



Colorado State Conservation Board  
Meeting Minutes  
Canon City, CO

Meeting was called to order by President Unwin at 8:02 a.m., July 2, 2015. 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

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

**Larry Sweeney:** Colorado River & Gunnison-Dolores River Watersheds

**Margaret Lenz:** Member-at-Large

**Chester Zwirn:** Republican River & Lower South Platte River Watersheds

**Danny Neufeld:** Rio Grande River Watershed

**Joe Lindsay:** Upper South Platte River Watershed

**Other Attendees**

**Cindy Lair:** State Conservation Board Program Manager

**Tammra Straub:** Conservation Specialist

**Jim Currier:** Conservation Specialist

**Nikki Reed:** Conservation Specialist

**Mark Cronquist:** Conservation Specialist

**Beth Karberg:** Conservation Specialist

**Sherm Liechty:** Area 3 Conservationist, NRCS Representative

**Sharon Pattee:** Colorado Association of Conservation Districts

**Jeff Steiner:** CSU Associate Dean, College of Agricultural Sciences

**Meeting Summary of Motions**



**AGENDA:** Larry Sweeney moved to accept the agenda with these additions. (**Agenda addition: Thank you letter to Royal Gorge, Rick Romano and Jim Heaston at Colorado Correctional Industries.**) Danny Neufeld seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**MEETING MINUTES:** Larry Sweeney moved to approve the January meeting minutes. Karen Salapich seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**CSCB ATTENDEES TO FALL CACD MEETING:** Larry Sweeney moved to ensure that CSCB pays expenses for local area board members to attend the CACD August meeting. Karin Utterback-Normann seconded. Call to vote, all in favor. Motion passed.

**CSCB NOMINATION COMMITTEE:** Larry Sweeney, Karin Utterback-Normann, and Karen Salapich volunteered. Vernon Lurette moved to approve the nomination committee, Danny Neufeld seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**FREMONT LAND CLARIFICATIONS:** Danny Neufeld moved to approve as stated. Joe Lindsay seconded, all in favor motion passed.



**Direct Assistance:**

**Margaret Lenz** moved for District 8, scoring a zero for not submitting a Completed Annual Plan of Work and choosing not to apply for direct assistance, to be removed from funding.

**Larry Sweeney** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Larry Sweeney** moved for the letter from CSCB describing allocation of direct assistance mention something about how the board was being gracious this year and allowing a small leniency on deadlines due to various reasons such as staff turnover, etc. **Joe Lindsay** seconded, all in favor. Motion passed.

**Joe Lindsay** moved that District #1, scoring a zero for not submitting a Completed Annual Plan of Work and choosing not to apply for direct assistance, to be removed from funding.

**Karen Salapich** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Joe Lindsay** moved that District #67, scoring a zero for not submitting a Completed Annual Plan of Work and choosing not to apply for direct assistance, to be removed from funding.

**Danny Neufeld** seconded, all in favor, motion passed.

**Vernon Lurette** moved that all 3 districts that scored a zero, which are not receiving direct assistance also be removed from eligibility from the Bootstrap Program. **Karen Salapich** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Larry Sweeney** moved to set the base amount of funding and the cap for the highest scoring district and incremental in-between. **Danny Neufeld** seconded.

**Larry Sweeney** amended his motion to add "the base district should start at \$5,000".

**Margaret Lenz** seconded. The amended motion passed unanimously.

**Larry Sweeney** amended to withdraw the cap from his original motion. **Danny Neufeld** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Larry Sweeney** amended that \$7,500 of Direct Assistance funds be put aside for Bootstrap Program. **Vernon Lurette** seconded. Board discussion. Motion withdrawn by both **Larry Sweeney** and **Vernon Lurette**. All in favor, motion withdrawn.



