

Grand Valley Audubon Board Meeting

March 10, 2022 11:30-1:45 Four Winds Coffee 1235 Bookcliff Ave

Present: Cary Atwood, Larry Collins, Logan Wagner, Pam Lauman, Chuck Hunt, Janet A. Gallenstein (Minutes), Nic Korte

Absent: Mike Campbell, Hunter Harmon, Meredith Walker

Guests: Dale Reece (Easement Deed Owner), Matt Reedy (Ducks Unlimited)

Welcome/Appreciation:

Many thanks to everyone for work done on KAFM radio, owl boxes, water ditch at preserve, bird walks, financials and programming. KUDOS to a great board and team members!

Financials: Larry

Larry reported we received our annual distribution of \$2700 from Western Colorado Community Foundation. Board voted unanimously to keep the distribution for expenditures. Currently we have \$68,924 in WCCF.

Minutes Approval: Janet

Minutes from November 2021 meeting were accepted.

Janet will contact Tina Wilson to have minutes posted on website for transparency and informational purposes.

2002 Dike Rd.Conservation Easement Dale Reece

Guest, Dale Reece, discussed how we can collaborate on clean up and signage of the piece of property along Dike Rd adjacent to the CO River that was long ago designated as a Conservation Easement in Grand Valley Audubon's care. There is a history of illegal camping, RV abandonments and littering. He would like our help in preventing more of that, yet allowing responsible public day use access.

Dale made the following suggestions upon which **Cary** will call a separate Board meeting to discuss:

Provide signage such as: No Camping. No Overnight Parking
Place barriers (cement pillars, rocks) alongside road to prevent parking
Collaborate with new owners of Ice Rink who also have similar problems
Set up fencing to prevent overnight camping

Cary provided copy of Easement Deed and the grantor, Dale Reece, is responsible for upkeep of the property. Audubon has no obligation for upkeep; however, this is an important piece of property and we want to be good stewards and neighbors.

Any agreement reached must be in writing. Cary suggested we use this piece of property for Earth Day cleanup. It was not clear if zoning allowed some overnight camping nor was it clear if property was covered by city vs county regulations.

Comments from Matt Reedy:

Matt has a lot of experience with conservation easements and advised unofficially that Dale is responsible for all upkeep. Read "Present Conditions Report". Audubon could send out a person to review the easement area and make sure the property owners maintain the property. Audubon's obligation is to verify that the property is maintained and can demand that the landowner maintain the property as per the easement. The land owner enjoys a significant tax break. NOTE: Our preserve north parcel IS also under a conservation easement. It was put in place because it was supposed to be a grow out pond for fish.

Wetlands Restoration & Funding Sources: Matt Reedy (Ducks Unlimited Biologist) Matt Reedy is our connection for funding for the preservation project at the Audubon property. Audubon has completed phase 1 of the plan. Matt thinks we did really well on Phase 1 based on the types of plants he sees growing in the managed area.

Phase 2

The Board and Matt discussed what funding was available for Phase 2:

Audubon has \$55,000 available from a grant.

Matt has secured a grant for \$150,000.

Matt provided a cost estimate of Phase 2 of \$205,000 for a contractor to do the work within the next 18 months. DU costs will be an additional \$25,000 to \$30,000 for their expertise.

Audubon needs to do more fund raising. Matt suggested **Cary** work with Denise to obtain additional grants. DU gets reimbursed based of the number acres of habitat which is preserved. **Cary** will email Matt that we have \$55,000 available immediately to dedicate to Phase 2. Matt will continue with funding that he can.

Phase 2 will include "Beaver Diverter" and fill in Traylor Pond. Per DU original plan we will fill in our deeper gravel pit ponds to create shallow ponds which will create seasonally shallow and deeper levels of water to encourage wetlands plant growth to increase waterfowl use of the ponds.

Audubon will need to provide fill dirt in order to fill in Traylor Pond and to create water conveyances. The west trail will be pushed into the cottonwoods on the east. Additional fill will come from the current parking lot and from what was left over from Phase 1. We need to source the fill from on site not offsite as fill and transport is expensive. We have approximately 15,000 cubic yards from Phase 1 and the current parking lot. DU thinks we will have enough fill for this project however, fill will settle and he does not know how much will settle and if we will need more fill due to compaction rates. Matt will get us as close to possible to our required water level that we want to achieve.

