

**Colorado Association of Conservation Districts
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
March 13, 2019, at 7:30 AM Teleconference**

Attendees:

Scott Jones, CACD President - Colorado River Watershed
Mike Cleary, CACD Vice President - Gunnison/Dolores River Watershed
George Fosha, Director - Upper Arkansas River Watershed
Nick Charchalis, Director - North Platte/White/Yampa River Watershed
Steve McEndree, Director – Lower Arkansas River Watershed
Nancy Berges, Director - Lower South Platte Watershed
Tyler Neely, Director - Rio Grande River Watershed
Brett Moore, CACD Lobbyist
Bobbi Ketels, CACD Executive Director

Absent:

Jim Cecil, Director - Republican River Watershed
Gary Thrash, Director - San Juan Basin Watershed /CO Representative Alternate to NACD
Charlie Carnahan, Director - Upper South Platte Watershed
Bob Warner, CO Representative to NACD

Guests:

Randy Randall, NRCS
Les Owen, CDA

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by President, **Scott Jones** at 7:43 AM after establishing a quorum. President **Scott Jones** asked for any agenda changes. A change in agenda allowed Brett Moore to give the legislative report first.

Legislative Update- Brett Moore:

Brett Moore started the legislative update by stating from the legislative call earlier this morning we have seen some good progress on a lot of the bills from our tracking sheet. Most pressing we are going to testify in favor of HB-1006 in front of the House of Rural Affairs and Agricultural Committee with Jefferson Conservation District and some of their landowners. CACD HB-1082 Water Rights Easement Bill has passed through the House and the Senate and the House approved Senate amendments. We are now waiting for the Governor's bill signing and we have requested a Bill signing ceremony. Thanks again to all who helped! This bill is good for the districts and CACD. HB-1108 has been post-poned indefinitely so this is a dead bill. SB-16, the reorganizational change of the severance tax operational funds is now through the House, waiting for the governor's signature. SB-181 bill is one step away from being through the Senate and moving to the House. CACD will testify against this bill in the House, based on guidance from the CACD legislative committee this morning. The decision to oppose was based on CACD policy. Brett told everyone that Les Owen explained SB-186: Expand Agricultural Chemical Management Program to Protect Surface Water, to the legislative committee this morning. March 25th is the first week of the Long Bill, starting in Senate this year and then April 1st is Long Bill week in the House. Our budget lines are in place in the Long Bill, so we will be watching this carefully to make sure that these funds stay there and do not get swept into any other funds. A lot of

what happens financially here in the coming two months will be based on the March 15th revenue forecast. We will get a projection and we will have a better grasp of what the budget will look like going forward. We should be in good shape for now but will be diligent to make sure our direct funding lines and matching grants funds stay in place. The House Rural Affairs Committee Chairman Roberts said we cannot meet the first week of April to do our partner presentation because the committee will be working on budgets. All three partners need to look at some different dates. We will keep corresponding and get a different date posted. It would be nice to get this scheduled with a bill signing ceremony but will be tough to accomplish. Brett reminded everyone of Ag Day at the Capitol coming up next Wednesday. This is always a good networking opportunity.

Prior Meeting Minutes:

President Scott Jones asked for a motion to approve the **February 2019 minutes**. Nancy Berges asked for an amendment for her name to be listed as she was present on the call. **CACD Director George Fosha** made the motion to approve with the amendment and **Director Steve McEndree** gave the second. Without any further discussion, the motion to approve the CACD BOD's **February 2019 Minutes** with the amendment was passed unanimously.

