



Colorado State Conservation Board
June 25th-26th, 2013
Center, CO

Meeting called to order: 1:01 pm

ROLL CALL:

Danny Neufeld, Rio Grande Watershed
Vernon Lurette, San Juan Basin Watershed
Mary Sue Liss, Upper South Platte River Watershed
Margaret Lenz, Member-At-Large
Larry Sweeney, Colorado River, Gunnison-Dolores River Watersheds
Harold Unwin, Lower Arkansas River Watershed
Karen Salapich, Upper Arkansas River Watershed
Karin Utterback-Normann, North Platte, White, Yampa Watershed

EXCUSED ABSENCE:

Bud Mekelburg, Republican, Lower South Platte Watershed

OTHER ATTENDEES:

Charlotte Bobicki, Senator Bennet's Office
Mike Collins, NRCS Representative
Brian Neufeld, Colorado Association of Conservation Districts
Cindy Lair, State Conservation Board Program Manager
Nicole Reed, Conservation Specialist
Ashley Ross, Conservation Specialist
Jim Currier, Conservation Specialist
Natalie Macsalka, Conservation Specialist
Tammra Straub, Conservation Specialist
Mark Cronquist, Conservation Specialist

Cindy Lair noted that **Commissioner Salazar** sends his apologies at the last minute cancellation. He was called on by the Governor to address livestock and the fires issues.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Harold Unwin moved to add a discussion on drought conditions and federal land under the drought updates topic. **Harold Unwin moved to approve, Vernon Lurette seconded. All in favor, motion passed.**

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES:

Harold Unwin moved to approve the meeting minutes, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

DIRECT ASSISTANCE:

Nicole Reed reviewed the past year's process and thanked the entire board for the timely review and submission of scores and comments. The board reviewed the four suggested funding sheets (several different tier options and incremental). Discussion about the success of past Bootstrap Program recipients and what level of funding (and from where) it should be set aside to continue. **Nicole Reed** reported the change in the bootstrap funding due to direct assistance being completely back in the general fund account (must follow fiscal year) vs. the previous backfill Ag Mgmt. funds (follow calendar year).

Danny Neufeld moved to accept the incremental funding, withholding \$5,000 for the Bootstrap Program and setting the cap for the top district at \$7,500.00. Vernon Lerette seconded. Discussion: the Board has not heard of complaints from districts. Staff clarified that they have received several concerns on the "competitive" piece of the funding and that is a large reason they prefer not to share (workshops, project ideas, etc. with each other). Much discussion on the Bootstrap Program, this year it will precede that one district from each Field Staff's region will be offered. Should they decline, the staff will move up the list until a district accepts. **Larry Sweeney abstained from the vote. Two nays, five votes in favor. Motion passed.**

Nicole Reed reviewed some small updates to the direct assistance pages of the plans of work to incorporate the Board and review committee's suggestion. All agreed in changes. **Larry Sweeney** suggested a sub-committee to work with **Nicole Reed** on adjusting the application or instructions to see if revisions are needed. **Harold Unwin** volunteered. **Nicole Reed** will email the board to gather input/volunteers.

CERTIFICATION PROGRAM:

Nicole Reed updated that 16 supervisors have completed one to four modules. One supervisor has completed the entire certification program. There are quite a few districts doing the tests but have just not submitted the paperwork yet. There was discussion about the possibility of having some of this as a breakout session at CACD. Everyone agreed and will work to reiterate to districts, this is not a mandated program.

FINANCIAL REVIEW FINAL REPORT:

Nicole Reed gave an overview of the process through the written report and went over the graphical representations. There will be an edit/clarification on the "no insurance" should be "no dishonesty insurance". **Larry Sweeney** spoke of using this in the Leadership Class to emphasize the need for leadership in the districts. Could be another opportunity for CACD breakout session – the "insurance" topic. **Nicole Reed** clarified that after the board review at this meeting there will be final publications printed. **Margaret Lenz** requested copies for the fall watershed meetings. **Karen Salapich** also recommended one goes to each district. **Nicole Reed** clarified that from here on; districts will have the opportunity to request a review by state board staff.

