

## LARIMER COUNTY LAND STEWARDSHIP ADVISORY BOARD

*The mission of Larimer County Department of Natural Resources is to establish, protect and manage significant regional parks and open lands providing quality outdoor recreational opportunities and stewardship of natural resource values. We are committed to fostering a sense of community and appreciation for the natural and agricultural heritage of Larimer County for present and future generations.*

### MINUTES

**Date:** 8/16/2018

**Time:** 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

**Location:** Larimer County Courthouse, 200 W. Oak St., Fort Collins, CO, 2nd Floor, Lake Loveland Room.

**Contact:** Please contact Emmy at [ellisoea@co.larimer.co.us](mailto:ellisoea@co.larimer.co.us) or 970-619-4462 if you are unable to attend.

Members		Staff		Guests
Ernie Marx	x	Casey Cisneros	x	
Richard (Hitch) McCulloch	x	Gary Buffington	x	
Ed Redente	x	Meegan Flenniken	x	
Frank Haug	x	*Lew Gaiter III		
Gordon Nuttall	x	Emmy Ellison (minutes)	x	
Renee Galeano-Popp	x			

x = present

\*commissioner

1. CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS – called to order 6:02 p.m.
  - a. Introduction of new board members Frank Haug, Gordon Nuttall and Renee Galeano-Popp to existing board members and staff.
  
2. PUBLIC COMMENT - none
  
3. AGENDA REVIEW
  - a. Move 5.e. up depending on sunlight
  
4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES
  - a. Hitch motions to approve minutes, Frank seconds, motion passed unanimously.

## 5. INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Natural Resource events for this month: See <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources>
- b. Joint invasive exotic tree removal project with City of Loveland completed – Casey
  - i. Wrapped up 4-5 year project first funded by grant from the Colorado Water Conservation Board to address invasive, exotic phreatophytes (Russian-olive, Siberian elm, and tamarisk). Original request was for \$1.5M but were granted \$65K, partnered with City of Loveland and changed scope to include inventory and assessment of exotic trees along river corridor. Fort Collins Tree Service won removal bid. Inventoried all elm, tamarisk and Russian-olives on 13 natural area parcels along Big T corridor (932 acres), mapped 4,006 Russian-olives, 2,007 Siberian elm, 149 tamarisk. On 4 properties, removed 1,585 Russian olives, 462 Siberian elms and 5 tamarisk. Data derived from project is being used by Big T Water Coalition for new project. Stipulation for monitoring for 5-6 years, Larimer County will re-treat any resprouts.
  - ii. Renee inquired about some Russian-olives that had been removed on N. Shields in Ft. Collins. It was noted that LC was not involved.
  - iii. Hitch commented that it would be interesting to use Garlon 3A on some sites and Rodeo on others for comparisons.
- c. Construction of the Long View Trail (connecting Fort Collins' Cathy Fromme Prairie to Loveland's Sunset Vista Natural Area) thru Larimer County's Long View Farm Open Space will be complete in August! Elected officials will conduct a ribbon cutting ceremony August 15th, with a public opening August 18<sup>th</sup> – Meegan
  - i. Renee commented that trails can be vectors for noxious weeds and asked if there was management/monitoring for that. It was noted that a management plan exists for regional trails, partnership with other entities, LC responsible for weed control and safety on certain sections.
- d. Group photo – Emmy
- e. Applications are now open for the 2019 cycle of the Small Grants for Community Partnering program. Individual grant awards are available up to \$3,000 per project. This year, applications will be accepted through a new online form. Grant applications are due Thursday, Aug. 30, 2018, by 5 p.m., with awards announced by March 2019. If you know of an individual, organization, homeowners association or other group with a project that connects people to the land, please direct them to [www.larimer.org/small-grants](http://www.larimer.org/small-grants), or have them contact Jennifer Almstead at (970) 619-4569 or [jalmstead@larimer.org](mailto:jalmstead@larimer.org) – Meegan
  - i. Funding source is Open Spaces Sales Tax.
- f. 2018 Work Plan progress report – Casey
  - i. Updating the LC Weed Management Plan, sent out revised plan to LSAB for review. Have added an appendix with priority ratings for each noxious weed species for consistency with other departments within the County. In the future will add other sections such as Early Detection Rapid Response Plan, Enterprise Strategy, etc. Zero Pest Act enforcements on private lands. Dave (County

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Forester) has not located any that pose hazards to private property or public health. Casey is staff liaison with Facilities to find new, shared building campus for consolidating Road and Bridge, Land Stewardship and Fleet. Existing building will likely be sold. Looking for 30-40 acres north of Prospect near I-25 and Mountain Vista. General Fund dollars have already been allocated for project. EAB service request, revising 3<sup>rd</sup> and final edition of Knapweeds of Colorado guide, also reorganizing and consolidating Land Stewardship website. Parks and Open Space crews have been spread thin due to new acquisitions, all parcels are quite degraded, full of noxious weeds.

