



EAGLE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PO Box 360 Eagle, CO 81631 (970) 236-6215

Monthly Board Meeting Minutes December 10, 2025, 5:30pm
1286 Chambers Ave, Unit #201, Eagle, CO 81631

Google Meet joining info

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/tmt-ihpy-xid>

Or dial: (US) +1 402-628-0151 PIN: 705 102 112#

Meeting called to order at: 5:30

Supervisors Present: Shawn Bruckman, Scott Jones, Wendy Sacks, Clayton Gerard, Niki Luark, Linn Brooks

Supervisors Absent: Scott Schlosser

Guests Present: Sarah McCracken, Stephen Jaouen

Approval of Minutes: approved

Roll Call Reports: Board member miles & hours spent on conservation starting with the last regular meeting held November 12, 2025.

BOARD MEMBER	HOURS	MILES
Shawn Bruckman	16	60
Scott Jones	10	20
Wendy Sacks	10	20
Scott Schlosser		
Clayton Gerard	2	14
Niki Luark	9	300
Linn Brooks	24	250

Guests:

NRCS Report:

- Working on year end payments
- Tentative Jan 15th deadline for EQIP/CSP applications
 - Contracting in April/May likely

- Colorado is below baseline for staffing, and will need to increase staffing. Waiting for more direction before NRCS can proceed with hiring.
- More money will be available for 2026 contracts

CSU Ext.:

Introduction of Sarah McCracken, new CSU Horticulture specialist

- Hosting a tri county pesticide applicator workshop in Eagle County - March 26th
- Testing to get commercial or private applicator license will be in February
- EVLT - ethnobotany display at their new center
- EC School District is looking at a 35 acre parcel for cattle production, and space to create “farm to school lunches”) - via a grant application

Topics to Discuss:

Program & Staff Updates:

- Nox Weed Cost Share:
 - \$72,000 remaining in contractual for cost-share
 - Martha, Aldo, Quarter Circle & Katya ‘grandfathered in’ from previous application process
 - Many of these applicants did not revegetate - last year we had a conversation that we would not continue to fund applicants that did not reseed.
 - Lederhouse - used rejuvena, should not reseed
 - Restivo - requirement that we go out to the property next year. Could probably benefit from reseeding
 - Several others spot treated, and didn’t need reseeding
 - Shawn included education resources in an email to Greg, which should be distributed to landowners.
 - **Wendy moves to approve 8 noxious weed applications. Clayton seconds. All in favor. Motion passes**
- Wolf Grant Update:
 - Dustin understands our decision to keep our funding through calving decision, and to make a decision on reallocating funding afterwards
 - Wolf column
 - Board provided edits, Greg will make edits for board review tomorrow. If the board is not comfortable with the article by Friday, we will submit a different article to the daily
- Forestry Program:
 - N/A
- Seed Sales:
 - See board packet
- CO Soil Health Program:
 - Capacity funding (\$12,000)
 - Denyse presented a proposal for a soil testing kit, and a possible soil testing program that utilizes these funds
 - General discussion about the purpose of the proposed program, and who the program benefits.

- Board recommends creating a grant program, as a trial
 - Denyse will bring ideas for the program to the next meeting and include expense for her time
- Beyond Lawn:
 - Sponsorships are a possible way to sustainably fund Beyond Lawn growth. A working group has been established to build out this idea.
 - Sponsorship Event: Waterwise Expo
 - Survey- \$1,000
 - **Scott Jones makes a motion to approve a survey for up to \$2,000. Linn seconds, all in favor, motion passes.**
- CIG: Virtual Fencing:
 - Final reimbursement request
- FAPL: Virtual Fencing:
 - Year 2 contract approved

General ECCD Updates:

- Strategic Operating Plan Review
 - Adding agricultural producers to the mission.
 - **Clayton makes a motion to approve the Strategic Operating Plan, with the addition of agriculture producers into the mission. Scott Jones seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passes.**
- Conservation Handbook Proposals
 - Sarah Shaw
 - Cliff Thompson
 - **Scott Jones makes a motion to move forward with Cliff's proposal, and maintaining the opportunity to discuss freelance writing in the future. Clayton seconds. All in favor, motion passes.**
- ECCD's 50/50 Conservation Grant
 - GarPit has a similar grant, CSCB has a similar grant
 - Payment for infrastructure that is handled by engineering (headgates, pipelines,) under the state of Colorado. We become a public entity that is paying for something that is engineered - liability concerns?
 - GarPit uses NRCS job approval authority
 - GarPit pays off of NRCS published rates, and NRCS standards/specifications
 - Board directs staff to research CSCB and GarPit grants, and to talk to Stephen before publishing the grant
 - Ask GarPit how much time they spend administering the grant, and how much board time is required.
 - This will be discussed in greater detail at the next board meeting
- DCT Position Update
 - Ria Kobernuss: NRCS (1.5 years), forestry, small acreage farming, wildlife
 - Vaun Evarts: NRCS (1.75 years), wildlife, education/outreach
 - Sarah Metcalf: Ranching/farming, project management, environmental monitoring
 - Ethan Kohn: CPW, Wildlife & Livestock Conflict Mitigation, livestock management
 - Board directs laura to renew the Conservation Job board, to continue promoting the posting
 - Important qualities (board opinions) - building relationships with landowners, water, NRCS experience

- Second round interviews - Scott Jones, Linn, Niki, Wendy
- Employee Handbook: Dependents (Health Insurance) + Disability Insurance
 - Dependents
 - Laura presented four different options for adding dependents to ECCD's health insurance plant
 - **Linn moves to approve 25% coverage for dependents (25% ECCD/75% Employee), Wendy seconds. All in favor, motion passes.**
 - Disability
 - Laura presented options for adding long term disability
 - **Wendy moves to adopt LTD1, Linn seconds. All in favor, motion passes.**
 - NACD Annual Meeting Budget
 - Three nights (registration, hotel, flight, food): **\$3,924.37** total
 - Allegra - \$1,589.37
 - Denyse - \$1,442.00
 - Scott - \$693.00
 - Four nights (registration, hotel, flight, food): **\$4,523.83** total
 - Allegra - \$2,010.83
 - Denyse - \$1,531.00
 - Scott - \$682.00
 - Two/Three optional events
 - Rodeo - \$75
 - Cavern Tour - \$115
 - (Day 4) Urban Farm - \$75
 - **Wendy makes a motion to approve the 4 night option, and one \$75 event option. Linn seconds, all in favor, motion passes.**
 - Land Use Code Update
 - Session planned for tomorrow

Treasurer's Report:
Master Financial Statement 2025-2029

Two reimbursement requests need to be submitted, and income will be on target
 Expenditures - on target
 Saving account will total ~ \$283,000 by the end of year
 End of year bonus - Shawn requests performance review with Laura prior to distributing bonus

- Adopt 2026 Budget
 - Property Tax Revenue for 2026 will = \$717,900.38
 - New items in 2026 budget:
 - Conservation Handbook: \$16,000
 - Professional Development: \$15,000
 - Contingency Funds: \$50,000
 - Board requests an increase to \$75,000
 - Conservation Projects (50/50 Grant): \$50,000
 - Board requests an increase to \$75,000

- Scott makes a motion to approve the 2026 budget as written, Clayton seconded. All in favor, motion passes.

Upcoming Events:

- Western Slope Soil Health Conference
 - 1/23-1/24
- NACD Conference
 - 2/15-2/19

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

- Next meeting will be from 4-7pm
 - If we are not able to complete the agenda in the two hours, we schedule a meeting on the 4th Wednesday.

Mail Review:

Next Meeting Date:

Adjourn:

Minutes taken by: [Allegra Waterman-Snow](#), Program Manager

Action Items:

Laura

- Update Strat Op Plan with new mission statement, incorporating “agricultural producers”
- Renew the Conservation Job board, to continue promoting the posting
- Set up performance review with board
- Update disability - LTD1
- Update dependants - 25%
- W/ Allegra - research CSCB grant, GarPit grant, to inform 50/50 Conservation Grant

Greg

- Greg will make edits to the wolf article for board review tomorrow.

