



October 1, 2022

# THE CONEJOS COUNTY MESSENGER

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Welcome to our **second year** of the Conejos County Newsletter! As elected officials and county department directors, our goal is to inform our citizens of news stories, information and data through the periodic publication of a newsletter. The previous editions of newsletters are archived on the county website, [www.conejoscounty.org](http://www.conejoscounty.org).

In an effort to gain more exposure, we are posting this same file on Facebook and the Citizens for a Better Conejos County page.

Scan QR code with your smartphone



## County Government Welcomes Grant Writer Curt Wilson

The Board of County Commissioners, other elected officials, administration, department directors, and all employees are excited and welcome Mr. Curt Wilson in the county's newly hired grant writer position. Mr. Wilson has recently started in his new position and is working the long hours in searching for available grants, reading grant guidelines, securing the necessary information, interviewing present and past county employees, and beginning the application processes. Currently, Mr. Wilson has begun work with the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) in applying for grant funds to build a new ambulance base, looking into the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant funds for the Veteran's Boulevard, assisting the Sheriff's Department in applying for grant funds, and smaller amount grants from various sources to upkeep the shooting range.

Mr. Wilson recently retired from the Superintendency of the North Conejos School District. "My interest is to better the services and interests for our citizens, our children, and offer what otherwise could not be possible without the assistance grants provide to the cause." We all wish Mr. Wilson success and happiness in his new job.

## Land Use Office

## 2022 Building Code Adoption Process

At the beginning of the year Conejos County started the adoption process to adopt the 2018 (IBC) International Building Code, (IRC) International Residential Code, (IMC) International Mechanical Code and (IECC) International Energy Conservation Code. We would like to get input from builders and members of the public to discuss the proposed building code, performance requirements as well as holistic sustainability, and any code amendment proposals. Contact the Land Use Office if you would like to submit any comments.

On October 19<sup>th</sup> the Land Use Staff will meet with the Conejos County Planning Commission to consider the proposals for adoption of building codes. The meeting is open to the public. During committee hearings, members will hear comments in favor of and against proposed revisions, discuss the merits, feasibility, and impacts of changes, and make recommendations on all proposed amendments, a few which were developed in the areas of sustainability and energy-conservation from ideas championed by the working groups. The Building Code will introduce a small number of readily achievable mandatory provisions to support familiarity and forward-thinking development outcomes.

The final review hearing before the Planning Commission concerning the adoption of the code will be on November 16, 2022, is open to the public, and will include time for public comments and questions. Virtual Zoom attendance will be available. The final proposed will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners on December 1<sup>st</sup> for review and adoption as a Conejos County ordinance.

We want to hear from you: Send your comments to [landuse@co.conejos.co.us](mailto:landuse@co.conejos.co.us)  
Include: Subject: Building Code Adoption

Chris DeHerrera, Inspector/Enforcement Officer

## Treasurer's Office

For fall 2022 the Treasurer's Office is preparing for our Annual Tax Lien Sale on Wednesday, November 16, 2022. The sale will be on-line with SRI Inc. at [www.zeusauction.com](http://www.zeusauction.com) Advertising for delinquent real estate taxes are published on Saturdays, October 15, 22, & 29, 2022 in the Valley Courier. To avoid tax lien sale charges, payments need to be in our office on Monday, November 14, 2022. Also to avoid distraint fees on mobile homes, payments need to be in our office by September 30, 2022.

A reminder you can still make online payments as well until October 30<sup>th</sup> at our county website. PLEASE NOTE the County Website address has changed! Go to: [conejoscounty.colorado.gov](http://conejoscounty.colorado.gov) If you have any questions regarding your taxes, please call our office at (719) 376-5919. Thank you and have a great Fall. Happy Halloween 2022!