**Direct Assistance and Bootstrap Boost Program:**

*Clarification of all motions, including amendments: Direct Assistance award base funding starts at \$5,000 and is incremental from there. West Greeley, Yuma and Mosca-Hooper receive zero funding and zero offer of the Bootstrap Program. CSCB Staff will send letters to the districts that scored below 23 points excluding Platte Valley to offer them the Bootstrap Program. The interested districts will submit letters of interest and due to funding the executive committee will determine which district in each region will be able to move forward with the program this year. Each of the 3 Regions will have \$2,500 as additional finances for the district upon completion of their scope of work.*

Original motion called to question. **All in favor, motion passed.**

**Matching Grants:**

**Vernon Lerette** moved to approve the CSCB Cost-Share form as amended by **Tammra Straub**. **Karen Salapich** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Margaret Lenz** moved to remove drought priority status, **Joe Lindsay** seconded. Those in favor – 3. Those opposed – 4. Motion failed.

**Danny Neufeld** moved to continue up to 30% of Matching Grant total dollars be set aside for mini grants. **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Larry Sweeney** moved to cost-share the same as previously done (2012) District for computer-related purchases. **Joe Lindsay** seconded. **Larry Sweeney** withdrew motion and **Joe** withdrew his second. All in favor, motion dismissed. *The board provided guidance to Tammra to limit match up to \$500 and will finalize the details with more information at the next meeting.*

**Approval of Agenda**

**President Unwin** requested additions to the agenda.

**Agenda addition: Thank you letter to Royal Gorge, Rick Romano and Jim Heaston at Colorado Correctional Industries.**

**Larry Sweeney** moved to accept the agenda with these additions. **Danny Neufeld** seconded. Motion passed unanimously.



### Approval of Minutes

**Larry Sweeney** moved to approve the January meeting minutes. **Karen Salapich** seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### Partner Updates:

#### Colorado Association of Conservation Districts

**Sharon Pattee** updated the board on several CACD items. Camp Rocky is next week, the extra money from the legislature in Direct Assistance was secured and the partnership between our two boards, along with NRCS, is great. The next CACD face-to-face meeting will be in August and either the 17-18 or the 18-19 in Pagosa. **Gary Moyer** is term limited as President of CACD at the end of this year, so their board is looking into new leadership from within.

There was discussion about alternates serving on CACD. **Larry Sweeney** voiced concerns with confusion within watersheds on who is representing them. **Cindy Lair** mentioned CACD needs help and the work they do is so important, how can CSCB help? There was further discussion on roles in the CACD board and how to recruit younger or new representation for the districts. **Harold Unwin** suggested that some CSCB members attend the August meeting to discuss this issue and volunteered himself to attend and offered no per diem.

**Larry Sweeney** moved to ensure that CSCB pays mileage to attend the CACD August meeting. **Karin Utterback-Normann** seconded. There was discussion about where CACD funding comes from and what exactly it is spent on. **Sharon Pattee** clarified that majority of funding is from district dues and that covers the basic employee pay from the CACD lobbyist to the CACD Executive Director. **Harold Unwin** asked if **Danny Neufeld** and/or Vernon were interested in attending and both agreed to go. Call to vote, all in favor. Motion passes.

#### Natural Resources Conservation Service

**Sherm Liechty** represented NRCS at the meeting and explained that Clint Evans is currently travelling the NW portion of the state and visiting NRCS offices there. The budget projections aren't great for next year and most likely will result in less staff (or relocated) and less funding for EQIP. There was an all NRCS employee meeting in Area 3 last week where partners were invited. It was a great turn out and very productive session. Locally led efforts are currently underway; there is some confusion from districts on where to send information and what



information. **Harold Unwin** will set up a meeting with Clint to discuss how CSCB and NRCS and continue to work together and collaborate.

### **Colorado State University**

**Jeff Steiner** serves as a member of the advisory committee to CSCB. He provided updates on CSU that they are working to engage the 7 research centers around the state to various groups including extension, counties, districts, etc. For the next year they are working more with the grazing association. Blake Osborn is the new Water Extension Specialist and is stationed out of Pueblo. **Harold Unwin** asked how to get CSU involved with the noxious weed county programs. **Jeff Steiner** answered to start with the initial meeting to discuss strategy how to regroup and where to focus on with both the public and private connections. **Cindy Lair** brought up that funding is typically the largest issue with weed programs. **Danny Neufeld** shared that Scott Nisson came to the Rio Grande Watershed and that it is a great start for CSU staff and recommended other districts invite them to district or watershed meetings. **Larry Sweeney** suggested to also bring county commissioners to those meetings with CSU experts to educate the community.

