

BOT Presentation 6/6/2022  
2021 Achievements and Look ahead to 2022

The Lyons Ecology Advisory Board did what all of us had to do in 2020 and 2021: adapt. In response to the pandemic, all EAB meetings kept to a virtual format until our revitalized in-person meeting in April 2022. Despite the loss of connectivity and the limited community outreach opportunities, the EAB still managed to keep its focus on protecting the ecological integrity of Lyons and the surrounding area, a task made all the more relevant in the wake of the unleaded fuel spill and black ash runoff from the CalWood fire.

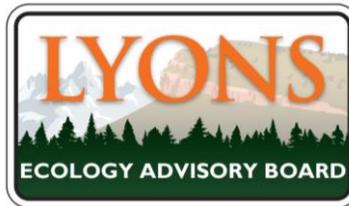
Our mission Statement: The EAB advocates for the protection of ecological integrity and the aquatic and terrestrial natural resources of the Town of Lyons and its surrounding areas to support a dynamic and resilient ecosystem, a quality environment for all, and a vibrant economy.

The EAB celebrated several significant accomplishments in 2021. Prompted by citizen concern, and at the request of the Board of Trustees, the EAB, along with community members and the Parks and Recreation Department, helped refine and focus in on details related to the town's weed management plan that greatly reduces the use of synthetic herbicides and pesticides. The prior BoT unanimously approved the new measures that are being implemented in 2022.

The EAB was also involved in shaping and supporting several measures of great importance to Lyons, particularly in light of the current drought conditions. The EAB supported the St. Vrain Watershed Health Partnership Memorandum of Understanding between Boulder County, USFS, local cities, towns and conservation groups. This project unites these groups to develop and implement a plan with regard to wildfire management throughout the area. The EAB also represented the town on the St. Vrain Watershed Forest Health Partnership, an initiative designed to help prepare the St. Vrain Basin for wildland fire as a natural part of the ecosystem. These projects take on renewed importance given the explosive and destructive nature of Colorado wildfires in 2020.

The EAB also provided comments and support to the St. Vrain and Lefthand Water Conservancy District mill levy proposal that passed in the November 2021 election. The EAB expressed support of the mill levy as a way to better manage water flows, water quality, and water allocation, to improve invertebrate and fish habitat, and to improve recreation and its associated economic benefits. One goal is to maintain sustainable river flows during low-flow seasons. Moving into 2022, the EAB has been involved in the adaptive management framework for assessing watershed health in the St. Vrain Basin, including Left Hand Creek and Boulder Creek. Left Hand Watershed Center (Watershed Center). This brought partners together in 2019 to develop this framework collaboratively and just recently in June 2022 the EAB attended an energizing review-workshop involving over 40 ecological-minded stakeholders from across the front range.

Two major long-term goals of the EAB are to better embed ecological considerations into the planning and development process in Lyons and to participate in outreach and educational opportunities in the community. To this end, the EAB continues to engage with the Planning and



Community Development Commission as they move forward with developing a new Comprehensive Plan. The EAB specifically promotes the identification and preservation of ecologically sensitive areas including the river corridor, riparian zones, wetlands, and upland areas that are beneficial to the watershed as open space and wildlife corridors. This is in alignment with surveys of local citizens that correlate the town's vibrant local economy being directly tied to a healthy river and upland ecosystem.

On the outreach side of things, the EAB supported the Lyons Elementary and Middle/High School in developing their Environmental Leadership Program through collaboration and promoting the use of Town lands for scientific studies (including the monthly river monitoring program at LaVern Johnson Park and the successful release of native Northern Redbelly Dace fish into the creek). The EAB starts with the knowledge that Lyons' unique location - at the confluence of the North and South St Vrain creeks surrounded by abundant natural areas - makes the Town an environmentally sensitive area worth working hard to protect.

Just recently in May 2022, the K-12 student scientific presentation call Confluence (at the new high school auditorium) was a fabulous success. It was well attended by over 200 parents and staff from around the community. It provided a framework for our youth and younger adults to become comfortable with the scientific process and public speaking.

The EAB continued its ongoing efforts to promote Lyons' Walking Arboretum, support the Weed Posse, educate community members through our own eco-minded Facebook page, newspaper articles, and provide an ecological perspective on development projects, including the new hotel, Summit affordable housing development, and the Martin parcel. We are working on: Securing funding for a weed removal steam-machine; Planet Bluegrass's South Farm developments; The sewage treatment discharge point (during low flows); Corona Flats trail; Andesite Mine restoration; Rights of Nature for the St Vrain Watershed.

Our ultimate goal is to secure funding for a natural resource position to be added to the town's staff. There are so many ecological topics taking place which merits a paid position.

The EAB meets on the second Tuesday of each month (via Zoom for now). The public is always welcome.

The all-volunteer board members currently are:

Steve Simms; chair

Kurt Carlson

Carse Pustmueller

David Batts

Bob Brakenridge

Kate Zalzal

Greg Lowell

Ted Elson; BOT liaison