

**Colorado Association of Conservation Districts  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
December 14, 2022, via Zoom**

**Attendees:**

*Jim Cecil, CACD President - Republican River Watershed  
Mike Cleary, CACD Secretary/Treasurer - Gunnison Dolores Watershed  
Scott Jones, CACD Immediate Past President - Colorado River Watershed  
Charlie Carnahan, CACD Director - Upper South Platte Watershed  
Gary Thrash, CACD Director - San Juan Basin - CO NACD Alternate Representative  
George Fosha, CACD Director - Upper Arkansas River Watershed  
Nick Charchalis, CACD Director – North-Platte/White-Yampa River Watershed  
Dale Parker, CACD Interim Director - Lower South Platte Watershed  
Bob Warner, CACD Alternate Director - CO NACD Representative - NCF Trustee  
Brett Moore, CACD Legislative Liaison  
Bobbi Ketels, CACD Executive Director*

**Absent:**

*Tyler Neely, CACD Vice President - Rio Grande River Watershed*

**Guests:**

*Les Owen, CDA  
Cindy Lair, CSCB*

**Call to Order:**

*The meeting was called to order by **President Jim Cecil** at 7:30 AM after establishing a quorum.  
**Director Dale Parker** moves to approve the December 14, 2022, meeting agenda with the addition of an executive session. **Director Gary Thrash** gives the second. **Motion Passes.***

**Prior Meeting Minutes:**

***President Jim Cecil** asked for a motion to approve the **November 2022** minutes. Director Mike Cleary asks you to correct the minutes to state that the NACD dues are \$775 instead of the \$1,700 noted in the minutes. **Director Gary Thrash** moves to approve the November 2022 minutes. **Director George Fosha** gives the second. Unanimous agreement to approve the minutes with this correction. **Motion Passes.***

***President Jim Cecil** informed the board that Bobbi Ketels had submitted her resignation letter. Bobbi has agreed to work with the Board until a replacement is hired. Jim will work through the process for the next 3-4 months. He added that he appreciates her support and continued support through the transition.*

**Legislative Update – Brett Moore:**

*The Legislative Committee met before this meeting, and discussions will continue at the stock show.*

**NRCS Update: No Report**

**CSCB Update - Cindy Lair:**

*Cindy Lair mentioned that Adam Chambers would be available to attend the January 18<sup>th</sup> joint CACD/CSCB meeting and present on the COMET tool that estimates the climate benefits of the different practices being used by ag producers. CSU and NRCS created the tool. Cindy verified that the meeting would start at 11:00 and end at 2:00. Bobbi added that Bob Warner wanted to invite the CSCB staff and Board to the dinner and rodeo. Bob has offered to pay for dinner for the CSCB/CDA staff and Board. The only cost to CSCB would be for a staff or board member that brought a guest. CACD will pay for the rodeo tickets. Bobbi stated that CSCB could use the CACD*

room block charge if that is cheaper than the State rate. Cindy thanked them for the invitation and will get back to Bobbi on their plans.

Cindy said that the **Soil Health Advisory Committee (SHAC)** met on Nov. 30 and decided the requests for applications for the Climate Smart Commodities (CSC) grant will be opened on Feb. 1. All districts and entities signing up for the STAR Plus program will be notified in May if they have been selected. This will give them time to have producers sign up for the program for the year starting in October. The next SHAC meeting will be on Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> during the Greeley Farm Show, with a meet and greet for STAR participants on the 24th. They would like to schedule another meeting and greet on the Western Slope.

Cindy noted that \$2M of stimulus funds went towards the STAR Plus program, and one of the most successful parts of the program was the equipment grants. As unspent monies were available, Nikki and Rakel worked to gather those funds and reallocate for additional equipment grant applications. CSCB has worked diligently to fulfill all the promises of this program.