Mack M. Crowther – CONEJOS COUNTY TREASURER/PT



## CONEJOS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

### Greetings from the Conejos County Department of Social Services

### Did you know?

#### Licensing Incentive Bonus Overview

Any child care provider who became licensed or CCCAP qualified exempt after March 11, 2021, including child care centers, family child care homes, and school-age child care, is eligible to receive a one-time incentive bonus after completing a very brief application and providing banking information, if needed. All Licensing Incentive Bonus funding must be spent by September 30, 2023.

#### Applying for the Licensing Incentive Bonus

Eligible child care providers will receive an email with a link to the application on Friday May 13th 2022 from [coecstimulus@metrixiq.com](mailto:coecstimulus@metrixiq.com) with a link to their personalized application.

Providers already participating in the Child Care Stabilization and Workforce Sustainability Grants Program will be asked to attest to reviewing the federal spending requirements of this program and provide their signature. Providers not currently participating in the Child Care Stabilization and Workforce Sustainability Grants Program will also be asked to provide their ACH and W-9 information.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis from May 13, 2022 through June 30, 2023, subject to available funding. Eligible programs are encouraged to apply as soon as possible in order to maximize the use of funds.

### Do you suspect child abuse or neglect?



Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline  
1-844-CO-4-KIDS (1-844-264-5437)

## Department of Social Services (Continued)

**Looking for a career where you can make a difference and help those in need?**

Learn more about our agency by reviewing the duties of a Child Welfare Caseworker. You will see where you can have the ability to work with families in our county as we can often time assist clients with finding the necessary resources to stabilize their households. Learn more about this position at <https://www.facebook.com/CO4Kids/videos/1389670604449757/> and contact our Human Resource Department to apply! **Hiring Bonus offered!**

**The CCDSS is contracting for a Colorado Works STEP Job Coach.**

This position will work with both employers and clients alike by placing participants in a subsidized employment program. This is a win-win for both the employer and our participants! Contact our Department Director for more information.

Also, with fall season around the corner, the Conejos County Department of Social Services would like to remind everyone that our LEAP season starts November 1, 2022. Applications can be picked up at the DSS office or you can choose to apply online at our Colorado PEAK website.

**CCDSS will be partnering with Alamosa Workforce** to hold a job/resource fair that will be tentatively scheduled for October 13, 2022 in Alamosa. Please keep an eye out for future noticing on this event.

**Also, please check out the new Conejos County website @**

<https://conejoscounty.colorado.gov>

**They can't.  
You can.**  
Be their voice. Make the call.  
**1-844-CO-4-KIDS**  
1-844-264-5437



**Nicholas Barela,  
Dept. of Social Services Director**

## Commissioners

**Jaffe Minor Subdivision:** At the July 7, 2022 regular board meeting, the Board of County Commissioners approved the Jaffe subdivision application requesting to replat the area to separate the individual lots for individual in Platoro. They are also creating a commons area for the owners of this development. There are currently 32 lots, and they were approved replating to have 10 individual lots with a greenbelt area. The replat shows of the approved 10 lots that there are 2 vacant lots for sale where the buyer could build a cabin/family dwelling, 5 duplex family dwellings, and 3 lots that contain single family dwellings. These 10 lots are part of the historic Skyline Lodge that were rented to seasonal guests. The public hearing before the Planning Commission was held on 06/15/2022 at 6:15 PM; whereby the Planning Commission made a recommendation to the BOCC to approve the proposed re-plat as presented.

### Subdivision Regulations and how County Commissioners are involved.

Conejos County adopted Subdivision Regulations in 1979 per state regulations. Those regulations were revised in May 2005. Did you know that no person with any interest in land located in subdivision or a proposed subdivision shall transfer, agree to sell, or sell any land before a survey plat has been approved by the Board of County Commissioners, except as allowed by Colorado State Law.

Our Land Use Department has been delegated by the Conejos Board of County Commissioners the duties of subdivisions, platting, replating, and vacating land in the unincorporated areas of Conejos County. All subdivision activities are submitted to the Conejos Board of County Commissioners for their approval.

