

**Colorado Association of Conservation Districts  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
June 12th, 2019, at 7:30 AM Teleconference**

**Attendees:**

Scott Jones, CACD President - Colorado River Watershed  
Mike Cleary, CACD Vice President - Gunnison/Dolores River Watershed  
Gary Thrash, Director - San Juan Basin Watershed /CO Representative to NACD  
Jim Cecil, Director - Republican River Watershed  
Charlie Carnahan, Director - Upper South Platte Watershed  
George Fosha, Director - Upper Arkansas River Watershed  
Nick Charchalis, Director - North Platte/White/Yampa River Watershed  
Nancy Berges, Director - Lower South Platte Watershed  
Tyler Neely, Director - Rio Grande River Watershed  
Bob Warner, CO Alternative Representative to NACD  
Brett Moore, CACD Lobbyist  
Bobbi Ketels, CACD Executive Director

**Absent:**

Steve McEndree, Director – Lower Arkansas River Watershed  
Cindy Lair, CSCB  
Les Owen, CDA

**Guests:**

Clint Evans, NRCS  
Mark Cronquist, CSCB  
Nikki Brinson, CSCB

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by President, Scott Jones at 7:30 AM after establishing a quorum. President Scott Jones asked for any additional agenda items. With no additional requests, the board moved on with the agenda.

**Prior Meeting Minutes:**

**President Scott Jones** asked for a motion to approve the May 2019 minutes. **CACD Director George Fosha** made the motion to approve and **Director Charlie Carnahan** gave the second. Without any further discussion, the motion to approve the CACD BOD's May 2019 Minutes was passed unanimously.

**NRCS Update-Clint Evans:**

Clint gave updates on the staffing front. Things are starting to move through the Human Resource teams up at the department level. In the process of submitting 45 positions for NRCS in Colorado all across the state. To date three of those have been advertised. The assistant state conservationist for management for strategy position which has been vacant for a year was advertised two weeks ago and closed last Thursday. The area conservationist position for area 3 in SE for Rocky Ford & Pueblo was also advertised on closed June 6<sup>th</sup>, and one more team lead district conservationist position for the Cheyenne Wells/Eads resource team had to be re-

advertised due to some errors in the original announcement. It also closed on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully the list of applicants will be available soon in order to make selections.

They have submitted 22 of the additional 42 remaining positions in the HR Tracker so those are being worked on by the HR team. Between now on July 4<sup>th</sup> they should have all the remaining in the system and pending advertisement which will be advertised in batches between now and October. They are anticipating out of the 45 positions they will gain 50 to 60%, so around 20 to 25 positions gained. The other 20 or so will most likely be internal advancement and maybe some from out of state.

They did gain 5 new folks over the last few weeks, including the new resource conservationist covering Pueblo and Rocky Ford, soil conservationist in the Burlington office and a new employee transitioning from the DTC program for the Longmont and Denver offices. Also, three pathway students filling three positions; one as an engineer for the Denver state office, one as a new entry level soil con in the Montrose office, and one as a range management specialist in the Fort Morgan field office. Gaining a few, but at the same time losing some folks. Hopefully by the end of the calendar year the staffing number will look a lot better than they do now. Staffing should be right at 178 with current changes. It is a constant everchanging battle trying to keep folks on board and moving forward.

The EQIP program is going very well with 35 to 40% obligated on the initial allocations, with approximately \$36.2 million. Still at about 13 to 14 million obligated, so 35 to 40% of the way. They were notified last week total of 10 million requested that they will be getting 7 million of this request. There will be another opportunity for additional funds in early July, if additional work can be handled by staff. This will get them up to the 43.1 million so far for the Fiscal Year 19 EQIP program. Clint mentioned that he is starting to hear from DC's that districts are starting to complain that they are not getting enough funding. Clint is asking everyone to wait until the end of the year before writing any complaint letters to see where they end up. The CSP program has started to roll out the new CSP Grasslands initiative, which is intended for prior converted farmland under certain eligibility. The final information for this will come out in mid-July. Clint gave an initial update on the Ag Conservation Easement program and also gave an update on the Emergency Water Protection program funding and this initial phase mitigation is underway, that is needed from the Avalanche situation. There are a lot of moving parts going on within NRCS right now.

