EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PO Box 360 Eagle, CO 81631 ~ 970.343.0333

Regular Board Meeting Minutes September 12, 2018

5:00 pm, 3289 Cooley Mesa Road, Gypsum, CO

**Meeting called to order at 5:09pm by Scott J**

**Supervisors Present:** Scott J, Wendy, Jay, Scott S and Shawn

**Supervisors Absent:** Clayton and Kirk

**Guests:** Holly L, Stephen J, Ken M, Brenden L

**Approval of Minutes** Motion to approve by Wendy with the amendment to add that the Board reimburse Scott S the $30 fee of attending the Colorado River Annual Seminar, seconded by Shawn S.

**Roll Call Reports:** Board member miles & hours spent on conservation starting with the last regular meeting held August 8, 2018

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **BOARD MEMBER** | **HOURS** | **MILES** |
| Scott Jones (From July) | 80 | 300 |
| Scott Schlosser | 15 | 75 |
| Wendy Sacks | 3 | 20 |
| Clayton Gerard |  |  |
| Kirk Pliske |  |  |
| Shawn Bruckman | 8 | 20 |
| Jay Taylor | 5 | 8 |

***Treasurer’s Report:*** As of 8/31/18

Alpine Checking Account balance: $ 14,482.91

Money Market Account balance: $ 30,616.91

***Old Business***

*Eagle River Integrated Water Management Plan*- (New name Eagle River Community Water Plan)- Scott S began by explaining the ECCD’s interest in having a role in the plan and what the District’s intention is to represent the ag community. Holly mentioned her apologies from the onset of the plan since they were rushed to create a stakeholder list and ERWC should have done a better job including the ag community. Tennessee pass to the confluence of the Colorado River- not looking at tributaries except for a few exceptions such as Homestake. Stakeholders broken down into 6 groups Ag, local govt, recreation, state and fed agencies, conservation groups, and western slope water rights Climax, VR, Aurora and C Springs are the primary water rights holders. Technical committee and community engagement group (ECCD on the latter), different meetings for both larger groups. Community engagement meetings that started in June 2018 and will end in June 2021. Identify risks, prioritizing actions while engaging stakeholders throughout. The data and conceptual model will provide the guidance to create an action plan. Coming to an agreement with the Front Range is necessary, this plan will show the front range what this side of the slope will require for future consumption needs. 30,000 acre feet from this side to the Front Range, MOU in 1999 they can have 20,000 and the Western slope keep 10,000 and Climax to have 3,000 acre feet. Everyone will get the water they’ve been promised, this plan focuses on how best to use the water.

Brenden- water rights legal side of things, this plan is more a recommendation of choosing best practices and including more/all stakeholders that are impacted from the water diversion. Fraser River is a good example of what not to do or things to avoid.

Brenden- Senior water right holders how are they involved in the plan? Holly- There hasn’t been a discussion to share water rights yet, ERWC wants to make sure everyone is included, see what water rights holder’s opinions are and go from there, the plan is still in its infancy.

Scott J- Crystal River an example of a water mgmt. plan that didn’t include folks it was done behind closed doors, not very public at first but Brenden said there have been public meetings and it seems that communication is getting better. The Gunnison River is a good example of ag community helping out other stakeholders such as fishers by flooding their crops earlier in the season that allowed for water later in the season.

Stephen- Speaking towards the Crystal River plan that it’s too early to tell if the plan has been successful since we’re in a drought, it’s hard to measure success in the short term. Look on the Roaring Fork Conservancy website for the plan details.

Holly- the Crystal River was a reactive plan whereas the Eagle River Community Water Plan is a proactive plan.

Stephen- Depends how everyone’s actions are after the plan is in place, the data can give recommendations but people need to follow those recommendations in order for the plan to work.

Brenden- Carbondale reacted to the Crystal River Plan positively align ag pinch points with environmental pinch points.

Holly- The Front Range is involved throughout the process and will agree to actions and plans voluntarily since they have legal rights.

Shawn- creating good relationships is key throughout this process since there’s legal rights vs. voluntary action.

Jay- How much water is available? Brenden- we don’t really know- there is a concern about the tributaries, everyone is developing models for future western slope water usage.

Scott S- Mentioned that some areas are stopping development such as Truckee and Reno to ensure enough water for the future.

Brenden- can we capture water if it comes quickly, such as a reservoir since even ag can’t use water quickly enough if water comes quickly.

Holly- Community members will be upset about a reservoir but having the engagement and explanation of how/why that decision was made will help ease tensions.

1922 Compact- Concern of Colorado coming out of compliance with this agreement, if that happens what will happen? There are a lot of unknowns that folks are trying to figure out.

River District did a seminar on Western Slope water usage/growth that Brenden will forward to the Board.

Eagle River MOU1998 PDF available online- Ken was interested in reading about it.

Scott S- Wants the District to have a brief update on the plan to give to people that the District represents since people are unable to attend daytime meetings or meetings held during busy parts of the year.

