. **Margaret Lenz** moved to direct staff to increase the pool of reviewers that are more in-tune of production agriculture with conservation practices. **Karin Utterback-Normann** seconded. Discussion. Two in favor, the rest against. **Motion failed.** **Larry Sweeney** moved to direct staff to further investigate and determine a different mix and different number of reviewers to incorporate, **Vernon Lurette** second. All in favor, motion passed.
10. **Danny Neufeld** moved to accept the proposal, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
11. **Larry Sweeney** moved to accept the proposal, **Vernon Lurette** seconded. Discussion on letter of support. All in favor, motion passed.
12. **Vernon Lurette** moved to accept the proposal, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. Discussion around CSCB vs Districts creating the docket. **Danny Neufeld** moved to table, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed to table.
 - a. **Danny Neufeld** moved to recommend the use of NRCS east/west slope cost-docket for matching grant, **Karen Salapich** seconded. Discussion on if districts would use the recommended docket or invent their own and how/who will monitor this. **Danny Neufeld** called to question. All in favor, motion called to question passed. All in favor, motion to adopt recommended use of cost-docket passed.
13. **Vernon Lurette** moved that we highly *recommend* proper spelling and grammar within the applications, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
14. **Larry Sweeney** moved to accept the proposal as written, to remove the drought statistic priority. **Vernon Lurette** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
15. **Larry Sweeney** moved to approve as written, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. No further discussion. All in favor, motion passed.
16. **Larry Sweeney** moved to approve after removing "for workshops only", **Vernon Lurette** seconded. No further discussion, all in favor, motion passed.
17. **Margaret Lenz** moved to approve proposal #17, **Larry Sweeney** seconded. No further discussion, all in favor, motion passed.
18. **Margaret Lenz** moved that no one supervisor (and/or their immediate family) receive 10% of the matching grant and that the board as a whole not receive more than 50% of the total matching grant award. **Vernon Lurette** seconded, no further discussion, all in favor, motion passed.



MATCHING GRANT MOTIONS:

1. **Vernon Lurette** moved to approve the \$2,500 from General Funds (Matching Grants) to cover this meeting expenses, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
2. **Margaret Lenz** moved to pull Olney Boone from consideration for the 2016 matching grants due to historical concerns of potential misuse, **Karen Salapich** seconded. There was more discussion. All in favor, motion passed.

DIRECT ASSISTANCE: **Larry Sweeney** moved direct staff to further investigate Direct Assistance review process and be prepared to discuss their recommendations at the July board meeting. **Karen Salapich** seconded. No further discussion, all in favor, motion passed.

MINED LAND RECLAMATION BOARD: **Larry Sweeney** moved to dismiss the motion (listed below in black font) about Matching Grants that **Vernon Lurette** made at the November meeting that was tabled, **Chester Zwirn** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Harold Unwin requested additions to the agenda. **Danny Neufeld** moved to approve the agenda as presented, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Margaret Lenz moved to approve the minutes of the November 2015 board meeting as presented, **Karen Wolf** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

APPROVAL OF ATTENDANCE

Larry Sweeney moved to approve **Joe Lindsay** absence as excused. **Karen Salapich** seconded, all in favor motion passed.

GRANT SPENDING STATUS UPDATE

Tammra Straub distributed packets to each board member containing an updated spreadsheet on potential funding and grant spending. This handout also included the matching grant update. **Tammra Straub** reviewed all current matching grant awards and the reason for not announcing the funding yet. The board voiced concern about DCT districts that over-estimated workload resulting in under-spending of their DCT awards, and shared comments about how this could happen. Some ideas were brought up: DCT could be retired and can only work



specific amount of time, workload is dependent on EQIP contracts, vacancy savings, the DC may not have that much work, etc.

The CSCB Funding Decision spreadsheet was reviewed that laid out the breakdown of matching grant awards. There was discussion on the funding options and ideas to keep in mind for the guidelines being reviewed.

Matching Grant by watershed application worksheet was reviewed by the board and discussion on regions, priorities, natural disasters, etc.

COMPUTING MATCHING GRANT

The computing matching grant application was originally \$5,000 set aside for computer software and hardware purchases for districts. **Tammra Straub** reviewed districts that were initially interested in a Computing Matching Grant and whether the previously approved funding level is high enough. **Margaret Lenz** moved to have 75% or \$750 cap for each applicant, **Larry Sweeney** seconded. All in favor, motion passed. **Larry Sweeney** moved to increase overall funding to \$12,000 and **Vernon Lurette** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

MATCHING GRANT DISCUSSION –review Guidelines

Tammra Straub's summaries of the current and proposed changes were reviewed by the board. The corresponding changes (numbered on the spreadsheet) are matched below with noted motions and changes.