**Director Mike Cleary** asked Cindy about the resolution submitted for an additional position (Field Specialist) for CSCB/CDA presented at the CACD annual meeting and how she sees this resolution moving forward. Cindy replied that she needs to be made aware of districts stating that CSCB cannot meet district support needs. She was not aware that this was an issue. It would require additional State funding if they were to add an additional position. If CSCB's service is lacking, they want to know and will redirect the existing team to ensure they are in the field more, helping the Districts. She welcomes any comments from CACD or the districts. Mike added that CACD is obligated to give Brett direction for the resolution. Cindy said that the CSCB had reviewed this and wondered if adding another position might be to assist wherever needed, not in one specific area. The State Board also discussed other ideas to help the districts. CACD noted that Cindy's opinion was critical to assisting CACD in deciding how to proceed with the resolution. She acknowledges the difficult position that CACD is in on this issue.

#### **CDA Update – Les Owen:**

**Les Owen** informed the Board that the **State Parks and Wildlife Commission** had made the State Wolf Management Plan public. Over the next 3 or 4 months, there will be several public meetings to go over the plan. It is currently open for public comment. The Parks and Wildlife Commission plan to finalize the Plan at their May Commission meeting. He encouraged all board members to look at the Plan and provide any comments. Their proposal for livestock compensation is to allow the producers a choice to apply for the missing livestock compensation ratio or to itemize and provide records on a baseline to recover for both missing livestock and production losses. Some details are missing about when "lethal take" permits will be issued. They have to pass a resolution to do so and under what circumstances.

The **EPA** work plan to comply with the **Endangered Species Act** proposes a set of label changes for a large list of herbicides and pesticides. The language targets agricultural applications that reduce sediment and water runoff and transport chemicals into wildlife habitats. However, there are no caveats associated with distance to aquatic habitats. Les asked the EPA why a farmer in southeast Colorado should have to place a vegetative strip around their field before they apply a pesticide. Less will pass the document around. The comment period is open until Jan. 30. Les would like the Board to provide any comments since the ag producers will deal with this for the next several years.

The **BLM** is taking another look at solar energy developments. They want to expand the available areas by expanding the existing areas and possibly adding other new areas. There are many unknowns currently. If they decide to place some of these areas in grazing allotments, the allotments will be gone.

**Brett Moore** stated that he read an article that says we need every part of the State to weigh in on the wolf issue. It is a good opportunity for a call to action and to get people to testify in the meetings. He feels that the State Legislature will move to define where cattle can graze, and crops can be grown in solar array areas.

Brett added that two sunsets affect pesticide applications. The Pesticides Applicator Act is one, and the other is the Noxious Weed Advisory Board. CACD will need to follow these two items in the Legislative meetings.

**Director Mike Cleary** commented that 1) he would like to get clarification from Les on what ranchers can do to document wolves on their grazing permits; 2) he requested that the State explain to the Feds that we need permits to fly over Federal lands. Mike would ask the state to visit with folks about allowing drone flyovers, as we need to use technology to locate livestock.

3) have the State investigate the use of Vence (virtual fencing) technology when cattle are released to track cattle and the interaction of cattle with cows through their collars; 4) there seems to be a plan to track the wolves; are they going to put solar powered ear tags, and will there be a retagging plan for the wolf packs in a few years? He added as a note on the pesticide issue; we need to continue to stress the difference between pesticides and herbicides. Cindy and Brett added that pesticides and herbicides fall under the same umbrella. Les stated that on the drone issue, he does not know if it is a restriction from the CPW over wildlife habitat or if it is a USFS restriction. Discussion continued on the general use of drones for locating cattle. Les also stated that he needs to be made aware of language about current wolf locations. However, he thinks they would if there is verified proof of a pack operating in an area and would stay away from that area and place wolves in another location farther away. The current plan highlights where they have looked for existing packs. They cannot be released on federal land because that requires a different permit. They are looking at private land or state land for release.