Allegra

- Purchase tickets, flights, hotel for NACD in January

Denyse

- Bring ideas for soil health program to the next board meeting

PROGRAM UPDATES

Beyond Lawn Program

General Program Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Presented to Glenwood Springs Garden Club ● Waterwise Guide Revision, Website & Resource Expansion ● Survey out to Beyond Lawn Participants ● Sustainable Funding Strategy ● Annual Progress Reports submitted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CRD ○ ERWSD ● Funding pools/grants closed out and final report submitted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CWCB Efficient Irrigation System Grant ○ Town of Eagle funding
Turf Replacement Rebate Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applications approved: 2 ● Turf Removed: 1,457 sq ft ● Rebates Awarded: \$1,457
Efficient Irrigation System Rebate Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applications approved: 2 ● Rebates Awarded: \$5,541.11
Financials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remaining Turf Replacement Funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expenditure: ○ Remaining: ● Remaining Efficient Irrigation System Funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expenditure \$50,160.78 ○ Remaining \$8,942.47

Noxious Weed Cost-Share Program

General Program Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Application deadline has passed (11/26)
On-Site Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 23 initial visits ● 10 post-control visits
Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 11 in total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4 approved (\$5,841.04 in reimbursements) ○ Waiting approval for additional 7 (\$11,511.13 in requests)
Financials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remaining Grant Funds

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ expenditures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ distributed as cost shares funding ■ \$5,841.04 to date ■ \$11,511.13 to be approved ○ remaining <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ remaining in cost share funding
Wolf Conflict Mitigation Project	
General Program Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After calving season, plan will be to purchase mesh fence kits and game cameras to spend down remainder of grant funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Remainder of grant funds after this point will be transferred to other organization in need
Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applications to date <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4
Financials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remaining Grant Funds: \$35,000 - \$8,781.16 = \$26,218.84
CIG Virtual Fencing	
General Program Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Final report is being completed by Allegra, with support from CSU and Stephanie
Financials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remaining Grant Funds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expenditures: \$771,811.63 ○ Remaining: \$0.00
Foundation for America's Public Lands: Virtual Fencing	
General Program Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Year 2 budget was approved on 12/1 ● Reimbursement request submitted for Nov/Dec 2025
Financials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remaining Grant Funds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Year 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expenditures: \$312,403.37 ■ remaining (rolled over into year 2): \$32,552.19 ○ Year 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remaining: \$397,825.77
CO Soil Health Program (+2.0)	
General Program Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review the proposal below for using the remaining \$12,000 capacity funding. ● ECCD Soil Health Program

Seed Sales	
Inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Low Grow - out of stock ● Dry Native - 17 ● Reclamation - 5 ● Wild Pollinator - 10 ● Waterwise Lawn - 1 ● Backyard pollinator - 25 ● Shade Tolerant Lawn - 3
Sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● \$5,115.65
Revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● \$17,052.17
STAFF UPDATES: Education, Outreach & Engagement	
Laura	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Events: 0 ● Presentations: 0 ● Site Visits: 0 ● Stakeholder Meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eagle River Community Water Plan ● Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eagle County Land Use Reg meetings ○ Beyond Lawn working group ○ Conservation Handbook working group ○ 50/50 Conservation Grant fact sheet
Allegra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Events: 0 ● Presentations: 0 ● Site Visits: 0 ● Stakeholder Meetings: 0 ● Other: N/A
Denyse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Events: 0 ● Presentations: 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 11/13: GS Garden Club Beyond Lawn Presentation ○ 11/17: Adam Palmer Fund - Food Systems Panel Discussion ● Site Visits: 0 ● Stakeholder Meetings: 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 11/19: Meeting w/ CSUE to discuss Native Plant Master Program ○ 11/21: Meeting w/ ERWSD to discuss Avon Landscaping Code

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 12/3: Eagle County Wildfire Collaborative monthly meeting ● Other:
Ryan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Events: 0 ● Presentations: 0 ● Site Visits: 0 ● Stakeholder Meetings: 0 ● Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○
Greg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vail Daily Column <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wolf Column Draft for Board Comment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Welcoming edits for upcoming column

