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Agenda

New Castle Climate and Environment Commission Thursday, December 18, 2025, 4:00 PM

Virtual Meetings are subject to internet and technical capabilities.

To join by computer, smart phone or tablet:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7096588400>

If you prefer to telephone in:

Please call: 1-346-248-7799

Meeting ID: 709 658 8400

Follow the prompts as directed. Be sure to set your phone to mute until called on

Call to Order

Citizen Comments on Items NOT on the Agenda

-Comments are limited to three minutes

Agenda Changes

Items For Consideration

- A. End of Year Report**
- B. Mission, Goals, Objectives**
- C. 2026 Calendar**
- D. Discuss Preparation for Business Grants**
- E. Bee Awareness Project**
- F. Approval of October 16 and November 20, 2025 minutes**

Commissioner Comments

Adjourn

2025 Annual Report

Climate and Environment
Commission



December 2025

Report composed by Sharon Morris,
CEC Chair



Introduction

The New Castle Climate and Environment Commission (CEC) provides information to town residents on environmental and climate issues. It develops a work plan with educational and outreach activities and provides recommendations to the Town Council on how the Town can meet the goals of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.

Commissioners

The CEC membership has changed significantly in the past two years. Five of the seven members have joined since April 2024. New members bring expertise and experience in wildlife biology, native landscaping, trail development, and event planning.

The Commissioners are:

- Kendall Bakich
- Nancy Barnes, Secretary
- Myrna Candreia - Vice-Chair
- Ryan Deyarmond
- Julia Koch - Commissioner
- Bruce Leland – Town Council Representative
- Sharon Morris - Commission Chair

CEC 2026 Activities

January

The Commission’s 2025 year started with a leadership loss. CEC Chair Tom Elder passed away in January. Commissioner Leland provided significant leadership during this time and throughout 2025. His knowledge and depth of experience were essential with many new members to the CEC.

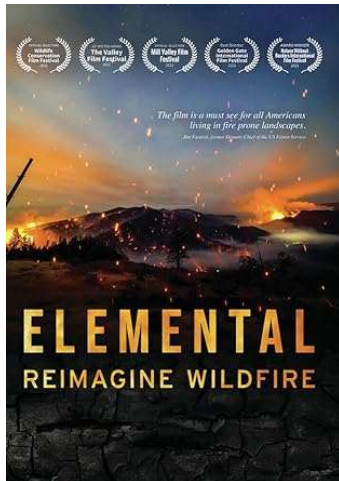
In January, the New Castle Town Council approved the budget and projects to use the bag fee funds (Colorado Plastic Pollution Reduction Act). As part of this process, the CEC submitted a report on recommendations on New Castle bag fee

expenditures: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1f5f-BmndXnxBMo4Xb6hOARmTR05ENbNcsRJ-3rVeiGg/edit?usp=sharing>

Election of Commissioner Morris as Commission Chair, Commissioner Candrea as Vice-Chair, and Commissioner Barnes as Secretary for 2025.

February

Environmental Film Night



The CEC, in partnership with the Garfield County Library District, hosted the documentary Elemental: Reimagine Wildfire with 41 residents attending. This film raised awareness of wildfire dangers and encouraged mitigation against wildfire and home damage. The event included a panel of experts after the movie who provided resources and answered questions that addressed key issues related to wildfire mitigation, New Castle emergency evacuation procedures, and evacuation preparation. Panelists included Paul Smith (Town of New Castle), Zach Pigatand (Colorado River Fire Protection District, Wildland Division Chief), Kate Collins (Middle Colorado Watershed Council).

April

Tom Elder Tree Planting



The CEC and the town recognized Tom Elder's important contributions to New Castle by planting a tree in Tom's honor. This tree and the accompanying plaque are prominent on the Main Street. The flowering crab apple tree was provided and planted by the town's Parks and Recreation Department. Funds for the plaque were acquired through an anonymous donor. Over 70 family members, friends, and town officials attended the tree-planting event. Town Manager Dave Reynolds spoke at the event.

Earth Day 2025

The CEC expanded Earth Day to Burning Mountain Park with 14 partner agencies exhibiting and over 125 attendees. The CEC gave away 10 subscriptions for 6 months of composting services. Twenty percent renewed their service after the trial six months. Post-event surveys from exhibitors indicate satisfaction with the event location, timeframe, and coordination. The wind, however, was an unwelcome addition to the event. The recommendation was to continue this event at this time next year but without the wind.



“Such a great event, highly recommend it happening again!”

Earth Day Exhibitor

May

Trash and Trail Clean Up



The CEC partnered with Roaring Folk Outdoor Volunteers to host a trail clean-up day for Alder Park and parts of the Colorow trail. Six volunteers worked to gather trash, create water flow structures on the steep parts of the trail, and develop narrowing strategies to improve native vegetation growth.

