

**LARIMER COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
February 7, 2017**

Natural Resources Admin Offices - 1800 S. County Rd. 31, Loveland, CO 80504

The mission of the Larimer County Parks and Open Lands Department 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.

PAB Members in Attendance:

Chris Klaas	x	Mark DeGregorio	x	Russell Fruits	
Deborah Shulman	x	Nick Clark		Stephanie Van Dyken	
Frank Gillespie		Rob Harris	x	Steve Ambrose	x
John Tipton	x	Ron Kainer		Steve Johnson, Commissioner	

Staff in Attendance:

Gary Buffington	x	Ken Brink	x	Mark Caughlan	x
Dan Rieves	x	Kim Butler	x	Charlie Johnson	x
Heather Young	x	Pam Mayhew	x	Casey Cineros	x

Guests:

Pat McCusker	x
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1. REGULAR MEETING OPENING (5:30pm)
 - a. Motion by John Tipton, seconded by Steve Ambrose to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Motion passed 6-0. Meeting called to order by Chair 5:29pm.
 - b. Reviewed agenda and enclosures.

2. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS – None

3. PUBLIC COMMENT: Items not on the agenda - None

4. GENERAL INFORMATION:
 - a. Natural Resource Events for this month: See website <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources>.
 - b. To sign up for Parks Advisory Board minutes go to <http://larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm>, put in your email and click 'Subscribe', then check "Parks Advisory Board" box.
 - c. Ken Brink:
 - i. We just recertified our rangers in Wilderness First Responder.
 - ii. We have 3 people taking the EMT class through Poudre Valley Hospital.
 - iii. We're working through the Master Plan and are currently between steps. Logan Simpson is working on developing Chapter 3. One of the main things in there is an ongoing emphasis on the need for more places near our existing parks and hopefully, in the future, more parks.
 - iv. Ken passed around the timeline for the project this year just as a reminder for everyone. If you have questions or concerns, please see Ken.
 - v. The next time we go out for review by the TAC is the first week of April. We have to stick to the calendar because we're doing the Master Plan for the County and also the Recreation Plan for the Bureau at the same time.
 - vi. Friday, Mark & Ken (maybe Gary) will be headed to Denver for the first meeting for the Board of Recreation's Grand Lake Environmental Assessment Process. The Board has been briefed previously. We'll have Participating Status on the project. We will attend the

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meetings and bring back reports to our group. Larimer County is going to represent all of the East Coast municipalities.

- vii. ANS Funding: We usually open our boat ramps the first weekend in April, so we are working hard to get funding in place. The Bureau, Natural Resources, & CPW have been meeting and trying to economize the program and seek funding partners for 2017. We're trying to make sure we can still get the inspections done so that boating is available to the public.
- viii. By 2018, we hope that CPW will have a bill presented to the Governor for some other funding sources. Our goal is to provide continuous service so the public's usage is not interrupted. Our understanding is that we're one of the few outside entities who are going to get partial funding from the state because we came forward early on to say we would contribute part.
- ix. We've had really steep increases in visitation to our park units.
- x. We'll be taking a look and having a conversation with the Commissioner's Board that perhaps in 2018, we might have some fee increases like we've talked about in the Master Plan process, so that our program can be sustainable.
- xi. We're working on the last FEMA grant from the 2013 floods. It has been approved, and we are planning to buy some much needed emergency equipment (ex. pack-set radios (ours are 8-12 years old, beyond the manufacturer's recommended useful life), an AED at the Admin Office, rescue equipment, fire shelters for rangers (because they are often asked to help with emerging fire situations), etc.