1. Discussion on the potential to change the name from the Natural Resource Matching Grant to the "CSCB Matching Grants". **Larry Sweeney** moved to name the program "CSCB Matching Grants", **Danny Neufeld** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
2. Mini Grant discussion on the limits, applications received and quality of proposals: **Danny Neufeld** moved to remove mini grant option and lower limit to \$1000-\$25000, **Vernon Lurette** seconded. Discussion on still encouraging small applications. All in favor, motion passed.
3. Discussion on the districts' ability to submit 3 different applications to a total aggregate limit of \$25,000. The Board decided to keep the current system in place.
 - a. **Margaret Lenz** moved to limit that any one project not receive any more than 10% available of funds. **Karen Salapich** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
4. There was board discussion on the district relinquish letter that allows a partner district to apply for more funding. **Tammra Straub** will work on wordage for the word 'surrender' (release, relinquish, etc.). Release eligibility to partner with another district and make note in the budget for delineating information on what each district will do/receive.



5. District boundary discussion on whether districts can do work for landowners within another district's boundaries. **Larry Sweeney** moved to accept the proposal with additional wording with 'decision being voted on by the board and recorded in official approved minutes'. **Vernon Lurette** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
6. Board discussion on industrial hemp and whether or not to allow proposals and in what context. **Larry Sweeney** move to table this discussion until we have more information, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
 - a. Side discussions:
 - i. Landowner labor: discussion on districts misusing this match in practice and what is the best outcome to still get conservation on the ground, ideas such as a matching grant cost docket were discussed. Tabled to discuss at #12 (cost docket).
 - ii. Prairie dog conversation: invite Ken Morgan from CPW to our next meeting to discuss the board's concerns about completely excluding prairie dog applications (even those applications not concerning rangeland health). **Karen Salapich** moved to remove the prairie dog language from the ineligible funds, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
7. A potential for match to be collected up to 6 months in advance was discussed. **Danny Neufeld** move to accept the proposal, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
8. This proposal is to clarify the Guidelines that the budget forms include before and after photos from either District or Technical Staff. **Larry Sweeney** moved that we accept #8 and #9 as proposed, **Karen Salapich** seconded. Discussion. All in favor, motion passed.
9. Discussion about indirect costs and what is/is not allowed.
 - a. The Board discussed the current review panel. **Cindy Lair** suggested trying to get more DCs to review, that have the agriculture and conservation background. We can ask Cattleman's Association and other agencies. Board discussion on qualifications and number of reviews. **Margaret Lenz** moved to direct staff to increase the pool of reviewers that are more in-tune of production agriculture with conservation practices. **Karin Utterback-Normann** seconded. Discussion. Two in favor, the rest against. **Motion failed**. **Larry Sweeney** moved to direct staff to further investigate and determine a different mix and different number of reviewers to incorporate, **Vernon Lurette** second. All in favor, **motion passed**.
10. Proposed to include approved or unapproved district board meeting minutes with the application documenting official Board vote to commit to the project and raising match dollars. **Danny Neufeld** moved to accept the proposal, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.



11. Proposed to require NRCS partner contract information to be listed on the application. **Larry Sweeney** moved to accept the proposal, **Vernon Lurette** seconded. Discussion on letter of support. All in favor, motion passed.
12. Cost docket discussion: Ideas of district submitting their own cost docket with their budgets and the implications of potentially 76 different dockets and justification of those. **Vernon Lurette** moved to accept the proposal, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. Discussion around CSCB vs Districts creating the docket. **Danny Neufeld** moved to table, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed to table.

Adjourn 5:00pm.

Thursday, January 28, 2016

Meeting called to order at 8:10am.

Additional Meeting Attendees: Chris Wiseman-CDA Deputy Commissioner, Sharon Pattee-CACD,

Vernon Lurette moved to approve the \$2,500 from General Funds (Matching Grants) to cover this meeting expenses, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

MATCHING GRANT DISCUSSION CONT'D.

12. Cost docket discussion re-visited. Suggestion of using NRCS cost docket instead of re-inventing the wheel. **Danny Neufeld** moved to recommend the use of NRCS east/west slope cost-docket for matching grant, **Karen Salapich** seconded. Discussion on if districts would use the recommended docket or invent their own and how/who will monitor this. **Danny Neufeld** called to question. All in favor, motion called to question passed. All in favor, motion to adopt recommended use of cost-docket passed.
13. Require proper spelling and grammar in the applications was discussed. **Vernon Lurette** moved that we highly *recommend* proper spelling and grammar within the applications, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.
14. Drought statistics priority points were discussed. **Larry Sweeney** moved to accept the proposal as written, to remove the drought statistic priority. **Vernon Lurette** seconded. All in favor, motion passed. Written proposal "Remove drought statistics from priority status as Colorado is a semi-arid to arid state and will likely continue to be in some stage of drought".

