

**COLORADO NATURAL AREAS COUNCIL**  
**AGENDA ITEM**  
**MEETING DATE: June 26, 2007**

<b>Topic:</b> CNAP and Rare Plant Conservation
<b>Action Requested:</b> None
<b>Prepared by:</b> Brian Kurznel

**BACKGROUND**

This item is a short review of the current role that CNAP is playing in rare plant conservation efforts in Colorado. CNAP staff is making efforts to play more of a leadership role in the monitoring and protection of rare and endangered plants around the state. CNAP is working primarily through collaborative projects that engage and mobilize government agencies, conservation organizations, volunteers and private landowners.

A summary of current projects include:

- **Leading a 'Rare Plant Monitoring Steward' training** in cooperation with the Denver Botanic Gardens and the Colorado Natural Heritage Program. This training has prepared 17 volunteers around Colorado to collect quantitative data on endangered plants. This data will inform adaptive management from the BLM and provide essential information to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service on the status of endangered plants.
- **Playing an active role in the statewide Rare Plant Conservation Initiative.** Through collaboration with The Nature Conservancy and other conservation groups, CNAP is taking an active role in addressing broader strategies and conservation actions for Colorado's rare plants.
- **Working closely with Shell Oil and Occidental Petroleum** to protect listed plant species on private lands in the Piceance Basin.
- **Coordinating a Management Advisory Committee for Wacker Ranch.** The model project that led to the protection of an endangered species is continuing as CNAP and TNC work on determining appropriate and exemplar management strategies.

Potential future projects include:

- **Submitting a proposal with Great Outdoors Colorado** to assist in funding rare plant conservation projects.
- Working with The Nature Conservancy on a **joint proposal to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** to fund cooperative protection of listed plants on private property.
- Approaching the Colorado Oil & Gas Commission, Department of Natural Resources Executive Team and West Slope Oil Producers with information and ideas for collaboration.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Discuss the role the CNAP is playing in plant conservation and provide recommendations for future work.



## COLORADO NATURAL AREAS COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

June 26, 2007 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.  
White Buffalo West Restaurant  
Battlement Mesa, CO

**\*\*\* On Wednesday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, the Council will visit Pyramid Rock Natural Area**

*Please call the Colorado Natural Areas Program (303-866-3203 x 301) for more information,  
or call the following cell phones if you need additional guidance:*

*Brian Kurzel: 303-548-8180*

*Rob Billerbeck: (303) 548-6169*

5:30 Check in at the Super 8 in Parachute

6:30 Meet at the White Buffalo Restaurant in Battlement Mesa

### **Reports from Staff**

7:00 CNAP and Rare Plant Conservation

7:30 Update on CNAP Activities

- Status of new Designations/Registrations
- CNAP on Television
- Wacker Ranch Media Event
- Natural Area visits

8:00 **Items from the Council**

**Discussion:** August and Fall Council Meetings

**Discussion:** Recognition of John Masson and Dennis Brinker

**Decision:** Approval of April 6, 2007 minutes

**Questions and comments from the Public and Council**

8:30 Adjourn

### **Attachments:**

- Agenda Item – CNAP and Rare Plant Conservation
- Agenda Item – Update on CNAP Activities
- Minutes of April 6, 2007 CNAC meeting

**COLORADO NATURAL AREAS COUNCIL  
AGENDA ITEM**

**MEETING DATE: June 26, 2007**

<b>Topic:</b> Update on CNAP Activities
<b>Action Requested:</b> Discussion – no action.
<b>Prepared by:</b> Brian Kurzel

**BACKGROUND**

Staff would like to update the Council on several ongoing projects that are moving forward:

- **Status of new Designations/Registrations:** Staff will discuss the current status of Boulder Mountain Parks and Wacker Ranch Natural Areas, as well as potential designations of more Occidental property on Mount Callahan in Garfield County and Shell Oil property at Duck Creek in Rio Blanco County.
- **CNAP on Television:** Rabbit Valley Natural Area will be highlighted on Colorado Getaways on Channel 4. CNAP staff highlighted the role of CNAP in protecting and interpreting the site.
- **Wacker Ranch Media Event:** On Friday, July 13, CNAP, TNC and other collaborators will highlight the success story of Wacker Ranch in Montrose County. This event will attempt to gather media attention for this unique cooperative project, and will culminate in a ‘buckwheat pancake breakfast’.
- **Natural Area visits:** CNAP staff has been diligently visiting Designated (15), Registered (3) and Identified (3) Natural Areas. A brief review of field visits and key contacts will be given.
- **Other projects:** State Parks Staff visitation, future Friends of CNAP Events, etc.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Discuss current staff projects. Give recommendations concerning the focus of staff time in upcoming months.