CACD REPORT:

Brian Neufeld recommended the board look at the legislative sheet CACD hosts on their SharePoint site to follow changes/topics there as well. **Brian Neufeld** reminded the board that CACD's support always follows the policies established through the resolution process and that CACD is also working on the roll out of the new resolution process. CACD is also working with NRCS on having a field office training program that will involve CSCB as well. Emphasis is on training boards, staff and NRCS employees on everyone's roles in the Field Office. Hopefully this will be going in the spring of 2014.

NRCS REPORT:

Mike Collins updated the board that the Farm Bill has still not passed. NRCS is looking at updating the 3-way agreement with districts and CSCB, as the addendum in the meeting packets indicates it is looking at protecting PII.

Soil health awareness is a big focus for the program in Colorado with the drought and fires this will continue to be a priority.

CDA REPORT:

Cindy Lair updated that the department is moving forward with approval on purchasing a central building. They are still looking so the exact location is unsure, but there is a search perimeter.

The Department is also producing a Colorado Ag magazine. This will be a yearly endeavor with highlights on Colorado Agriculture; including information on districts and CSCB. The publication will be solely printed on selling ad space.

There was discussion from the CSCB that the amount of direct assistance has not increased in approximately 20 years. **Cindy Lair** mentioned that if they have an idea (such as Bootstrap program, workshops, etc.) to submit a proposal for Ag mgmt. funds (typically due April 30th). The board will discuss this further at the November meeting.

MATCHING GRANTS

Tammra Straub reviewed that the deadline for applications was last Friday, June 19th. There were a total of 27 applications for a total amount of \$503,588. Five of those are mini grants and 11 are in the severe drought areas of the state. 47.6% of the total applications are in drought section.

Discussion on prioritizing drought areas. The scoring rubric has an element that speaks to the “urgency of a request/practice”. **Tammra Straub** reminded CACD of a need for 2 directors to review grants. **Brian Neufeld** indicated he would ask his board and potentially volunteer himself. Orientation is the 17th.

MINED LAND RECLAMATION:

Mary Sue Liss was elected in February; however her term on CSCB expires at the end of this current year. The question was presented on if the board would like her to continue in the liaison role on the Mined Land Reclamation Board to complete her term with them (2 more years). She would be at their meetings on behalf of CSCB interests, but would NOT be as CSCB representative. There was discussion on the potential future implications of this decision. **Cindy Lair** clarified with the other board and our attorney that it would not “jeopardize” CSCB representative position. The board will vote on a decision in tomorrow’s meeting.

BYLAWS:

The review committee presented the changed document to the board and it was reviewed by each section.

Section 1 – Harold Unwin moved to accept, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

Section 2- Danny Neufeld moved to accept, **Vernon Lurette** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

Section 8- Margaret Lenz moved to accept, **Harold Unwin** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

Section 9- Paragraph 1: Karen Salapich moved to accept, **Mary Sue Liss** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

Section 9- Paragraph 2: Board discussion, this will be tabled as the review committee will clarify the writing and represent to the board tomorrow.

Section 10- Vernon Lurette moved to accept, **Harold Unwin** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

Section 11- Mary Sue Liss moved to accept, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

Section 12 – “and may assist in” Harold Unwin moved to accept, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

Section 13 – tabled until tomorrow.

Section 14- remove the two “soil”. **Danny Neufeld** moved to accept, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

Section 15- Mary Sue Liss Sue moved to accept, **Margaret Lenz** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

Meeting recessed until Wednesday, June 26th, 2013.

8:05 am MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

BYLAWS CONTD:

Section 9- Karin Utterback-Normann moved to accept, **Margaret Lenz** seconded, **All in favor, motion passed** to include the following wording:

“if a board member has two unexcused absences per calendar year.”

And

“Excused absences will be approved by the board at each meeting.”

Section 13 – the addition of this section to the bylaws. **Harold Unwin** moved, **Margaret Lenz** seconded, **all in favor, motion passed.**

MINED LAND RECLAMATION:

Vernon Lurette moved to have **Mary Sue Liss** finish her term with the Mined Land Reclamation Board after her term at CSCB expires. **Danny Neufeld** seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

SUMMARY ANNUAL PLAN OF WORK:

The board reviewed the APW compiled by state staff. It was discussed to have some copies available at CACD. **Margaret Lenz** moved to approve this plan, with the addition of a box on CACD partnerships that staff and the executive committee would work together on. **Harold Unwin** seconded. Discussion that it would be appropriate to request hard copy conservators is maintained as part of CSCB’s payment of \$5,000 towards the paper. **All in favor, motion passed.**

LONG RANGE PLANS:

Nicole Reed explained the LRP process. **Cindy Lair** indicated that statute empowers CSCB to oversee planning of Colorado Districts. Discussion followed on how LRPs are viewed by districts and the CSCB. **Cindy Lair** mentioned that it is not technically CSCB’s role to make districts successful, it is locally led conservation. CSCB is comfortable letting districts develop long range plans and they will be reviewed, NOT approved or disapproved.