STRATEGIC OPERATING PLAN UPDATES	
Strengthen Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AIP 1A: Weekly working group meetings ● AIP 1B: ● AIP 1C: Draft for review
Communication / Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AIP 2A: Working group set to meet on 12/12 @ 4pm ● AIP 2B: ● AIP 2C:
Expand Resources / Expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● AIP 3A: Fact sheet for review ● AIP 3B: ● AIP 3C: Weekly working group meetings

BOARD UPDATES
<p>Linn Brooks: Colorado Basin Roundtable November 17 Meeting</p> <p>The Colorado River Basin Roundtable held its last meeting of the year on November 17, 2025. April Long is vacating her seat on the roundtable, which is expected to be filled in Q12026. She is also stepping down as chair of the roundtable. Abby Burke, Senior Manager of Wester Rivers Program at Audubon Rockies, was elected as the new Chair of the roundtable; Kristin Kurath and Merritt Link will co-chair. Linn Brooks was elected to serve in the Agriculture At-large seat, which has been vacant for some time, on behalf of ECCD.</p>

Hydrology Update:

The 2025 water year (Oct 1, 2024-Sept 30, 2025) provided no relief to falling water volumes in Lake Powell and the watershed feeding the reservoir has experienced average precipitation on the whole for start of the 2026 water year. Forecasts indicate that Lake Powell volume could reach the Lower Elevation Balancing Tier in January 2026, which would trigger reductions to releases from Powell to Mead to try to conserve power production from the dam's turbines. Without these reductions, and if we have a relatively dry winter, the elevation of Powell could reach the elevation of minimum power pool by next fall.

This summer, reservoir operators attempted to rehabilitate the bypass tunnels at the Glen Canyon Dam, in order to allow continued releases from Lake Powell if elevations drop below the intakes to the hydroelectric turbines. This attempt was unsuccessful, therefore if the elevations in Lake Powell drop below the turbine intakes, the reservoir will be in a deadlock situation and no water will be able to be released to the Grand Canyon and Lake Mead. This is a serious development, in light of the fact that state negotiators on Colorado River issues missed the November 11 deadline to report to the Department of Interior that they had found a consensus path forward on how to share water shortages and rebuild reservoir volumes for resiliency in the face of the on-going drought. The current situation will likely also trigger mandatory releases from upstream reservoirs such as Blue Mesa and Flaming Gorge to prop up Lake Powell levels in the short-term. State river negotiators have messaged that they are still hard at work developing a consensus plan. The next deadline to be able to propose a plan to the Department of Interior's NEPA planning process is February 14, 2026.

Local hydrology remains dry, despite recent precipitation. A dry fall is setting us up for an inefficient run-off next spring, meaning that, for instance, an average snowpack season could translate into runoff well below average, as happened this year. Annual flow at the Cameo diversion in Grand Junction ended at the 8th percentile (meaning only 7 years in 100 would have lower total annual flow), and the annual flow at the Dotsero gage ended at the 7th percentile (only 6 in 100 years would be lower).

Shoshone Water Right Update:

The Colorado River District updated the roundtable on the CWCB's upcoming decision as whether to allow the water right to be co-managed by the river district and the CWCB. The CWCB has generally supported the concept of converting the power plant water right to an instream flow right to ensure the perpetual ability to use the right to call out upstream junior diverters, including the transbasin diversions of the large Front Range cities. Protecting this status quo protects in basin water rights (especially senior ag rights and the rights of local municipal water systems) and instream flows for ecological health. The river district proposed an instream flow right agreement, which has been vigorously opposed by the front range cities. The CWCB will make its decision on Wednesday, November 19th.

Agricultural Water Conservation:

Dr Seth Mason presented the results of his doctoral thesis which developed a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of agricultural water conservation policies, such as dollar incentives for producers, crop

type, etc. This work ties in with the conservation pilot project, SCPP, recently conducted on the west slope. the results of which were presented at the last roundtable meeting. Key takeaways were that there is in general less opportunity to conserve water at higher elevations in our area; that producers are risk averse and are more favorable to participating with a small portion of their acreage than a large portion; that water rights owners are concerned that if they don't use their water in a given year they will devalue their water right; and that producers are more likely to participate in a conservation program if they know that east slope users are also participating. This tool will be available locally going forward as the west slope continues to experiment with ag conservation.