Tammra Straub and **Rachel Theler** discussed pre-application assistance from CSCB staff and the potential of certification preference points and issues around that. The idea of a watershed



matching grant workshop was brought up and **Tammra Straub** mentioned that she is doing a presentation at the Upper South Platte watershed meeting and field staff can facilitate as well.

*O-Project Oversight: clarify language to read “The proposed project must be coordinated under the direction of a District Project Coordinator.

15. **Larry Sweeney** moved to approve as written, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. No further discussion. All in favor, motion passed. Written proposal “Allow project expenditures for Workshops to be accrued up to six months prior to the State contract effective date with deposit or similar documents required to show accrual”.
16. **Larry Sweeney** moved to approve after removing “for workshops only”, **Vernon Lerette** seconded. No further discussion, all in favor, motion passed. Written proposal “Allow matching contributions to be accrued up to six months prior to the State contract period for Workshops only”.

Tammra Straub lead a discussion on project process involving nine steps from landowner request to project completion and reimbursement.

Pause for introductions with Deputy Commissioner and CDA Update.

MATCHING GRANT DISCUSSION CONT'D.

Discussion on life span of practices and who monitors it with landowner transfers, etc.

Margaret Lenz suggested including this piece (second paragraph of “O-Conservation Practice Installments) in the application part as a line item for clarification.

Publicity Article – discussion to just add a piece to clarify that the funding is from CSCB.

Photographic Records – **Tammra Straub** reviewed and will make more clarifications on this piece.

Project Location – submitting a map does not seem to be an issue with any of the districts.

Insurance – **Tammra Straub** updated the board that districts are still forgetting or are not ‘aware’ of this even though it is in every document (contract, application, etc.). There was board discussion. **Margaret Lenz** suggested adding a checklist for the different insurances required or recommended.

Record retention and IRS Requirement – discussion on the current language and clarification.

Quarterly Report - discussion on the current language and clarification.



Noxious Weed Reporting - discussion on the current language and clarification.

Final Report - discussion on the current language and clarification.

Additions to Operational Guidelines –

17. Adding reference to applicable state regulations (i.e., Pesticide Applicator's Act, Noxious Weed Act, etc.) to prepare districts to be aware they are responsible for learning about these regulations. **Margaret Lenz moved to approve proposal #17, Larry Sweeney seconded. No further discussion, all in favor, motion passed.**
18. Discussion and history of what has brought about this proposal on incorporating district employee/board supervisor form for all districts to limit program misuse by District Board Supervisors and to provide fairness to all District landowners. Discussion about examples and potential for using one in the future as well as other options. **Margaret Lenz moved that no one supervisor (and/or their immediate family) receive 10% of the matching grant and that the board as a whole not receive more than 50% of the total matching grant award. Vernon Lurette seconded, no further discussion, all in favor, motion passed.**

Discussion on further funding potential for 2016 matching grants and eligible districts.

Margaret Lenz moved to pull Olney Boone from consideration for the 2016 matching grants due to historical concerns of potential misuse, Karen Salapich seconded. There was more discussion. All in favor, motion passed.

Clint provided some background information on NRCS cost docket.

CDA UPDATE

Deputy Commissioner Chris Wiseman provided the CDA update that most of the legislative focus is marijuana and the department requested 14 inspectors to assist with the new task, unfortunately they only received 7. There is a strong marijuana presence in the form of lobbyists. The State Fair is also requesting funding with support of the Governor's office. The Department is working on a restructuring that will be coming out soon and the goal of bringing in a public land specialist to work with landowners and federal partners in the upcoming months. The state budget in FY 2018 is going to be tight, Tabor issues, etc. There were board questions and discussion on concern of legislature representatives and their knowledge, or lack there-of, of agriculture.

DIRECT ASSISTANCE

There was board concern over district staff writing letters of issue with the review process. The current review process consists of **1 CSCB staff** (from another region), **2-3 CSCB members** (1 from geographic same area, not same watershed and 1 from another part of the state), **1 NRCS**



area conservationist (not from the same district area) and **usually 1-2 other** reviewers (CACD representatives, etc.) for EACH district. There was discussion on having CSCB staff review their own regions to be able to provide direct support to their districts and reflective standard reviews/comments. Also, there should be training developed for watersheds due to the turnover in district managers over the last year.