Margaret Lenz moved to allow the President to sign as a review function with recommendations as provided by field specialist, watershed representative and program manager. **Vernon Lurette** seconded, all in favor. **Motion passed.**

SALINITY UPDATE:

Jim Currier gave an update and history of the program. There is concern with depletion of funds, the Bureau of Reclamation is developing priorities for fund use, and this will be explained in July. Cost effectiveness will be a primary consideration.

MESA CONSERVATION DISTRICT DISCUSSION:

Mesa is one of the districts in the Salinity program. **Nicole Reed** updated the board that the district is not meeting their statutory requirements, specifically not filing an audit or exemption from audit for the past three years. This isn't the only issue this board is facing, but it is significant. After much discussion and updates from staff that work with the district, **Karen Salapich** moved to remove Direct Assistance Funding for 2013 to Mesa CD, **Danny Neufeld** seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

Margaret Lenz moved to put the money that is being withheld from Mesa in the direct assistance funding to be distributed to all the other districts in good standing. **Karen Salapich** seconded, **all in favor, motion passed.**

COLORADO CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP CLASS UPDATE:

Cindy Lair updated the board that applications are due August 15th. The 1st session will be at CACD, 2nd session in Denver at Legislature, 3rd session Late 2014 summer central location, 4th/Final session at 2014 CACD. **Larry Sweeney** will talk with **Randy Randall** (NRCS) about funding.

AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSURANCE PROGRAM:

Cindy Lair went over the handout and background information. Discussion. Question from board on the enterprise records when producers comply and work within this program. **Cindy Lair** will look into other states for suggestions. She will have another update at the September meeting.

DROUGHT UPDATE:

Cindy Lair provided updates that if districts have specific plans to deal with drought issues they should send them to her. She may be able to find funding sources. The board had several discussions on the issues:

- Release CRP for earlier grazing/haying
- Eliminate or reduce capital gains tax on emergency herd reductions.
- Watersheds really need to do resolutions for CACD.
- Etc.

The board will send additional thoughts/ideas to **Larry Sweeney** about these issues and he will discuss with CACD at their July 11th call.

CAMP ROCKY:

Cindy Lair mentioned that it is a challenge as a conservation community; there is a real need for other partners to step up to and provide co-leadership of Camp Rocky. The question was asked, how much do you want CSCB staff to be involved? **Mary Sue Liss** suggested documenting time/costs of Camp Rocky involvement and report to the board at the next meeting. **Larry Sweeney** suggested staff be as involved as possible without impacting "feed on the ground" work with districts.

ENVIROTHON:

Mark Cronquist provided an update and a handout that explains the whole set up and first year success. The State team is in need of financial support to send them the National contest in Bozeman. Any ideas/suggestions/donations please contact **Mark Cronquist**.

3 WAY AGREEMENTS:

Cindy Lair discussed the addendum for privacy act to the current 3 way agreement. The board supported **Cindy Lair** to work with NRCS on it.

BRIEF FIELD SPECIALIST UPDATE:

Jim Currier: Grand Valley Salinity Control Project closed out

Natalie Macsalka: LRP measurable goals and rework of "sample LRP", 2 videos in the works, Recreation section of Camp Rocky

Ashley Ross: Review matching grants for her districts, District manager certification program

Mark Cronquist: district improvement, matching grant reviews, LRP process; assist Southeast Weld with Lower South Platte Watershed Plan grant project

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION:

Danny Neufeld provided us with a summary of the "new building project" that Center completed over 8+ years. It is a great facility and the board was thankful for the district for letting us the meeting space.

NEXT MEETING

September 5-6th in Palisade

MEETING ADJOURNED: 11:45 PM