**CSCB Update-Cindy Lair:**

No update as Cindy was unable to be on the call.

**CDA Update-Les Owen:**

No update as Les was unable to be on the call.

**NACD Update-Gary Thrash:**

**Director Gary Thrash** stated that the NACD Conservation Bootcamp has a final session planned and people are encouraged to register right away for this fall course, October 7<sup>th</sup> to November 7<sup>th</sup> as the final being offered in 2019. NACD has an education resources page that has been revised and available online. All districts are encouraged to take a look at this material and share with teachers who are interested. There are a couple conservation leadership awards nominations due by the end of August. One is the NACD Friend of Conservation award and the NACD Distinguished Service award. Keep these in mind for nominations to be submitted for the NACD 2020 Annual meeting.

NACD also has a farm bill web page that they continue to update as things are implemented and deadlines for sign-ups for grants. Bobbi sent out to the districts the August Resource Guide and the grassroots engagement for when our representatives come home to the states to encourage the districts and folks to contact our representatives with any concerns, they would like to see our legislatures address. On June 14<sup>th</sup> BLM is

hosting a webinar on its 90<sup>th</sup> planning regulations, making changes and they are interested in getting districts and counties involved at this level. We have the opportunity to sign on as cooperating agencies for the local plans that they put in place. In August is the NACD in Santa Fe. Bob Warner suggested that anyone who has a chance to go down this is a good meeting location to attend.

**CACD FINANCIALS: 04-30-19**

**Ending/Cleared Balance in Checking as of April 30th, \$96,157.92**

Checks/Payments Cleared - \$40,003.06, Deposits Cleared \$22809.95

Total Uncleared Transactions (Checks/Payments Only-No Pending Deposits) -\$3,972.72

**Ending Register Balance as of April 30th, \$92,185.20**

Reserve remains at \$26,075.15 (remaining payback due to reserve total \$15K)

Funds allocated for AM 2019 \$5,000.00

Funds allocated for AM 2020 \$5,000.00

**NOI as of 04/30/19 \$56,110.05**

**New Transactions**

Expenses -\$2,231.50

Deposits \$2,391.28

Total New Transactions \$159.78

Current Register Balance \$92,344.98

**Current NOI \$56,269.83**

**Credit Card Ending Statement Balance as of 5/07/19 \$22.87**

**Total District Dues Paid/Received as of 4/30/2019 \$42,200.00**

**UARRP Activity 2019 YTD:** Total pass-through expenses \$442,925.48 - Total pass-through income

\$42,925.48 - Total CACD Income Earned YTD 2019 \$2,386.28 (Includes 5% Admin & Payroll Reimb)

Balance of Federal Funds Available \$351,935.73

**CACD FINANCIALS: 05-31-19**

**Ending/Cleared Balance in Checking as of May 31st, \$86,407.04**

Checks/Payments Cleared - \$12,142.16, Deposits Cleared \$2,397.28

Total Uncleared Transactions (Checks/Payments Only-No Pending Deposits) -\$4,901.55

**Ending Register Balance as of April 30th, \$92,185.20**

Reserve remains at \$26,075.15 (remaining payback due to reserve total \$15K)

Funds allocated for AM 2019 \$5,000.00

Funds allocated for AM 2020 \$5,000.00

**NOI as of 05/31/19 \$56,110.05**

**New Transactions**

Expenses -\$992.06

Deposits \$27,116.79

Total New Transactions \$26,124.73

Current Register Balance \$107,630.22

**Current NOI \$71,555.07**

**Credit Card Ending Statement Balance as of 6/06/19 \$2.15**

**Total District Dues Paid/Received as of 5/31/2019 \$45,800.00**

**UARRP Activity 2019 YTD:** Total pass-through expenses \$442,925.48 - Total pass-through income \$42,925.48 - Total CACD Income Earned YTD 2019 \$2,386.28 (Includes 5% Admin & Payroll Reimb)  
Balance of Federal Funds Available \$351,935.73

Bobbi reminded everyone that the April financials had been tabled due to time constraints. **Vice President Mike Cleary** made a motion to approve both the April and May Financials. **Director Jim Cecil** gave the second. Motion passes.