**Director Scott Jones** asked when they will inform landowners where wolves are located. In the Eagle County area, they have wolves already. Is there a website and a way of tracking the pack movement since they will have tracking technology in place? Les stated that there had been much discussion concerning this topic. The feeling is that the more information they can get to livestock producers, the better. Les is cautiously optimistic that they will have a way to communicate with livestock producers on wolf pack locations so producers can be proactive. Available staffing may create an issue, however. However, they will not provide locations to the general public. Cause and effect discussions continued.

**Director Gary Thrash** stated that a solar installation is proposed in his area. He sees no oversight on private land as the BLM does with NEPA. Is there any discussion with the State on best management practices for solar installations? Les said he does not know of any discussion. There might be permitting and construction requirements. There was discussion about not having the solar installations be a single land use by having sheep, goats, and cattle graze under the arrays. The conversation continued about the pros and cons of solar installations and where these installations are being installed. It boils down to the associated income.

#### **NACD Update – Gary Thrash and Bob Warner:**

**Director Gary Thrash** noted the procedure and draft resolution to be presented to NACD concerning the CREP. There are 20+ policy statements in the NACD policy book regarding CRP and CREP. He feels that policy number 19 could be changed from CRP to CREP as the resolution. It asks NACD to talk to NRCS National wide to get them to use their State Technical Advisory Committees to address the CREP concerns so it can be modified for local conditions. Brain Neufeld is going to put together a background on what their concerns are. Margaret Lenz will also provide some background for her area.

The **NACD annual meeting** will be held in mid-February in New Orleans. Due to medical issues, Gary cannot attend meetings at the Stock Show or the NACD meeting. If anyone else would like to attend and help Bob, it would be helpful. At times meetings overlap, and it helps to have two people attend. Cindy said that Margaret Lenz will be attending and can be considered a resource for coverage if CACD would like. Gary believes that the by-laws allow her to fill that role. Board consensus, by voice vote, is that Margaret Lenz be given the first-time scholarship to attend as an alternate for CACD at the NACD annual meeting. Early registration is on Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The **NACD spring fly-in** will be in March. This will be to meet with legislators.

**CACD Programs:**

**Stock Show:** When Bobbi receives information from Nikki and Cindy, Bobbi will cancel the three rooms that were reserved. CSCB will be asked to help pay 50% of the buffet lunch. The room will be \$139/night. She will need a head count for food in about two weeks. They will be using the same bus service as last year. Bobbi was given permission to purchase the rodeo tickets (70). **Director George Fosha** moves to approve the Stock Show budget as submitted by Bobbi. **Director Charlie Carnahan** 2nds the motion. **Motion Passed.** Bobbi asked the Board for sponsor suggestions to help cover expenses. Bobbi thanked Bob for offering to pay for the dinner. She also asked if anyone wanted to help pay any of the costs; it would be appreciated.

**2023 Annual Meeting** was discussed. She sent an estimate from the Marriott Hotel where the 2022 meeting was held. The room rate has increased to \$129 plus a 23% service fee. The audio-visual equipment was also discussed as being extremely high. Some equipment was purchased by CACD in 2022 that can be used for future events. She has asked Noah to set up the equipment for the Stock Show. There needs to be a review of expenses to see where costs can be cut. Combining the annual meeting with the Stock Show or a one-day event was discussed. Should the meeting be in Colorado Springs, or should it be moved? Mike noted that NRCS and CSCB participation is critical to where the meeting should be held. Much discussion continued about scheduling events, meeting agendas, funding, and location—**Director Mike Cleary** motions for a 2-day annual meeting at the Marriott in Colorado Springs. **Director Nick Charchalis** seconds the motion. **Motion Passed.** Bobbi asked for date suggestions from the Board. These will be emailed to her.

**Camp Rocky:** Bobbi stated that Noah wants to have a separate meeting with the Board to discuss the Camp. He will try to stop in at the face-to-face meeting.

**Envirothon:** It is looking hopeful that Mark has the CSU Spur grant. CSU starts with a more significant grant, then decreases as time progresses in anticipation that the event will become more self-supporting. This year the nationals will be in Canada. CSU Spur seems excited because this is the type of event they are looking to support. She should know by the end of this week. If Mark cannot coordinate the event, Tyler feels CACD should pull out of Envirothon altogether. Bobbi will keep everyone updated via email.

