

Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District
Meeting of the Board of Directors
May 13, 2026

The monthly meeting of the Center of Colorado Water Conservancy District was held on Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at the main meeting room of the district offices located at 548 Front Street in Fairplay. Lisa McVicker, Board Chairman, called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM. The members present in the office were Chris Fuller, Lynne Buchanan, Lisa McVicker, Wallie Weld and Craig Steinmetz. Nola Knudsen, Administrative Manager and Lisa Brown, Operation's Manager were present in the office. David Shohet, legal counsel, was present via teleconference.

Also present was Cyndy Weld, patron and Esther Duke from Coalitions and Collaboratives (CoCo), Luke Cherney, Director of Forestry Colorado for Stewardship West, Audrey Ek-Psomas Partnership Specialist with Coalition and Collaboratives, and Matt Ashley from Aurora Water.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

1.1 Chris Fuller made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Wallie Weld seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

1.2 Wallie Weld moved to approve the April minutes as presented. Craig Steinmetz seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

2.1 Presentation of 2026 Grant Applications

a. Coalitions and Collaboratives: Lisa McVicker shared is on the Board of Co-Co and will recuse herself from voting. Esther Duke, Chief Operations Officer with Coalitions and Collaboratives is present to talk about the South Park Partnership and was joined virtually by her colleague Audrey Ek-Psomas who coordinates the partnership. Esther Duke presented slide presentation. She provided some background information about Co-Co. It is a national non-profit working with Stand-Up Launch and provide capacity building support and mentorship to community-based watershed coalitions, forestry collaboratives and fire shed groups. Their organization grew out of an organization called Coalition of the Upper South Platte (CUSP). CUSP leadership said they were getting pulled away too much supporting communities outside the South Platte Water Shed. That was happening because community leaders and organizations throughout Colorado and nationwide were inspired by what the founding executive Director of CUSP, Carol Eukarius and staff were accomplishing with post wildfire recovery and pre-fire mitigation work. Carol and Jonathon Bruno, Operations Officer for CUSP formed a new organization to work in tandem with CUSP and other organizations that were doing this work and in partnership with the US Forest Service to provide capacity building support and to organizations throughout the state and nationwide, looking to do something similar to what CUSP had accomplished in their local watershed. Due to this history, Park County remained an important landscape for Co-Co and we are deeply invested in supporting work in these communities. When the Pike National Forest leadership approached us about running a stake holder identification and scoping of interest to stand up a larger landscape, Forest and Watership Health Collaborative that included Park County we were all in. We launched the results of that

work, the Central Colorado Forest Collaborative in 2024 and that would complement to the No-Co fire shed that was working to the northern Colorado partners there who were working across the wild fire crisis strategy area along the front range. There was a lot of interest in building a similar large landscape effort in the southern half of this fire shed so that we could bring in larger pools of funding and work across boundaries of that large landscape scale. The reason it is so important is because when you look at the landscape on the front range, which was identified as one of those wild fire crisis strategy landscapes, it was one of ten landscapes that was identified nationwide by the forest Service as the most critical for investment in wildfire mitigation both because of the level of wildfire risk and the highly valued resources and assets and the community impact that would transpire if you had a catastrophic fire in this fire shed. The CCFC mission is to create resilient landscapes, water sheds and communities through collaborative cross-boundary fuel and forest health projects. We facilitated the Stand Up and Launch of that large landscape project. CCFC large landscape collaborative is made up of three partnerships: the South Park partnership, Upper South Platte partnership and Pikes Peak partnership. Proposal focuses on building capacity for the South Park partnership component of this large landscape collaborative. The focus is to take collaborative action on forest and watershed health and wildfire mitigation. We are at a critical turning point for this partnership. There was an initial investment by the Pikes San Isabelle National Forest which was the funding for the feasibility study and the standing up of this collaborative and constituent partnership and also an investment in a decision support tool and process that took place last year using Vibrant Planet which helps the group to all put in their priority and find their shared priorities and then look at wildfire risk and opportunity where the greatest return on investment for forest treatments was on this landscape. That was a large investment that the Forest Service made working with the CCFC to do the analysis, resulting in a map of prioritized areas in need of treatment. Each of the partnerships now have that prioritization and they have to go in and decide on projects among those prioritizations and they are going to work together to treat in those areas and connect to those adjacent areas where folks are already doing work. Based on that modeling, we are focusing on treating 14% of the South Park landscape over the next 15 years which would result in reduced wildfire hazard across the whole landscape of 21%. This is what came out of the Vibrant Planet analysis. We are integrating that along with other various planning tools that partners have used throughout the landscape to overlay those and figure out how we come together as a partnership and leverage opportunities we have on the landscape. The risk of catastrophic fire in a managed vs unmanaged forests was reviewed including potential degraded drinking water, unhealthy air quality and habitat impact for wildlife, higher erosion impacts in steep slope areas and potential for post fire erosion, flood, and debris flow risks. Looking at those impacts with nutrient depositions and impacts on reservoirs, and spinoffs such as the cost and impacts to community health.

