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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

February 9, 2026

YCCD Supervisors Present: Margaret Lenz, Ron Richards (phone), Sonya Shaw, Darrell Smith, & Chester Zwirn

Supervisors Absent: None

Ex officio Members: Daniel Palic, NRCS

Guests Present: TJ Tisdale, CACD Eastern Watershed Technician

Staff Present: Tanya Fell, Shirley Deason, and Rafael Trejo

Call to Order:

President Lenz declared a quorum present and convened the meeting of the Yuma County Conservation District at 3:00 p.m. at the Wray NRCS Conference Room.

Update to Mileage Calendar:

Updates were made by each board member to the mileage calendar.

Approval of Agenda:

There were no additions or corrections to the agenda. Approval of the agenda was made on a motion by Supervisor Shaw. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously.

Approval of Previous Month's Minutes:

Supervisor Smith moved to approve the January 13, 2026, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Shaw and carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Financial Statement and Pay Bills: District Manager Fell presented the monthly financials. Supervisor Shaw moved to accept the financial report and pay the February bills. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously. The current bills paid are:

- Employee Payroll
- Wray Gazette
- Wray Print Shop
- ECSDD - plaques

NRCS Report:

Daniel Palic gave the NRCS report saying the Wray Dam reports had been corrected, discussed critical vacancies and NRCS programs.

OLD BUSINESS:

Grants & Updates: Due to time constraints, District Manager Fell gave updates on only the following grants that had significant changes since the previous board meeting:

- **Bonny Grazing Project:** Three grant applications have been submitted to fund the project at the Bonny Reservoir – Demonstration Grant, HPP Grant and the Colorado Water Plan Grant. No additional information was provided.
- **CSCB 50/50 Matching Grant 2026:** The Conservation District was awarded a \$50,000 CSCB 50/50 Matching Grant for 2026 to support the installation of water tanks, pipelines, solar pumps, and wireless tank monitoring devices. These improvements will benefit the producers within both the Yuma Conservation District and the Yuma County Conservation District.

A motion was made by Supervisor Shaw to approve the 2026 Matching Grant applications for Darwin Benton, Ronald Blach, Jamie Deterding, Kelly Deterding, Tyra Drager, Gaylord Meikelburg, Newtrumil LLC, RLS Ranch LLC, Jake Rockwell, Larry Smith, Juston Strand, and to pend the application submitted by Aaron Waitman until further information could be gathered to determine whether the proposed project met NRCS guidelines. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Zwirn and carried unanimously.

Subsequently, the Aaron Waitman project was discussed with Justin Stephen with NRCS. It was determined that the project meets NRCS guidelines, and the grant application was approved.

- **CSCB Supplemental Matching Grant 2025:** The Yuma Conservation District, under the administration of the Yuma County Conservation District, has been awarded a \$50,000 grant to support tree restoration efforts. No additional information was provided.
- **Restore Colorado Grant 2024 -NFWF:** \$320,000 grant request for Rejuvra for all of Yuma County: The Conservation District has received an invoice from Aero Applicators totaling \$45,690.59. The Conservation District has received payment from landowners for their \$15.00 per acre cost-share. The Conservation District has submitted an invoice for the remainder to NFWF and is still awaiting reimbursement.

Due to the federal government shutdown, the Conservation District requested and received an extension until December 31, 2026, to complete the project:

- **Mule Deer Foundation Grant - MDF:** The Conservation District has \$10,000 remaining from the \$20,000 grant with an additional \$22,500 available for projects in 2026. No additional information was provided.
- **Demonstration Grant (Cheatgrass)-CACD/NRCS:** The Conservation District has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$10,000 for Cheatgrass Control Test Plots. The project will be started in the Spring with the assistance of ENVU. No additional information was provided.
- **Climate Resiliency Grant-Co. Dept of Ag:** The Conservation District has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$30,000 for living snow fences. A conference call was held on February 3, 2026, giving information about the program.

T.J. Tisdale, Eastern Watershed Technician for the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD), joined the meeting at 4:00 p.m. He provided a brief introduction and explained how he can

assist with securing and managing grants, tracking and engaging in relevant legislation, and supporting the development and advancement of conservation resolutions.