Jay- Community meetings need to be held in the evenings since people are busy during the daytime, Holly- There’s going to be public meeting one in Vail and one in Eagle that will be held in the evening at the end of October, exact dates TBD. A special meeting for the ag community can be held in January or February when ag community folks have more free time.

Board agreed to get the info from Holly and then relay that info to ag members since we have their mailing addresses, email address, etc. and they know who the District is, they might not know ERWC.

Nicole Seltzer- gave a presentation for the Book Cliff and Mount Sopris Conservation District’s community meeting on their water mgmt plan.

Brenden- Is there a way for the District to be involved with the planning process not just attending meetings? Holly- They can send the agenda to ECCD and get the District’s input and Scott S can represent during the meeting.

Brenden- Can someone from the technical group come quarterly to ECCD’s meetings to give updates? Devote a page on the ECCD’s website to the newest/latest information to relay to ag community members. Holly- Bill H might be able to attend ECCD’s meetings.

Scott S- When we move forward on other plans like Deep Creek- he wants to make sure the District is involved with those meetings/decisions.

Holly- they have already involved the ag community on Deep Creek-listed a bunch of homeowners that live off the creek. They’ve had no opposition to their plan so far and feel fine with Chris representing them since the plan excludes mines and dam development. All current uses are protected, wild and scenic protection is the priority.

Shawn- to help communicate better, how are we going to pay for mailing materials? Is ERWC getting more grants would they be interested in working with ECCD to pay for materials. Holly said they do have money available for community engagement that hasn’t been earmarked. Radio PSA’s, Vail Daily Ads and printing of mailings and postage are items that the ECCD would like funding for. $3,200 is the number Shawn came up with. The material doesn’t need to be ag specific, ECCD can work with ERWC on marketing have both logos on materials. Holly- would this be every year (3)? Shawn- yes, money even for meetings, food. Holly- they only have $10,000 budgeted for community outreach so more grants would be required, there might be grants that ERWC qualifies for that ECCD doesn’t and vice versa.

Scott J- Eagle County is next in line to have a speaker that CACD/NRCS would pay for, good opportunity to have a speaker on this plan or related issue.

2019 Matching Grant Award- ECCD was awarded the full amount requested of $1,062-

***New Business***

Colorado River District Annual Seminar- Scott S will be attending on Friday September 14th. A rundown will be communicated at the next Board meeting.

Shawn- reached out to Jefferson County on seed sales- they said the sales are easy and a great educational tool. They buy bulk seeds from Granit Seed Company. Talked to Glenda from CSU ext and she’d be happy to help the District specifically with storage and sales of the seeds. Stephen- you need someone to store the seed and sell it since we don’t have an actual location, so if Glenda is willing to do that it will help but the seeds need to be stored in a cool, dry place otherwise seeds germination rate will plummet. Could be a lot of money upfront, Wendy mentioned we could do it like the tree sales. Shawn- it should be more about education than making a profit. Scott J- should focus on native seed since there’s nowhere to get seed around Eagle County. Look for potential partners that can help us store and sell seed throughout the valley; Salvation Army, CSU, farmers markets, Walking Mountains, etc…Shawn will look into all aspects of this to discuss at the next meeting.

Shawn- will be presenting on Sept 28th at the Brush Creek Pavilion about bugs and soil health on behalf of the ERWC.

**Other Business:**

Are there any resolutions that the Board wants to bring to CACD? For example there was a resolution to get rid of the APW and they got rid of it and made it work. Is there any policy (soil & land, water, and urban) as landowners that would make a difference that CACD can help with? It’s the Districts responsibility to lobby for land owners and keep track of legislation like the Farm Bill.

October 5th is the watershed meeting at the Blue Valley Ranch, Scott J mentioned that we should go if we’re interested.

November 28 and 29th are the dates of the CACD Annual Meeting held in Loveland. There is funding available for first time attendees to attend the meeting. There is also an auction if anyone wants to donate.

**NRCS Report:** Stephen- finished funding for this year, next year’s funding will be soon, application cutoff date will likely be in February. Farm Bill- if we don’t get a Farm Bill in the next 3 weeks then the old version will be extended- State and Feds are still hammering out the details. Plan on doing a TCP Grant and should have similar EUIP funding available. The Lake Christine fire, the division of wildlife team of 10 people that looked at all of the watersheds to see if and where damage occurred, are going to seek funds specifically for Basalt and El Jebel areas. If a major fire hits where you believe there is possible damage to homes, property, life the District as well as any subdivision of govt can petition for research and funds from NRCS’s Emergency Watershed Protection Program.

Upland, and ag usage and how it affects the blue line needs to be included in the Community Water Mgmt Plan, needs to broaden the focus to not be so narrow of just the Eagle River- should include upland and tributaries.

An informal discussion of water rights was had.

**Mail Review:No Mail**

**Next Meeting Date:** October 10, 2018

**Adjourn:** 7:39pm Motioned by Wendy seconded by Scott S

**Notes taken by:** Courtney Grant (District Manager)