**Camp Rocky:**

Bobbi stated that Camp Rocky is just around the corner and we are 9 campers away from hitting our goal of 30 campers. The deadline date of June 15<sup>th</sup> will probably be extended a couple of weeks. Sponsorships for 2019 is in good shape and all other plans in are in the works.

**Corporate Fundraising:**

Anadarko wrote a check to CACD for 10K as a contribution to CACD in FY2019. When he originally spoke with Anadarko about the contribution, the premise was that 80% would target primarily to help struggling districts make their full dues payments with 20% to be used for general funds. With this said, CACD has to come up with a mechanism to help those who cannot make a full payment or those who cannot pay dues at all. We need a mechanism of which districts should be subsidized as bringing in more members that could not pay full dues. Director Gary Thrash stated that there should be some accountability lined out for the districts who are subsidized. Bob Warner suggested to keep in mind that there are some districts that have quite a bit of money in the bank but only pay \$100 in dues as an example, maybe give them some assistance, but do not give them full voting power, but this should be up for discussion. VP Mike Cleary stated that we do have the methodology to look into their financial status. The idea is not to subsidize those districts who have the ability but not the desire, this funding should not be available to those districts. Mike brought up the Lower Ark watershed as an example to use as a test case and that many of these districts might not have the budgeting. Director George Fosha asked if we had the authority to check into their financials. Director Gary Thrash stated that they are required to make this information available on the DOLA website. Director George Fosha stated that we should find out how financially solvent these districts are before they receive any of these funds.

Director Gary Thrash brought up that Dove Creek has a very low budget but paid full dues this year. Director Jim Cecil stated it will be a slippery slope and it will be tough, but we do the best we can to make it work and to make it a fair mechanism for selection. President Scott Jones made the suggestion that maybe CACD puts together a subcommittee from the board to review the district financials and reimburse those districts who have made the dues payments who were under a tight budget, go ahead and reimburse them a determined portion as a reward of their support and we recognize their efforts with a rebate check and a letter from CACD.

Bob suggested instead of a rebate, possibly offer them free registrations at the annual meeting. VP Mike Cleary stated that both concepts is not costing CACD any money as we are giving an internal credit. Director George Fosha agreed and said the first thing to do is to find out the financial situation of these districts to figure out how many districts we would be targeting to subsidize based on their financial condition. Year to date there are 42 districts that have paid dues and from this only four of the forty-two paid partial dues.

VP Mike Cleary made the motion that we put together this committee. Director Jim Cecil gave the second. Director Nick Charchalis asked if we could have all board member involvement as they know the districts within their watershed better than anyone. VP Mike Cleary stated this is a good point and we should get input from the director for each specified watershed. Director Gary Thrash asked if we could go to CSCB staff for help with budget information. Director George Fosha agreed, and added that the director from the watersheds would make the initial contact with these chosen districts.

President restated the motion on the floor to do the subcommittee and with that each watershed rep compile a list of the districts within their watershed to go to the subcommittee as well with a list of the districts who they think needs the help, in order to have input on deciding how to divvy up this money. Motion passes. President Scott Jones asked if we wanted to sign up now. VP Mike Cleary volunteered. Director George Fosha and Director Jim Cecil also agreed to be on the committee. The three committee members will reach out to other directors for their input.

