



# OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD (OLAB) Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 28, 2016

5:00- 8:00 PM

City of Loveland Public Works Administration Building • Second Floor Conference Rooms

City of Loveland Service Center • 2525 W 1<sup>st</sup> Street

*The mission of the Larimer County Open Lands Program is to preserve and protect significant open space, natural areas, wildlife habitat, and develop parks and trails for present and future generations. These open lands provide opportunities for leisure, human renewal and protection of our natural and cultural resources.*

### Members Present

Mary Banken	At-large
Jason Brothers	At-large
Suzan Fritchel	At-large
Trudy Haines	At-large
Gerry Horak	City of Fort Collins
Pete Kelly	At-large
David Marvin	At-large
Ward Nelson	Town of Estes Park
Carl Sorrentino	At-large
Nancy Wallace	Planning Commission

### Staff Present

Gary Buffington, Natural Resources Director
Kerri Rollins, Open Lands Program Manager
Charlie Johnson, Senior Land Agent
Alex Castina, Land Agent
Sandy Werkmeister, Department Specialist
Heather Young, Education Specialist
Pam Mayhew, Volunteer Coordinator

### Members Absent

Paul Alaback	Town of Berthoud
Hugh McKean	City of Loveland

### Guests

Todd Doherty, Western Water Partnerships
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## 1. CALL TO ORDER / INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ken Brink introduced himself offering a brief professional history, which includes 3 years with the US Forest Service and 30 years with the Colorado Parks and Wildlife in 8 different units around the state, in the field as well as in administration. He grew up in Fort Collins, and said returning to the area at this point of his career is a treat.

## 2. PUBLIC COMMENT – No public comment

## 3. AGENDA REVIEW – No changes

## 4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES

Motion by Mary Banken and second by Carl Sorrentino to approve the *November 18, 2015 meeting minutes* as submitted in this month’s packet. Motion carried unanimously.

## 5. INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. [Cultivating Connections for a Healthy, Working River - Third Annual Poudre River Forum](#) – Fresh off the Governor's approval of the State Water Plan, this conference will focus on how cooperative water projects can help meet future water demands and the role the Poudre River plays in sustaining our agriculture economy. Friday, February 5, 2016 | 9am – 4pm | The Ranch, Loveland – flyer attached.
- b. Help us select the 2016 Visual Artist of the Year! We need an Open Lands Advisory Board member to serve on the selection committee. The process takes place in late February/early March and typically involves reviewing 6-10 applications, meeting with the committee and helping with artist interviews if necessary. *Dave Marvin and Gerry Horak volunteered.*
- c. Temporary Closure at Devil’s Backbone Open Space beginning Feb. 1. Construction is expected to take at least four weeks, weather depending. - see attached press release.

