EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PO Box 360 Eagle, CO 81631 ~ 970.343.0333

Monthly Board Meeting Agenda May 12th, 2021

5:00pm Online Zoom Meeting

**Meeting called to order at 5:09pm**

**Supervisors Present: Scott Jones, Wendy Sacks, Clayton Gerard, Ken Marchetti, Shawn Bruckman, Jay Taylor**

**Supervisors Absent: Scott Schlosser**

**Guests: Kirsten Lerner (Deep Creek Ranch), Steve Smith (Deep Creek), Stephen Jaouen (NRCS), Denyse Schrenker (CSU Ext)**

**Approval of Minutes: motion to approve minutes by Ken and seconded by Clayton.**

Introduction of the guests

**Roll Call Reports:** Board member miles & hours spent on conservation starting with the last regular meeting held April 14th, 2021

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **BOARD MEMBER** | **HOURS** | **MILES** |
| Scott Jones |  |  |
| Scott Schlosser |  |  |
| Wendy Sacks | 4 | 0 |
| Clayton Gerard | 8 | 0 |
| Shawn Bruckman | 18 | 1/2 |
| Jay Taylor |  |  |
| Ken Marchetti | 9 | 0 |

**Treasurer’s Report:**

Alpine Checking Account balance: $ 31,522.44

Money Market Account balance: $30,655.70

Ken had mentioned during the work session for Laura whether or not it made sense to now provide a Budget vs Actuals Report via Quickbooks. With the new hours provided for the DM, Ken stated that it would be nice for Laura to help Wendy create the Report so that the whole Board can monitor the progress of what’s been done and what needs to be done. Wendy stated that Quickbooks online is very pricy to provide public access for viewing. This will be work in progress and Wendy approves an updated 2021 Budget vs Actuals Report and to create an annual budget instead of monthly. Further discussion must take place in how to share the data files and how much Laura should participate in building the Report. A sub-committee will take place to set up the new budget.

**Topics to Discuss:**

**Deep Creek Draft:** The summary was presented by Steve Smith. The Deep Creek drafting committee has concentrated working through the draft language for congressional legislation. In addition to designating the land as a Wild and Scenic River system, the legislation also includes passages to address any other concerns, interests or uses of the land. On April 20th the drafting committee finished a comprehensive version of the language and was sent to a larger stakeholder group. The next meeting to go over the material will be May 18 at 10am.

Topics in the legislation discussed:

* Grazing: Highlights passages that specify that existing contracts and uses of grazing will remain protected by the agreement. It states that livestock grazing on public lands are consistent with the objectives for Deep Creek watershed and maintains a healthy forage system. It also states that any future changes in allotment will not be affected by this Act, including any future infrastructure that modernizes and better protects the land.
* Water: The legislation states that no existing water rights will be harmed by the Act. Kirsten Lerner, on Deep Creek Ranch, states that she now feels comfortable with the language in what is hers vs what is not.
* Withdrawal: There is still some issue with the mineral/mining section. Steve shows that some existing mineral claims are present within the corridor up towards Onion Ridge. Once this Act is in effect, however, no new claims for mining can be filed and any existing claims will be scrutinized for excavation. Lerner is concerned that the language is vague and is worried about a large excavation company called Lhoist. She and other landowners are interested in expanding the map that preserves specific areas from mining limestone. Steve states, however, that until they do a sample and prove it to be marketable material, they cannot mine it. The upcoming workgroup meeting will address these issues and extend the map to cover these additional lands.

**Vence Grant Update**- Clayton updated the group with where the Sub-committee is currently at. He addressed a few landowners who are pushing for the collar and other good potential candidates. The board addressed financials and estimates for how much money it will cost and how many head are we realistically looking at. Right now, the Vence pilot project will require 2 towers, and the grant that Stephanie will be applying for will cover the costs for 3 years. The board discussed additional potential funders and will draft a proposal for local landtrusts and funders.

**ERWC- Eagle River Fund Update:** A potential endowment funding source that is at its beginning stages. In the agricultural community this fund could help with headgates, flumes, Tamaris and Russian olive removal. Scott Jones discussed how the Ag world would best benefit from the money. The Eagle River Fund is looking to create a working group to discuss the fund moving forward and wants a representative from the agriculture department. Scott Jones, Scott Schlosser and Clayton will be representatives. This will be a 2-year process that will address who, what, and where.

**Three Way Agreement Review** – The board overviewed the legislation and Ken made a motion to pass. Shawn second the motion. Scott Jones will sign.