The specific proposal request is for \$60,000. Lisa McVicker added the breakdown of other funding and in-kind matches. Audrey added the timeline component. The initial focus on finishing developing tools to finalize project selection and developing how we decide together which projects we would infuse the funding into. That will be creating a working group that wants to work on implementation. We would do some of these small projects, in the fall of this year. There would be a selection over the summer and do the work in the Fall. assessments on property. This partnership wants to start seeing work with private land owners and local communities. Audrey said she came on in her position in January and has been doing one-on-one

interviews with partners. She said there are a lot of ideas how this money can be used. Using it to get things moving and get some energy around how do we do this is good and looking at how can we benefit these communities. Ideally there will be an educational component. Will be a pilot of what a longer planning version might be. We understand this is a 2026 grant and will need to be used by December. Chris Fuller asked how will you work so we aren't duplicating efforts. She said CWCP is technical and she thinks with outreach and education this will be better for the public. Lisa McVicker said Co-Co is very much boots on the ground. They came into being because small communities needed immediate help.

b. Aurora Water – Matt Ashley joined. He participates in SPEB with Lisa Brown. Lisa has talked with Matt about this project. He is going to talk about an Airborne Snow Observatories (ASO) project. ASO is a non-profit company that does airborne observations, snowpack surveys based on LIDAR technologies. They fly a grid of flights across most of the state of Colorado and coordinate through the Colorado Water Conservation Board. The position was just made permanent that coordinates all of these flights cross the state and that maps out the snowpack. It is a high resolution, watershed-scale measurement of snow water equivalent, snow depth, and snow albedo (melt rate driver). One of the advantages of the airborne measurement is you get an actual real time measurement of the entire basin and you're not taking your best guess based on individual SNOTEL sites. Flying across the entire state can be very expensive. This is why the Colorado Water Conservation Board got involved and most partners who are funding these sites, operate in a big partnership and pull together a lot of funds and go after grants. This partnership covers the Upper South Platte basin and the Blue River basin which is the partnership between Aurora Water and Denver Water. The grant we have applied for to fund this round of flights is the Bureau of Reclamation Snow Water Supply Forecasting (SNOFO) Program grant and Aurora is acting as the fiscal agent. Our grants coordinator is Luz Lopez and Matt Ashley is the project manager. Denver Water has submitted this grant application in the past and has provided them some of the old information to put into this grant. The money we are requesting would be additional match on top of what Denver Water and Aurora have provided. Also, CWCB has provided funding for this project. The traditional all station-based snow monitoring is not as accurate and there is a lot of estimating and guessing going on. When you compare the data from that to the data that is put out from these airborne snow observation flights, it is incredibly more detailed and you can make a lot more informed water management decisions based on that, predicting the peak runoff, knowing when you are going to move water from place to place. The budget originally sent to CCWCD has since been updated. The first budget was submitted with the application while still working on it. The CWCB came in with more than expected which changed our calculus. Total project cost is \$1.4 million dollars. They have 54% of that covered with their match already. Matt is requesting \$50k over two years from CCWCD. This is for flights in 2027 and 2028. Matt asked if the best way to approach this was to request half this year and come back and request half next year or request a lower amount. They have plenty of match but we know CCWCD wants to be involved and have access to this data and be a valued project partner. Lisa Brown provided a letter of support. Chris Fuller asked when the first flights were; they were two years ago. Craig Steinmetz asked how many aircraft there was, where it was located and how many hours was in the air. Matt said there is one aircraft based out of California. He was unsure of hours in the air but said they are all day flights in a tight grid pattern. Chris Fuller said they have an app you can watch. Craig requested they use unleaded fuel.