**Colorado Natural Areas Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Breckenridge, CO**  
**April 6, 2006**

**Council (Present):** John Masson, Dr. Tom Ready, Dennis Brinker, Kathy Yates, Tom Burke, Lee Shropshire

**Council (Absent):** Tyler Nifong

**CNAP FTE Staff:** Rob Billerbeck, Brian Kurzel

**CNAP seasonals:** Marcia Rickey, Chris Wootten

**Others:** Chris Wanner, City of Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks

Meeting called to order at 12:30pm

**1. Update on CNAP Activities:**

**JM:** Thanks for coming.

**WACKER RANCH**

**RB:** We own Wacker Ranch, TNC will manage it for 25 yrs. We would eventually like to seek an endowment. Purchased with USFWS \$160,000, TNC donation of ~\$45,000, Lottery cash approved by the Parks Board \$13,000.

**JM:** \$13,000 was critical piece.

**RB:** We had a press release and we will have a summer visit with the Wackers for photo op.

**JM:** Please give council press release.

**RB:** We fundraised to pay back the money to Parks and are still raising money to help pay back TNC's contribution.

**BK:** We gave talks, CONPS matched, big anonymous donor, Center for Native Ecosystem had a website for credit card donations.

**JM:** Did the Friends help?

**RB:** Friends played a role in the fund-raising. However, we need to build up Friends in a specific way so they can play more of a role. It should be noted that three-way (agency) deals are hard...we learned from this issue during this project; we will apply for other USWFS species acquisition grants to be a big player in the Colorado conservation world with a small staff, but we may do so in a different fashion.

**JM:** What do you mean "these types of deals"?

**RB:** We will likely not own in fee in the future in the way we now own Wacker (CNAP and Parks). Future idea: own half of an easement with a local land trust owning the other half; this will double the protection. Rare Plant Conservation Initiative is a good accomplishment, uniting many groups; Wacker was a cornerstone for the Rare Plant Conservation Initiative.

**JM:** What was GOCO's stance? Should it have been in forefront?

**RB:** GOCO money was not available for this project, since it is only for buffer acquisitions adjacent to State Parks. Lottery money was used to purchase the option for the Wacker Ranch. At Dinosaur Ridge, Lottery funds were also used to stabilize tracks. Also, every sign in front of Dinosaur Ridge will have a CNAP logo.

## COFFEE TABLE BOOK

**RB:** Coffee table book may have a forward by, and may be published by John Fielder. Most of the photos will be taken by Frank Weston, who has been a volunteer steward with CNAP. He is taking photos at State Parks and Natural Areas. This will help with book money and book sales.

**LS:** How much?

**RB:** Book will break even but we will aim to own photo rights for marketing purposes. We made a sensitivity matrix to determine which sites would be best to photograph; we are producing promotional flyers and we will use the photos in the flyers. We would also like to use these photos on web site, etc.

**JM:** Is there a preamble in book?

**RB:** Book will have a foreword, intro/history; 2009 is 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Parks and 30th anniversary of CNAP. Harris Sherman was old DNR director when CNAP was created; we may give a slide show to Harris Sherman and ask him to "write" intro to book. JM or any council members can come on April 26 to HS presentation.

**KY:** What about Friends?

**RB:** Friends of CNAP may work within the Parks Foundation.

**KY:** There is a tax benefit if found within the Foundation.

**RB:** We will aim to publish book through Westcliffe Publishing.

**JM:** How much will all of this cost?

**RB:** \$40,000-\$60,000 depending on copies. There will be at least 150 photos/text narrative photos, geology full page photos with small captions.

**LS:** Hardcover?

**RB:** Yes, and price will be between \$30-\$40 dollars.

**JM:** How does the Sensitivity Matrix fit into all of this?

**RB:** The Sensitivity Matrix was used to determine what goes in the book. Structure will be three chapters: plants, then wildlife (such as Lesser Prairie Chicken), then geology. Text will be inter-dispersed throughout. Mary Taylor Young, the author, has worked with Fielder, and has done other books. She will submit draft to us and to state experts, such as Lee for geology fact-checking. Historic Colorado people stories will also be included and will appeal to wider audiences. Booked will be priced below \$50; we will give some to the media, other select people for gift books.

**JM:** Make sure you give to right people.

**RB:** Upfront cost is difficult therefore we will do a limited first edition. The second edition is cheaper, and we have already begun negotiating.

