



COLORADO NATURAL AREAS COUNCIL **DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

Friday, December 6, 2019
6060 Broadway
Denver, CO 80216

CNAC Attendees: Ken Strom (Chair), Dina Clark (Vice-Chair), Julia Kintsch, Lynn Riedel, Denise Culver
CPW Staff: Raquel Wertsbaugh, David Klute (Species Conservation Unit supervisor), Brian Dreher (Terrestrial Section supervisor), Reid DeWalt (Assistant Director, Wildlife and Natural Resources)
Other: Jessica Smith (Colorado Natural Heritage Program Botanist), Lindsey Brandt (State Land Board Stewardship Trust Manager), Savanna Smith (CNAP Technician on seasonal break from CPW)

Council Chair Ken Strom called meeting to order at 10:05 am

Presentations from Commissions and Appointees

Dina Clark: Reported on work being accomplished at CU Boulder- digitizing of collections including herbarium, invertebrates, & vertebrate museum records, allowing for greater niche modeling and ecological research.

Lynn Riedel: Suggested CNAP look into sites within Dinosaur National Monument as future natural area candidates.

Lindsey Brandt (SLB): Asset management plan for Lowry Ranch being finalized; will be taken to the board in February. Working on SLB property in Fremont County adjacent to Mexican spotted owl habitat.

Denise Culver: Found excellent habitat including quality wetlands and rare plants while working in Roaring Fork watershed over the summer, planning on continuing work in 2020. Colorado butterfly plant, a wetland plant species, recently delisted by USFWS.

Ken Strom: Recent Audubon study concluded that 2/3 bird species in North America are at-risk due to climate change. Ties into the work we do at CNAP and threats to other species including plants.

CPW staff update

- Introduction of new terrestrial section manager, Brian Dreher. Brian was previously the southeast region senior biologist for CPW.
- Operating budget for CNAP has been secured and funding outlook is positive for the program
- Recovering America's Wildlife Act: passed out of the House Committee on Natural Resources yesterday, and next will go to a full vote in the House. There is bipartisan support. Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission endorsed a resolution on the Act last month.
- Two recent releases of black-footed ferret
- CPW will be repeating range-wide monitoring of black-tailed prairie dog in 2020
- CPW studying pinyon-jay to gain more info on demography and habitat use
- Ongoing work on brown-capped rosy finch

- Ongoing work with black rail and awaiting a final ESA listing decision. CO may have largest extant population in the interior U.S.
- There is a proposal to delist the interior least tern, which occurs in CO
- Assistant Director Reid DeWalt:
 - Governor has signed executive order on big game migration corridors
 - Overall increased revenue for CPW since the passing of Future Generations Act
 - Discussions in DNR on how the recreational community could contribute funding to state conservation efforts

Matters from Staff

- *Staffing update:*
 - Program coordinator Raquel Wertsbaugh will be on maternity leave April- July 2020
 - Field technician Savanna Smith will be returning in February
 - CNAP will hire additional technician in March
- *2019 field season wrap-up:*
 - Staff is finishing compiling staff and volunteer field reports, photo monitoring, species lists, and element occurrence records
 - Staff will send out field season reports to all natural area owners/managers in January
 - Staff distributed 2019 field season stats report: 30 sites visited by staff, 55 species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) observed by staff and volunteers, 49 element occurrence records submitted to CNHP
 - Monitoring continued via contractors on budding monkeyflower, Parachute penstemon, Brandegee wild buckwheat, and cushion bladderpod
- *CNAP assistance on ESA documents*
 - Staff are currently involved with assisting the USFWS with review of species status assessments, draft recovery plans, and/or biological reports on: Pagosa skyrocket, Parachute penstemon, Mosquito Range mustard, North Park phacelia, and budding monkeyflower
- *Colorado Conservation Data Explorer*
 - CPW currently working with CNHP to develop an online conservation data explorer tool that would serve as a clearinghouse for projects that could be accessed by government agencies, NGOs, consultants, etc. Data will focus on SWAP tier 1 species.
- *Eastern Plains Identified Site Planning*
 - Presentation outlining background info, steps taken, and current staff recommendations for moving forward on potential designation(s)
 - Staff recommendation: move forward with the designation of Fox Ranch (already registered by CNAC in 2010)
 - Chair Ken Strom made motion to support staff recommendation, moved by Denise Culver, seconded by Julia Kintsch, motion approved
 - A second recommendation was made by staff: move forward with pursuing registration of Brett Gray Ranch, given landowner and manager support
 - Chair Ken Strom made motion to support staff recommendation, moved by Lynn Riedel, seconded by Dina Clark, motion approved

- Staff reminded members of other potential designation and amendment work that may be brought forward in the near future such as expansion of White Rocks and Colorado Tallgrass Natural Areas

Matters from Council

- *Approval of September minutes:* motion to approve by Chair Ken Strom, moved by Dina Clark, seconded by Julia Kinstch, motion approved
- *2020 CNAC meeting dates (tentative):*
 - March 5 or 6 (hold both for now)
 - July 10
 - September 11
 - December 4
- *Upcoming CNAC vacancy:* Julia Kintsch's 2nd term on CNAC will end June 2020, will need potential replacement ideas by March meeting
- *CNAP Strategic Plan Update:* Staff provided 2019 progress report. Current 5 year strategic plan is due for an update in 2020. Discussed having staff make suggested edits with input CNAC prior to March meeting and spend majority of day at March meeting to discuss and draft updates.

2019 CNAP Field Season Highlights

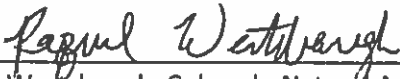
- Photos and presentation by field tech Savanna Smith and botanist Jessica Smith

Board and Commission Ethics and Transparency Training

- Presentation by Assistant Attorney General Joe Phillips and Jake Matter

Meeting Adjourned: 2:45 PM

Respectfully submitted:



Raquel Wertsbaugh, Colorado Natural Areas Program Coordinator

Approved:



Ken Strom, Colorado Natural Areas Council Chair