c. Stewardship West – There are two applications from Luke Cherney. Luke expressed gratitude for funding previously provided. The two today are directly tied to two other grants funded. Kinnaird and Korthuis are two private land owners with land adjacent to the Glen Isle project. Luke received a phone call from Mike Kinnaird, a former neighbor of one of the landowners working with Glen Isle. Luke went over and spent an afternoon and looked at his property. He has another neighbor right next to him. Luke looked at both parcels and they have about 40 acres they are interested in treating and doing a forest health fuel reduction project. The request is \$100K. They have about 83% of that. One of the lessons they have learned from the Glen Isle project which is one of the first forays into working with personal land owners, is there is a necessity to have personnel funds up front to be able to work with these landowners and be able to take a conceptual project and really refine it and have a project that is ready to go. The implementation funding is a variety of sources that come from our USP partnership. We would be looking to get the rest of the match. The request would be to work with the private land owners, take the project in the conceptual phase and get it nailed down to exactly how many acres, what the treatment type is, and also to be able to pay for the staff time to get funding needed for implementation. We have seen higher costs and the cost of implementation has really gone up. It is to everyone's benefit to have a little higher investment in personnel time to get project fully developed. As it sits now, we have about 40 acres that would get treated. Seventeen percent is to pay the contractor for work. This ties into 1200 acres in Bailey area that has already been treated. There has been around 800-900 acres the forest service has treated. Now the Glen Isle piece with 136 acres, we have a really big plot of land that has been. This property is just upstream of that and up behind the high school. These two properties are right by where the Snaking Fire was in Bailey. Above these two properties were not burned and there is a lot of fuel loading in the air, north facing slopes with a lot of mixed conifer trees and a very high density of vegetation. Mike built his retirement home here and worked with some other partners from the Platte Canyon Fire Protection District. His home was built to be fire wise. He needs assistance to treat the land before his house with sits atop the hill. The grant would treat approximately 44 acres; the goal is to get it done by end of 2026. It may get pushed out to 2027 for implementation. Chris asked about the total acreage. Luke said approximately 150 acres but a portion was open area with Ponderosa that don't really require any treatment. The tasks are to work with both landowners to make sure we delineate precisely what needs to be treated. They go in with plots to determine the basal area and compare to historic areas treated in the past. They will determine what methodology would be used. They also want to implement some low-tech erosion control. Luke was asked what contribution the land owners were willing to make. He spoke with Mr. Kinnaird and he let Luke know he is on a fixed income and because of the investment he has made in his home he cannot make a cash contribution but is interested in make an in-kind contribution. Luke said regarding Bob Korthuis is to be determined.

Patron Cyndy Weld asked what is done with the beetle kill trees. Stewardship West has invested in property north of Antero Junction and a lot of the trees were put there. They are in talks about what to do with them. Luke said there aren't mills or a market for it. They are able to do this because they have no conifer trees in a mile. The literature shows the beetles can only fly about half a mile. The beetles are very small and they are looking to find out when the beetles emerge in Colorado.