- d. The grant request to GOCO for the Horsetooth West Expansion project was ranked number one in the state and awarded \$1 million. KUDOS to Zac, with help from Charlie, Tim and others.
- e. Recall the current GOCOs strategic plan is Connect, Protect & Inspire. On January 15, they announced the request for [Protect Initiative](#) concept papers to compete for \$47 million over a three-year period. Concept papers are due February 12. Larimer County and wonderful partner City of Fort Collins intend to submit an application. The result of the concept papers will be announced mid April, and full applications will be due in May, with award announcements in June.  
Gerry Horak - asked if we seek public input for these types of grant opportunities. Kerri responded not with such a short turn-around time, further explaining that the (willing) landowner(s) almost solely drive timelines for opportunities to purchase land that require leveraging our dollars with GOCO grants) and the Board is consulted on whether to pursue the opportunity during Executive Sessions.  
Gerry - explained he was not asking about Executive Session project discussions, but rather about a more general prioritization to guide the Board (on behalf of the public) on where to direct the sales tax dollars as they become available. Kerri explained that the Boards last prioritization exercise was in 2012 and she thought we were on track with it.  
Suzan Fritchel - asked that we send out a summary of that Exercise, so the Board can compare it with the priorities more recently identified in the master plan, to make a decision on what need to operate into the future.
- f. Larimer County hired Western Water Partnerships to implement the Colorado Water Conservation Bureau (CWCB) water ATM grant. Todd Doherty will present to the Board later on the agenda.
- g. The Land Evaluation Site Assessment (LESA) tool used by the Department is a 2001 version. Many attributes of agriculture land assessments do not change very much, but there are things to update to make it a better. Staff from our Natural Resources will work with the Ag Advisory Board on updates, before sending to the Board of Commissioners for final adoption.
- h. Larimer County has selected a contractor for the Poudre River Bank Stabilization project at Lions Open Space. The project will be completed in two phases: rock work this spring with trail construction and revegetation this fall. Lions Open Space trailhead will be closed during the spring but the Pleasant Valley Trail will remain open.
- i. The reconstruction at Pinewood is down to sign installation and finalizing the interpretation for the education area. We can bring slides and/or offer a tour to the Board.
- j. Ken Brink told the Board that increasing the number of campsites, improving the quality of the facilities and adding a shower house to Carter Lake South Shore is one of the last projects on the current Parks Master Plan. There is also placeholder for a connection trail to Hermit Park Open Space. The cost for construction right now is high and rising rapidly as construction demand is higher than available companies can supply. This could affect the timing of when to start the Carter Lake project.
- k. Heath Construction won the bid for the Horsetooth Information Center and maintenance buildings. Their plans are to finish about the end of May. Gary reported that prices are rising on the project, due to the same pressures of demand mentioned for Carter Lake South Shore renovation. Funds for the project were identified from Parks reserve, lottery and sales tax. Gary will be coming back with a request to bump up all original requests. Heather and Teddy are working on the interpretive signs component.
- l. Kerri alerted the Board that Catherine Roberts passed away, the last of that generation in the family.
- m. Loveland notified DNR that reconstruction of Viestenz-Smith Park will not occur until the fall of 2016 and is not planned for opening to the public until the fall of 2017, or possibly even the spring of 2018.
- n. Thank you letter from RMNP – Gary added that the partnership worked very well to leverage other dollars!
- o. Kerri and Meegan’s staff attended a 2-day retreat for 2016 planning – to review the priorities from the master plan and choose ones to focus on in 2016. Items that rose to the top were further developing the interface of the Salesforce/Locate database and of course, innovative Ag and water projects, rivers and the restoration around the rivers.

- p. Open Space Operations District Reports – no questions
- q. Sales Tax Report from prior month – no questions
- r. Acquisition & Development Financial Summary Sheet – no questions

6. DISCUSSION & UPDATES

a. Outreach, Education & Volunteer end-of-year summary

- Pam Mayhew presented on the Volunteer Program first followed by Heather Young presenting on the Education program. *The presentation is attached to these minutes.* Heather also shared that Zach Schierl, our exceptional intern the past year, accepted a permanent position in Utah.

- i. The Board recommended developing an incentive program or contest to increase volunteers entering their own hours. They also asked whether there is an app available with the volunteer database.
- ii. The Board clarified that the Education Program does not track unique participant numbers.
- iii. One public comment was for more fishing programs for kids.

Heather wrapped up by mentioning the additional projects that rose to the top this year, namely the Inspire Initiative and larger, more complex interpretive projects than usual (Devil's Backbone, Pinewood and the Horsetooth Information Center) and planning for 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary events and activities.

b. Alternative Transfer Mechanism (ATM), a Colorado Water Conservation Board funded project

- Kerri reminded the Board that we received a \$178,000 grant from the CWCB to hire a team of experts to help us forge into water and agriculture. Western Water Partnerships was selected as the contractor. Kerri introduced the Project Manager, Todd Doherty with Western Water Partnerships who presented on the entire project. *The presentation is attached to these minutes.*

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402 (4)(a) for discussion regarding the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer, or sale of any real, personal, or other property interest the Board moved into Executive Session at 7:00 p.m.

9. ADJOURN – The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.



## 2015 END-OF-YEAR OVERVIEW

Volunteer and Education Programs  
Pam Mayhew - Volunteer Program Coordinator  
Heather Young - Education Program Coordinator



## VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

### ACHIEVEMENTS...



- Patrolled trails
- Built trails
- Restored damaged trails
- Monitored raptors
- Removed thorny Russian olive trees
- Hosted our campgrounds
- Photographed our properties and events

### ACHIEVEMENTS...



- Assisted boaters
- Removed graffiti
- Built play structures
- Removed fencing
- Restored fire scar areas
- Set up, tore down and assisted with some of the most fun and highly visible special events!