**NRCS Projects:** Bobbi told Clint that she has resigned but that NRCS should not be worried about the funding grants.

Bobbi asked the Board to review what their interest is and be prepared to volunteer for these things at the face-to-face to help the new Executive Director.

Mesa CD has asked CACD to be involved in some projects as they are a new board with a new district manager. Bobbi will meet with them to learn more about what they are looking for. She added that Mesa CD is desperate for help from CSCB and state partners. **Director Scott Jones** said he would contact the Mesa CD to see if he could help them.

**CACD FINANCIAL SUMMARY: 11-30-2022**

**Beginning Balance in checking on 11-1-2022, \$148,933.41**

Checks/Payments Cleared -\$10,608.53, Deposits & Credits Cleared \$37,711.84

**Statement Ending/Cleared Balance in Checking as of 11-30-2022 \$176,036.72.**

Total Uncleared Transactions = -\$10,865.87

**Ending Register Balance as of 11-30-2022 \$165,170.85**

**Reserve Total \$41,075.15 \*In US Bank Checking Acct**

**2021 Estimated Remainder of Funds Rolled Over & Designated for 2022 Youth Programs **\$8,000.00.****

**\*I need to deduct the remainder of my time spent on these programs.**

BOD needs to vote to designate a balance to 2023 Youth Programs. \*Waiting for a commitment from CSU. If CSU cannot run Envirothon for CACD, all Envirothon donors will be contacted to find out if they want to transfer their donation to Camp Rocky or prefer a refund.

**Net Operating Income as of 11-30-2022 \$116,095.70**

**Credit Card Beginning Statement Balance as of 12/06/22 \$224.99**

Charges Cleared \$22,716.69, Credits/CC Payments Cleared -\$12,927.98.

**Credit Card Ending Statement Balance as of 9/07/22 \$10,013.70 (now pd in full)**

Total District Dues Paid as of 11/30/22 \$58,500.00 (membership invoiced (74) \$88,800.00-budget\$60K)

**Grand Total District Dues PD in 2021 \$58,750.00 (budget \$60K)**

**UARRP Activity 07-31-2022 YTD:**

Closed Out – Zero Balance – Working on the year-end 425 due December 31. This will be the last requirement on the grant that closed on August 31<sup>st</sup>.

**NRCS new Grant as of 6/30/22 \$30,000.00 \$30K in process for Reimb submission to NRCS for AM. All are prepped in QB.**

**NRCS Demonstration Project – 7 district projects \$75K – \$7500 expended on one completed project for Longmont in process for Reimb submission to NRCS. Check and invoice entered into QB.-I am manually putting together all first-time progress reports from the districts and waiting for a call back from FSA to help me verify my identity for access to eZGrants. I will have to manually submit it to NRCS until this is resolved.**

**Director Mike Cleary** stated that he spoke with Suzie, and she is willing to take on the financials. Bobbi will create an operations manual that details the CACD projects and operations to help the new Executive Director.

**Director Mike Cleary** moves to reluctantly accept Bobbi Ketels' resignation, and **Director Gary Thrash** seconds the motion. **Motion Passes.** Bobbi would like to be kept on payroll throughout the year to help the new Exec. Director. She would also like to keep the computer in her possession until a new person is hired.

**Other:**

Director Mike Cleary moves to pay NACD the \$775 gold membership dues. Director Charlie Carnahan seconds the motion. **Motion Passes.**

**The Board entered into an executive session at 10:16 AM. The board came out of the executive session at 11:20 AM.**

Further discussions took place about the transition timeline. The board will work on an email notification to the districts for Bobbi to forward. CACD President Jim Cecil will finalize the resignation agreement and send certified mail to Bobbi Ketels for review and signature.

**The meeting was Adjourned at 11:42 AM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

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