July & August

New Castle Business Grant

The CEC launched a grant program for New Castle businesses to support new projects that reduce waste or replace single-use plastics. This project was funded by plastic bag fee funds. Allowable activities included composting, recycling, and switching materials to non-plastic and compostable materials.

Two businesses were awarded grants:

Home Town Real Estate Company to shred and recycle legacy papers.

Salon West to start a compost and recycling service for salon waste. The adjacent image is a report on the first few months of Salon West's participation in the beauty product recovery service funded by this grant. Their continued commitment to this service will include a small recycle/repurpose fee with all salon services.

You are recovering:

- Hair
- Metals
- Paper
- Hair Color
- Plastic
- Single Use

Total amount of beauty waste recovered so far this year:

35.0 LBS

September

CEC Award & Recognition



The CEC was honored to receive the New Castle Volunteer Organization of the Year, awarded at Burning Mountain Festival. The Commission members were honored with a float in the parade, candy to hand out, and wrist bands.

This civic visibility allowed the CEC to soft launch the “Guardians of Nature” campaign. This campaign will encourage sustainable practices and recognize and celebrate those who are taking care of New Castle’s natural resources.

October

Trash Pick Up Day

On October 11, CEC hosted a trash pick up day in coordination with the town of New Castle. The key areas for pick up were Bruce Road, near City Market and CR 335, from Grand River Park to Apple Tree Park. Four Commissioners and community members volunteered for over three hours on a rainy day. They were rewarded with lunch together at the New Castle Library. In total, 18 large trash and recycling bags were filled and brought to the New Castle Trash Day.



November

Planning

The CEC met in an extended work session to consider updates to their mission, strategic plan, and other initiatives. With newer Commissioners, this work session helped to review the history of the CEC as well as look toward the future. A three-year plan will be solidified by the end of 2025 along with a calendar for 2026 initiatives.

December

Post Chili Cook Off

In 2024, the CEC supported the New Castle Recreation Center in using bag fee funds to buy reusable bowls for the annual chili cook off as well as reusable cups and other dishes for regular use at the community center (to reduce plastic use and trash). To come full circle, after the 2025 Chili Cook Off, two Commissioners volunteered to help with cleaning all the reusable bowls, spoons, cups, etc.



Funds

Town Council allocated \$1,000 in 2025 which was used for promotional materials and giveaway items for events and initiatives.

The New Castle Bag Fees funds were used for the trail day trash clean up with Roaring Fork Outdoor Volunteers, the business grants, the community trash day clean up, and the 10 subscriptions to composting services (Evergreen) for six months.



**Climate and Environment Commission
New Castle, Colorado
Strategic Plan 2026 – 2028**

Mission

The CEC advances sustainable practices for our community to live harmoniously with nature and improve environmental resilience for future generations.

CEC 2026 - 2028 Goals

GOAL 1: Engage the community in environmental stewardship

GOAL 2: Advise and inform local **decision-makers**

GOAL 3: Collaborate for broader impact

GOAL 4: Develop New Castle's Environmental Leadership

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: Engage the community in environmental stewardship

OBJECTIVES

- Raise public awareness by educating residents and businesses about environmental issues, sustainable practices, and opportunities for involvement.
- Promote environmental stewardship among residents, businesses, and organizations through events, promotional campaigns, social media, **online resources**, and other initiatives.
- Encourage responsible management and care for the local environment and its resources, such as water, air, land, and biodiversity via grants, recognition, **volunteer opportunities**, and other methods.
- **ADDED-** Inspire a deep appreciation by the community to develop a lifelong commitment by our children to protect our natural environment.

GOAL 2: Advise and inform local entities

OBJECTIVES

- Provide **information**, research, and recommendations to the Town Council and other **community** leaders to inform environmental issues and policies.
- **Promote** environmentally responsible development and maintenance practices that minimize negative impacts on the local environment, natural resources, and wildlife.

GOAL 3: Collaborate for broader impact

OBJECTIVES

- Work with individuals, community groups, businesses, and other organizations to achieve shared environmental goals.
- Convene and participate in relevant events to promote sustainable environmental practices locally and regionally, **collaborating with other Garfield County environmental groups and regional partners to share and leverage resources.**
- **ADDED** - Support Garfield Clean Energy.