### **Off Road Vehicles on County Roads Legalization Update:**

The Board of County Commissioners, along with Sheriff Garth Crowther, Attorney Nick Sarmiento and County Administrator Theresa Martinez conducted meetings on September 7, 14, and 21 to gather citizen comments. The meetings were a success and the next step in the process is to form a citizen committee that will work with the county officials in drafting a code of regulations. All citizens that attended are in favor or legalizing “street legal” Ohv’s and Atv’s. The main citizen comment for wanting them legal is “safety” for all those that enjoy the ride.

A few major points that need clarifying are when adopted the use is for recreational/personal purposes. The ordinance that will eventually be adopted will not have an effect on current law that allows ranchers and farmers to use these vehicles in their businesses. Also, the ordinance will only effect rural Conejos County, not municipalities. The consensus as discussed was once adopted, perhaps municipalities would adopt the same ordinance to make it less confusing for all who own a vehicle.

Citizen comments the commissioners were made aware of are the following and these will be considered when the committee begins the work: whether the use of helmets will be required, a nominal licensing fee, the age of those operating the vehicle, would use be allowed on paved county roads or only dirt roads, designated crossing intersections over state highways, what street legal would look like—would all off road vehicles need signals, and many other ideas to consider.

The next step in the process is to form a committee. Email addresses were provided from those in attendance and those attending will be emailed first to see if they will volunteer to be on the committee. We hope to have a link on our webpage as soon as possible in the event you would like to volunteer. Another way to volunteer is to email the commissioners using the email addresses provided on the county website: [www.conejoscounty.org](http://www.conejoscounty.org)

Commissioners Baroz, Garcia, and Jarvies



## Public Health Dept. (CCPH)



*Austin Chavez (not pictured) with CCPH staffed a booth at **Fun with 911** Event on September 24<sup>th</sup>*

Conejos County Public health kicked off Fall 2022 by participating in the **“Fun with 911”** event held Saturday September 24<sup>th</sup> in La Jara, sponsored by Conejos County EMS. CCPH provided educational material on prevention, vaccination and general information on the programming at CCPH.

As we segway into the Fall and colder months, CCPH is gearing up to deliver flu vaccines and is actively setting up flu clinics. Our nurses are working with our 3 school districts to schedule childhood immunizations as well.

If you would like more information, or to schedule a childhood vaccine, flu, or Covid 19 vaccine, including COVID 19 boosters, please call us at 719-274-4307. To see other options for vaccine providers in the SLV, please visit the SLV Public Health Partnership at <https://www.slvphp.com/>

As a reminder, if you or someone in your home is not feeling well, please do not go to school or work until illness resolves and you’re feeling better. Please help us in keeping the community healthy and well. Lastly, you can pick up FREE COVID 19 Home test kits at the following Locations:

Conejos County Public Health  
Conejos County Department of Social Services  
Conejos County Libraries

**Please follow us on Facebook for updates**

Denise Jiron, Public Health Department Director

## County Clerk & Recorder

### MOTOR VEHICLE

## **Historic Colorado Contest asks Coloradans to help design state's 150th anniversary license plate**

LAKEWOOD, Monday, Sept. 19, 2022 -- From Buffalo Bill Cody to Molly Brown and Dr. Justina Ford, Coloradans have a habit of making history, and with the DMV's newest effort, Centennial State residents have another opportunity to do just that.

The Colorado Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is pleased to launch the Historic Colorado Contest, a license plate design contest aimed to honor the state's 150th anniversary with a commemorative license plate.

"This is a great kickoff to create an exciting way to celebrate 150 years of Colorado history and showcase Colorado's talented artists. As we gear up for Colorado's sesquicentennial in 2026 we are planning many more ways to celebrate our state," Gov. Jared Polis said. "In Colorado, creativity and inspiration are all around us, and we are excited to see the great designs Coloradans share. This new license plate honors the legacy of Coloradans who helped shape our great state as we look forward towards a bright future together."