Nikki Brinson said to reach out to her and let her know what budget information was needed. Nikki also reminded everyone that CSCB has a board meeting next week, with a fall meeting in the NE area of CO. The matching grant and DTC applications are out. Nikki cannot provide how much money the districts have in the bank but can provide a budget. This may give us a general big picture idea and then a good idea to follow up with those districts. Some budgets may look big because of grants, but some of these districts don't have a lot to spend. Director Gary Thrash gave an update on his efforts to get a direct contact for Cabela's to send to Mike since it takes about six months to get through their process.

#### **Envirothon Update:**

VP Mike Cleary said that some of the Anadarko funding could be earmarked for Camp Rocky if needed. Bobbi stated Camp Rocky was in pretty good shape, but Envirothon could use some help for national expenses. Director George Fosha spoke about the ranch brought on that gave a \$5K donation to CACD that could be geared toward Envirothon. Everyone agreed we could use either one or both to help with Envirothon. Bobbi stated this years nationals budget should be revamped and information available within the next two weeks. The original budget was around \$7800 total. Mark Cronquist jumped in to give a more detailed update on the details of getting the team to North Carolina for nationals but feels the initial figures should be pretty close. There will be five students and two sponsors.

VP Mike Cleary feels that we should craft a letter to the Walton Foundation for Envirothon funds as needed. Director Nick Charchalis agreed. VP Mike Cleary did not think we needed a motion for this. The Envirothon team will be flying into NC on July 26<sup>th</sup> and returning home on August 1<sup>st</sup>. President Scott Jones said we would have time to discuss again on the next board call for final numbers. Bobbi stated that we will need to purchase the airline tickets within the next few days and we need to secure the rooms.

Mark Cronquist thanked the CACD Board for their support of the Envirothon event and reiterated that the first two priorities are to get our winning team to nationals and the second being the draft of the MOU between CACD and CSCB. The other currently being worked on are the topics experts. Mark gave a rundown of who we feel we have so far for topic experts. Mark is also working on recruitment for the subcommittees and financials. There will be much more transparency and details going forward. Also developing materials for a foundation of focused fundraising and sponsorships. Further talks to take place on promotional ideas to share with CO schools.

Website changes for the 2020 event will start very soon. Director Nick Charchalis stated he is very excited with the new ideas to include all districts and the entire state to bring in more schools, helping them feel that

they have the ability to compete. Mark discussed some further ideas on this subject of improving the involvement of other schools. Director George Fosha brought up the relationship between FFA and Envirothon. Mark gave some history on this subject. Bobbi stated that she sent out the latest draft of the MOU and asked everyone to make their comments prior to the CSCB Board meeting and hopefully vote on the final MOU on the next CACD call. Mark said this is a good goal, depending on the development of the committees and how fast this can be put together.

Director Tyler Neeley thanked Mark for his efforts and the CSCB staff assistance. Mark Cronquist wanted to thank Bobbi for her assistance as well. Bobbi brought up the discussion of the Envirothon checking account, which is currently located in Center (Community Banks of Colorado), with several branches down in the valley, which is addressed to Center CD. Bobbi stated she is going through transactions needed with Tyler. Discussion took place on the details of transactions. Between the Envirothon account and the general account for CACD. Bobbi asked the board if they still want a separate account for Envirothon once this current account is closed. Envirothon is the only CACD program that has a separate account. Further discussion took place amongst board members. VP Mike Cleary stated he felt Envirothon should maintain a separate account but to simplify things, the account can be with the same bank as the general account, which is US Bank. This will simplify while maintaining total transparency on the Envirothon event. Scott stated that Tyler would be the signer on the account along with Bobbi. VP Mike Cleary gave the motion. Director George Fosha gave the second. Motion passes.

#### **Annual Meeting:**

Scott stated that we should schedule our first Annual Meeting call very soon. Mike could not specify a date and said to just let him know and we will go from there. Mike had to sign off early.