There was a suggestion to include in the DA review committee yearly webinar more information on: what reviewers look for (annual meeting, attendee count, agenda; District Board involvement/engagement [how to determine this]).

At the board's request, staff will review the current process and reporting procedures and will bring suggestions for revisions to the July meeting. **Larry Sweeney** moved direct staff to further investigate Direct Assistance review process and be prepared to discuss their recommendations at the July board meeting. **Karen Salapich** seconded. No further discussion, all in favor, motion passed.

Prairie Letter recommendation – **Cindy Lair** and **Harold Unwin** will draft a response on behalf of the board.

DCT UPDATE

Tammra Straub summarized that we have a new 5 year agreement with NRCS, 75%/25% split and the handout in the packet states more information.

MINED LAND-RECLAMATION BOARD

Karin Utterback-Normann provided updates to the CSC Board.

Larry Sweeney moved to dismiss the motion (listed below in black font) about Matching Grants that **Vernon Lurette** made at the November meeting that was tabled, **Chester Zwirn** seconded. All in favor, motion passed. [Original tabled motion: "There was discussion on various DCT/MG program criteria. **Vernon Lurette** moved for the matching grant program to follow NRCS specs where practical but local districts can adjust where necessary. **Chester Zwirn** seconded. Discussion about logistics of implementations, keeping good standards and getting conservation on the ground completed. **Margaret Lenz** moved to table the vote until the next meeting, **Joe Lindsay** seconded. All in favor, motion passed to table the vote."]

SHPO UPDATE

Cindy Lair provided information about the SHPO agreement with NRCS to be accepted. **Clint Evans** briefed on the information and background.



CSCB OPERATING AND STAFF BUDGET REQUESTS

Cindy Lair provided handouts on the request for Ag Management Funds and the three proposals that were submitted to the Commissioner's office requesting those funds and the background information and explanation of each one.

Cindy Lair provided an update on the Salinity position and that **Cindy Lair** has been working on some structural changes within the program that needed to be completed before the job could be announced. Board voiced support of the decision as well as concern over **Tammra Straub's** current workload and adding more.

CONSERVATION DISTRICTS AND CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Cindy Lair explained that there was discussion about moving the easement program from the division of real estate over to the department of agriculture and specifically to CSCB. The Department has not expressed an opinion on it, but CSCB was mentioned as providing monitoring of the easements. **Clint Evans** voiced to proceed with caution as it's a huge undertaking for districts.

PARTNER UPDATES

NRCS: Clint Evans expressed thanks for getting the DCT agreement completed and thanks to **Commissioner Brown, Cindy Lair** and **Tammra Straub**. NRCS staffing filled 34 vacancies last year in the state. Currently, there are 36 vacancies in Colorado. 30 are going to be advertised soon and hopefully those will be filled by summer. Jeff Long is the new civil engineer in the Delta office to work on Salinity. **Clint Evans** and Roy met with Yuma about industrial hemp and discussed that for research and development only can be helped by federal program, not for actual crop production. NRCS is working with FSA to be on the same page as NRCS. Clint discussed economic impacts of putting projects in place, last year alone over 57 million dollars in financial assistance (x5) is a HUGE economic boost to rural Colorado. Local work group information went out to districts for prioritizing projects for EQIP yesterday. The proposals are due March 18th, so it will be a tight turn around. \$2.5 million has been set aside for targeted conservation projects, admin fees are not allowed in the program.

CACD: Sharon Pattee updated the Board that CACD's new President is Don McBee and Anthony Lobato is the new VP. They have two new board members, Mike Cleary from Gunnison-Dolores and Delta DC and Scott Jones from Colorado and Eagle County CD. They are now a full board. Gary Moyer is now the Executive Board of NACD and the new Region chair will determined at the national conference. Bob Warner will now be Colorado's representative for NACD and Gary Thrash will also attend NACD meeting in Reno. The CACD members attending NACD are all being covered by non-CACD dollars (Sharon, Gary Moyer, Gary Thrash and Bob Warner).



Envirothon has been moved to an agreement between Rio Grande Watershed and CACD. Camp Rocky is moving forward for this year. The legislative session is in full swing and CACD with the rest of Ag Council is there every other week representing Colorado agriculture. The next Colorado Conservator issue is coming out soon. The 2016 Annual Meeting will be in the Southern Front Range area.

Cindy Lair provided information that the Douglas Creek CD Matching Grant provided support of the formation of the National Horse and Burro Rangeland Health Coalition videos, if you have any questions then contact **Cindy Lair**.

Next meeting

July 11-12 Byers

September 7-8 Steamboat

Meeting adjourned 12:17pm.