**Climate action Collaborative; Presentation (May 31st)**: Shawn stated that the Climate Action Collaborative has invited ECCD to present at their next event. The focus is on land, soil and carbon sequestration plans for the county. This is an opportunity to introduce ourselves, who we are, what we do. Ideas for the presentation include

* Scholarships to Walking Mountains
* Education Events (e.g. Fair and Rodeo)
* Soil Pit Demonstration
* Ditch Inventory
* Introduce Vence Pilot Project

It was questioned whether we could provide technical data or invite a guest speaker from another Conservation District that is practicing Carbon sequestration work, (i.e. Roaring Fork). The next meeting is May 31st from 1-4pm. As of now, Laura will be creating the presentation, Shawn and Ken will be presenting.

**Update with Eagle County**- The board went through a brief update of the meeting, including what the SOW will look like, relationship/partnership building, and office space. Ken mentioned that organizations are having a hard time getting things done in the legal department with Covid-19 so ECCD needs to jump on finalizing the funding agreement as well as the office space agreement. Laura will continue to finalize the SOW document and send it off to Eagle County, and set up a meeting with Jan Miller regarding office space.

**Work session for Laura-** Laura briefly introduced the new District Manager Report that was requested by the board. It will hold overviews of meetings attended, meetings to come, and an update of tasks and accomplishments achieved throughout the course of the month. It was discussed whether or not it should be a continual/running document or whether it should be a PDF document that is attached to the monthly board meetings. For now, the board has agreed that it will continue to be a work in progress and will stay a google document, that is accessible to everyone. Laura will continue to add to it daily under the editing tool that will highlight additional changes. In addition, before each Board meeting, Laura will export the document as a PDF file with the past months’ updates.

**Annual Meeting**- The annual meeting has been pushed back to sometime within the first two weeks of September. Scott Jones still needs to inquire whether or not it can be held on his ranch. ECCD is still looking for a caterer. Laura will be reaching out to Courtney for the specific format that the invitations were submitted through.

*Broad discussion on other events that have happened in the past month-* meetings, conferences, etc.

**Fair and Rodeo**: (July 21-24) ECCD has reserved a 10x10 space for a booth under the grandstands. As of right now the director is uncertain about what restrictions (if any) are going to be in place or required by the Eagle County Public Health. For now, they are planning the event as normal.

**Initiative 16:** A motion was made by Clayton to write an opposition letter. It was seconded by ken and will be written by Laura. It will be sent to the Gypsum as well as the state. The next Gypsum town meeting is June 4th and must be submitted by that date.

**Quarterly Newsletter:** Shawn recommended a quarterly newsletter to be sent out to the public via either Mail Chimp, or the Vail Daily. Laura will request a free quarterly space from the Vail Daily once ECCD has some examples of writing to provide to the Newspaper and will begin to create a more comprehensive mailing list.

**NRCS Report:** Stephen stated that the NRCS is in the finishing obligationsfor EQIP with close to $400,000 for work on the ground. He expressed that drought throughout Colorado continues even though it’s been raining over the past few weeks. We are looking at 67% normal snow pack, less than normal moisture. The reservoir storage is low and will not be refilled anytime soon and we are looking at 50-70% normal runoff for rivers and creeks off the CO river basin. Eastern CO pulled out of drought by a little but not Western CO. The Lake Powell cap may implement drought measures which means Arizona will be hit hard next year. Any farmers under the cap are looking at 50% reduction and can either fully irrigate half or partially irrigate whole. Hay prices are also expected to rise. They just hired two new staff members and both will be introduced to ECCD.

**CSU Ext Update:**  Grazing school begins June 29-Aug 3, every Tuesday evening from 5-8pm. June 29th will host Soil Night with Shawn and July 20th Scott Jones will present Rancher Panel Night. Denyse asked Ken and Jay to talk to their HOA to see if anyone in the horse pasture is willing to offer their small acreage for onsite workshops such as grass identification, forage utilization, weed management, etc. Shawn asked how we can help to promote the events and Denyse is looking for sponsors for dinner if anyone has any recommendations. She also encouraged to spread the word through social media, newsletters and email.

**Mail Review:** The trees from the tree sale have been delivered to Vail Public works on May 12th and Wendy is still waiting for one more check. One customer placed an order for one box of Blue Spruce that was not delivered. Wendy has not yet cashed the check and we are waiting to hear from David with the Colorado State Forest Service in regards to the order.

**Next Meeting Date: 6/9/2021**

**Adjourn: 8:07pm**

**Notes taken by: Laura Bohannon (District Manager)**