

Colorado League of RC&D Councils  
Annual Meeting – Alamosa, Colorado  
May 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 2008

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**Members present –**

Colorado Big Country – Frank Kenny

East Central –

Northeast – Nellie Zion

Painted Sky – Linda Matthews

Sangre de Christo – Bill Ault

San Juan - Bob Frye, Roy Horvath

San Luis Valley – Harold Anderson, Frank Maestas, Bob Crowder, J.D. Alexander,  
Mary Hopkins.

Southeast

Others present – Kristi Gay new East Central Fed Coord; Doug Ramsey - San Juan Fed Coord; Jim Mietz – San Luis Valley Fed Coord; Carol Gurule SLV Admin Asst; Tawny Becker, SLV Grant Writer; Maria Valdez, SLV Solar Coord; Rich Mullaney, Northeast fed Coord; Paul Van Ryzin – Painted Sky new Fed Coord; Tim Macklin, Southeast Fed Coord; Kristi Gay, new East Central Fed Coord; Jane Wustrow S de C Fed Coord.

**Call to Order** – Bob Frye, CO League Vice President called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM Gary Ensign was unable to attend.

Roy Horvath's reports on the League Strategic Plan and web site development were deferred until the League Business Meeting scheduled for the next day, Friday 5-9-08.

**Individual RC&D Highlights**

**Colorado Big Country** started off. Frank Kenny related that CBC currently has an 8 Council members who bring diverse skills to bear on projects. CBC recently hired an Executive Director, Cindy George, who has considerable non-profit experience. CBC's 2008 Plan of Work is addressing numerous issues including: Noxious weed mgt; Sage Grouse habitat protection; Biomass reduction (Grand County pine beetle killed trees); Hayden, CO Park Project; Library educational materials; Scholarships; and a Partnership grant Program.

**San Luis Valley** – Harold Anderson mentioned that SLV has 9 Council members. Their project work includes: Solar (PV) powered irrigation, Weed mgt; Wild fire protection; Alamosa river restoration; Willow Creek Project (mine pollution); Seed Park business venture. Jim Mietz added that the CO Governor's Energy Office has a program for 50-50 matching funds for renewable projects to cities, nonprofits and Rural Energy COOPs (REC's). Harold also said that CO State has mandated to all utilities that a certain percentage of power comes from renewables.

**Painted Sky** – Paul Van Ryzin said that PS has an Energy Efficiency & Renewables Project and is looking to the USDARD for a Rural Business Enterprise Grant. Also the CO Governor's Energy Office is a good source of loan funding (Joni Mattranga) for (1) energy efficiency, (2) geothermal, (3) solar hot water. These 3 technologies are viewed as offering the best pay-back for the investment. REC's have federal \$ for RE to dole out to customers. PS is seeking a Conservation Innovation Grant for a project to remove Tamarisk infestation using the beetle (bioremediation) from the Palisade CO Insectory. PS employs a grant writer on a fee-for-services basis for other

organizations. (orgs must make up front payments before writer begins). Their grant writer is a retired guy who charges (only) \$28/hour.

**Sangre de Christo** – Bill Ault mentioned some of their projects: Southern CO Tourism Heritage – regional tourism promotion & job growth; applied to USDARD for funds to hire a consultant on Nation Heritage Sites; renewable energy – organized a seminar for the local agricultural industry; organized the Upper Arkansas Forum (120 attendees); Upper Arkansas Weed Mgt Coop.

**Northeast** – Rich Mullaney (Fed Coord due to retire in June) spoke of: projects in RE focused on small landowners; wind power; weed control; carbon sequestration (a complicated system of buying and selling “carbon credits”. Rich plans to consult to this sector upon retirement); Republican River Riparian project. Rich handed out their 2007 Summary, a color brochure.

**East Central** – Kristi Gay (new Fed Coord) described some of their projects: Wind Development Workshop; a farmer’s market where you can order in advance ( ?) – check this out at [www.highplainsfood.org](http://www.highplainsfood.org) ; Republican River Weed Mgt Coop; Carbon credit Workshop; day care facility help for Town of Hugo; Bio-fuels Conservation Innovation Grant.

**San Juan** - Bob Frye reported 19 open projects: Animas river Stakeholders Group (mine run-off clean up); water quality projects; GPS survey of irrigation ditches (using seasonal employees & charging the ditch co’s for this); Bob also handed out copies of their new tri-fold brochure and 2007 Annual Report.

**Southeast** – No presentation was made.

**Fundraising training** – El Pomar Foundation conducted this training for a total of 4 hours. All attendees were given copies of the MS Power Point slides. The presentation was very good and all Councils came away with some new thoughts on fund raising.

## **CO League Annual Business Meeting**

**Call to Order** – Bob Frye, League V.P., called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM on Friday 5/9/08. (No word from Gary Ensign, President, about attending).

**Review of Minutes** –Bob reported that the minutes of the 4/29/08 League conference call had not been distributed (they were sent to Gary on 5/1/08 by the League Secretary, Frank Kenny), so we were unable to approve them.