**LS:** Maybe have some copies that are signed by council members.

**KY:** Charge a special price for signed copies.

**RB:** We could give out gifts as signed copies.

**KY:** I suggest working on presale now.

**RB:** This fall, we hope to support the book's funding with a fundraiser with Friends. We may use some money that is raised for a Wacker endowment. John Fielder is interested in fundraiser; we may look to TNC for advice and indirect assistance with fundraising.

## FRIENDS:

**RB:** We will seek a subfund for CNAP Friends under the Parks Foundation. The Foundation loved the idea of a coffee table book. Rob will shoot for 2% overhead taken by the Foundation for donations to Friends.

**KY:** 4% overhead is realistic.

**RB:** We would need to determine how to control the spending of Friends money. One idea is to have 1 Council member, 1 representative from the Parks Foundation, and 1 person from Friends on a board the controls the funding.

**JM:** Why include 1 Parks Foundation member??

**RB:** This could be negotiable.

**JM:** As a caveat, we may want to get authorization of full council for spending this funding, and a representative from CNAC reports to the Friends.

**RB:** Parks Foundation will want to review all spending of this funding to make sure it complies with 501c3 status. The vision for spending donations to Friends of CNAP is: 1) protect existing Natural Areas with protection project or by building endowments 2) purchase easements or fee titles for new Natural Areas, 3) Outreach for CNAP.

**BK:** Friends is recruiting in newsletter; they need more than Lynn & Linda.

## PARTNERSHIPS

**RB:** I have met with some people at TNC to forge a closer relationship. In particular, Chris Pague, who built CNHP from 3 to 30 people. CNHP used to be part of CNAP. The question remains, should CNHP be in state government? TNC may be interested in cooperating with CNAP to designate more areas on TNC land; CNAP may also have an opportunity to help TNC with monitoring on their properties. Our Volunteer Steward program has been noticed.

CNHP is not funded very well. I am also meeting with the CNHP director, Renee Rondeau, to see if we can help with their long range plans.

**JM:** How does CNAP benefit from working with TNC?

**RB:** They can help bring us in as a big player. TNC may also help us work more closely with other land trusts around the state; many of which we have already begun to partner with.

**KY:** Give examples?

**RB:** We are starting to work with the Black Canyon land trust, Upper Arkansas land trust, Cattlemans land trust. We could do high quality conservation work with private landowners if they don't want easements. There are strong monetary incentives for easements now, but that could change in the future. Partnering with a land trust on private Natural Areas could provide the best protection.

**BK:** We are modeling our partnerships and efforts after our Outreach Plan approved by the Council! As a big part of this, we are part of a Rare Plant Conservation Initiative (RPCI), which is a very important group in CO. This group was spawned from the rare plant technical committee, which is made up of state experts on rare plants. The RPCI uses the Wacker Property as one of its templates for success. There are two major pieces of RPCI: 1) Rob is involved with the strategy team, which focuses on the broad picture and funding issues; 2) Brian is on the action team, which focuses on implementing conservation action on the ground. A goal for the action team is to identify properties on private land with endangered plants and work with landowners to buy easements next year. Since CNAP is the only state agency working on rare plants, we can apply for USFWS funding to help with this effort, like we did for Wacker. We may apply for \$1 million.

**JM:** If a private landowner with rare plants doesn't care about conservation, what to do?

**RB:** Move on to other areas. There are other landowners that may be interested. For example: T. Wright Dickerson supports CNHP, who identified a rare plant on his property. He worked with them to keep the plant from being listed.

**JM:** Be cautious that no one in the group is overzealous, you may alienate people if you are too much of an advocate.

**BK:** This is the advantage of working with such a great coalition of people all over the state: land trusts or other agencies usually have some contacts with landowners, so we can work with allies and focus on potential successful areas.

**KY:** Did CNAP initiate Rare Plant Conservation Initiative?

**RB:** No, but Wacker project helped get it off the ground.

**RB:** The RPCI grant proposal to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation used Wacker as a successful example.

## PUEBLO STATE PARK AND WILDLIFE AREAS

**BK:** At Pueblo State Park and Pueblo SWA, there are many rare plants found only in the Arkansas River valley. SWA has the highest concentration of 4-7 species found only in Colorado. This is an important time to discuss these plants since there is lots of attention from TNC, politicians, etc. Parks staff is working on finalizing the Park boundary with help from DOW, etc. We received a list of management prescriptions for the SWA from the DOW (Ed & Gretchen). We spoke with Al Trujillo, and to address his initial concerns we met with State Parks regional staff to discuss designation on Lake Pueblo State Park. Mike French discussed first steps.

