

Colorado Association of Conservation Districts
February 19, 2014
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Via Conference Call

Attendees:

Gary Moyer, President
Don McBee, Vice President
Sharon Pattee, Secretary/Treasurer
Scott Nocks, Director
Jim Cecil, Director
Bob Warner, NACD alternate/former Director
Brett Moore, CACD Lobbyist
Janette Terry, CACD Acting Administrator
Larry Sweeney, President – Colorado State Conservation Board (CSCB)
Nicole Reed, Conservation Specialist – CSCB
Ted Ramsey, NACD Western Issues Specialist

Absent:

Charlie Carnahan, Director
Gary Thrash, Director
Anthony Lobato, Director
Brian Starkebaum, Director
Dawn Smith, DOP Coordinator

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Gary Moyer at 7:33 a.m. after establishing a quorum.

President Gary Moyer called for additions to the agenda. A request was made to add discussion regarding the board travel reimbursement policy/2014 expense form to the agenda.

Prior Meeting Minutes

President Gary Moyer asked if there were any corrections or additions to the January 2014 minutes. Hearing none, he entertained a motion to approve the minutes. Scott Nocks made a motion to approve the January minutes. The motion was seconded by Jim Cecil and the motion carried.

Financial Review

Sharon Pattee reviewed various financial reports through the end of January 2014. Sharon entertained questions and there was a question regarding the amount listed for the Leadership Program. Sharon will check on the amount and follow up with details to the Board. Don McBee made a motion to accept the financial reports as presented. The motion was seconded by Scott Nocks. Motion carried.

State Conservation Board Updates

Nicole Reed reported that the CSCB is working on arrangements for a June Board meeting in Trinidad. The meeting has been moved from June 10, 2014 to June 5 & 6, 2014. On Cindy Lair's behalf, Nicole asked when the Annual Meeting Committee will begin working on the 2014 meeting. The CACD Vice President, Don McBee will serve as the Meeting Chair. The committee will be working in the near future to formulate a time line and decide on the theme. Since Don McBee is new to the many responsibilities for the annual meeting, he will be assisted by a team effort from the CACD Board.

NACD Western Issues Report

Ted Ramsey, NACD Western Issues Specialist updated the Board on a variety of issues. Ted joined NACD in September 2013, taking over for Mark Truax. Ted will work directly with states and territories in the Southwest and Pacific Regions focusing on western issues. He has been appointed to chair the National Horse & Burro Rangeland Management Coalition. With the strong guidance and experience from Colorado, NACD was instrumental in forming and organizing the National Coalition. The Coalition will hold a conference call next week to work on direction for 2014 and appropriations for 2015. The Coalition is working with the Bureau of Land Management on solutions for effective management of wild horse and burro populations in the west.

In early February the Farm Bill was officially signed into law and was passed with bipartisan support in the Senate and the House. NACD strongly supported the Conservation Title of the 2014 Farm Bill which consolidated 23 conservation programs into 13 programs. The bill increases efficiency and ease-of-use for producers and includes a provision, submitted by NACD, giving Technical Assistance (TA) decision-making authority to the Secretary of USDA for effective implementation of conservation programs. This provision gives the Secretary the authority to move funds and provide more dollars for TA if needed. NACD was not successful in removal of the NRCS user fee provision in the Bill. However, NACD will work to address the user fee in the rules and regulations process. The bill also links conservation compliance to crop insurance premium assistance and will help further the conservation of natural resources while assisting producers who have been in compliance in the past. However, it is not retroactive.

Ted pointed out that in the Forestry Title of the Farm Bill, the Healthy Forests Reserve Program was reauthorized. Under the Title, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act allows the Secretary to allocate hazardous fuel reduction projects, at least one per state, to national forests experiencing dieback due to insect infestation or disease. \$200 million is appropriated each year through Fiscal Year 2024. These projects must be allocated 60 days from the date the Farm Bill was signed. He encouraged CACD to touch base with the Governor and get Colorado on board to submit an area for one of these projects. CACD requested that Ted send a summary of the language and appropriation details in writing to Gary Moyer and Brett Moore to work with the Governor on submitting a project within the 60 day window.

Ted entertained questions regarding the Farm Bill. Scott Nocks asked about the current policy at his local NRCS office of taking names but not doing any work on the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Ted believes that work on EQIP will be limited to taking names and not doing anything until implementation. He will check on this and send an update to Gary Moyer.

Scott Nocks also asked if the \$150 NRCS administrative fee for management plans applies if NRCS meets with the landowner regarding the management plan or applies to any transaction that NRCS has with the landowner. Ted explained that NRCS hopes to have flexibility and discretion in assessing the administrative fee but the fee will ultimately be addressed when the rules and regulations are written.