"Coloradans are proud of the state we call home," DMV Senior Director Electra Bustle said. "Our state has a rich history and we want to honor the legacy of those Coloradans who laid the foundation for our success, and with the Historic Colorado Contest, we will."

The Historic Colorado Contest, also known as the Great License Plate Design Contest, will accept submissions from Monday, Sept. 19 to Wednesday, Nov. 30 and is open to anyone who lives or studies in Colorado. The contest will have two divisions — 13 and older, and under 13.

Up to 10 finalists per division will be selected by a committee with a final, public vote on the top three designs. The winners will get huge bragging rights, the DMV will feature the artists in all media releases and the winners will each receive a special commemorative license plate and a \$1,000 grant.

Entries will be judged on how well the artwork captures Colorado and its history, the artistic quality and its originality, and how well that design translates into becoming a Colorado license plate.

The Historic Colorado Contest is free to enter and each participant can submit up to three entries, each of which need to be the participant's original artwork. Coloradans interested in participating in the Historic Colorado contest can visit [DMV.Colorado.gov/HistoricColorado](https://dmv.colorado.gov/HistoricColorado) for complete information, terms and conditions, and templates for drafting submissions.

The DMV will accept a variety of file formats such as EPS, SVG, AI, PDF, and high resolution TIFF and JPEG (3.375 in x 2.125 in at 600 dpi) for entries, and asks that submissions not have any watermarks. Coloradans should email their designs and entry form to [dor.HistoricColorado@state.co.us](mailto:dor.HistoricColorado@state.co.us).

The Historic Colorado Contest is a low-cost effort to honor Colorado's history and 150th anniversary with a commemorative license plate. Voting for the winning designs is anticipated to begin in early 2023.

**Keep Colorado Wild Pass Renewal, will not start until January 2023 and you will have the option to opt in or out every year.**



Conejos County Sheriff's Office  
14044 Crd G.5  
Po Box 37  
Conejos Co. 81129  
PH# 719-376-2196

**The Sheriff's Office would like to remind everyone enjoying the outdoors to always be prepared when you head into the high country. Numerous search and rescue missions have already taken place through the summer months and we expect more to come as we approach the hunting seasons. We would like to remind people to go prepared, no matter if you are planning a short hike, or a multiday camping trip. Always take extra clothing, including a hat and gloves along with water and snacks. A lighter and compass or GPS should also be taken and with a sound knowledge of how to use it is paramount. No matter how short or long the trip, you need to be prepared.**

**A simple mushroom picking trip resulted in a two day search and rescue, and a cold night out for one local Conejos County Resident. The following weekend resulted in two more local men staying out overnight when they misjudged their route on a fishing trip. The terrain they were walking through was much more difficult and much longer than anticipated. Search and Rescue teams were deployed and both men were found and extracted safely. These incidents are simple and innocent, but can become dangerous and even life threatening if not prepared.**

**Thefts have been increasing over the last few months in the County, and Deputies are working overtime to stop the criminal activity. With the help of victims, some vigilant citizens, and hard work by Conejos County Deputies, three individuals were arrested on September 21, 2022, in Sanford. All were charged and booked into the Conejos County Jail. A fourth individual is being sought and has several warrants for his arrest in connection with multiple break in's and thefts throughout the county. We would continue to ask the public to assist with solving these and other crimes in our community. "If you see something, say something" is the mentality we must all have. Law enforcement working together with the citizens of our community will make Conejos County a great place to live and raise our children.**

**SHERIFF GARTH CROWTHER**



## Road & Bridge Dept.

The Conejos County Road and Bridge Department had a busy third quarter of 2022.

We laid asphalt on a couple of our county roads and patched all of our paved roads. We paved one road in the Town of La Jara and paved the majority of the roads in the Town of Antonito. The biggest struggle with paving this season was the availability of oil for asphalt. The shortage of oil made it difficult to plan and finish up projects during our paving process. We often found ourselves leaving a project temporarily for other road and bridge work until the supply was available.