Nic advised there is a webinar Thursday 3/17/22 by Rivers Edge and Hutchins Water regarding a grant for \$10,000 they received for river projects. **Nic** will attend the webinar so that Audubon has a presence. Audubon wants to encourage habitat

restoration in addition to recreation opportunities. **Nic** will contact Abby with National Audubon.

Program Committee Report/Plans: Pam & Cmt (Chuck Hunt, Hunter Harmon)

CFO is having a fund raiser on 5/8/22 for CFO.

Spring Bird Count, Migratory Bird Day, and Grand Valley River Day are 5/14/22.

Nic is doing a brief presentation at the Collbran Public Library on 7/9/22. This is NOT a GVAS event. FYI only.

Friends and Neighbor Piece with Cary

Audubon Programs:

March	Larry/Spouse	Bird Feeding/Feeders Q&A
April	Meredith	Automated Apps
May	Brett	Brewer's Sparrow

Future Program:

Kevin Humphries, Ray Rickheard, Cley Ceiling are Falconers. **Pam** will make contacts. Paul Gray illustrator might be able to do a program.

Data entry needs to be streamlined for the Christmas and Spring Bird Counts. Members enjoy both count events but wonder what the data is being used for. We collect the data for Ebird and it would be easier for all count data to be counted and submitted on the Ebird App.

Cary suggested we do a fund raiser for our preserve project with the Spring Bird Count. Nic asked if it would be better for Audubon to ask membership for donations for the preserve project. *Nic volunteered to write up a summary once a scope is determined and after discussion with Denise and board agreement on the nature and timing of the fund raiser.* After discussion, it was decided to wait until the fall to do an event/fund raiser at Ramblevine Brewery where they create a new brew and call it a name representing the non profit. They hold an event to tap the new brew and the non profit receives a % of the sales.

March Program:

Hunter contacted the Presbyterian church and they agreed for us to use their room for an in person meeting. **Pam** will contact Bob Wilson to see which members have the 2 keys for the church. Committee wants to continue have in person meetings throughout the summer.

Early Arrival: 6:30
Program; 7:00
Refreshments: after program

Pam will bring in bird books for sale and hold a raffle

Social Media Report: Logan

With a limited time available, Logan continues to try to increase membership on social media. Logan can post information from other media presentations but needs materials to post. Long articles with links are not successful.

Social Media Success:

Recaps of what's going on

Bird Location of the week

Bird of the week

Logan will post tips for attracting native species to your feeders.

Chapter Goals 2022:

Board Review

Board to email Cary with ideas. CT newsletter did a really good job on presenting their goals.

Spring Newsletter/April

Cary

We did not have a winter newsletter. **Board members** need to submit articles to Tina Wilson by mid April for the Spring newsletter. Article suggestions: Bird walks, winter/spring bird counts, Nic's feature, advertise events etc

CMU Extension Garden Demo Day 3/26/22 7:30am

Susan Carter CMU extension office asked if Audubon wanted to set up a table with brochures etc at their Garden Demo Day. **Chuck** will contact Susan at 970-244-1850 to talk with about setting up a table.

Planting Cottonwood Trees at the Preserve:

Pam will contact a native plant specialist. Cottonwood trees increase diversity.

GVAS will examine carefully future plant removal as it has been documented that long eared owls as well as cuckoos have lost habitat due to the reduction of tamarisk killed by introduced beetles. Both birds have used tamarisk for nesting purposes.

Kentucky Blue Grass: Chuck

Chuck is interested in reducing the amount of Kentucky blue grass being planted and wants to talk to people who will know what can replace it in our area. Our local greenhouses do not carry good substitutes. We need to talk to legislators regarding laws and tax breaks to discourage water loving lawns. Some local covenants require grass.

Cary will email Chuck with a contact he can talk to who can give information on what can be planted in place of blue grass. **Nic** will also provide Chuck a contact. Jamie Wise may also have information.

Next Board Meeting:

Monday 4/18/22 5-6:30 Presbyterian Church
(prior to Audubon program meeting)

Meeting ended 1:45