

**Routt County Conservation District**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**July 18th, 2023**

**Attending:**

**Board Members:**

Lyn Halliday  
Kent Sandstedt  
Tyler Snyder  
Cam Kuelthau  
Stephen Evans  
Patrick Stanko

**Partners and Public:**

Dustin Shiflett, CSCB  
Baili Foster, USFS  
Berkley Bayuk, USFS Intern  
Todd Hagenbuch, CSU Extension

**I. Call to Order:**

- The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by Tyler Snyder and a quorum established.
- The meeting was noticed as required by the Sunshine Law.
- Tyler welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining.

**Dustin Introduction** Lyn introduced Dustin from CSCB (John Miller's replacement) and the Board members introduced themselves to him.

**Approval of Minutes**

The Board voted to approve the minutes from the June 18<sup>th</sup>. Lyn motioned and Kent seconded, motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report**

Cam noted that there no major changes to report.

**III. Business**

1. Todd gave a Legacy Ranch update. They are studying how grazing of mountain ranches might improve soil health. He mentioned that there are a couple test plots of a legume mix and one of Kernsa Wheat. The wheat project is funded by the Land Institute.

**2. North Routt Virtual Fencing Demonstration Project**

Baili introduced Berkley Bayuk who will be assisting her this summer to implement the virtual fence project. She is an intern hired by the CSU extension and is on a 9–10-week program. Berkely gave the Board a brief background of herself and the Board Members introduced themselves.

Baili informed the Board that there is a virtual fence field day sponsored by CAWA in North Routt on September 5<sup>th</sup> and asked the Board if it would be willing to sponsor lunch up to \$1000. Kent motioned that the RCCD Board sponsor lunch up to \$1000, Patrick seconded and the motion passed.

**3. GLCI Grant**

Tyler Informed the Board that the RCCD GLCI Grant application revisions as discussed by the Board have been completed by Baili and submitted to Barbara at the NRCS State office. The Board will vote whether or not to accept the grant money once it receives the Agreement from Barbara. Tyler mentioned that it

is going to be a lot of work to find the right person for the job, but not impossible. Lyn mentioned that we need to get final go ahead from Board member Michael Moon on his willingness to head the GLCI subcommittee. Patrick said he is willing to join the subcommittee.

#### **4. Soil Health Toolkit and Field Day Update**

Lyn mentioned that the Soil Health pocket field guide (toolkit) she has prepared is at the printer. Lyn informed the Board about the agenda for the upcoming Soil Health field day on August 15<sup>th</sup>. The toolkit will be a handout. She mentioned that Eric Fuchs, the featured speaker from Understand Ag, will be arrive in the valley on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August and will visit the host ranch (Cam's). Lyn discussed the possibility of renting a shuttle to get people to Cam's ranch for the afternoon field portion of the full day event. The morning session will be classroom style. Lyn asked the Board about providing lunch, and the Board agreed to this expense. Lyn was still looking for a cost breakdown for Eric's expenses and will follow up and forward to Board members. Lyn outlined a marketing plan including Happenings, News in Brief, and multiple email distribution lists (FSA, NRCS, CAA, etc.). Jeremy mentioned that he is willing to smoke some meats and would give Lyn a cost estimate for providing the lunch. Patrick said he would talk to the CAA Market about getting some greens. The Board decided not to have a Board meeting on that day.

#### **Board Member Reports**

Kent updated the Board on the Wildfire Mitigation Council chipping program and that the Oak Creek Fire Chief Grady is who to reach out to.

Lyn gave an update on the RCCD soil health initiative and the STAR Plus program. Two ranches have volunteered for the comprehensive soil testing and Clinton has finished the interpretation reports. The STAR Plus participating producers (five) are now in the second year of the three year commitment. Colby's ranch (Hayden Fresh Farms) has received 5 stars through the CDA scoring system and the other producers have received 2 stars. STAR has provided funding for implementation of best practices on the participating ranches and is also funding \$1,000 support for the upcoming soil health field day on August 15th.

Lyn mentioned that she put our annual report together for 2022 and submitted it to DOLA. CSCB will pay \$500 to RCCD for this, in addition to the annual capacity support payment.

Dustin took the Board through the labor challenges that the CSCB is facing. Dustin said he is willing to help the Board with CSCB obligations and will participate in the local working group meeting.

Lyn updated the Board on the Upper Yampa Watershed Group projects. She mentioned that they are focusing on a comprehensive analysis of the upper Bear River sub-basin to identify and study nutrient loading relative to prolific algae blooms in Stagecoach Reservoir. UWYG is trying to understand the cause of the blooms.

Jeremy gave a weed sprayer update and said that he got some interest in some 4-500 acre jobs but was lacking the commitment from the landowners.

Kent gave a CAA update. There is a new market manager Chris Balenski. There was a July 8<sup>th</sup> ranch tour and was very successful. There will also be a farm tour on August 19<sup>th</sup> and a Farm to Table dinner on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

Patrick mentioned a grant for CAA to help pay for Jeff to continue his work. He mentioned that the grant also paid for design work on the Nickle Ditch Diversion. He mentioned that there are Riparian Restoration Projects through the Yampa River Fund. He mentioned that the Round Table has spent most of its money for 2023 and will get a 2024 budget in October. He informed the Board that the Upper

Yampa Water Conservancy District is working on a Yampa River Water Quality Dashboard to make observation, planning, and administration easier and asked for input from an ag perspective so he can report back to the steering committee.

Tyler said he will reach back out to Andy Schaffner about possibly serving on the RCCD Board.

#### **NRCS Report**

Clinton informed the Board that he is just managing existing projects at this point and not trying to take on any more projects. Hiring is challenging and the process is frustrating. Lyn mentioned that the High Desert Conservation District has drafted a letter to Clint Evans, head of Colorado NRCS in support of streamlining the hiring process and to hire more staff.

#### **CSU Extension Report**

Patrick gave a report for Todd that there will be a Grasshopper Reimbursement for \$2-4 per acre. There is a meeting one Friday at the library about the benefits and challenges of biochar.

Cam Motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:49 and the meeting was Adjourned.