During this quarter we battled the much needed rainfall, the higher than normal rainfall washed out several of our roads, worked itself around a couple of culverts and over the top of one of our bridges. We had several trees fall into our roadways and many times we were out removing boulders that rolled onto the mountain roads we help maintain.

After the long paving process and repairing water damaged road and debris removal, we are finally getting back to the normal maintaining our county roads. All of our road graders and operators are out in force, while the rest of the crew has started to trim trees, work on bridges and culverts, building up some of the roads that need road base replaced.

This fall we hope to crush and produce road base at our Romeo Gravel pit and start hauling it to roads as weather allows. Winter is coming so we will be setting up equipment and getting it ready for snow removal.

Donnie Martinez, Road & Bridge Department Director



County Road 12.5—Ortiz



County Road 2

## Emergency Management Office

Greetings,

The Colorado Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) in partnership with local emergency management is required to support all the San Luis Valley response agencies develop training and conduct exercises.

To meet this requirement we will be holding an Integrated Preparedness and Planning Workshop (IPPW). This workshop will help us to better understand what planning, organizing, equipping, training or exercises are necessary for the San Luis Valley response agencies to improve our cross agency, multi jurisdiction large scale response.

The San Luis Valley Regional IPPW is scheduled for 17 October 2022 from 10:00 - 15:00 at 301 West Ave, Alamosa, Colorado.

This link; <https://forms.gle/KyzZ375iQnUHJjGh8> will direct you to a short questionnaire. This questionnaire will help us gather data from all of the San Luis Valley response agencies and enable us to tailor the IPPW to ensure all agencies' needs are well represented.

### **Fentanyl Threat Resources**

Fentanyl has become an increasing threat in Colorado. Please consider sharing these resources with your network to increase awareness of this deadly threat.

Drug Enforcement Agency: [One Pill Can Kill PSA](#)

[City & County of Denver Resource Page](#)

[DEA Warns of Brightly-Colored Fentanyl Used to Target Young Americans](#)

FEMA is releasing the "[Local Elected and Appointed Officials Guide: Roles and Resources in Emergency Management](#)." This guide makes it easier for senior officials to understand, prepare for and execute their leadership responsibilities to help:

Mitigate community risk

Save lives;

Protect property; and

Recover from disasters.

The document provides an executive-level introduction to emergency management concepts and principles for local senior officials, and identifies local senior officials' roles and responsibilities for incident emergency management before, during and after disasters. The guide also explains how to access additional resources.

FEMA will host a series of 60-minute webinars to provide an overview of the guide, quick reference guide and checklists. The sessions will include facilitated discussions with stakeholders and provide updates since the National Engagement Period. Advance registration is required and on a first-come, first-served basis.

To download the document, quick reference guide, checklists or learn more about the webinar sessions please visit the FEMA website at <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/plan>.

### **Alternate Electric Transmission for the San Luis Valley**

This meeting was hosted by U.S. Senator Bennet and Colorado Senator Simpson to discuss the possibility and need of an alternate transmission capacity and redundancy in the San Luis Valley. Mike Kruger from the Colorado Solar & Storage Association (COSSA) presented additional possible Solutions. Additional meetings will be held (no dates set at this time).

## Emergency Management Office (Continued)

### SLV Wildfire Council

An organizational meeting was held to start discussion on a formal council. The discussion centered on the need to address 1.) Landscape Treatments, 2.) Community Engagement, 3.) Resident and Community Mitigation. 4.) Plans and Regulations. Additional meetings will be held (no dates set at this time).

Rodney King, Office Emergency Manager

### Pictures Submitted by Land Use Office, Michelle Bradford



Forest Service Road 250,  
near the Rocky Mountain Estates



Forest Service Road 250,  
West of Platoro

**Conejos County will be changing to a new website address after this year's November 8, 2022 Election Day. We hope to have this new website, [www.conejoscounty.colorado.gov](http://www.conejoscounty.colorado.gov) up and running by November 10. This is the first of many notifications informing our citizens of the website change.**