#### **Legislative Update- Brett Moore:**

Brett Moore gave a legislative update stating that the Governor's 30-day bill signing period ended last week on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Any bills passed within the past ten days, the governor has thirty days to sign those. CACD actually had two that they supported that went right up to the end. This included the two forestry bills, HB19-1006 and SB1940 were actually signed on May 31<sup>st</sup> and June 3<sup>rd</sup>. We tracked 34 bills and ran one bill with a total of four bills that we supported, and all were signed by the governor. We opposed SB181, which ended up being signed as well. Brett encouraged everyone to take a look at the tracking sheet for further discussion of who is supporting and who is not. We are tracking a few things going on in the interim. There is a Hemp committee being put together by CDA that we will be monitoring. Brett will be out of town for the Ag Council summer meeting and looking for someone to attend in his place. Further information forth coming. Brett will cover the upper South Platte watershed meeting on Thursday for Bobbi. The interim water committee meetings are starting up. The Ag and animal husbandry got off pretty light this session but keep an ear to the ground on these many issues that will be coming up.

Brett put together a press release on 1082 for Bobbi and George to review. Director George Fosha brought up that Clint Evans brought to our attention that NRCS has some concerns about HB1082, regarding needing permission from the landowner in regard to EQIP and that our bill did not fully address permission from the landowner. George is in conversations with the NRCS attorney and will follow up with Clint Evans. George stated he is OK to go forward with the press release. Bobbi had two questions for Brett on the press release before finalizing.

#### **CACD Misc. Programs:**

Bobbi asked about the next steps on the resolution defeated in 2018 on the Conservationist of the year policies that was turned into an action items. Bobbi read the resolution and asked for discussions in order to be able to finish and release the 2019 awards forms. Director Gary Thrash gave some history and personal input on the issues. He used the Nature Conservancy as an example of a corporate COY who is doing a very

good job, but so is the individual rancher. This has only happened once. Bob had one comment about recognition at the National Western Stock show to limit it to the Farmer and Rancher of the year as it is now. Director Charlie Carnahan, Jim Cecil and President Scott Jones agreed. Gary said we have been holding to this and the issue is more of how we have handled the nominations coming in from the districts.

Director George Fosha stated from his experience can think of three instances where this has happened with the large operations in comparison to the hard work being done by the local on the ground-based farming ranching operations. This was the concern of the Double El district. Director Gary Thrash stated he does not receive the financial information on the nominees and sometimes it has been a bit of a stretch on fitting nominees into the proper categories. Gary also discussed the issues of the length of the awards ceremonies at the annual meeting. Director Jim Cecil pointed out that Gary has been doing this on his own and if anyone is interested, they can step up to help him. Director George Fosha agreed. President Scott Jones said he would help. Gary stated it is just a handful of nominations.

Bobbi asked George if this was a watershed issue and George said he is thinking it is more on the state level, but if we are only getting a handful of nominees, he does not want to make a bunch of changes. Director Jim Cecil stated that this issue was addressed and discussed and as a board and help more with the nominee review process. Director Gary Thrash said he welcomed anyone who want to take it over, no volunteers, but Director Nick Charchalis said we could certainly help Gary more on the grassroots level. Also, to communicate better as a board on the urban population, pick something and do a press release on this award bringing more awareness of urban conservation. Further discussion took place on urban versus rural issues. NACD on national awards get a certificate and CACD could start doing this, along with getting an invitation to the awards banquet.

**Misc. Discussions:**

Discussions took place on the draft from CDA/CSCB on the soil health program. The draft is very generalized, but the board feels at this point CACD could support this program at this time and waiting for draft changes for review. The next CACD BOD meeting is August 14<sup>th</sup>, via Face to Face starting around 9:30 or 10 AM with a catered lunch and be done at 5 PM. **Director Jim Cecil** made the motion to adjourn. **Director Gary Thrash** gave the second.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 AM

Respectfully Submitted,

**Bobbi Ketels**  
**CACD Executive Director**