**TR:** BOR is planning on expanding the reservoir. This may flood the adjacent canyons.

**RB:** This is a concern, but it is unlikely to flood all the plant habitat. Should we consider it a done deal?

**TR:** Very likely. The timeline is about 20 years. They will add to the existing dam.

**JM:** What is the dam's age?

**TR:** Built in 1979.

**LS:** Would it be possible to de-designate if the dam ~~is~~ drowned some plant habitat?

**RB:** Yes it can be done: The only site ever de-designated is the Prairie Conservation Center after E-470 was built through it.

**RB:** We are pursuing the potential of designation on state parks by first getting a better survey of the plants through CNHP. If possible, we would like the DOW to chip in for the survey. Mike French has said he would speak with Dan Prenzlöw to start discussions. However, we will go very slowly & carefully.

**TB:** Why would an SWA designate a Natural Area?

**RB:** Designation carries no teeth, it is a big carrot. We can help with advice on rare plants, noxious weeds, etc.; we can provide monitoring of the area through a Volunteer Steward; and we can provide funding for protection projects if needed. Designation calls attention to the importance of the area, not only for wildlife, but for plant species of global significance.

**TB:** A concern is that SWAs are supported by sportsman's \$\$\$. We can't create an impediment to the SWA. The DOW can do all those things, and there will be reluctance if there is any threat to sportsman.

**RB:** A similar situation occurs on State Parks, where managers don't want recreation hindered. We accommodate the needs of the landowner, and work within current policies to assure no greater restrictions.

**BK:** We have received the list of uses and management prescriptions from Gretchen & Ed so we can assure DOW that designation will not inhibit any management activities. Any agreement will be based on the needs of the DOW; CNAP would just like to recognize the value of the natural resources and help where possible.

**RB:** We have Natural Areas on DOW, SLB, & State Parks land. This calls attention to the great condition of these areas. Our staff is good at plants, and we can be of assistance. For example, at Chalk Bluffs, where wind development was proposed, our staff mapped rare plants and made wind development compatible with raptors and rare plants. We found ways to mitigate but not prohibit uses proposed by the SLB.

**TB:** What does Bruce McColsky say about SWA designation at Pueblo?

**RB:** We haven't had an audience with him... can you help us set that up?

**JM:** This is a good property for DOW, and it would fit well with CNAP.

**TB:** There is a concern with the word 'protect' since this may indicate less flexibility to manage as they see fit.

**JM:** An example is invasive plants that destroy wildlife food and plants. CNAP can help with this.

**TB:** DOW tech is on the property to address these issues.

**JM:** With designation, you get more people, more time, and more money to work on the problem.

**RB:** We offer rare plant experience. We are cautious and approach problems without an enforcement attitude. That would be political suicide. What we could do is provide help if needed/requested. For

example, spraying advice to techs. With designation, there are 3 more full-time state staff people (Rob, Elizabeth, Brian) to help with working on problems.

**TB:** Will talk to Bruce.

**KY:** Does Tom feel like he has enough information to talk to Bruce?

**TB:** Yes; I will approach this as a topic idea. Make sure designation fits with sportsmen.

**JM:** Also, if DOW coordinates with CNAP, it would be good to tell legislature about collaboration.

**TR:** CNAP has no personal property infringements.

**KY:** AOD is written with land owner.

**TB:** CNAP has not had a NA designation on CDOW land in last seven years, so nobody at DOW knows about it. Need preparation.

**RB:** I'd like to talk to commission and Bruce.

**TB:** This issue eventually goes to Prenzlöw. CNAP should also talk to him.

**RB:** We have talked to DOW, and Mike French is currently making an effort to talk to Prenzlöw.

#### 5 MINUTE BREAK

#### MOUNT CALLAHAN

**BK:** CNAP worked with Occidental oil shale in the summer of 2006 to survey Parachute penstemon. The populations are doing very well in the Natural Area, and we visited another population outside of the boundary. There are 4 populations in the world, all in Garfield County, and 3 on Occidental land. In 1987, we designated a NA with Occidental for the plant. We met last month in Grand Junction to discuss expansion of the NA to include the Saddle population. We could also attach best management protections for the plant that may allow for some O&G development and plant protection. Media could be brought in to give positive PR.

**KY:** Why not have Occidental underwrite part of the coffee table book?

**RB:** We are discussing this possibility.

**TB:** Right now might be a good time to work with O&G companies.

**RB:** The fact that Occidental is moving from oil shale to Oil and Gas is good, since oil shale would be worse for the plant. There is the possibility of O&G development, but mitigations can be put in place to secure the populations.