### VOLUNTEER TRAINING

- Volunteer Ranger Assistant
  - Screening, interviewing, and selection
  - Ranger staff able to focus on field responsibilities and communication with volunteers
  - Continuing education classes offered
- Campground Host
  - All sites filled for 2016!
- Park Ranger/Boat Ranger Assistant
  - Continued recruitment and training
  - Lead volunteer at each location for training
  - Increased hands-on training at each site
  - Senior Tax Worker numbers declining



### GROUPS

- In-Situ
- Overland Mountain Bike Club
- Team B.O.B
- Noble Casing
- LCHA
- C.A.T.S.
- Centennial Bass Club
- CO Arsenal
- Comcast
- NC3
- Trailology
- CSU
- Front Range Forestry
- Antea

## NORTHERN COLORADO CLIMBING COALITION AT DUNCAN'S RIDGE



## LAND STEWARDSHIP AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Monitoring
  - Raptors at Horsetooth Mountain
  - Raptors at Chimney Hollow
  - Conservation Easements
- Projects
  - Night sky monitoring
  - Russian olive removal at Three Bells and Kauffman Conservation Easements
  - Restoration of Foothills Trail
  - Bison fence project at Red Mountain



## PARKS AND OPEN LANDS PROJECTS



## WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN?

- Volunteer service hours
  - 2015 hours recorded to date: 21,078
    - No longer managing Mary's Lake and East Portal campgrounds
  - 2014 hours: 23,478
- Maintained the number of projects
  - 2015: 30 projects
  - 2014: 30 projects
- Increased the number of engaged volunteers
  - 2015: 360 volunteers
  - 2014: 320 volunteers
- Continued the summer volunteer recognition
  - 150 attendees

## 2015 HIGHS AND LOWS

### Highs

- High impact projects
- Growth in the number of corporate project requests
- Web-based recruitment
- Grant to purchase CPR and AED training equipment

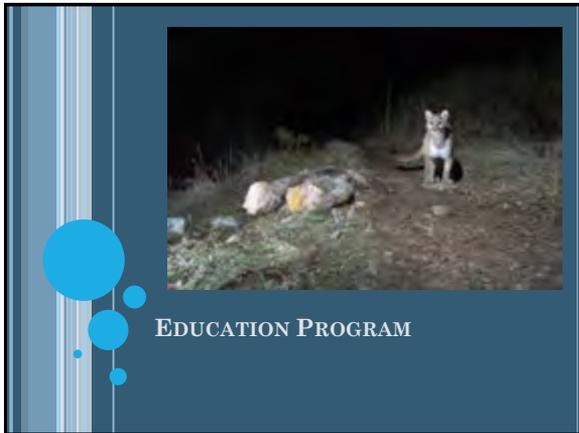
### Lows

- Senior Tax Worker Program limits
- Volunteers entering hours

## 2016 VOLUNTEER PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- Manage capacity program-wide
- Cloud-based photographer portal
- Quality recruitment efforts
- Creative use of volunteers
- 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary projects!





### EDUCATION PLANNING AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

- Devil's Backbone management plan update
  - Education section
- Horsetooth Information Center interpretation
- Pinewood interpretive signs and kiosk
- Horsetooth Mountain Open Space ecology curriculum



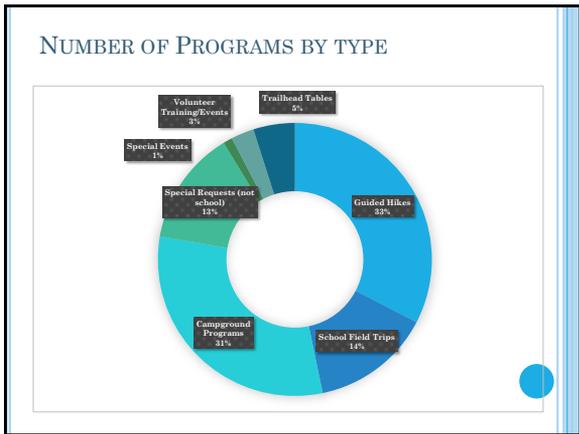
### EDUCATIONAL VOLUNTEER TRAININGS

- Naturalist Assistant training
- Did not hold annual Volunteer Naturalist training due to 2015 capacity



### PROGRAMMING AND OUTREACH

- Total outreach impact for Education Program
  - 184 events for 8968 individuals participating  
*(Note: the program does not track for unique participants.)*
- Slight increase in number of programs and 24% increase in number of participants.

