



Colorado First Conservation District
 970-329-3145
 145 Commerce Street Craig, CO 81625

Minutes 5/11/2021

Place: Moffat County Courthouse: Conference Room

**NOTE: Agenda subject to changes and additions. Please note that the Board may discuss any topic relevant to CFCO business, whether or not the topic has been specifically noted on this agenda.*

Attendance:

Board Members: Wayne Counts, Ken Bekkedahl, Bill Green, Jorgiea Raftopoulos, Colton Murray, Nick Charchalis

Staff: Jerry Magas – DCT, Kacey Green – DM

Online: Kendall Smith – NRCS, Laurel Dietch – NRCS, Rebecca Burton - NRCS

Call meeting to Order: Meeting was called to order by Wayne Counts at 6:35 PM

Reading of Previous Minutes: Colton moved and Jorgiea seconded to approve minutes. Motion passed

Treasure's Report: Nick moved and Ken seconded to approve the treasurer's report and pay bills. Motion passed

Guests: none

Board Mileage and Time Report:

Name	Miles	Time	Note
Wayne Counts		4	
Nick Charchalis		10	
Colton Murray		4	
Rod Cook		N/A	
Ken Bekkedahl		4	
Bill Green		4	
Jorgiea Raftopoulos		4	

NRCS: Kendall Smith provided the NRCS update including upcoming deadlines for EQIP, CSP and EQIP-WME.

- Kendall provided an overview of the NRCS Colorado Conservation Planning 1st Initiative (see attached), which brings more involvement of conservation districts into the process of outreach.

- NRCS has been working on a news release to reach out to producers with expiring CRP contracts. That release is waiting on a quote from the district and will be mailed out to landowners this week. Kendall mentioned that it has typically been absentee owners that renew contracts, while local landowners are not re-entering the program. This may change as President Biden's 30 by 30 plan is implemented, as it may result in increased payments for renewed CRP contracts.
- Snow pack update was given
- Nakayla Lestina was announced as the new Resource Team Leader (RTL) for Craig and Meeker. NRCS has interviewed for a new CET position in Meeker, which should help reduce workload for Jerry and Arjun.

DCT Report: Jerry Magas

- The river trailer has been to one field trip for 3rd graders at Loudy Simpson and is booked for 4th grade Ag day on May 13th. The FFA/ Ag classes were unable to get materials to paint the trailer, but we will take it back next school year for painting.

District Manager Report: Kacey Green

- NFWF Grant application was not invited to full proposal – Kacey will continue to work with Kendall/ Nakayla on outreach for landowners looking to improve CRP and pasture land
- Ag Water Update – May 26th (see attached flyer)
- Kacey will attend IWMP community meeting - Maybell May 15th, 12-3 to represent the district
- Working on Over-Appropriation fact sheet to be handed out to landowners

Old Business:

- Kacey will get in touch with Alden Vanden Brink regarding the Wolf Creek reservoir project and the opportunity for CFCD's collaboration during the permitting process. One or two board members would need to commit to attending meeting for representation. Ken said he would consider attending, depending on when the meetings are.
- 3-way agreement for USDA-NRCS, Colorado Department of Ag State Conservation Board, and CFCD was signed by Wayne and submitted.

New Business:

- Soil Health Initiative updates – Nick reported that HB20-1151 passed the Senate with amendments that allowed both CSCB and CACD to have 2 voting members on the advisory board. This is a positive, but it is still a bit unclear as to how districts will be involved in the soil health initiative. More bills are coming that will impact agriculture, including a bill that would create a climate resiliency office within the Colorado Department of Ag. CFCD will continue to stress the importance of voluntary programs with incentives for landowners.
- Land Use Board - no meeting
- Scholarship Applications: 3 applications were reviewed and Elizabeth Tate Severson was selected to receive a \$500 scholarship. Nick moved and Bill seconded to award \$500 to Tate Severson. Motion passed.
- Nick suggested that the district touch base with Tri-State and ask them to consider donating water rights from Elkhead to facilitate an augmentation plan for the Yampa, if it is designated as over-appropriated. The board discussed ideas on how to approach Tri-State regarding water rights, or possibly a conservation easement for the district. Kacey

will coordinate with Nick and Jeff Comstock to come up with an appropriate ask and draft a letter.

- Bill Green and Wayne Counts signed a conflict of interest disclosure form regarding the familial relationship between Bill and District Manager; Kacey Green.
- Colton presented the idea of CFCD writing a proposal to the local Habitat Partnership Program (HPP) to ask for a lump sum of funding that the district can use for reimbursements for landowner reseeding projects. The funding could be distributed through an application process, similar to what the HPP does. This project would provide a valuable service to landowners. The board agreed that Colton can move forward with the proposal. Wayne thought the district could also approach HPP about spending remaining end of year funds by using the district as a pass-through agency.
- Schedule for board member tours with NRCS staff was set:
 - Bill Green/ Colton Murray – May 14th
 - Rod Cook – June 11th
 - Nick Charchalis – July 9th
 - Wayne Counts – August 13th
 - Jorgiea Raftopoulos – September
- Board has interest in getting more outreach set up. Ideas discussed were: small acreage workshop, tour the high school FFA's acre in a box, and ask Laurel to do a soil health workshop.

Next Monthly Meeting: June 8th , 6:30 pm – Location TBD

Adjourn: Ken moved and Jorgiea seconded to adjourn. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm

After meeting activity: Conservation District Supervisor Certification Course Module 2 was delayed until next meeting.