Ted emphasized that NACD is an advocate for local districts and the state association. He will work to improve communication with CACD through contact with Gary Moyer. He stressed that NACD is the local districts' and CACD's voice in Washington, D.C. Now that the Farm Bill has passed, he will focus more on Western issues.

State Conservation Board Updates (continued)

Larry Sweeney, CSCB President reiterated that the Board is going through the state statutes to focus on business as defined by statutes and to stay out of district business by following more closely the letter of the law. The Board is not out looking for things for districts to do, but rather CSCB is looking for things to do that will help the districts. He attended the NACD National Meeting as a newcomer and observed that Colorado has a strong voice regionally and nationally especially on the Natural Resource Resolution Committee. All of the resolutions submitted by Colorado passed without amendments. Colorado has a lot of support from other states, particularly the western region states.

Legislative Update

Brett Moore reviewed the Bill Tracking update as of February 18, 2014. He is currently tracking 25 bills. The Legislature is on track for 500-515 bills that are standard for an election year. The session is on the 43rd day of the 120 day session – about 1/3 of the way through. He has spent a great deal of time on two bills. The first is House Bill 14-1028 which opposes federal special use permit water rights. The second is Senate Bill 14-052 which deals with soil erosion and county board of commissioners. He also encouraged the group to check out Senate Bill 14-023 which was introduced on the first day of the session and hasn't moved. The Bill will be up on Thursday and it is important to check with the watersheds for any issues to bring to the Policy Committee regarding this Bill. At this point, CACD is neutral on the Bill.

Scott Nocks asked whether CACD has a position on Senate Bill 14-115. The bill concerns the draft state water plan. At this point Brett advises to see where the bill goes. Scott also asked about Senate Bill 14-103 which concerns the phase-out of the sale of certain low-efficiency plumbing fixtures. Brett will add this bill to the Bill Tracking Sheet and will get the Policy Committee's in-put on the Bill.

Brett, Scott and Jim attended the Colorado Ag Water Alliance (CAWA) meeting. The meeting was not a formal meeting but was more of an informative and networking meeting. Board members were able to ask questions and network with partners regarding water issues especially the State Water Plan. In 2013 Governor Hickenlooper issued an executive order directing the Colorado Water Conservation Board to draft a water plan to address the state's water issues. The draft plan is due by December 2014 and the final plan will be done no later than December 2015. Brett reminded the group to "Save the Date" - March 26, 2014 for Colorado Ag Day at the Capitol.

2014 Camp Rocky Update/Funding

Sharon Pattee updated the Board about Camp Rocky. Cindy Lair has scheduled a teleconference call for the Camp Rocky Team on March 6th. Amy Gossman has been selected as the co-director and the Team will discuss strategy and moving forward. The camp brochure has been updated and emailed to the Districts and partners. Sharon is concerned that she and Cindy Lair have contacted Brent Newman by phone and email regarding the Colorado Water Conservation Board's initial commitment of a sponsorship of \$5,000 for Camp Rocky and have not had a response. Cindy Lair has contacted another source interested in Campy Rocky sponsorship. Don McBee spoke with Jerry Nelson with Tri-State Generation and Tri-State is interested in potentially funding \$5000 for CACD with no specific tag on funding use. He suggested a letter from Gary Moyer with information about CACD including contact information to move this possible funding opportunity forward. He also suggested a packet about CACD to send to potential future donors. Sharon commented that there have been positive responses from potential sponsors for Camp Rocky funding but actually getting funds in hand has been a challenge.

NRCS/CSFS Funding

Sharon explained that CACD has not received the \$2000 pledged by the Colorado State Forest Service for the Conservator. Also NRCS funding reimbursement for the District Outreach Program Coordinator, Dawn Smith has been a challenge. Sharon has been working with several contacts at NRCS in order to solve the issues with reimbursement.

District Outreach Program Update

Dawn Smith, Program Coordinator could not be present on the call. It was heard that Delta Conservation District decided they are not sure if they want to participate in the program. Dawn is working with CSCB and NRCS staff on the draft curriculum and is planning on a dry run and a scoping session presentation in the near future. The pilot program must be completed by the end of May as specified by the agreement with NRCS.

2014 District Dues Letters/Invoicing

Janette Terry reported that a letter from Gary Moyer regarding district dues and an invoice for 2014 district dues has been created for each of the 76 districts and will be mailed in the next day or two. Once the letters hit the districts, Gary Moyer asked each watershed director to touch base with the districts in their respective watershed and encourage them to pay the dues. He encouraged each director to read the letter and

become familiar with the importance of each district paying dues. Janette Terry will email the directors a copy of the letter.

2013 Annual Meeting Survey

Janette Terry reported that approximately slightly less than half of the surveys mailed have been returned. She is in the process of compiling them into an Excel spreadsheet for the Board's review.

