



COLORADO NATURAL AREAS COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday June 16, 2022
Hybrid Meeting - 6060 Broadway and Google Meet

CNAC Attendees: Ken Strom (Chair), Lynn Riedel (Vice Chair), Phyllis Pineda Bovin, Jessica Pierce, Taishya Adams (CPW Commissioner)

CPW Staff: David Klute (SCON supervisor), Raquel Wertsbaugh (CNAP Coordinator), Lucy Haggard (Outreach and Stewardship Specialist)

Other: Savanna Smith (CNHP Botanist)

Council Chair Ken Strom called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m. Four council members in person, one council member remote, four staff/contractors in person.

Presentations from committees and appointees

Lynn Riedel: City of Boulder OSMP recently celebrated the retirement and career of Tim Hogan, a well-known CO botanist who managed the CU Herbarium for 30+ years. Tim's floristic work on City of Boulder OSMP lands has led to better informed management and knowledge of the local area. The 2022 Colorado Native Plant Society annual meeting will be held in Longmont this year and Lynn is tentatively planning to lead a field trip to one of the tallgrass prairie state natural areas.

Phyllis Pineda Bovin: The National Park Service (NPS) is taking a more proactive approach to implementing climate change information in planning. NPS is utilizing an interagency document called "[Resist, Accept, Direct.](#)" to help guide management efforts in light of climate change.

Parks and Wildlife Commissioner Taishya Adams:

- Recently attended the Colorado Cattlemen's Association annual convention. Encouraged CNAP to work with more ag producers as many of their land stewardship goals align with CNAP's. Highlighted that many agricultural lands in Colorado are being repurposed for recreation or development, which is not good from a wildlife, land health, and/or food productivity perspective.
- Mentioned [Outdoor Retailer Show](#) and lack of emphasis on habitat and conservation.
- Recent [Partners in the Outdoors Conference](#) had several helpful sessions, however noticed that some stakeholder groups were missing from the conversations, namely agriculture representatives. Stewardship conversations were more wildlife focused rather than habitat focused.
- Participated in [Outdoors Alliance for Kids](#) summit in DC; interesting to be involved with pipeline of youth to stewardship opportunities, especially with CPW having a generally older volunteer demographic.

- Highlighted the [Recreate Responsibly](#) strategy as a “can-do” over “don’t-do” emphasis, but still not seeing the “why” component as strongly (e.g. why people should stay on trail). Could be an opportunity to show people the consequences of recreational activities on the landscape.
- Visited the Ute Mountain Ute reservation; thinking about relationships with reservations in Colorado borders. Ute Mountain Ute has a charter school and is rigorously looking for meaningful content, curriculum, opportunities to engage, etc.

Jessica Pierce: Has been communicating with some faculty and grad students at University of Colorado Boulder and University of California Davis who study birds, to get ideas about science communication. Interested in showing the perspective of birds as a gateway species to building interest in and empathy for ecosystems as a whole, including insects, plants, etc. Highlighted the importance of working with youth to get involved both as community scientists and hopefully involved in STEM careers. Interesting to learn about their strategies and science communication in general. A CU Boulder program called [Side By Side](#) has recently been used to teach high school students about birds through arts and community science. Also trying to learn as much as possible about plants, especially those less noticed such as lichens, mosses, and those that escape attention.

Ken Strom: Thanked staff for all the projects they’ve worked on over the last several months.

CPW Updates – SCON Supervisor David Klute

- [Recovering America’s Wildlife Act](#) passed the U.S. House and is headed to the senate floor in July. The Biden administration [came out in support of passage](#). Reminder: RAWA would be about \$1.3 billion annually for State Wildlife Action Plans, \$26 million of which would come to Colorado (plus about \$2 million for rare plants, since they are in our SWAP). Still figuring out next steps in the Senate, though there’s a push to get it done in this session, preferably before August recess. If it passes this summer, funds could be available in federal fiscal year 2023 (aka October 2023). There’s a ramp-up period for states to adjust, and the gap funds are going to USFWS for targeted work on T&E species recovery.
- Other current funding opportunities include the federal infrastructure bill and America the Beautiful. CPW is looking at a grasslands-focused proposal.
- Colorado’s legislative session wrapped up for 2022. A few relevant bills: [sensitive species data bill](#) which will protect sensitive plant and wildlife data, [pollinator study bill](#), and a [disaster preparedness bill](#) that will include an FTE for CPW to work on climate-related issues.
- The [Central Grasslands Summit](#) took place in Fort Collins last month, with a focus on grassland conservation across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.
- The Terrestrial section is in the process of creating a third unit focused specifically on habitat – hiring a unit supervisor and four region-based field staff.
- Field season is very active, especially working on some state parks such as Fishers Peak and Sweetwater Lake. Species work related to SCON include burrowing owls, black rails, black-footed ferrets, Gunnison sage grouse, white-tailed ptarmigan, brown-capped rosy finch, lesser prairie chicken, and several others.
- Some inappropriate comments were made by the CPW director at the recent Partners in the Outdoors Conference, and there is a third party investigating the situation. Director Dan Prenzlou is on administrative leave, and Heather Dugan is currently acting director.
- Wolf reintroduction efforts continue to move forward. The pack that migrated on their own in North Park has continued depredation, especially with one particular rancher, which is very challenging. There’s an ongoing stakeholder and technical advisory group, and CPW is looking to release a draft plan about the translocations that need to happen by December 2023.