NRCS Update – Randy Randall:

Randy Randall started off with a staffing update. Colorado is still poised to go through and hire 10 staff between now and March. These announcements have not been made yet, but they are in the first batching that Clint said would be advertised in the mid part of February. Their Human Resources department has not been able to get these out yet as they are still in the process of trying to clean up some of the hires from this past September. They remain optimistic but capacity remains an issue. They did get a bit of good news as they have what they refer to as “pathways,” which are student interns being converted. They will pick up two to three of these within the next couple of months. From the September panel they will have two soil con technicians starting. One will be in Longmont and one will be in Area 3. On the budgeting front, they are still in the process of waiting for the full allocation. To date on the technical assistance side of things which goes through and pays for agreements, etc., they have only received 40% of funding. Even though they have only received 40% of funding they took aggressive steps to go through and pay agreements forward that are tied to people as far forward as they could. Just as a reminder Secretary Northey is scheduled to be in town to speak at the Water Forum hosted by CSU over at the Gaylord. He is supposed to fly in this evening, but with the inclement weather coming they will see how this unfolds. NRCS did get some good news and Clint gave the green light to fund the district technician agreement that is put together with CSCB which places about 25 district technicians out in the field. This agreement is to the Commissioner for signature and they look forward to having this signed and back by the end of the week. This program will be extended out another year through June 2020. NRCS is also in the process of working with CACD to go through and develop the new amended CACD agreement for year three, which funds Envirothon, Camp Rocky, Conservator, the Annual Meeting, and the Education Workshop/Watershed match agreement. Some district board members may have been recently contacted by a company that does business with NRCS called Ultima to see if there might not be a way where Ultima could go through and provide some administrative support to the districts. Basically, to see if there would be a need for districts to utilize their services. If anyone has an interest and it is the right fit, it might be something some might have an interest in.

CSCB Update- No Update:

Cindy Lair was not available to be on the call.

CDA Update – Les Owen:

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Les Owen stated if anyone that joined the call after the legislative call had any questions to let him know on SB-186 that expands their groundwater program into surface water. Regarding Big Horn Sheep/Domestic

Sheep interactions. The Forest Service was sued for allowing grazing on this permit. For those not familiar with this, the permit used to be on Snow Mesa where they grazed sheep. They ran their risk of contact model there and came up with it was a high-risk area, so they created this allotment and moved them down onto it. The allotment is a bunch of small strung out pieces of ground where from one end to another some of the trailing is 6 to 7 miles between the areas of where they are supposed to graze. There are a lot of issues with it. The Forest Service ran this model and it came out as a high-risk model, but the Forest Service said due to additional management actions that would be required on there, they lowered the risk to moderate, which is huge because this is what we need them to do because just relying on the model has only one outcome and that is having domestic sheep off the landscape. The Forest Service sticking to this is what is getting them sued. If the Forest Service wins this is a good thing that management actions lower the risk. The GMUG is not moving real quick. They have their draft eligibility report for Wild and Scenic Rivers out and they identified approximately 120 miles of rivers and streams that would be eligible. Most of these, maybe 75% are within wilderness areas. This is something to take a look at and make sure there are not any diversions that they may have missed, and it is hard to say what the need for future diversions is which is the danger and the problem of these types of designations. This is an eligibility report to identify streams that are eligible. Down the road in this process, there will be a suitability report done, whether or not they are suitable for it. This is where if there is an identified need to do some development of diversions or structures on these streams. That is where that will need to come into the conversation which is down the road a little bit. On the regulatory side, the definition for Waters of the United States is out for comment until April 15th. Colorado and many other states and other entities have submitted a request to extend the comment period for another 60 days. Currently working in a workgroup to develop some comments for the state of Colorado. The governor has indicated he would like to see one set of comments from the state rather than each agency submitting their own. There was a Federal Register notice from NRCS that was wanting comments on ways to improve conservation practices, the requirements that go along with those ways to streamline it.

President Scott Jones asked Les if the Wild and Scenic Rivers were all in Colorado or the Western United States. Colorado only has one officially designated wild and scenic river, portions of the Cache La Poudre. The GMUG is only looking at stream segments within the forest boundaries at this time. Through the forest planning process, they can put in place restrictions on those rivers to keep them eligible and suitable for wild and scenic rivers designation, but only Congress can officially designate them. Any river segments can be nominated for study at any time by members of the public or agency officials. **Scott** suggested if you have a grazing allotment or water right near this area, you need to pay attention to what is going on. **Director George Fosha** pointed out that wild and scenic designation does not necessarily have to be on federal lands. **Scott** agreed it could be both and discussed the 3 categories it could fall under.