- ii. Ernie asked if Casey would have more resources in the future for weed management on open lands with the shift of tax dollars going from acquisition to management. It was noted that he would. Close to hitting staffing trigger for 2019, may add seasonals, reapportion existing staff.
  - iii. County Forester had project added mid-year, inventory of high value and hazard trees, may include treatment prescription. EDRR framework for LC, will sit and work on once management plan is formally adopted.
  - iv. Ernie asked when the budget prioritization happens and if there is an opportunity for board to give feedback on. It was noted that it happens every April and though it is not traditionally taken to the boards, feedback is welcome. Budget worked on internally, Gary approves, BOCC gives final approval.
- g. BOCC work session summary – Casey & Gary
- i. Attended work session with 7 items, ran by LSAB first. 1<sup>st</sup> was to update LC Weed Management Plan, will present revised version for formal adoption. Feedback was to run by Agricultural Advisory Committee which will happen in next 2 weeks, will take back to another work session once they review draft. Other big item was increasing Enterprise rates for the Weed Management Program, deficit last couple of years, program works with other agencies and landowners to address weed management, need to make adjustments to rates, haven't increased since 2014. Will address at Public Works meeting in December, hoping for new rates Jan 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - ii. Ernie asked if LC gets feedback from private sector regarding competitive pricing. Hitch commented that he thought it was interesting that tax dollars are used to performing a service that is similar to his own livelihood instead of farming it out. He also said that the flipside is why doesn't the county fund the program out of tax dollars instead of having to hustle your own dollars. Funding the county to compete on certain level with similar businesses to Hitch's. It was noted that the Enterprise works as mechanism for compliance work and educational outreach. Ernie suggested a market survey for the cost of services. Hitch mentioned that LC pay scale is nowhere near what his is. If Larimer County is undercharging for services, it can make public sector look like they are overcharging. It was noted that the contracts are usually worked out 1 year in advance, don't tend to pick up extra work, argue that LC being more aggressive

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with addressing noxious weeds on private lands generates more work for private sector. LC does not treat private land, they treat the County Rights-of-Way. LC process is once landowner gets their letter, they call LC office and we send list of contractors.

- iii. Renee asked if herbicides LC sells are marked up. It was noted that they are marked up a small amount. There is an HPP program through CPW that will do a cost share if you own a certain amount of land.
- iv. Submitted service proposal last year to supplement the Forestry budget, shortfall in budget, did not pass last year. LC feels it is a good time to propose again before the Emerald Ash Borer arrives, provide education to BOCC. Will hear back about new 2019/2020 proposal in September. Hitch mentioned that it can take 5 years before it is expressed in the trees, could be here now.
- v. Bylaws are being updated, BOCC said to proceed, send through Consent Agenda, should have new bylaws by next meeting.
- vi. Noxious weed compliance procedure in LC: reported by citizens or staff (phone calls, emails, online form, etc.), complaint verified within 5 working days, courtesy letter sent out for 1<sup>st</sup> report including list of management resources, landowners have 10 working days to respond to LC with management plan and timeline, if letters sent in previous years or high-priority weed involved, staff can skip step and move to certified enforcement letter. Gordon asked if the reporting party remains anonymous, it was noted that they do. After enforcement letter sent, if no action after 10 working days, a Right of Entry is requested from BOCC, only 4 requested this year, takes 1 week. Due diligence in notifying landowners. If no contact still, enforcement action conducted and invoice sent to landowner to be paid before October 15<sup>th</sup> to avoid a lien on property. Renee asked if LC receives more reports than they can handle. It was noted that the complaints and inspections were manageable, but it is difficult to keep up with site visits afterwards, current backlog is 3-4 weeks. Counties work with Department of Ag for List A, B, C prioritization. Current cases are 6 'investigate' status, 8 courtesy letters sent, 6 enforcement letters sent, 26 'monitor' status, 285 'next year' status, 859 field inspections, requested 3 Rights of Entry, conducted 1 enforcement in Estes Valley. Time frame is primarily April through August, bulk is in June.
- vii. EDSS maps are used for tracking statewide noxious weed distribution. Workflow tracking system will collect all the same fields needed for EDSS maps and field collection system (ARC online) and LC will likely have most robust data in state.

## 6. UPDATES/DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Noxious weed compliance update – Casey
  - i. Nearing end of compliance season, brought update, sent revised management plan prior to meeting.

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7. ACTION ITEMS

a. Vice Chair election

- i. Decision to wait on election until November meeting. Brief explanation of Vice-chair duties to new board members.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

9. NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED: 11/15/2018 at Larimer County Courthouse, 200 W. Oak St., Fort Collins, CO, 2nd Floor, Lake Loveland Room.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pursuant to C.R.S. (24-6-402(4)(a)) for discussion pertaining to the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer or sale of any real, personal or other property interest.

11. ADJOURN – 7:25pm

- a. Ed motions to adjourn, Hitch seconds, motion passed unanimously.

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