- ESA-related news: there will likely be a proposed rule to re-list lesser prairie chicken as threatened in the northern portion of their range (including CO), and endangered in the southern portion. Pinyon jays were petitioned for listing, a species that CPW has been studying. CPW staff have done surveys and work to understand their breeding colonies, and now are working with USFWS, BLM, etc. to train them how recognize colonies during fuels management projects so crews aren't downing trees that should be left. Wolverine has seen push for reintroduction; a recent court settlement just put them back on the candidate species list, so now USFWS will reevaluate. Because they're on the candidate list, they require legislative approval for reintroduction, so CPW no longer has direct authority to do that.

SWAP conservation dashboards presentation

- SCON supervisor David Klute gave a presentation on the newly created conservation dashboards for SWAP implementation actions in Colorado.
- David hired a temporary employee to create the dashboards, and content/data came from SCON staff including CNAP.
- CNAP staff completed hundreds of surveys to gather conservation actions for Tier 1 PGCN that are displayed in the dashboards.
- The dashboards contain actions completed by CPW on species of greatest conservation need (including plants) since the start of the 2015 SWAP.
- The dashboards will be presented to the PWC in the near future, although the dashboards aren't yet available for public viewing.
- The SWAP dashboard project will be extremely beneficial in updating the next SWAP in 2025. If RAWA passes, the dashboards will help direct and prioritize how to spend the funds.

Matters from staff

- Recently hired seasonal staff, Caroline Hildebrad, has resigned to take a permanent position with a consulting firm. This is unfortunate timing given that the field season just started but luckily our other current seasonal outreach staff, Lucy Haggard, is willing to take on more field monitoring duties. Lucy's new title will be Outreach and Stewardship Specialist.
- Field season is underway and staff have conducted 13 site visits since the beginning of May.
- Staff will be in Pagosa Springs all of next week conducting quantitative and qualitative monitoring on Pagosa skyrocket, collecting soil moisture probe data, and weed mapping on the natural area. Staff will be joined by several CNHP botanists/ecologists including Jessica Smith and Renee Rondeau.
- Staff will be monitoring at Mount Callahan and Logan Wash Mine the following week. They'll be joined by CNHP botanists, USFWS staff, and private landowners.
- Lucy, CNAP's new outreach specialist, has been busy since March with the following outreach-related projects:
 - Played a large role in completing and distributing the [annual CNAP newsletter](#)
 - Initiated a "legacy project"- has contacted numerous past and present CNAP/CNAC directors, staff, partners, and volunteers to give oral histories on CNAP
 - Updating and creating new content for CNAP's webpage, specifically the Visit a State Natural Area page
 - Created a CNAP 101 toolkit that can be used and adapted for outreach events
 - Met with CPW social media coordinator and working on social media content to increase awareness of CNAP
 - Will be working on an article submission for Colorado Outdoors magazine

- Working on several article submissions for Colorado Native Plant Society magazine Aguilgia
- Staff continue to work on amended AODs for Colorado Tallgrass and White Rocks natural areas, as well as progressing on Coal Creek Tallgrass Prairie designation steps.

Matters from Council:

Approval of March 2022 minutes: Motion by Lynn Riedel, second by Phyllis Pineda Bovin. One grammatical edit. Unanimous approval 5-0.

CNAC chair nominations and voting:

- *Chair* – Nomination put forth by Jessica Pierce for Lynn Riedel as chair. Second by Taishya Adams. Unanimous vote 5-0 (two council members absent from meeting). Ken Strom will finish out the current meeting as chair.
- *Vice chair* – Nomination put forth by Jessica Pierce for Phyllis Pineda Bovin. Second by Lynn Riedel. Unanimous vote 5-0 (two council members absent for meeting).

September meeting plan: staff recommended a morning business meeting at Castlewood Canyon State Park/State Natural Area followed by an outdoor appreciation lunch with CNAC and volunteer stewards. Council agreed to proceed with the plan. The meeting is planned for September 21, 2022.

Lunch break

Recognition of outgoing Chair Ken Strom's service on the CNAC

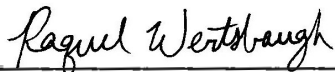
Thank you for your 8 years of service, Ken!

CNAP strategic plan implementation discussion

The discussion focused on Strategic Plan Goal 1, Objective 3, and the strategies therein. Since only 30 minutes remained on the agenda, Council expressed interest in finding more time to go into greater detail, whether at a future meeting(s) and/or an electronic survey. Staff agreed to send a survey to gauge Council member's thoughts on upcoming fiscal year priorities, progress, etc.

Meeting adjourned at 1:45pm.

Respectfully submitted:



Raquel Wertsbaugh, Colorado Natural Areas Program Coordinator

Approved:



Lynn Riedel, Colorado Natural Areas Council Chair