

Center of Excellence

Colorado: America's Best Land Conservation Community

Background Information for Commission Members March 3, 2011

What is the Center of Excellence?

- The creation of a long term program to be administered by CCLT dedicated to fostering excellence in the Colorado land conservation community. The program will be developed by a Commission. The Commission will:
 - o Have members from across the state.
 - o Represent public and private organizations.
 - o Include statewide organizations, regional organizations and the professional community which supports our work.
- The organization of the Commission is a joint venture of the Colorado Coalition of Land Trust and Colorado Conservation Trust.

What is the mission of the Center of Excellence?

To make the Colorado land conservation community the most professional and competent association of land conservation professionals in the United States.

Center of Excellence Overall Objectives

- The objectives of the Commission are to evaluate the practices of the Colorado land conservation community and recommend:
 - o Programs and practices to enhance our community's overall work;
 - o Steps to ensure organizations/individuals are competent fiduciaries;
 - o Means to improve the technical quality of easement documents;
 - o Programs to more comprehensively address our perpetuity obligations;
 - o Comprehensive and meaningful educational offerings;
 - o New tools to help organizations conduct their work more effectively and efficiently.

Why is the work of the Center of Excellence Commission important and necessary?

1. Continuous Improvement. Colorado is home to the most effective land conservation community in the country—but like any industry we have the professional obligation to strive for continuous improvement.

2. Achieving Excellence Together. As a community, we can—and should-- help each other achieve excellence. We have the same overall goals—conserving and protecting extraordinary Colorado landscapes.

3. Our Fiduciary Responsibility. The people of Colorado have provided our community with the most powerful land conservation tools in the nation—the conservation easement transferrable state tax credit and funding from the Colorado Lottery and Great Outdoors Colorado. Our community has a fiduciary responsibility to ensure these public funds achieve the maximum possible perpetual conservation benefits.

4. Funding. Conservation funding from historically supportive private and public sources is lessening. The competition for funds among states and organizations is intensifying. Colorado can enhance its chances of receiving at least its fair share of conservation funding by demonstrating a credible commitment to setting the national standard for excellence in land conservation.

5. Public Perception. Regrettably, past abuses of land conservation tools by non-conservation motivated promoters have created obstacles and perceptions detrimental to our work. By demonstrating an on-going dedication to excellence, our community can withstand the challenges created by past abuses.

6. Education. New professionals to land conservation, mid career professionals and veterans will all benefit from a rigorous Colorado focused and on-going education program. Colorado's reputation for conservation excellence will be enhanced if we organize the best state specific educational program for land conservation professionals in the nation.

7. Efficiency. Technology has aided nearly every industry become more effective and efficient. The decentralized nature of land conservation organizations (and the relatively small number of land conservation organizations) has impeded the customization of technology tools for our community. By working together, we may be able to create new tools which will aid both private land trusts and public open space programs.

How will the Center of Excellence perform its work?

Governance

a. The Center of Excellence (COE) is guided by a 27 person Commission. Commission members were recruited from across Colorado and represent small land trusts, regional trusts, statewide trusts, public open space agencies and representatives of the professional community which support land conservation. Kathleen Staks of GOCO and Hollis Glenn of the Division of Real Estate will sit on the Commission as ex-officio members. Commission members were appointed by the Board of Directors of CCLT and CCT.

b. Once developed, the programs of the Center of Excellence will be the on-going responsibility of CCLT.

c. Commission activities will be organized by a seven person Executive Committee. Commission members and members of the Executive Committee are identified in the attachment.

d. The Commission will be staffed by a full time employee. Key tasks of the staff person is to research topics generated by Commission activity; to organize all Commission business; to ensure excellent communications among Commission members and the land conservation community generally about Commission activity; and, organize and draft the recommendations generated by the Commission.

e. The Commission may form subcommittees if this it is believed this may be an effective way to examine subject areas in depth.

f. The full Commission will be charged with formulating recommendations. The Executive Committee will be responsible for taking the work of the full Commission and organizing it into a series of final recommendations for submittal to CCLT.

g. The policies adopted by the CCLT Board will be policy and practice guidelines to which CCLT members will be expected to adhere.

h. It is anticipated the Commission may generate recommendations directed to GOCO, DRE and COSA but all such recommendations must be authorized by the Board of CCLT.

Commission Work Process

i. It is the responsibility of the Commission to define the scope of its work and to identify the issues which it elects to address in order to achieve the overall objectives identified above.

j. The Commission will conduct an in-person inaugural meeting as part of the CCLT annual conference. The objective of this meeting is to answer questions about the Commission's mission, objectives and work process.

k. Conference calls and webinars will be scheduled following the inaugural meeting to provide all requested background information to Commission members.

l. A (beginning) full day (or two day) in-person working session run by a professional facilitator will be organized for April or May 2011. The goal of this session will be to identify and prioritize the critical issues for which the Commission will generate recommendations.

m. Recommendations for each priority topic will be researched and solutions debated and developed using conference calls and webinars. The Executive Committee will call for additional in-person meetings when it considers such a meeting (s) necessary.

n. A (final) full day (or two day) in-person session will be scheduled to allow the full Commission to debate and decide upon all final recommendations of the Commission.

o. The Commission will have approximately 16 months to conduct its work. (May 2011-in person meeting to set issues and priorities—September 2012 to review final recommendations to CCLT).

Center of Excellence

Commission Members

<i>Member</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Community</i>	<i>Region</i>
1 Beezley, Alan	law firm	law	Denver metro
2 Bleiberg, Rob	Mesa Land Trust	land trust	W. Slope
3 Boggs, Ryan	Legacy Land Trust	land trust	F. Range
4 Butler, Nancy	RiGHT	land trust	S.L. Valley
5 Campbell, Scott	Palmer Land Trust	land trust	F. Range
6 Cochran, Martha	Aspen Valley Land Trust	land trust	W. Slope
7 Fishbein, Nancy	The Nature Conservancy	national	state
8 Goehl, Lucy	Gunnison Rangeland	land trust	W.Slope
9 Holsinger, Kent	landowner	land owner	Nwest
10 Kelson, Ann	Division of Wildlife	State Gov	state
11 Mackie, Andrew	Land Trust of Upper Ark	land trust	Central
12 Ripley-Williams, Katherine	San Isabel Land Protection	land trust	Central
13 Shea, Kevin	appraiser	appraiser	F. Range
14 Steele, Ariel	Tax credit broker	broker	state
15 University	University representative	education	
16 West, Chris	CCALT	ag	state
17 Whisman, Janis	Boulder Co Parks and Open Space	county open space	F.Range
18 Will, Dale	Pitkin Co. Open Space and Trails	county open space	Pitken
<i>Ex Offico Leadership</i>			
19 Glenn, Hollis	DORA-DRE	State Gov	state
20 Staks, Kathleen	GOCO	GOCO	state
<i>Executive Committee</i>			
21 Katz, Juniper	Montezuma		
22 Kueter, Larry	LTA/law		
23 Meyer, Shannon	LTA		
24 Pike, Dan	Colorado Open Lands		
25 Rollins, Kerri	Larimer County		
26 Ross, Brian	CCT		
27 Swartout, John	CCLT		