The 2nd grant is the Webber Park project. Already 867 acres have been treated. CCWCD funded about 52 acres, we have a contractor on site. There is another 500 acres to the west of that. In their discussion with their forest service partners, their budget is not out yet but a good outlook for being able to do a phased approach rather than trying to treat that 500 acres all at once which would be also \$2 million dollars at current rates. We are looking at trying to treat 250 acres. We are requesting all implementation funds. This is a phase one and hope to chunk it into two pieces, utilize funds as match and leverage to get Forest Service to write the other check. Forest health. We are applying for two applications but we don't have expectations that you will fund both. It is intended to be a choose your own adventure here.

The board discussed thoughts of which of the grants they would consider funding. Lisa Lynne Buchanan said our budget for grants is 4% of Colotrust which would be approximately \$120,000 to \$150,000. Lisa McVicker looked at the Aurora request in which Matt said they could take \$25K now and \$25K next year. Board members were in favor of this. The Co-Co grant was discussed. Board members Chris Fuller said the two properties above river are congruent with work already done. She said having money to plan is so incredibly important. She believes the purpose is good, their work has proven itself. Chris realizes they are in the planning stage, but when looking at the cost per acre, it is about double with the Forest Service is supporting right now at over \$7,000 per acre. She thinks the price is high but the purpose is really good. Lynne Buchanan agrees an in-kind donation to doing the work for the landowner is important. The landowner should have skin in the game. If we give them the money now without all the detail work, would they have skin in the game as a private owner is one of her concerns. The homeowner may not be experienced in the work needed. Lisa McVicker said to remember these are 2026 grants. She thinks the project for Webber Park is ready to hit the ground whereas the private owner was to be determined. David Shohet said he felt the private owner was premature and did not have enough for the board to make a decision for a grant; could make contingent on blanks that have not been filled in yet. The Webber Park project is already mobilized. The start date is September 26, 2026 for Webber Park. Chris Fuller moves to approve a \$60K grant to Co-Co, a \$60K grant to Stewardship West and a \$25K grant to Aurora. Aurora can apply for another grant next year when they know more. Lisa Brown watched flight tracker last year. She said they fly from a very high elevation and doesn't believe it is a propeller plane. David questioned which years the \$25K was being granted to Aurora. Lynne Buchanan said the present \$25K grant is for 2026. Wallie Weld seconded and the motion carried unanimously with Lisa McVicker recusing herself on the Co-Co grant.

2.2 Discuss additional Scholarship Application

Lisa McVicker reviewed that all scholarships that came in were approved at the last meeting. We have one more that came in of a very impressive young man that goes to Summit High School. Lisa Brown said he will attend Mines Academy for the first year where he already has a number of college credits and will be able to complete his Associates degree in the first year. He will then transfer to the School of Mines. He has been accepted in an internship with a plastics recycling company working with Breck Create in Breckenridge where they turn recycled plastics into functional materials. Lisa McVicker moves to offer a \$2500 scholarship to Eric McLean. Wallie Weld seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Water Law Class: The new proposed date for the water law class is August 8, 2026.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Nola Knudsen addressed some issues regarding the 548 building. Nola reminded the board there is a need to repair the drain system exiting the female bathroom to the street. Several months ago, Agent Drain came to the building and provided a video of where the break occurred in the pipeline. At that time, the town would not allow digging until Spring. Agent Drain's estimate is 8-10 hours to complete, cost between \$6,000 to \$7,500. It is possible a third man will be needed. The estimate included a description of all his equipment and he will provide another video showing the job completion. We also need the concrete to be removed and replaced with the appropriate color and stamp. A company out of Denver, HPE met with Nola and reviewed the area to be removed and replaced. This company did the stamped concrete for the town on 5th street. Their estimate was broken down with Hammer rental, air compressor, disposal of the concrete, materials, labor for a total of \$5,050. Made a motion to authorize up to \$14,000 for the repair of the pipeline and cement work as needed. Lynne Buchanan seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Nola Knudsen reminded Wallie Weld and Craig Steinmetz to prepare their letters to the Judge for reinstatement as Directors.