**Financial Report** – In the absence of Gail Pitzer, Bob handed out several exhibits done by the Treasurer, Gail Pitzer: two exhibits showing “the cash flow from 5/1/07 through 5/1/08. and 5 pages of “balance sheet detail”. Gail was not present to explain the exhibits, but it appeared that the net asset balance as of 5/1/08 was \$10,029. Frank Kenny mentioned to Bob that there was no mention of a receivable from the State Office for \$15,950, that had been mentioned by Randy Randall at several League meetings during the past year. Frank said that he had brought this up several times during meetings in the past year and the \$15,950 was still not mentioned in the financial reports, even as a foot note. As meager as the assets of the League reported at \$10,029 are, the \$15,950 would bring the total assets to about \$26,000 and present a much different picture to the league members as to the financial viability / survivability of the League. Bob seemed to

agree that with the turnover of League members, especially with Randy going on active duty, the need for the League to recover these funds could be lost, if we don't keep it as an action item in our financial reports. The League's agreement with the State Office for this amount expires 12-31-08.

**Old Business:**

**Report on Strategic Plan implementation** –Roy Horvath related that each of the 8 Councils in Colorado now had a “point person” who would help to implement the League’s Strategic Plan. These council reps would relay information between the Councils and the League for feed back. Roy pointed out that the RC&D Councils are in a prime position to approach local and regional governments explaining that RC&D Councils can play a role in their activities. Roy is working on a proposal to submit to the League Executive Committee regarding fund raising. Maybe we could use the consultants ICA as facilitators, or maybe someone from the NRCS.

Roy would like to focus on a Renewable Energy project as a way to bind the councils together and pool their resources & experience. The El Pomar foundation fund raising presentation is very appropriate and gives us ideas on how to make the Plan work. All the Councils have a common goal which is to “make things better for folks” in the State of Colorado. Council volunteers need to step up and contribute to the “group capacity”.

Frank Kenny asked Roy to send an E-Mail to each of the 8 Council reps, asking them to poll their Council members to find out what they would like to make our membership in the League more valuable.

Kristi Gay asked if all councils had Admin Assistants and was told no. She then asked where Admin Assts can go to learn how to do things properly for the Councils – we need a handbook. Also Kristi thought it would be a good thing if all Admin Assts could have a conference call periodically.

**League Web Site** – Roy has also taken on the task of restarting the League web site. He has two bids in from web developers and hopes to have the site restored in 6 to 8 weeks.

**Rural Community Development Initiative** – Paul Van Ryzin made a brief presentation on the RCDI Program which is part of the USDARD. The RCDI is set up to provide technical assistance to intermediary organizations to develop their capacity to take on housing, facility and economic development projects in rural areas. There are over \$6 million in grant funds in this program available to intermediary orgs and have a 50-50 matching requirement. The intermediary orgs can be nonprofits, low-income communities or federally recognized tribes. Paul said he was willing to take the lead on this. He also mentioned that Renewable Energy is also a hot issue for RCDI. Bob Frye agreed that this is something that the League should do.

**CO League By Laws** – Bob asked all attendees to reread the revised version of the By Laws which were handed out. Nellie Zion made a motion to accept the By Laws and frank Kenny seconded and the motion passed.

**Mini Grants** – Rich Mullaney reminded the group that the State Conservationist’s Office had \$30,000 in funds to be distributed to the Councils via the League. Randy Randall sent out grant application guidelines last month and the deadline for the applications was 5/16/08. The State Office will work with the League officers to review the applications and make the awards. A maximum award of \$7,000 to any one Council is one of the rules. The applications are to be reviewed on 5/19/08.

## **New Business**

**Federal Coordinator Vacancies** – With Rich retiring from the Northeast Council and Wayne Jipsen moving to the Northwest Area Conservationist's job from Colorado Big Country, Randy has said that these two Fed Coord positions will be filled first.

**League Secretary Vacancy** – Frank Kenny's resignation will be effective after this Annual Meeting so we need to work at filling this position before our next meeting. Bob asked all Councils to consider taking on this League officer's job. Bob also reminded us that League Board Officers have unique opportunities to vote on important issues that shape the future of the CO League.

**Western Conference of RC&Ds** – Nellie Zion said that the next conference would be in Spearfish S.D. in 2009. Also the National Conference of RC&D's would be in Albuquerque N.M. in June 2009. Nellie also related that during the recent Leadership Forum in Washington D.C., which she attended, visits to offices of 10 congressmen demonstrated that there is a lot of support for the RC&D Program. Especially Ken Salazar's office. Ken is a big supporter of thr RC&Ds. Also Congressmen like to see Councils achieve the "Circle of Diamonds"  
Part of the training at the Leadership Forum was about learning to work with the media.

On the last item of New Business, Bob asked the league to approve buying a number of copies of the "little red book" on fund raising recommended by El Pomar. Frank made a motion to spend \$100 and Nellie seconded and the motion carried.

## **Adjournment** –

As there was no additional business, Bob Frye adjourned the meeting at 2:20 PM.