NACD 2014 Annual Meeting Review

Gary Moyer reported that Colorado was well represented at the meeting. He, Brian Starkebaum, Bob Warner and Sharon Pattee attended representing CACD. Cindy Lair and Larry Sweeney representing CSCB attended as well as district representatives, Callie Hendrickson and Joyce Wallace. The three resolutions submitted by Colorado addressing manual snow courses, forest management, and the Lesser Prairie Chicken Listing were approved. The resolutions, simple and concise, were not edited in committee which positively impacted the smooth movement through the resolution approval process. Gary reviewed a resolution submitted by Oregon concerning listing of the greater sage grouse which was specific to Oregon and did not work specifically for all states affected by the sage grouse issue. The resolution was killed in the Natural Resource Committee. The resolution was re-worked to address all states concerned. After a 2/3 vote by all the states to reintroduce the resolution, it was approved.

Randy Ristau, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)

Gary reported that Cindy Lair is communicating with Randy Ristau, Nonpoint Source Specialist with CDPHE to obtain more specifics regarding the possibility of a partnership with CACD to implement Nonpoint Source Programs. Randy has also indicated that there are potentially more opportunities to partner with CACD. Cindy is working to set up a conference call with CSCB, CACD and Randy to explore the possibilities, specifics and authorities to proceed with the CDPHE partnership.

Website Revamp Updates

Gary Moyer announced that the newly designed site is now up and running. Website developer Mike Macklin is working with CACD to "tweak" the site. The end goal will be to have the CACD Administrator be given the authority and ability to update the site without the developer being involved. A goal is to have various CACD updates posted within 24 hours. Copies of the Conservator are now posted. A legislative tab including the Bill Tracking Sheet during the legislative session, status of the resource committees, Campy Rocky information are other topics that are currently in the process of development. The ultimate goal is to have relevant, timely, and updated information posted to the site for the eyes of all of the Districts and our partners. The site has a tab that links to most every district's website and a request was made to add Facebook links for districts that have them as well. Gary encouraged everyone to take a look at the website and provide in-put.

Executive Director Hiring Update

Gary Moyer reported that the position has been extensively advertised. The application submission deadline is February 21, 2014. Four applications have been received so far. Gary set a February 26, 2014 date for the Personnel Committee to meet and interview each candidate. He entertained discussion on how to handle selection of the Director. After discussion, the Board consensus was that the Personnel Committee for this position will review the applications by email, conduct interviews to narrow the selection to the top two candidates. The application packets for the top two candidates will then be emailed to the Board, discussed again on the March teleconference, where a decision can be made.

2014 Resource Committee Updates

Gary Moyer requested that CACD Directors take the lead to touch base with the Resource Committee Chairs when there are gray areas in policy concerning pending legislation. He asked the directors to encourage the Chairs to check the Legislative tab on the new website to refer to the Bill Tracking Sheet to evaluate current legislation and give guidance on policy.

2014 Annual Meeting Update

Gary Moyer has signed the contract for CACD's 2014 Annual Meeting. Janette Terry will send a "Save the Date" email to districts and partners for the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting Committee will begin work soon on a time line and theme.

Board Member Travel Reimbursement Policy

Gary Moyer explained that CACD policy states that Board members can submit travel and meal expenses while conducting most CACD business. The current budget allows for three face-to-face board meetings each year. He asked board members to use discretion when submitting expenses and do what they can to assist with expenses. Sharon Pattee anticipated that as the year progresses and income starts coming in, the CACD budget will improve. She will keep the Board informed when/if more funds become available as the year progresses. She encouraged Board members to keep a ledger during the year for potential reimbursements and also to use this for tax deduction purposes on the Director's personal tax returns. As the financial situation improves, legitimate travel expenses can be reimbursed. She reassured the Board that travel reimbursement will be handled consistently.

NACD 2014 Legislative Conference March 2014 in Washington DC

The Board previously approved Gary Moyer to attend the NACD 2014 Legislative Conference on March 26 & 26, 2014. Gary is working with Brett Moore and Ted Ramsey to set up meetings with legislators to cover three to four major issues. He is attending agency meetings with the BLM and Forest Service with five or six states in attendance as well. He asked the Board to think about the major issues to bring to the conference. The passage of the Farm Bill has changed the issues.

Other Discussion

The Board discussed issues with Districts claiming what work NRCS has done as work the Districts have done. This can present problems with Districts' credibility. The District Outreach Program will help address these issues. Discussion encouraged the Board members to bring up the issues at their Watershed Meetings and to stress that Districts take credit for what the Districts in fact do, and not what NRCS does.

Next Board Meeting

Gary Moyer entertained a motion to schedule the next meeting. Scott Nocks made a motion to schedule the next CACD BOD Meeting for Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at 7:30 a.m. via teleconference. Sharon Pattee seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janette Terry
Acting Executive Administrator