

Audubon Colorado  
State Board Meeting Minutes  
September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
Cedar Creek Wind Farm  
Grover, Colorado

Attendees: Dave Balogh, Steve Bloom, Pam Butler, Carol DeStefanis, Martha Grewal, Bob Johnson, Baine Kerr, Bill Miller, Peggy Montano, SeEtta Moss, Gregg Sutherland, Jean Sutherland, Bob Turner

Staff: Gary Graham, Laurel Mattrey, Ken Strom

Meeting Start 10:20 AM

**Board Actions**

- **The June Board Meeting minutes were approved**
- **Jean Sutherland was elected to serve a second four-year term**
- **Bob Turner was elected to serve a second four-year term**
- **Voted to rename Audubon Center for Conservation Careers to the Audubon Program for Conservation Careers.**

**Welcome and President's Report**

Steve Bloom called the meeting to order at 10:20am. Steve introduced Pam Butler, our most recently added board member.

**Fort Collins Audubon Society Report**

Fort Collins Audubon Society reported that they are expanding to a wider audience. They are attending the Rocky Mountain Sustainability Fair and have prepared comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Glade Reservoir.

**Science and Conservation**

**Strategy #1: Grasslands and Grouse; Rivers of Birds Initiatives**

The Gunnison Sage-Grouse Monitoring Rendezvous was held in June, and was coordinated with the Bureau of Land Management. Two IBA Interns funded by a grant from Xcel Energy Foundation worked with Ken over the summer to enter more than 50 Important Bird Areas into the national database. The Colorado Birding Trail guide has been published by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (was handed out to board members) along with the Sage Grouse guide. Aggressive leasing of public lands to for oil & gas development continues; Audubon Colorado submitted a Letter of Protest against the oil & gas lease sale by BLM on nearly 73,000 acres of public lands on the Roan Plateau. SeEtta reported on the ongoing threat of oil & gas drilling at the Baca National Wildlife Refuge, the impacts of Coal Bed Methane development on water quality and stream flows, and her continuing participation in the Arkansas River Basin Roundtable. She also discussed the impact of Hurricane Ike on bird sanctuaries along the Texas coast, especially at High Island, and encouraged people to think about offering support to Houston Audubon for restoring the sanctuaries.

## **Public Policy and Advocacy: Colorado's Voice for Conservation**

### Strategy #3: Address Critical Federal and State Conservation Policy Issues

A Public Policy and Advocacy committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 9<sup>th</sup>. There is an open invitation to all board members to attend this meeting. Gary provided an update our work with the Oil & Gas Conservation Commission's work. Although not formally adopted until September 22-23, 2008, at the time of this report the highlights of the rules will be that an industry operator within a sensitive wildlife habitat such as an important grouse production area will have to consult with DOW on the permit application who will direct typically direct them to place only one well pad per square mile of land in the most productive habitats. It may be that the industry can opt out of the consultation by restricting up front their activity to only one well pad per section and they typically will not be able to drill within 0.6 mi of leks. Gary presented a map of sage grouse habitats across the state with drilling areas superimposed to show the extent of overlap and potential problems. A recent federal energy bill that was passed that included oil shale provisions that we do not support because the science is so poor and the process for public input inadequate. Ken gave an update on the Wind Energy Task Force meetings with the Division of Wildlife.

## **Chapters and Membership: Power to the People**

### Strategy #2: Conduct the Jake and Terry Hershey Audubon Pilot Outreach Program

Around 350 students have attended the successful science program at the Four-Mile Ranch. Gary is working on how to sustain the important work we do there. Ken has been working on an IBA assessment of the property.

### Strategy #3: Improve Communication and Strengthen Ties

Chapter Highlights: The Evergreen Audubon Society has been leading trips to the Bear Creek Valley IBA; the nature center has been very successful. Audubon Society of Greater Denver will lead birding trips to Costa Rica and Alaska this year. Carl Norbeck, Executive Director, is out on extended medical leave. The Education Director for Audubon Society of Greater Denver recently resigned. Boulder County Audubon Society is focusing on carbon reductions, and has been producing larger monthly programs with 80-100 people in attendance. Arkansas Valley Audubon Society is holding monthly programs and meetings. Fort Collins Audubon Society is hosting trips along the Poudre River.

## **Centers and Education: Creating a Culture of Conservation**

### Strategy #1: Audubon's Center for Conservation Careers

Gary gave an update on the status of the Audubon Center for Conservation Careers. We are pursuing a partnership with LendLease, which is the benchmark for continuing with the program. National Park Service has invited us to apply for Centennial Grants. Steve stated that the board needs to determine if staff should continue to focus on this effort, as it is using a lot of resources. The Board voted to change the name to the Audubon Program for Conservation Careers to reflect the current focus on programming rather than a physical center.

## **Meeting the Costs of Conservation**

### Strategy #1: Develop an aggressive fundraising plan and program

Annual revenue at the close of the fiscal year was \$498,111 and expenses were \$572,120, resulting in a budget deficit of \$74,009. Our ability to meet our budget was challenged by the lack of success with the ACCC. The FY09 budget was revised and we are now projecting \$620,421 in revenue and \$620,388 in expenses, which results in a projected surplus of \$33 for FY09.

## **Organizational Capacity**

### Strategy #3: Maintain and improve institutional and administrative systems

Gary led a review of the FY08 Strategic Plan performance evaluation. He then presented the National Audubon Society's strategic planning process and the FY10 Strategic Plan revisions. Both the staff and a subset of the board have met to create a proposal for changes to the Strategic Plan. Proposed changes include the addition of several new drivers - Global Warming, Colorado Energy Boom, Sagebrush Ecosystem Initiative, New NAS Goals and Benchmarks, and National Capital Campaign. Steve asked all board members to provide feedback on the revised FY10 Strategic goals to Gary no later than end of October. Discussion on the strategic plan ensued, and SeEtta volunteered to set up a Yahoo discussion group for the board members. Peggy recommended and the rest of the Board agreed that we pull out the strategic plan items for which we do not have a strong indication that funding will be available and is not one of our highest priorities.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup> and it was decided that we would pursue the possibilities of having a virtual meeting. Otherwise, the meeting will be held in the Denver metro area.