### **Colorado State Conservation Board**

**Cindy Lair** started with the staff updates that **Tammra Straub's** help in the past year was tremendous and we are all grateful that **Nikki Reed** is back. On Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup> **Karen Wolf** will start as the West Slope Conservation Specialist. The Southeast position is currently posted and will remain open until July 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm and will be based in Pueblo with the goal to hire in August. The new CDA Ag Commissioner is Don Brown, a Yuma county farmer. The new Deputy Commissioner is Chris Wiseman, the previous State Fair Director.

**Cindy Lair** reminded the board of the budget request letter they wrote last November to Commissioner Salazar. **Cindy Lair** had moved the letter through the Department system and not entirely sure if it's continuing up the ladder. Colorado Department of Agriculture finances are tight with the building purchase and the unknown fixes that came with it will more than likely use the Ag Management Funds. It may be worthwhile to update the letter and clarify that some of the allocation of those Funds was from CACD/CSCB involvement.



The new NRCS leadership is fantastic and shows great potential for districts in Colorado with a fresh perspective. **Cindy Lair** is excited to see good things happening and building great partnerships. The DCT program is a great example.

New 3-way Agreements will be going out soon. The draft was on hold while waiting for the new State Conservationist to begin but the new edits are completed with a focus on moving forward with steps to ensure personal identification information remains secure. CSCB will help coordinate the signing by districts and **Harold Unwin**, then send to NRCS for final signature.

The local work group meetings to get landowner input are starting. CACD sent out the initial request with the letter from **Harold Unwin** and **Gary Moyer**. **Cindy Lair** updated the board that then **Nikki Reed** followed up requesting dates from districts and to offer help/guidance/facilitation assistance from CSCB staff if requested. The final information will be sent in to NRCS. **Cindy Lair** offered any districts help, either by field staff or her since there is no current SE Region specialist. Recently, **Dawn Jackson** sent districts more specific information.

### **CSCB Nomination Committee**

**Harold Unwin** provided information and asked for volunteers. **Larry Sweeney**, **Karin Utterback-Normann**, and **Karen Salapich** volunteered. **Vernon Lurette** moved to approve the nomination committee, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. All in favor, motion passes.

### **Fremont Land Transfer Letter and Clarification**

**Nikki Reed** mentioned this letter has the last few missing pieces for clarification on their boundary work they have been slowly going through for the last year. **Danny Neufeld** moved to approve as stated. **Joe Lindsay** seconded, all in favor motion passed.

### **Dolores Name Change**

Dolores Conservation District held a formal meeting and voted to change their name to High Desert Conservation District. **Nikki Reed** updated the board the paperwork which is being sent to appropriate parties. **Larry Sweeney** suggested clarifying if landowner support is needed. **Nikki Reed** will check additional resources to be sure our procedures are up to date and accurate.



### **Innovation Award**

**Nikki Reed** initiated discussion on the lack of some quantity of district recommendations from direct assistance reviewers and the previously drafted procedures and timeline is off due to CSCB staff turnover. **Mark Cronquist** provided additional history and thought behind this award. **Nikki Reed** recommends delaying the award until all details can be filled in and asked for board volunteers to assist with the process. **Margaret Lenz and Larry Sweeney volunteered to assist with the final plan which will be presented to the board at the September meeting with the goal of presenting the new award and outline of details at the CACD annual meeting.**

**Cindy Lair** suggested renaming the award, the Pace-Setter Award instead of innovation to focus more on a district that is meeting what they statutorily should be but maybe in a different process.