NACD Update- No Update:

Gary Thrash is currently attending the NACD Fly-In with **Clint Evans** and his leadership team from NRCS. The NACD year two round of TA Grants is underway and Colorado submitted 8 renewal applications.

Financial Update – Bobbi Ketels:

CACD FINANCIALS: 03-31-19

Ending/Cleared Balance in Checking as of February 28th, \$95,306.32

Checks/Payments Cleared - \$27,867.30, Deposits Cleared \$8,200.00

Total Uncleared Transactions (Checks/Payments Only-No Pending Deposits) -\$29,961.69

Ending Register Balance as of February 28th, \$65,344.63

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

NOI as of 02/28/19 \$39,269.48

New Transactions

Expenses -\$3,781.12

Deposits \$39,714.90

Total New Transactions \$35,933.78

Current Register Balance \$101,278.41

Current NOI \$75,203.26

Credit Card Ending Statement Balance as of 3/06/19 \$0

Total District Dues Paid 2019 \$27,500.00

UARRP Activity 2019 YTD: Total pass-through expenses \$40,779.90 - Total pass-through income \$40,779.90 - Total CACD Income Earned YTD 2019 \$2,219.00 (Includes 5% Admin & Payroll Reimb)

Director Steve McEndree made a motion to accept the financials. **Director George Fosha** gave the second. All in favor, motion passed.

Corporate Fundraising:

No update

Envirothon:

Bobbi Ketels confirmed the dates for Envirothon. The event will be held at the Arapahoe County Fairgrounds, April 23rd and 24th. There was a face to face meeting after the Rio Grande Watershed meeting. CSCB is taking a strong lead in helping to work on the transition of a more statewide program. Working on the website, fundraising, test modules, registrations and scheduling.

Camp Rocky:

Bobbi Ketels stated the first call has taken place and the committee is in the process of gearing up on soliciting for campers, sponsorships, volunteers as well as planning guest speakers and presentations.

Annual Meeting:

Bobbi Ketels will be scheduling another site visit soon. Working on round three of the revised contract with Hotel Elegante.

CACD/NRCS Agreement:

Bobbi is working on the revised budget for 2019 to submit to NRCS.

Bobbi also discussed miscellaneous attended meetings, including the CWA/CAWA workshop in Keenesburg. She also discussed miscellaneous projects she has been working on since the last board call, including the health insurance resolution and discussions that have taken place with Ultima Services.

Misc. Discussions & Ag Council/CAWA:

President Scott Jones welcomed **Tyler Neely** to the CACD Board and invited him to share a little about himself. Tyler represents the Rio Grande Watershed and is also on the Rio Grande Conservation District board. He is a fourth-generation farmer in the San Luis Valley on the west side. He also sits on the board for the Water Conservancy District.

Scott called into the last CAWA meeting. He recapped on the CAWA/CWA workshop that was well attended. They were very pleased with the CACD Bill that was passed and thanked CACD for this work. Scott encouraged everyone to attend Ag Day at the Capitol, March 20th.

Vice President Mike Cleary brought up the interview with **Director Charlie Carnahan** on the news discussing how to prepare cattle for the forecasted snow storm.

President Scott Jones recapped on the Watershed Leadership Training coming up. Discussions took place about who would pay the cost for each watershed attendee and CACD board member attendees. **Randy Randall** reminded CACD of the agreement under the watershed capacity portion, that some travel expenses for board members may be able to be covered in this area. **Vice President Mike Cleary** made the motion for CACD to pay half the registration cost of a CACD Board member to attend. **Director George Fosha** made the second. Motion passes. **George Fosha** said for bookkeeping purposes to go ahead and pay in full to CACD and then CACD will reimburse half of the registration fee. The board also discussed the possibility of scholarships to the watersheds. This would be one scholarship per watershed if needed and requested. This is to be determined on a case by case basis after reviewing who registers from each watershed.

The next CACD BOD meeting is April 10th, via teleconference.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bobbi Ketels
CACD Executive Director