Nola spoke with Aysha Berlin who is the individual that has painted the mural scenes in town. Aysha suggested starting on the side facing Main Street with some mountains and a stream that will following on around the building to the back side of the building facing the neighbor that laid the asphalt that damaged the building. Her quote is approximately \$7,000 that includes all materials and labor. She researched the amount of paint on stucco for her estimate. She is estimating time to be 80 to 90 hours at \$60 per hour. Aysha will be invited to the June meeting to discuss the project.

2.1 Administrator's Report: Nola Knudsen reviewed the check register with the Board. All board members were sent a listing of the bills paid via bill pay along with the minutes from the last meeting. The invoices totaled \$32,049.20. The total cash assets after the payment of bills are \$3,267,003.46.

2.2 Treasurer's Report: Lynne Buchanan reviewed the deposit activity. Deposited into TBK Bank from Summit Dental Office and Knudsen Counseling were rents of \$1,000 each and Upper South Platte utilities of \$314.03. Interest received was \$5.39. The Colotrust interest was \$9,482.84 and property taxes received were \$187,691.89.

2.3 Invoices and Warrants: Chris Fuller moved to approve the invoices and warrants as Presented through email. Wallie Weld seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT

Smelter Pipeline Reservoir (SPR):

• I visited the SPR at least 4 times in April. On April 2, a gage height of 8.35' was

observed, for 21.81 AF in storage. An exchange of approximately 6 AF of Sessions Ditch credits stored in Spinney Mountain Reservoir was coordinated, which took care of OTR obligations and filled the SPR to 25.93 AF. This occurred from April 2- April 5. On May 1, there was 25.43 AF in storage.

- The beaver problem has increased exponentially with low flows this spring. The culverts in the access road have been compromised, with much work needed to keep the road from flooding. I engaged a local contractor to help. He came out with a mini track hoe and cleared and assessed the culvert integrity. Work that was done on May 3 was undone by last week. I just received an invoice for that work. He has given me quotes for replacing the aging (50+ year) culverts with a better road solution.

Chatfield Reallocation Project (CRP):

- I attended the CRMC meeting on April 28th.
 - o The draft budget was presented. Cost per share is projected at \$130. Last year was \$152.
 - o There is a vacancy on the Board of Directors due to Rick McLoud's retirement. The new representative from Highlands Ranch is Julie Tinetti. A special members' meeting will be held in person on June 24th to elect a new director. This will precede the regular CRMC Board meeting scheduled for that day. It is unclear if there may be an additional director vacancy, which will be addressed at that meeting.
 - o A proposal to clean up tree debris and stumps by MarkIt Forestry was approved by the Board. Funding for this operation will come from the reserve account. The operation may begin as early as June if conditions allow.
- Accounting through March reflects 115.84 AF on March 31.
- Matt Loose attended the OAC meeting on April 22nd on CCWCD's behalf.
 - o The OTR account is very low and DWR may begin to assess a pro-rata amount to the members to release.

James Tingle Reservoir (JTR)

- **Accounting was received through Mar 31. CCWCD had 46.92 AF in storage. 4.20 AF of stored Randall Ditch credits were released in March.**
- **A trade of stored Randall Ditch credits between CCWCD and HRW for 5.55 AF between James Tingle Reservoir and Chatfield Reallocation Project were arranged at the beginning of May. Case 05CW111, joint applicants.**
- **The Sessions Ditch delivery efficiency study is proceeding.**

South Platte Enhancement Board (SPEB):

