



Colorado First Conservation District  
 970-329-3145  
 145 Commerce Street Craig, CO 81625

## Minutes 3/10/26

**Place:** USDA Office 145 Commerce Street Craig, CO

*\*NOTE: Agenda subject to changes and additions. Please note that the Board may discuss any topic relevant to CFCD business, whether or not the topic has been specifically noted on this agenda.*

**Attendance:** Board members - Nick Charchalis, Rod Cook, Doug Davis, via ZOOM: Jorgia Raftopoulos, Steve Hinkemeyer CFCD Staff - Kacey Green, Nicky Boulger, Mark Lowrey, via ZOOM: Cassie Lamb NRCS - Nakayla Lestina

**Call meeting to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 4:13 by Colton Murray, acting Chair

**Reading of Previous Minutes:** Nick moved, Doug seconded to approve the Minutes and Treasurer's report. Motion passed

**Treasure's Report:** notes from Kacey - debit cards for General and Sage-grouse accounts were inadvertently switched during annual meeting prep. The starred charges were swapped back to the correct accounts via Jorgiea on 3/10/26. Kacey is working with Lance McMahon on audit. There are updates that need to be made to the watershed account, as all recent signature updates have not been found. Nick and Wayne are working on getting the 3 accounts held at Bank of the San Juans updated.

**Guests:** N/A

**Board Time Report:**

Name	Time	Note
Wayne Counts	n/a	
Nick Charchalis	10	
Colton Murray	10	
Rod Cook	3	
Stephen Hinkemeyer	16	
Doug Davis	6	
Jorgiea Raftopoulos	8	

**NRCS UPDATE:** Nakayla Lestina gave updates on deadlines and applications, reminded that CFCD must host a Local Work Group Meeting. Guidance from the state encouraged districts to put in an application for a TCP (Targeted Conservation Project). Discussion revolved around benefits and negatives to this. NRCS money could be allocated to a specific targeted area (for example: Invasive annual grasses or fire recovery) and the TCP if awarded becomes its own category. Projects don't have to be

ranked against all others. The board will think on and discuss if TCP application is an option.

Nakayla is still waiting for final guidance on all funding and moving forward with applications. There are 40+ applicants including from Meeker. They are also waiting on RCCP guidelines for things like carcass management and cameras - these cannot be tied to wolf mitigation. Colton mentioned that the Moffat County Cattlemen's association currently has funding available for game cameras.

**DCT Report:** Nicky Boulger has been working on CSP and EQIP here and in Meeker with a March 27th obligation deadline

**District Manager Report:** Kacey Green updated on ATB and BIL grant funding - both are getting toward the lower end of available funds, and will reassess as spring projects near completion. Nick mentioned that one of the landowners who moved and dropped out of ATB may have a replacement with the new landowner. He will reach out to them with office contact info. Kacey provided a reminder of the CACD Camp Rocky and will visit with the MCHS FFA to distribute information. Nick - we should consider scholarships to the camp as in the past.

#### **Old Business:**

Land Use Board – Steve reported that the state land board has put together an easement program, in the early stages of development but regarding tax credits. Commissioner Villard gave an update on the department of energy, and the county exploring uranium processing. These are early conversations, and if the county/state does not show interest now they will not be considered in future conversations. Jeff updated LUB on the Wildlife Commission meeting where they voted to uphold a petition to ban sale of fur in the state. Comments were that it was the worst run meeting ever attended with many commission members showing confusion on what they were even voting on. The petition now goes into the rule making process, but it is likely there will be lawsuits filed due to the nature of the meeting and the commission going against CPW recommendations to deny the petition.

Annual meeting review - Kacey reported that costs for the annual meeting came in under budget, and thanked Nicky for her hard work on organizing and meal prep. Nick asked that we do more to promote our sponsors, perhaps an ad on social media. Kacey will get this on the agenda sooner next year so there is more prep time before the meeting. Overall the meeting was well attended and feedback was positive.

#### **New Business:**

There was no new business

### **Committee Report:**

NFWF Sage Grouse – Kacey updated budget and communication from attorney regarding the certified letter to rescind Swartzell project. Minor changes were made and the letter is ready to send.

New projects were presented as approved and advance by Sage-grouse committee (see committee minutes for detailed discussions)

- Jorgiea moved, Doug seconded to approve requested changes to Terry project. Motion passed unanimously.
- Jorgiea moved, Nick seconded to approve Duzik project. Motion passed unanimously

Discussion revolved around the package of projects for retiring farmed fields. Lively debate was had regarding what past projects have required for match, not only labor but also materials/ supply such as seed & chemical. There have only been a few projects that have presented as complex and multifaceted, so the standard has not really been set, so it is important to get this right moving forward. Some were in agreement that it is unfair to change what the board is asking for landowner match on these new projects vs what was asked on previous projects - on the other hand, these are to be considered on individual merit and intricacies. Should the board pay for materials & supply, with the landowner responsible for labor? Should it be a flat rate percentage? All were in agreement that this is a good project in an area that adds connectivity to several projects that are currently underway/ completed. The land is already in planting condition, and committee members from CPW and BLM were in favor of moving forward as presented. There was concern about a few comments from some of the landowners to the committee with an 'ultimatum' type attitude, but the dollars need to be allocated objectively, not based on attitude - all agreed.

The board was presented with a tiered landowner match option, based on total project cost. Lower cost projects would be asked for a higher landowner match, while projects over \$60k would pay less. This allows for higher impact acreage to move forward, but not be cost prohibitive to the landowner.

Doug moved to approve Williams, RD Kawchack, and Cook as presented. Steve seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The larger acreage projects will also add a sagebrush component as a Fall planting to coincide when sage naturally seeds itself. It was noted that for a landowner to only pay 25% of the labor was not enough "skin in the game" and landowners are financially responsible for property they own. It was noted that one project that fell in the middle range was actually being asked to pay more of a match than the higher dollar projects -

the tiered scale is good but needs refining. After discussion to make the scale most equitable the following was decided, and will be used as a guideline for future, similar projects.

Updated tiered scale::

<b>Total project cost</b>	<b>Landowner out of pocket for labor</b>
\$0-\$20,000	100%
\$20,001 - \$40,000	40%
\$40,001 - \$60,000	30%
\$60,001 and up	25%

Doug moved to approve Taylor, J. Kawchack and VanMatre (as amended with the new tiered scale). Nick seconded. Motion passed unanimously

Nick moved that CFCD will purchase Sagebrush seed to be added at 5% rate in the Fall, location determined by applicator and project team, to Taylor, VanMatre and J. Kawchack, up to a cost of \$10,000. Doug seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Steve asked that the budget and project documents be updated to reflect these final numbers.

**Next Monthly Meeting:** Tuesday, April 14th, 2026 at 4:00 PM

**Adjourn:** Doug moved to adjourn the meeting, Nick seconded. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned at 6:08 PM