Upcoming Grant Opportunities: Due to time constraints, District Manager Fell gave updates only on the following grant opportunities with significant changes since the previous meeting:

- **NRCS Locally Led Targeted Conservation Project:** A locally led Targeted Conservation Project Proposal for fiscal year 2026 was submitted by the Yuma County Conservation District in the amount of \$500,000 for Cheatgrass Control, which would encompass Yuma County, Phillips County and Sedgwick County. No additional information was provided.
- **Demonstration Grant #2 – CACD/NRCS:** The grant application in the amount of \$10,000 for Virtual Fence, Portable Corral System & Water Structure at Bonny Reservoir has been approved.
- **Habitat Partnership Program - CPW:** The application has been submitted in the amount of \$50,555 for virtual fence, and water structure at Bonny Reservoir. No additional information was provided.
- **Restore Colorado Grant – NFWF:** The application has been submitted in the amount of \$349,242.77 for a watershed wide grant for cheatgrass control. No additional information was provided.
- **Friends of NACD - NACD:** The grant application in the amount of \$2,500 for the “Garden in a Box” project was denied.
- **Colorado Water Plan Grants - CWCB:** The application has been submitted in the amount of \$112,500 for virtual fence, portable corral system and water structure at Bonny Reservoir. No additional information was provided.
- **Technical Assistance Grant- NACD:** This grant would fund a dedicated employee position to provide technical services on behalf of the district. The application has been submitted in the \$121,037.50 Awards are expected to be announced in March 2026. No additional information was provided.
- **Soil Health and Optimizing Water Grants – Colorado Department of Ag:** The grant has been submitted in the amount of \$50,000 for an educational project for 5th – 8th grade students. No additional information was provided.
- **Specialty Crop Block Grant Program:** The Colorado Department of Agriculture announced a Specialty Crop Block Grant Program with awards up to \$50,000. The Conservation District will not apply and will instead focus on other funding opportunities.

District Vehicle - Door Signs:

District Conservation Technician Trejo obtained a quote From Wrayberry Graphics of \$125 for a 16-20” decal with installation to be placed on the Conservation District pickup. A motion was made by Supervisor Zwirn to approve the purchase and installation of a decal from Wrayberry Graphics. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously.

Leadership Training Reschedule:

A rescheduled date for leadership training presented by Stephanie Scott has not yet been determined.

Workshops:

- **Estate/Succession Plan Workshop:** The Conservation District discussed hosting an estate and succession planning workshop targeted toward younger producers. District Manager Fell contacted CSU Extension Specialist Jeffrey Tranel to inquire about potential dates, and April 8, 2026, was identified as an available option. However, due to tree sales activities and incoming inventory scheduled during that timeframe, the Conservation District decided to postpone the workshop until mid-November or early December.
- **Pesticide Applicator Workshop:** The Conservation District has scheduled a pesticide applicator workshop for March 10, 2026.
- **Landowner Dam Easement Education Workshop:** The Board discussed the need to hold a workshop for landowners near the dams to emphasize the importance of keeping these areas clear of brush to ensure water flow is not impeded during significant rain events. The workshop is tentatively planned for June.
- **Irrigation Workshop:** The Conservation District discussed the possibility of hosting an irrigation workshop.

Host CSCB Solar & Agrivoltaics tour for the Northeast Region:

District Manager Fell will follow up with Jordan Macknick (NREL) and Jeff Risley (Executive Director, Renewable Energy Farmers of America) about serving as speakers for an Agrivoltaics workshop.

Wray Dam Inspections:

The Conservation District has received the Engineer's Inspection Reports for the Wray Dams following the site visit conducted on October 30, 2025, by Dam Safety Chief John Batka, along with the corrected dam inspection report for dam #1. The Conservation District will need to request an updated Emergency Action Plan from the City of Wray.

Colorado State Unemployment Tax:

The issue with the incorrect Colorado Unemployment Insurance Tax rate has been resolved. Premier Accounting is requesting a refund for the amount overpaid due to the incorrect rate.