### GUIDED HIKES

- 60 guided hikes reaching 745 members of the public
  - Astrophotography programs
  - Birding tour of Three Bells Conservation Easement
  - Public tours of Chimney Hollow




## SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

- 26 field trips reaching 1360 students



## CAMPGROUND PROGRAMS

- 57 campground programs for 1863 members of the public
  - Continue to refine for quality programs
  - Appropriate programs for each location



## SPECIAL REQUESTS

- 25 special request programs reaching 1108 members of the public
  - Bison presentations
  - Community groups
  - Outreach booths

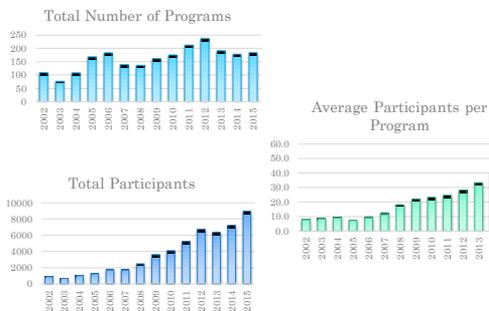


## EVENTS

- National Get Outdoors Day – June 13, 2015
  - 2000 people
- Nature's Harvest Fest – September 12, 2015
  - 1200 people



## LONG TERM TRENDS



## 2015 HIGHS AND LOWS

- | Highs   | Lows  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased capacity</li> <li>Flexible programming to meet needs of public, volunteers and staff</li> <li>Focus on projects</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Floods (office)</li> <li>Staff turnover</li> </ul> |

## 2016 EDUCATION PROGRAM INITIATIVES

- Intentional efforts appropriate for level of capacity
- Interpretive planning projects
- 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary programs!
- Great Outdoors Colorado Inspire Initiative



## CONTACT INFORMATION

Pam Mayhew

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Coordinator

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Heather Young

○ Education Program  
Coordinator

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○ 970-619-4489



# Larimer County ATM Pilot Project

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OPEN LANDS ADVISORY BOARD

JANUARY 28, 2016

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## Outline

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- Western Water Partnerships selected as contractor
  - CWCB Grant project approach and schedule
  - Northern's rulemaking
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Pilot Project (Water Court Change Case)
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## CWCB Grant - Project Team

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- Western Water Partnerships (Todd Doherty) - Project Manager
- Harvey Economics - Economist
- Brown and Caldwell - Engineer
- AgSkill, Inc. (Brad Walker) - Agronomist
- Dan Brown (Fischer, Brown, Bartlett & Gunn, P.C.) - Attorney



## CWCB Grant - Project Approach

### Farm Viability & Water Provider Considerations

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#### **Task 1**

- Farm viability for water sharing agreement will examine: Open Space Attributes, Water Rights (ease of delivery) and Financial Considerations
- Agronomics, Engineering and Financial Analyses
- Development of matrix to determine feasibility of particular farm

#### **Task 2**

- Water Partner financial and technical considerations
  - Analysis of intake facilities, storage availability, demands, etc..
  - Economic analysis on future water demands and ability to pay
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## CWCB Grant - Project Approach

# Develop Water Sharing Agreement with Water Provider

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### Task 3: (Focus right now)

- Identify willing water partners
- Conduct interviews: learn their needs and determine if this project can meet those needs
- Negotiate terms of water supply contract (Letter of Intent/Understanding)
- Develop specific terms and execute final contract - to be approved by this Board and Board of County Commissioners



## Water Sharing Agreement Terms (Task 3)

### Continued

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- Determine:
  - Triggers and timing that implement the interruptible supply
  - Each party's costs
  - Delivery of water to our water partner
  - Payment (if any) to farmer or landowner (County) during dry/fallowed years (including cover crop and weed control)
  - Water accounting responsibilities

## CWCB Grant - Project Approach

# Other Key Tasks

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- Farm and Water Operation Plan (Task 4)
- Larimer County Financial Considerations (Task 5)
- Implementation Plan (Task 6)



## Northern Water Rulemaking for “Subcontracting” C-BT Water

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Northern Staff and Board are going through a rulemaking process:

- supportive of allowing water sharing agreements with C-BT water
  - concerned that these could be creatively used as C-BT parking agreements
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- Larimer County has met several times with Northern staff
  - Presented to Northern Planning & Action Committee
  - Will continue to meet with Northern staff on draft rules and attend Planning & Action Committee meetings
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