### **Long Range Plans**

**Nikki Reed** thanked everyone for getting them reviewed in the short time frame, but due to starting them late, the districts will greatly appreciate the reviews and plans back as soon as possible. After this meeting the signed plans, along with comments will be sent out to all districts.

### **Tour Thank You letters**

**Vernon Lurette** made a motion for the board to send thank you letters to our tour and meal planners from yesterday, July 1<sup>st</sup>. **Larry Sweeney** seconded, all in favor. Motion passed.

### **Envirothon**

**Sharon Pattee** brought up the history of the program and what it is and how it came to be under CACD's program. There is a 43% growth in participation from last year and this past competition was very successful. The steering committee consists of **Judy Lopez, Brenda Anderson, Mark Cronquist, Anthony Lobato** and **Sharon Pattee**. They completed a website but are struggling with funding. The steering committee is asking CSCB for a contribution to help with the needed \$15,000 annually, they are asking for only \$2,500 from CSCB directly. **Mark Cronquist** is also working on a management piece and sustainability of the program.

### **9:55 Break**



10:05 am back to order

### **Middle Park Direct Assistance Letter**

There was much board discussion on the letter that was submitted by the district manager, without the approval of her board. There was talk about understanding the merit of the letter but the concern of disallowing the work of supervisor around the state that do the work and that a large number of districts get the same comment of wanting to see more supervisor involvement. **Tammra Straub** suggested the certification program may help the board and staff clarify their roles. **Larry Sweeney** offered to write the draft letter and both **Cindy Lair** and **Harold Unwin** will review. **The board all gave general consensus to the letter.**

### **Bootstrap**

**Cindy Lair** reviewed the program, the history, how the contract works, etc. This year Platte Valley was offered the Bootstrap Program, worked an initial Scope of Work with **Mark Cronquist**. They originally accepted, but upon request of the initial reports countered the Scope of Work. There were two deadlines missed and after discussion with **Harold Unwin** it was decided that the offer of the program (and due to fiscal year ending) for Platte Valley no longer applies. Flagler is the other district that accepted this year and is meeting all deadlines with reporting. **Mark Cronquist** has faith in their completion of the program and suggested that maybe in the future districts apply for the opportunity to participate in Bootstrap. **Larry Sweeney** stated that we should help districts and they should not have to apply. There was more discussion from the board on how to best approach districts with the program and how to save time offering Bootstrap to actually get receptive participants. **Margaret Lenz** suggested that maybe we offer the bottom 5 districts in each region the opportunity to send in an 'interest' letter. **Cindy Lair** suggested that the board draw a line to tell staff exactly who to offer the program to, the districts can reply and then the executive committee can evaluate and determine which district in each region is priority.

Vernon moved to send letters out to the districts that the board decides, give 10 weeks as the deadline. **Cindy Lair** clarified that the interest letter will be reviewed and determined by the executive committee. **Vernon Lurette** concurred. **Joe Lindsay** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

### **Direct Assistance**



**Cindy Lair** gave history of direct assistance and the idea of providing a base funding or the several options provided in the meeting packet. There was much board discussion.

**Margaret Lenz** moved for District #8, scoring a zero for not submitting a Completed Annual Plan of Work and choosing not to apply for direct assistance, to be removed from funding. **Larry Sweeney** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Larry Sweeney** moved for the letter from CSCB describing allocation of direct assistance mention something about how the board was being gracious this year and allowing a small leniency on deadlines due to various reasons such as staff turnover, etc. **Joe Lindsay** seconded, all in favor. Motion passed.

**Joe Lindsay** moved that District #1, scoring a zero for not submitting a Completed Annual Plan of Work and choosing not to apply for direct assistance, to be removed from funding. **Karen Salapich** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Joe Lindsay** moved that District #67, scoring a zero for not submitting a Completed Annual Plan of Work and choosing not to apply for direct assistance, to be removed from funding. **Danny Neufeld** seconded, all in favor, motion passed.

