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# BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

## November 5, 2025

YCCD Supervisors Present: Margaret Lenz, Darrell Smith, Sonya Shaw & Chester Zwirn

Supervisors Absent: Ron Richards

Ex officio Members: None

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 1:05 p.m. at the Lenz residence.

### **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 Zwirn moved to approve the October 14, 2025, meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith 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 November bills. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously. The current bills paid are:

- Employee Payroll
- Plains Communications
- NACD - Dues
- Alyse Wenstrom – 50/50 Matching Grant
- Full House LLP – 50/50 Matching Grant

**Cash Flow Needs:** The Board discussed current and anticipated cash flow needs. A motion was made by Supervisor Smith to transfer \$7,500.00 from the NOW account held at Wray State Bank to the general fund held at First Pioneer National Bank. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Zwirn and carried

unanimously. Certificate of Deposit #8708 held at Wray State Bank is maturing November 22, 2025. Renewal rates were not available at the time of the meeting.

**Preliminary 2026 Budget/Plan of Work:** The Board reviewed and discussed the 2026 draft budget. The Budget Hearing has been scheduled for December 3, 2025, at 11:00 a.m.

## **NRCS Report:**

Due to the ongoing federal government shutdown, no reports were available from NRCS.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Grants & Updates:** District Manager Fell gave updates on the following grants:

- **Bonny Grazing Project:** District Manager Fell has prepared a draft grant request for CPW Habitat Partnership Program. Clarification of ownership of property purchased using grant funds was discussed.
- **Restore Colorado Grant 2024 -NFWF:** \$320,000 grant request for Rejuvra for all of Yuma County: On October 3, 2025, the Conservation District received notice that, due to the federal government shutdown, all work under NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) authority was to cease immediately. Subsequently, on October 15, 2025, the District was informed that grant-related expenses may resume, provided total expenditure does not exceed \$146,279.00. This is because the grant award includes funding from sources other than NRCS, which remain unaffected by the shutdown. The Conservation District requested reimbursement in the amount of \$75,690.91. A preliminary list of producers who may want spraying for cheatgrass control in the coming year was compiled.
- **CSCB 50/50 Matching Grant 2025:** Due to the federal government shutdown, several projects that need inspection and certification by NRCS are still awaiting completion.
- **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. District Manager Fell and District Conservation Technician (DCT) Trejo have been actively engaging with local producers to gather information on the specific needs for tree replacement, including weed barrier materials and drip irrigation components and mapping of the properties.
- **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 2025.
- **CSCB 50/50 Matching Grant 2026:** \$50,000 grant to be used for Water Tanks, Pipelines, Solar Pumps, and Wireless Tank Monitoring Devices benefiting producers in the Yuma Conservation District and the Yuma County Conservation District. There is currently a waiting list of interested producers. Producer applications should be available towards the end of December.

**Upcoming Grant Opportunities:** District Manager Fell gave updates on the following grant opportunities:

- **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 further information is available due to the federal government shutdown.
- **Conservation Partners Program - NFWF:** The application has been submitted for \$ 287,660. This grant would be for staff funding for Habitat Enhancement on Grazing Land or Soil Health Practices on Cropland. Awards will be announced in December 2025.
- **District Conservation Technician (DCT) Application Renewal - CSCB:** The application has been submitted. The Conservation District applied for a renewal of DCT funding for Rafale Trejo in the amount of \$46,142.
- **Demonstration Grant #1 – CACD/NRCS:** The application has been submitted in the amount of \$10,000 for Cheatgrass Control Test Plots.
- **Demonstration Grant #2 – CACD/NRCS:** The Conservation District intends to apply for \$10,000 for Virtual Fence, Portable Corral System & Water Structure at Bonny Reservoir.
- **Habitat Partnership Program - CPW:** District Manager Fell has prepared a draft grant request for CPW Habitat Partnership Program. Clarification of ownership of property purchased using grant funds was discussed.
- **Restore Colorado Grant – NFWF:** The Conservation District intends to apply for a watershed wide grant for cheatgrass control. Applications are due November 10, 2025.
- **Climate Resiliency Grant – Colorado Department of Ag:** The Conservation District previously applied for funding through the Climate Resiliency Grant Program to support its Shelterbelt Tree Restoration Project. Building on the lessons learned from the prior application, the Conservation District intends to reapply for \$30,000 in the new round of available funding. Applications are due November 24, 2025.
- **Friends of NACD - NACD:** The Conservation District intends to apply for \$2,500 for a "Garden in a Box" project. Applications are due November 30, 2025.
- **Colorado Water Plan Grants - CWCB:** The Conservation District is preparing to apply for grant assistance to support the Bonny Reservoir Project. The application will request funding for virtual fencing, a portable corral system, and water structure improvements. Applications are due by December 1, 2025. District Manager Fell is coordinating with Phil Brink, consulting coordinator of the Colorado Cattlemen's Ag Water Network (CCAWN), and Jackie Carano,

Regional Water Plan Grant Manager of the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) for assistance in completing the grant application.

