



Meeting Minutes: Colorado Wildlife Council - April 16, 2026

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. ~ Virtual

Members Present:

Anderson, Ehrhart-Gemmill, Gray-Bertuglia, Gwinn, Kitching, Twinem, Weyand, Williams

Members Absent:

None.

Also in Attendance:

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)/State: Megan Schulz-Collins, Rebecca Ferrell, Aundrea Kurth

R&R Partners: Patrick Buller, Angela Suganuma, Sophie Haws, Miriam Swofford

Public: None.

Call to Order / Introductions – Kitching

- Called the meeting to order.

Key Decisions and Actions:

Approve Minutes - March CWC

Motion:

Weyand moved to approve the March minutes, seconded by Williams, and the motion was approved unanimously.

R&R Presentation

Rockies Review:

- R&R reported on the feasibility of a ticket voucher program with the Colorado Rockies.
 - The proposal was for the purchase of a hunting/fishing license, which yields 2 free tickets at the cost of \$150,000 for the season (up to 10,000 tickets).
 - The Council noted there is no remaining budget for this in the current season and requested a follow-up on whether a smaller, game-specific promotion (specifically for the September game against the Padres) is negotiable.
 - **To-Do:** R&R to check on single-game promotional costs for future reference.
- The Council compared two proposed promotional items: a high-quality tote bag and a custom belt buckle.
 - Tote Bag: Cost \$47,000. Described as highly popular across the sportsman community and practical for gear.
 - Belt Buckle: Cost \$72,000. Members felt a lower-cost buckle might be seen as cheap and suggested saving high-quality buckles for special awards (e.g., Conservationist of the Year).
 - The council decided to move forward with the tote bags.
 - The Council agreed on a series of motifs. The next bag will feature a new species (suggestions included fish, duck, or mule deer) while maintaining the current design style and three-tone color scheme.
 - Final artwork is due by May 15th to ensure delivery before the account transitions to Karsh.
 - Since the next full Council meeting is May 21st, a smaller subcommittee call will be scheduled before May 15th to provide official sign-off on the final art.
 - **To-Do:** Schulz-Collins send out meeting dates for around May 15th for artwork approval.

Social Media:

- Q4 Social Calendar: R&R presented refreshed designs that lean into photography over illustration to increase sophistication.

Motion:

Motion made by Twinem to approve the Q4 social media calendar, seconded by Weyand, and approved unanimously.

Confirm Subcommittees:

- Schulz-Collins noted that all subcommittee assignments are officially confirmed in the March meeting minutes.

Newsletter:

- Q4 Newsletter: R&R noted a minor update to the newsletter to inform that fishing license sales are occurring despite drought conditions.

Motion:

Motion made by Anderson to approve the Q4 newsletter, seconded by Weyand, and approved unanimously.

Outdoor Equity Grant Presentation- Aundrea Kurth

- Andrea Kurth presented on the \$10.5M invested in underserved youth. The Council is entering an exploratory stage to partner with OEGP to reach new audiences (e.g., by sharing CWC messaging with OEGP's 79,000+ participants).

Conservationist of the Year Award Discussion

- Members pre-scored applicants based on five categories: Innovation, Impact, Sustainability, Community Involvement, and Education/Outreach.
- The finalists: Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF), Will Shoemaker, and Kathleen Mawhinney.
 - Will Shoemaker: Highly regarded on the West Slope for his communication and marketing background in conservation. He received two separate nominations.

- Kathleen Mawhinney: Scored high due to her specific work educating disenfranchised communities and veterans in hunting and angling.
- RMEF: Recognized as highly meeting every judging parameter with an undeniable statewide impact.
- **Decision:** Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation was selected as the 2025 Conservationist of the Year. It was noted that they also held the highest aggregate score in the initial matrix.
- **Award Presentation Plan:**
 - Requesting a slot at the September Parks and Wildlife Commission meeting in La Junta. Members emphasized the importance of showing the new Commission members the impact of groups like RMEF.
 - Inviting four representatives from RMEF to attend the Council's suite at the Rockies game in September, potentially including an on-field recognition.
 - Coordinating the award with the Governor's National Hunting and Fishing Day proclamation in September.
- **Future Note:** Subcommittee to draft new rules for 2026 to include both an Individual and Organizational award category.

Hunter & Angler Outreach Update

- The Council reviewed recent and upcoming events in the Hunter & Angler Subcommittee.
 - Sportsman's Day at the Capitol (April 23): Williams and Gwinn will attend.
 - Bighorn Society Banquet: Weyand will represent the Council this weekend.
 - Clay Shoot Competition: Zelinsky is holding a competition today to engage participants with the CWC.
 - Sportsman's Radio: Interviews are ongoing through June 30. Weyand completed the April interview with Scott Watley; Twinem and Ehrhart-Gemmill are scheduled for the remaining months.
 - Promo Items: Schulz-Collins is seeking ideas for new promotional items for upcoming purchase orders.
 - Flyathlon: The subcommittee recommended sponsoring three Flyathlon events (combining trail running and fly fishing).
 - Cost: \$5,475
 - Inclusions: Branded coolers, water bottles, social media promotion, and logo placement.

Motion:

Williams moved to approve the \$5,475 Flyathlon sponsorship, seconded by Anderson, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of Upcoming Event Travel

No event travel discussion was needed.

Open Discussion & Questions

- None.

Public Comment

Meeting Adjourned

Motion:

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.