GOAL 4: Develop New Castle's Environmental Leadership

OBJECTIVES

- Build the Climate and Environment Commissioner's knowledge and capacity for effectiveness in achieving other goals.
- Attend relevant events to gain knowledge, share expertise, and build partnerships.
- **ADDED** - Identify and facilitate local expert engagement to achieve shared environmental goals.
- **ADDED** - Establish citizen leadership group, Guardians of Nature, to help further the CEC's mission.
- **ADDED** - Locate and acquire additional funding sources to achieve CEC goals and objectives.

Let's also consider a brief statement summarizing our commission.

The CEC acts as New Castle's local advocate for the environment, works to integrate environmental considerations into New Castle decision-making, engages the community toward environmental stewardship, and develops environmental civic leadership. Keeping New Castle Authentically Colorado.

Commission Activities

- Develop an annual calendar plan with educational and outreach activities.
- Host an annual environmental film and panel of experts
- Focus the community on sustainable use of natural resources (water, air, native plants, wildlife, etc.) through a “Guardians of Nature” campaign, sustainable business recognition, and other public awareness initiatives.
- Use bag fee funding to support initiatives to reduce plastic use, encourage reuse, recycling, composting, upcycling, and other waste reduction strategies.
- Provide town council with recommendations when relevant.
- Support town departments with their sustainability efforts.
- Host annual Earth Day events with partner participation.
- Engage with town and civic events, such as Chamber events, Burning Mountain Parade, Chili Cook-Off clean up, etc.
- Conduct town, trail, and stream bank cleanups and partner with others on these events.
- Manage funding for environmental initiatives.
- Gain public input on commission initiatives.
- Collaborate with other municipal and/or regional environmental commissions.
- Maintain public transparency with meetings, regular online updates (town newsletter, website, social media), reports, and well-promoted activities.
- Stay current with environmental issues through speakers at meetings, attendance at conferences, and other educational development.
- **ADDED** - Raise public awareness through social media.
- **ADDED**- Host community awareness event at Down Valley Brewing.

2026 Calendar of Events & Projects

- Monthly meetings on 3rd Thursday at 4:00 pm
- Ongoing updates to website & social media with events & news
- Host a joint meeting of climate and environmental groups from the region to share ideas, coordinate, and collaborate for regional impact.

January

Submit 2025 CEC Annual Report to Town Council
Elect Officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary)
2nd Round Business Grants Launched
Attend Chamber Business After Hours – January 28
Promote grants at Chamber event, flyers to businesses

February

2nd Annual Film – Water Conservation Theme? – **Weds, Feb 11th, 6pm** (partner with library)
Prepare for Earth Day event

March

March 19 Meeting - Select Business Grants
March 19 Meeting - Identify Nature & Environment Champion - Business of the Year

April

Attend Energy Conference (regional, per Dave Reynolds) **April 25** - New Castle
Earth Day in Burning Mountain Park – CEC Hosts; Ceremony to award Business Nature & Environment Champion for **2025**; swag, etc.

April or May

Trail project – remove invasive plants, seed native plants with partners

June

Chamber event in the park – Promote Waterwise, Firewise

July – August

Campaign for **CEC at Down Valley Brewery**

September

Parade (Theme, logistics, give aways TBD)
Half day planning for 2027, submit budget request for 2027 town budget

October

Oct 9 or 10? Clean Up New Castle – Trash & Recycling Pick Up (joint with town)

November & December

Spend down any extra 2026 funds, prepare 2026 report for town council
Edits and updates to the web presence

New Castle Climate & Environment Commission Minutes

October 16, 2025

Attendees: Chair Sharon Morris, Commissioner Ryan Deyarmond, Commissioner Julia Koch, Commissioner Kendall Bakich, and Commissioner Nancy Barnes

Chair Morris called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Council Retreat Update

Commissioner Leland shared a report on the Council Retreat, and the group discussed his key points emphasizing fire mitigation and water conservation. Commissioner Koch suggested highlighting an example of a home with defensible space and fire-wise landscaping, proposing a “Fire-Wise Home of the Year” recognition similar to the garden club awards. The commission supported launching a water-wise education program in 2026.

Community Trash Clean-Up Debrief

The clean-up event was held Friday, October 10th, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., in coordination with the town’s clean-up weekend. Volunteers covered Bruce Road near City Market and CR 335 from Grand River Park to Apple Tree Park. Working with Public Works Director John Wenzel the group identified key areas for trash collection. Public Works provided bags, grabbers, gloves, and safety vests, while Chair Morris supplied compost bags for recyclables. Volunteer registration was coordinated through Kelley Cox at the New Castle Recreation Center, and Commissioner Candraia organized lunch from City Market at a cost of approximately \$75. Commissioner Deyarmond transported 18 large trash bags to town dumpsters, and other volunteers handled three bags of recyclables. In addition to the trash and recyclables, the volunteers also cleaned up, three tires, and one television, receiving thanks from passing community members. Marketing included flyers, social media posts, and local business outreach. Volunteers included four CEC commissioners (Sharon, Ryan, Myrna, Nancy) and five community members.