- **Technical Assistance Grant- NACD:** This grant would fund a dedicated employee position to provide technical services on behalf of the district. Due to the federal government shutdown, applications have been extended to December 11, 2025.

### **District Vehicle - Door Signs:**

District Conservation Technician (DCT) Trejo was assigned to work on the project for the production and installation of a door decal for the Conservation District's pickup.

### **Workshops:**

District Manager Fell contacted Jeffrey Tranel, Extension Specialist, with Colorado State University concerning available dates in January or February to moderate an estate/succession planning workshop geared towards younger producers but has not received a response. District Manager Fell will follow up with Mr. Tranel on dates.

The Conservation District has scheduled a pesticide applicator workshop for March 10, 2026.

The supervisors also discussed the need to hold a workshop for landowners near the dams to emphasize the importance of keeping these areas clear of brush, ensuring that water flow is not impeded during significant rain events.

### **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.

### **Leadership Certificate:**

Stephanie Scott is scheduled for the Leadership training on January 13, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

### **Candidates for Conservationist of the Year:**

The Supervisors discussed presenting Brad Wingfield as the YCCD Conservationist of the Year – Farmer, and the Sandhill Bloomers as the YCCD Conservationist of the Year – Small Acreage at the 2026 Annual Meeting. The Conservation District would then forward both nominations to the Republican River Watershed Association (RRWA) for consideration in the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts Awards.

### **Wray Dam Inspections:**

Inspections of the Wray Dams were conducted on October 30, 2025, by John Batka, Dam Safety Chief along with Devin Ridnour, Deputy Water Commissioner for District 49 & 65 and Chris Kucera, Lead Republican Commissioner for District 49 & 65. They were accompanied by Supervisors Lenz and Richards, along with district staff Fell, Deason, and Trejo. City and County representatives in attendance included Nick Newton, Leroy Foster, and Jodi Brady. No major concerns were noted during

the inspection. Mr. Batka will forward recommendations for maintenance to both the City of Wray and the Conservation District.

**CACD 2025 Resource Committee Meetings – October 20<sup>th</sup> – October 24<sup>th</sup>:**

Sonya Shaw, appointee representing the RRWA for the CACD District Outlook & Finance Meeting, reported six resolutions were discussed with 2 passed.

Margaret Lenz, appointee representing the RRWA for the CACD Education and Outreach Resource Committee Meeting, reported there were no resolutions discussed. Information was given about Camp Rocky and Envirothon.

**CACD General Membership Meeting & Policy Session – November 5th:**

The Colorado Association of Conservation Districts General Membership Meeting & Policy Session will be held via Zoom at 6:30 p.m., following this meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Colorado State Unemployment Tax:**

The Supervisors reviewed email correspondence from Premier Accounting to the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) regarding the Conservation District's Colorado State Unemployment Tax Account. When the District changed from non-contributory to contributory status in 2024, CDLE assigned a new account to the Conservation District. Premier Accounting has requested that all reports submitted in 2024, and the first half of 2025 be transferred to the new account.

Additionally, a letter dated August 25, 2025, from CDLE incorrectly identifies the Conservation District as a 501(c)(3) organization. Premier Accounting believes that when the new account was created, the NAICS code may not have been entered correctly. Sabrina Fonte of Premier Accounting will continue to monitor the situation and keep the Conservation District informed on the status of the account.

**Computer for District Conservation Technician (DCT):**

Due to the federal government shutdown, DCT Trejo has not had access to a computer to complete work for the Conservation District. DCT Trejo will obtain plans/pricing information for a computer tablet.

**District Vehicle – Running Boards:**

DCT Trejo was assigned to obtain pricing information, including installation costs, for adding running boards to the Conservation District's pickup.

**Colorado Open Records Act/Colorado Open Meetings Law Procedures Review:**

The Board reviewed key provisions of Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) and the Colorado Open Meetings Law (COML) to ensure compliance with state transparency requirements.

**Colorado State Conservation Board (CSCB):**

Margaret Lenz was the sole nominee to represent the Republican River Watershed Association on the Colorado State Conservation Board. As an uncontested candidate, she will continue her service with a second four-year term beginning January 1, 2026.

**Day after Thanksgiving:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Shaw to approve giving staff the Friday after Thanksgiving off with pay. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously.

**Press Release – Poster Contest:**

The press release for the 2025 poster contest was reviewed.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

A motion was made by Supervisor Zwirn to dispense with the executive session. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Smith and carried unanimously. It was noted that an executive session will be scheduled for the next regular meeting pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f) for the purpose of discussing personnel matters.

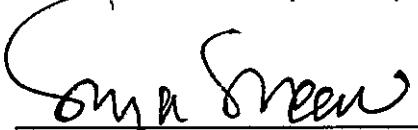
**ADJOURNMENT:**

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 5:20 p.m.

**Next Meeting:**

The next YCCD meeting has been scheduled for December 3, 2025, at 9:30 a.m. with the Budget Hearing scheduled for 11:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the NRCS conference room in Wray.

Minutes submitted by: Shirley Deason, Office Assistant

  
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Sonya Shaw, Secretary/Treasurer

12/31/25  
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Date