Tree Sale:

The 2026 Tree Sale is ongoing. The Conservation District has been advertising on Facebook and WIX.

High Plains No-Till Conference:

District Manager Fell and District Conservation Technician (DCT) Trejo attended the High Plains No-Till Conference on February 3 – 4, 2026. Both provided brief reports on the workshops they attended. Supervisor Richards also attended the conference and gave a brief report.

NACD Conference:

District Manager Fell will attend the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Annual Meeting to be held in San Antonio, Texas, February 15–19, 2026. The Colorado State Conservation Board has agreed to provide \$1500 in assistance to support attendance at the conference with the Colorado Conservation District Employees Association providing \$500 in assistance.

Republican River Watershed Association Spring Meeting:

The Spring Meeting of the Republican River Watershed Association is scheduled for March 26, 2026, at Cheyenne Wells, CO. Supervisors are encouraged to attend the meeting.

Consolidation of Yuma County and Yuma Conservation Districts:

Supervisors and District Manager Fell plan to attend the Yuma Conservation District Annual Meeting on February 10, 2026, to discuss the possibility of consolidation with their Board.

Conservation District Signs:

The Conservation District has tabled the purchase of conservation district signs pending a decision by the Yuma County Conservation District and Yuma Conservation District regarding whether the two districts will combine.

Camp Rocky:

The flyer for 2026 Camp Rocky was reviewed.

Farmers Market:

The Board reviewed the emails sent and received by Supervisor Shaw regarding the potential hosting of a farmer's market. As discussed in the correspondence, not all cities and counties adopt the optional exemption for food intended for home consumption. For example, while a dozen ears of corn would be exempt from state sales tax, the seller would still be required to collect the 2.50% City of Wray sales tax and remit it on the special event return, assuming the event takes place within city limits.

Additionally, as the event organizer of the farmer's market, the Conservation District would be required to submit a report listing all participating vendors and inform each seller of the applicable taxes and tax rates for retail sales made at the event.

After consideration, the Conservation District determined that it does not have the time or sufficient knowledge of sales tax laws to feel comfortable hosting the event. It was suggested that Jackie Seyler or Shelby Rockwell with The Space in Wray be contacted to determine if they would be interested in organizing the farmer's market, with the Conservation District offering assistance as needed.

2026 Annual Meeting:

The annual meeting will be held later this evening at the Cliff Theater in Wray. The meeting will include a screening of *Kiss the Ground*, presentation of awards to poster contest winners, and recognition of the District's Conservationists of the Year.

NEW BUSINESS:

High Plains Community Beekeepers Sponsorship:

Supervisor Zwirn gave a brief presentation on the High Plains Community Beekeepers Association and the activities in which the organization is involved. A motion was made by Supervisor Shaw to approve the annual sponsorship of \$250 to the High Plains Community Beekeepers Association. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously, with Supervisor Zwirn abstaining.

The board discussed adding a link to the Conservation District's website directing the public to register for Bee Check.

December 17, 2025, Emergency Management Update:

The Board reviewed the December 17, 2025, Extreme Wind Event and Wildfires Recovery Newsletter received from Yuma County Emergency Management Agency.

Press Releases:

The Board reviewed the following press releases:

- 2026 Annual Meeting with Film Screening
- 2025 Youth Poster Contest Winners
- YCCD Receives Partnership Award at CWMA Winter Training
- Time to Order your Trees, Shrubs and Drip Supplies

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Supervisor Smith to dispense with the executive session. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Shaw and carried unanimously.

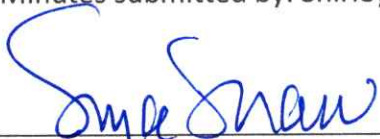
ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Supervisor Shaw to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously with President Lenz adjourning the meeting at 5:02 p.m.

Next Meeting:

The next Yuma County Conservation District meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2026, at 9:30 a.m., if Stepanie Scott is available for Leadership Training. Otherwise, the meeting will begin at 5:00 p.m. and will be held in the NRCS conference room in Wray.

Minutes submitted by: Shirley Deason, Office Assistant



Sonya Shaw, Secretary/Treasurer



Date