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- a. Outreach, Education and Volunteers End-of-Year presentation
 - i. Shared video of 20th Anniversary – Help Preserve Open Spaces
 - ii. Please see PowerPoint attached
 - iii. Pam Mayhew (Volunteer Program Coordinator) – notes during presentation:
 - 1. Thank you to the Board for serving and contributing to Parks & Open Spaces.
 - 2. We're launching a new volunteer management program. Previously, it was all filtered through the City of Fort Collins.
 - 3. Volunteers had 13,000 contacts with the public; 2 of top 4 areas were Hermit Park Open Space & Devil's Backbone.
 - 4. About 50% of campground hosts return each year.
 - 5. We have 2 volunteers who are trained to teach CPR/AED/First Aid. We have our own equipment and were able to train 22 people last year.
 - 6. We monitor 8 raptor nests, 6 are active. We also monitor the 3 prairie dog communities on our lands.
 - 7. The new management system will let volunteers go in, look at calendars, and sign up for projects online. This will be an enormous time saving tool for us.
 - iv. Heather Young (Education Program Coordinator) – notes during presentation:
 - 1. GOCO Inspire Grant – We are working with the City of Fort Collins to try to improve the connection between children and nature
 - 2. Naturalist Assistants get only a 3 hours of training. This is a really great opportunity to learn about the program, and many return to do the full 60 hour naturalist training.
 - 3. Our guided hikes fill up and we have waiting list, so we're trying to figure out what is a sustainable size for our program. We are trying to focus on quality vs. quantity. We stopped doing Get Outdoors Day (was about 2,000 people) because there was too much competition with other events. Instead, we're trying to partner with some events that already exist.
 - 4. We do school field trips for the Thompson & Poudre Valley.
 - 5. Repeat experiences in nature create more investment and attachment, so we are looking at how to do more contacts/visits instead of 1 visit for 4 hours.
 - v. Board Comment

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1. Mark D.– What you probably are providing is a first time opportunity, so it might not have as much impact a repeat, but first time is still important.
- b. Emerald Ash Bore Mitigation – Casey Cisneros, Land Stewardship Program Manager
 - i. This project has been active for the last 6 months.
 - ii. Please see PowerPoint attached. Notes below:
 - iii. How does it kill the tree? The larvae feeds on the tissue under the bark and it girdles the tree, impeding nutrient and water intake by the tree.
 - iv. Effects of Emerald Ash Bore (EAB) include more run-off and less shade among other things.
 - v. They say this is worse than the pine beetle because it is exotic, so has no natural predator, so it is running rampant.
 - vi. Handout – Decision Guide for Managing Emerald Ash Bore
 - vii. Our County Forester has evaluated trees on County Parks, Open Spaces, right-of-ways, and parcels.
 - viii. We're going to be replanting on our properties in the last week of March/first week of April.
- c. Board and Staff comments
 - i. What's the rough estimate of cost?
 1. Casey - We're using existing staff and each district's maintenance is doing the removal. Materials will cost about \$10,000 to replant. The contractor's estimate just for planting was \$30-35,000.
 - ii. How big are the trees you plant?
 1. 2-3 inches caliper
 - iii. Casey – Do you feel like you have been bombarded with information or is there room for more education?
 1. Mark DeGregorio – I think once it gets to Fort Collins, people will pay more attention.

Break at 6:47pm; Reconvened 6:53pm

6. ACTION ITEMS: None

7. STANDING AGENDA ITEMS:

- a. Park District updates and Parks Master Plan Implementation Progress report
 - i. Dan Rieves, Carter Lake District Manager
 1. Parks Master Plan from 2007: South Shore plan is underway, but we're still making final decisions. We're scheduled to break ground September 2017, adding 22 campsites and reorganizing the parking. We can go check it out about halfway through construction. We're not expecting any surprises.
 2. The road closure is a hot topic right now. That is run by Road & Bridge. It is set to be completed in March.
 3. We had a lot of wind damage from our last storm. We might ask volunteers to come buck up the trees. Wind was clocked at 82 mph at Carter Lake weather station.
 4. The water level forecast looks really good. Carter is on the fill and we're at a good recreation level right now. There is a pumping cycle scheduled for the end of August too.
 5. ANS Contract: We will focus on the core mission – protecting the waters for zebra and quagga mussels. Hopefully we can streamline some processes and maybe do a little more with less staff time. We've been doing about 1,400 decontaminations/year. If we take the other species off the list, we should get it down to a couple of hundred. This will improve wait time and customer service as well.
 6. We have a staff vacancy at Carter. We are also losing some long term seasonal people.

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7. Recreational Sport Shooting Coalition: There is a potential change in the amount of acreage open on federal properties for recreational sport shooting. There will be a decision and amendment to the forest plan that will change where you can shoot. The group has been proactive creating videos on how to be safe, and are also working with partners to create shooting ranges. This has been a conversation with Gary, the Commissioners, and the Sheriff's Office. More to come on that.