Successes included scheduling alongside the town clean-up, strong coordination with Public Works and the Rec Center, good volunteer participation, timely lunch, and use of the library for lunch during rain. Improvements suggested include using larger recyclable bags, moving the event to a weekend to attract more volunteers, earlier marketing through the town newsletter and local businesses, and partnerships with community organizations like the Boy Scouts. Additional recommendations include requesting “Volunteers at Work” safety signage or cones from Public Works.

CEC Graphic Design Input

Chair Morris presented a design quote from a local graphic designer for logo, sticker, templates, and website design support.

Motion: Commissioner Bakich moved to approve moving forward with Kataplum Studio Graphic Design for logo, sticker, and flyer template design up to \$500. Commissioner Deyarmond seconded. The motion carried.

Motion: Commissioner Koch moved to make “Guardians of Nature” our tagline moving forward. Commissioner Deyarmond seconded. The motion carried.

Action: Chair Morris will reach out to Kataplum Studio Graphic Design to move forward with the design work.

Proposed Calendar of Events, 2026

Chair Morris presented a proposed 2026 events calendar. Mindy Andis recommended submitting budget requests in September next year. Commissioner Barnes suggested attending a Chamber networking event in January or February to promote business grants. Chair Morris also proposed hosting a summit for local municipal climate and environmental groups.

Action: Chair Morris will work with Commissioner Leland on getting the 2026 budget submitted.

CEC November Work Session Discussion

The commission will hold a two-hour work session on November 20 to discuss our mission and goals, event calendar for 2026, graphic design updates, and a budget report, including the bag fee budget. The regular meeting will follow from 6–7 p.m. Commissioner Bakich suggested sending a survey to CEC members to identify key climate and environmental concerns, goals, and priorities.

Action: Chair Morris will arrange snacks for the work session.

Approval of September Minutes

Motion: Chair Morris moved to accept the minutes. Commissioner Bakich seconded. The motion carried.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Bakich attended the “Wild and Scenic” Film Festival and highlighted the fire mitigation film *Fire Forest*. Commissioner Koch appreciated the usefulness of the proposed events calendar. Chair Morris suggested inviting more expert guest speakers to regular CEC meetings.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Commissioner Nancy Barnes

Commission Chair Sharon Morris

New Castle Climate & Environment Commission Minutes
November 20, 2025

Attendees: Chair Sharon Morris, Commissioner Candreia, Commissioner Julia Koch, Commissioner Kendall Bakich, Commissioner Leland, and Commissioner Nancy Barnes

Chair Morris called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Work Session

The CEC met in a work session prior to the regular meeting to discuss and draft a new mission statement, goals, objectives, activities and a proposed 2026 calendar of events.

CEC Mission

Commissioners drafted the following mission statement:

The CEC advances sustainable practices for our community to live harmoniously with nature and improve environmental resilience for future generations.

Motion: Commissioner Leland moved to accept the CEC mission statement. Commissioner Candreia seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

CEC Goals

Commissioners reviewed the following four goal statements:

1. Engage the community in environmental stewardship
2. Advise and inform local decision-makers
3. Collaborate for broader impact
4. Develop New Castle's Environmental Leadership

Motion: Commissioner Barnes moved to accept the goals with one change. Commissioner Bakich seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

CEC Objectives

Commissioners discussed and modified goal objectives.

Motion: Commissioner Leland moved to postpone consideration of the objectives until the December meeting. Commissioner Koch seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Action: Commissioner Barnes will send modified objectives to the group. The CEC will vote on them at the December meeting.

Proposed Calendar of Events, 2026

Commissioners discussed proposed activities and a calendar of events for 2026. Commissioners identified February 11th as the date for the film program and agreed to pursue the PR campaign in July or August in partnership with Down Valley Brewing.

Motion: Commissioner Bakich moved to accept the calendar of events. Commissioner Koch seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Nature Guardian Sticker Design

Commissioners reviewed graphic design options for a new CEC logo, sticker badge, and flyer template. Suggestions and alterations were discussed.

Action: Commissioner Koch and Chair Morris will collaborate with the graphic designer to convey the CEC's feedback and revise the design options.

Approval of October 16th Minutes

Approval of the October 16 minutes was delayed until the December meeting.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Leland reported that the Urban Wildlife Interface code had been updated – new homes will now require class A building materials. He also noted that the apartments being built near VIX park will use concrete (fire-resistant) boards.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Commissioner Nancy Barnes

Commission Chair Sharon Morris