Vernon moved that all 3 districts that scored a zero, are not receiving direct assistance also be removed from eligibility from the Bootstrap Program. **Karen Salapich** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Larry Sweeney** moved to set the base amount of funding and the cap for the highest scoring district and incremental in-between. **Danny Neufeld** seconded. There was discussion on the cap amount and more on the additional funds. More discussion on clarification in award letter of increased funding and how it was added.

**Larry Sweeney** amended his motion to add "the base district should start at \$5,000". **Margaret Lenz** seconded. The amended motion passed.

**Larry Sweeney** amended to withdraw the cap from his original motion. **Danny Neufeld** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.



**Larry Sweeney** amended that \$7,500 of Direct Assistance funds be put aside for Bootstrap Program. **Vernon** seconded. Board discussion. Motion withdrawn by both **Larry Sweeney** and **Vernon Lurette**. All in favor.

More discussion. Motion with amendments passed.

**Joe Lindsay** moved that of the \$7,500 Bootstrap dollars, each of the three regions receive \$2,500. **Vernon Lurette** seconded. Board discussion. **Margaret Lenz** called the vote to question. All in favor, motion passed.

**Margaret Lenz** moved to offer the districts that scored less than 23 points be offered Bootstrap, clarifying from Morgan and down but excluding the zero scored districts: West Greeley, Yuma, and Mosca-Hooper. **Larry Sweeney** seconded and asked the Executive Committee to give priority to lower scored districts for Bootstrap Program.

Motion amended by **Margaret Lenz** to exclude Platte Valley from Bootstrap offer due to repetitive declined offers. **Karen Salapich** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

Board discussion.

Original motion called to question. All in favor, motion passed. *(Clarification of all motions, including amendments: Direct Assistance award base funding starts at \$5,000 and is incremental from there. West Greeley, Yuma and Mosca-Hooper receive zero funding and zero offer of the Bootstrap Program. CSCB Staff will send letters to the districts that scored below 23 points excluding Platte Valley to offer them the Bootstrap Program. The interested districts will submit letters of interest and due to funding the executive committee will determine which district in each region will be able to move forward with the program this year. Each of the 3 Regions will have \$2,500 as additional finances for the Bootstrap district upon completion of their scope of work.)*

### **Matching Grants**

**Tammra Straub** updated the board that the FY 2015 General Fund dollars is fully spent. She reviewed the handouts in the meeting packet. Background information was provided on the changes to the Matching Grant Cost Share Form. The goal is to fully integrate the form in the 2016 cycle. **Vernon Lurette** moved to approve the form as amended. **Karen Salapich** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.



The 2016 Matching Grant cycle had 31 applications, 5 mini-grants and 7 educational based applications. The total amount requested is around \$669,000. The review committee has its webinar introduction next week and **Tammra Straub** needs CSCB guidance on priority status for drought status.

**Margaret Lenz** moved to remove drought priority status, **Joe Lindsay** seconded. Discussion on various conditions around the state. All in favor – 3. All opposed – 4. Motion failed.

**Tammra Straub** discussed funding preference for mini-grants. **Danny Neufeld** moved to continue up to 30% of Matching Grant total dollars be set aside for mini grants. **Margaret Lenz** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

**Tammra Straub** polled districts on the need for computer or software upgrades. There are currently 5 districts interested.

**Larry Sweeney** moved to cost-share the same as previously done (2012). **Joe Lindsay** seconded. Board discussion about holding the vote. **Larry Sweeney** withdrew motion and **Joe Lindsay** withdrew his second. All in favor, motion dismissed. *The board provided guidance to Tammra Straub to limit match up to \$500 and will finalize the details with more information at the next meeting.*

This year the matching grant review will be done completely online, similar to direct assistance. Review Committee still needs 2 representatives from our board. The reviews will be due August 5<sup>th</sup>. **Harold Unwin** and **Karen Salapich** have done several years. Very little interest was expressed. **Karen Salapich** volunteered to move around her schedule to accommodate the reviews, **Vernon Lerette** agreed as well noting that his wife Jane will be having to get the electronic information for him to review. The board agreed that was fine.

**Next meeting:**

**September 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in Broomfield.**

Meeting adjourned 12:20.