- **I attended the April 15th meeting virtually.**
 - **DW reported that they anticipate Roberts Tunnel to continue to run for the foreseeable future. Stag 1 Drought Declaration has been implemented. A declaration of Stage 2 will depend on developing conditions.**
 - **Aurora Water had implemented Stage 1 Drought Declaration-aiming to conserve 20% of normal consumption.**
 - **A report was given by CPW on Aquatic Nuisance Species. I have obtained informative pamphlets for the public.**
 - **CPW reported that they will be available to help facilitate fish salvage.**

Snowpack Report:

- **Hoosier Pass still has a skiff of snow, about 2", which is 9%. We are just a little over a week past peak median SWE of about 17". All other sites are completely melted out, and about two weeks past peak median SWE of ~12" at Michigan and Buckskin Joe.**

CCWCD Website Issues:

- **The website has been functioning well. Updates have been made in a timely manner.**

Wild Horse Reservoir:

- **The next WHR Cooperating Agency meeting was just scheduled for May 21st, which I plan to attend. The focus of discussion will be the newly selected South site**

Kenosha Trout Club (KTC): No changes since last report.

Michigan Creek Restoration Plan (MCR): No changes since last report.

Bar Star Corporation (BSC): No changes since last report.
Indian Mountain Plan (IMP): No changes since last report.
Guffey-area Augmentation Plan (GAP): No changes since last report.
Division Two Delivery (DTD): No changes since last report.
Currant Creek Two (CCT): No changes since last report.

Lisa Brown mentioned the Smelter Pipeline Reservoir replacing the culverts. She said they are ancient and the one damaged a couple of years ago by the ice is completely crushed in with piping coming around it. She had an excavator come out, remove the beaver dams that were there. They have come back and filled them back in. She just received a bill from him for the work he did for approximately \$850.00. The excavator also provided Lisa Brown with three bids that ranged from \$24,000 up to \$34,000 for a 48" culvert. She ran it by Christine Mugele at W.W.Wheeler and she said a 48" would work based on expected flows through there. He wants to use HDPE which is a smooth double-walled high-density plastic that they are using at a lot of applications now. It is smooth on the inside as compared to corrugated that they can ram sticks in to. He also has ideas of using a much more robust beaver deceiver upstream. Lisa DeVicker asked if the excavator will have to repair this again and again until full replacement. Lisa Brown said the runoff is so low it is probably not a huge concern. She can remove the dams by hand and hold off the repair. Lisa Brown thinks a big culvert is the way of handling this and it will be addressed in the June meeting.

Lisa Brown talked to a reporter from the Flume that had made some inaccurate statement. Overall, it was favorable. Lisa Brown had corrections made in the electronic copy.

OLD BUSINESS

5.1 Update on 2025 Grant Report

5.2 CCWCD Water Law Class – New Date Proposed August 8, 2026. Ideas for a different name includes Your Water Your Rights; Wells, Streams, and Water Rights.

5.3 2026 Open House: Lynne Buchanan sent out a schedule for the open house. The Bristlecone bakery in Alma will make the cookies. Wallie Weld moved to limit expenses to \$5K. Craig Steinmentz seconded and carried unanimously.

5.4 Discuss extension of Dental Office Lease. David Shohet said the current lease extends until August of 2027. They are looking for another 2-3 term lease. The board will review that in 2027.

UPDATE ON LEGAL ISSUES

Provided at the following joint meeting.

PATRON COMMENTS

None

DIRECTOR'S ISSUES

Craig Steinmetz said CCWCD was created for the benefit of people of Park County. Our accumulation of wealth should be discussed. Lisa McVicker said that is for our very next meeting. Lisa Brown said she has an opportunity mentioned to her. Someone is building a reservoir on the Middle Fork just south of town on a ranch with 500-600 acres. The owner is interested in possible expanding the size, and he is looking at approximately 20af or even having another reservoir. David Shohet said we are going to have a report the end of this year that will suggest ways to spend the money on projects that are targets and goals that we have wanted to accomplish.

ADJOURN

Wallie Weld moved to adjourn. Chris Fuller seconded and the Board adjourned at 2:02pm.