**LS:** Would oil shale be done by in situ mining?

**JM:** Mount Callahan is a toughplace for oil shale mining. The peninsula with shale showing on both sides will not be easy to mine. They are moving it out of the oil shale division.

**BK:** We will give comments to the council for review; we would like to send these to the landmen and PR people for Occidental.

**LS:** Don't forget the geologic values of this area.

**RB:** We hope that this work is tip of iceberg...

#### 2007 FIELD CALENDAR

**BK:** The council is invited to look over the calendar and let staff know if they have any interest in attending a field trip. There is potential for a June 25 or 26 council meeting, maybe with the media and Occidental at Mt. Callahan in Garfield county. We will schedule meeting by email. We can also have an August 10 council meeting at Geneva basin iron fens, where Clear Creek County is having issues with OHV's.

**RB:** We could bring legislators or GOCO.

#### ITEMS FROM THE COUNCIL

#### WACKER RANCH DESIGNATION

**JM:** Motion to designate Wacker Ranch.

**DB:** Second.

All in Favor: 6          All Opposed: 0

#### STAUNTON REGISTRATION

**TR:** There is a bog leading to Elk Falls that is spectacular.

**JM:** Motion to register Staunton.

**TR:** Second.

All in Favor: 6          All Opposed: 0

#### BOULDER MOUNTAIN PARK DESIGNATION

**BK:** Review the values and AOD.

**JM:** Hunting is needed in Boulder Mountain Park. I believe in hunting, and CNAP should work with City of Boulder OSMP and ask them to reconsider allowing hunting in the area.

**TB:** The Wildlife Commission is meeting with city councils and county commissions about hunting. OSMP understands land management and has been discussing the issue.

**BK:** There are three parts of the AOD's that are under final review from the Boulder City Attorney: 1) wording from the City Charter about goals of the area, 2) wording including the OSMP Board, and 3) final wording concerning hunting on the property. OSMP is hyper-aware of this issue and wants to make sure that the wording is appropriate.

**CW:** We are aware of the hunting issue, and have been involved in Front Range mountain lion studies.

**JM:** Mule deer, elk contribute to mountain lion problem.

**CW:** OSMP gets 6 million visits a year, so hunting on the property is a challenge to implement.

**JM:** We should hold off the vote if the hunting wording is not finalized.

**DB:** Would staff be ok with holding-off on this designation?

**JM:** What will the final language from the City Attorney be in regards to hunting?

**BK:** It is likely this language would be altered slightly.

**JM:** Right now the language includes 'special wildlife cases'. This language would be acceptable.

**TB:** We should not sign the AOD if this clause is still in draft form.

**BK:** The vote is not for the exact wording on the AOD; it is for support of designation. This document would still need to be approved, and may be changed, by the Boulder County Commissioners and a public hearing.

**TR:** Parks Board will also have a chance to change the language, and must approve it.

**JM:** I would like to see the final hunting language before we vote. Motion to table vote until Council gets 'final' draft.

**DB:** Second.

All in Favor: 6          All Opposed: 0

#### APPROVE MINUTES

Page 15 correction: change page 15 to Tom Ready.

**DB:** Motion to approve corrections.

**JM:** Second.

All in Favor: 6          All Opposed: 0

**KY:** Get meeting minutes out soon.

**KY:** I would like to discuss the Dinosaur Ridge money.

**RB:** \$6000 spent on stabilizing dino tracks. Freeze-thaw has been causing damage, and tracks could suffer. Rebar and foam fill-ins were recently added. CNAP will put our logos on all signs and have a big CNAP sign in front on main tracks, as well as at the visitors center.

**KY:** Where did the money come from?

**RB:** Lottery money. Normally GOCO, but we used Lottery instead. We will highlight the use of Lottery money. GOCO money grants go directly to state parks.

**KY:** Who authorizes these funds? What's the history?

**RB:** In the past, \$30,000 for protection projects, \$30,000 for research. We have a request to restore this funding. GOCO money has recently been reduced by half from \$16 M to \$8 M. The money can be spent on Parks or Natural Areas. The money is not specifically protected for CNAP.

**JM:** We can't forget about replacements on the Council that will be coming up at the end of June. We will need a new Chair, and Dennis is leaving as the SLB rep.

**RB:** We would like to have Dave Anderson back on council, and I will attend a SLB meeting to meet commissioners.

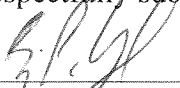
**TR:** It may be a good idea to move the vice chair up to chair.

**JM:** Motion to adjourn at 3pm.

**KY:** Second


Adjourned

Respectfully submitted:



Brian Kurzel for Marcia Rickey

Approved:



John Masson, Chair