8. Board and Staff comments

a. Deborah – Have you looked at potential sites?

i. Dan - We helped Estes Park get their range up and running post flood. We've looked at sites, but there's nothing as the front runner. I think the private market is also coming to fill in the gap, but there is still a need for outdoor shooting ranges. We want to plan for the changing population growth, and potential decreases in acreage in other counties if it pushes shooters to Larimer.

ii. Mark Caughlan, Horsetooth District Manager

1. HAIC has been extremely busy. The educational component should be done in April. The grand opening is planned for May.
2. The last few weeks, we've been taking down the ash trees.
3. A lot of our guys spend a lot of time in training this time of year.
4. We just finished up a septic pumping bid today.
5. We are getting more and more requests for people wanting to rent paddleboards on Horsetooth as a business. We have 6 people who have licenses to rent paddleboards on Horsetooth. The most responsible thing to do is put a bid out to have a concessionaire at Horsetooth, so we plan to select someone in October for 2018.

8. US BUREAU OF RECLAMATION UPDATE – Pat McCusker

- a. It's going to be a challenging year with the new administration and lack of federal funding.
- b. We just hired 3 new Natural Resource Specialists. We've been understaffed for so long. There is now a hiring freeze.
- c. We support the South Shore Campground upgrade from the 2007 Resource Management Plan.
- d. We are keeping busy with the new Resource Management Plan and EA. The end goal is to have it done by August. The projects will be really great for Larimer County.
- e. We do give Larimer County \$26,000/year to treat noxious weeds at the reservoirs.
- f. The Barrier Project at Carter Lake is coming up regarding dam safety. The barriers will be mounted jersey barriers in case there's a need to close the damn, etc.
- g. Siphon project: Northern has a siphon that's failing between Flatiron and Horsetooth, on this side of CR 34, so we won't be able to bring water down that canal from July – August. This will not affect the Carter or Horsetooth flow, but Flatiron will go to dead flow. We are talking to State to see where we can move the fish to.
 - i. Dan – It might be a good thing, because there are a lot of white suckers in Flatiron, so there is potential to remake it as a Trout Reservoir. For the overall health of raising fish, it could be a good thing.
 - ii. We won't be sending water from Flatiron to the trification. There will be periods of time where Flatiron is drawn down very low, and it will not hold the water it will usually hold.
 - iii. Horsetooth will get water from the Dilly Diversion from the Big Thompson River.
- h. Carter Lake Outcrop: They're coming along. They're not going to blast, just mechanically break it apart.
- i. We're reviewing the Chimney Hollow documents from Northern Water. They're trying to get it filled by 2022.

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- j. ANS is big with us. We're doing a lot of research on how we can put some money into the system. Right now, it would take \$1.5 million to treat all of the Colorado Big Thompson and Frying Pan Arkansas sites.
- k. CPW lost all of its funding from the excise tax. The Forest Service also dropped out last year because of all of the fires. We're trying to get the authority and see if we can contribute some.
- l. The Core of Engineers told their reservoirs that if they're not inspecting, then they cannot put boats on the reservoir.
- m. Considering putting a bill through State Congress supporting the funding, but that funding was for the Corp of Engineer Reservoirs, not County ones. He's not sure why we were not included. Pat does not think it will cover it all.
- n. Clarity is an ongoing project.

9. DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Gary Buffington

- a. Ken & Gary have been attending Principles for Advancing Outdoor Recreation & Conservation. (please see attached). Gary would like Larimer County to create something like this for us. He thinks Colorado is the first to adopt these principles.
- b. Board Comments:
 - i. Deborah: Do you mean these are like Guiding Principles moving forward?
 - l. Gary: Yes

7:21pm

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

11. MEETING ADJOURN

- a. Motion by Chris Klaas to adjourn, seconded by Steve Ambrose. Motion passed 6-0.
The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Next regular meeting [if needed]:
March 14, 2017
Horsetooth Area Information Center
4200 W. CR 38E, Fort Collins, CO

Public can view agenda and minutes at
http://larimer.org/boards/minutes/parks_advisory_board.cfm



