



**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (PRRIP -or- Program)**

**Land Advisory Committee (LAC) Meeting**

Wednesday, August 13, 2024; 10:00 AM - noon PM CST

*Meeting held virtually & in-person at ED Office in Kearney, NE*

**Land Advisory Committee (LAC)**

**State of Wyoming**

Michelle Hubbard – Member (online)

**Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)**

Brock Merrill – Member (online)

**State of Colorado**

Kara Scheel – Member (online)

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)**

Matt Rabbe – Member

**State of Nebraska**

Caitlin Kingsley – Alternate (online)

Ted LaGrange – Member

**Environmental Entities**

Cody Wagner – Member (Vice-Chair)

**Power Districts**

Dave Zorn – Member (Chair)

Jim Jenniges – Member

**Local Nebraska Rep. – Central Platte Natural Resources District (CPNRD)**

Dave Carr – Member

**Local Nebraska Rep. – Tri-Basin Natural Resources District (TBNRD)**

John Thorburn – Member

**Local Nebraska Rep. – Joint CPNRD/TBNRD**

None

**Executive Director's Office (EDO)**

Jason Farnsworth, ED

Tim Tunnell

**Other Participants**

Melissa Moiser - Audubon

Josh Wiese – Crane Trust



### **WELCOME & ADMINISTRATIVE**

Chairman Zorn called the meeting to order at 10:02 am Central Time. Tunnell recognized members who were attending in-person at the PRRIP conference room and acknowledged members attending virtually. Zorn asked for agenda modifications. None were offered. Zorn asked for the LAC's recommendation in the minutes of the May 15, 2024, LAC meeting.

**LAC MOTION:** *Rabbe moved, and Thorburn seconded to approve the May 15, 2024, LAC Meeting minutes. Minutes approved.*

### **GENERAL UPDATE AND OTHER COMMITTEE COORDINATION**

Rabbe updated the committee on the TAC. Discussed the predator management plan for tern/ plover sites. Made informal decision to continue for 2025 and check back in after next year and see if there is enough information to change course or not. Received an update from the whooping crane stopover vs flyover working group and have an updated whooping crane monitoring protocol for the GC. Update from the pallid sturgeon crew on monitoring efforts resulting in "verified-ish" evidence of spawning in the Loup. Wet meadow working group are combining efforts with the Grassland Working Group to make a policy/management recommendations of wet meadows/grasslands. First draft reviewed by the TAC, revised and will go before the TAC & LAC again in October before GC in December.

Farnsworth updated the committee on the two big WAC efforts that are wrapping up right now:

- Investigation of ways to increase the efficiency of recharge. So, how can we recapture recharged water and get it back to the river? Best way to increase our efficiency for recapturing recharged water is to put an outlet in the Elwood Reservoir and get it into Plum Creek and then get it into the river.
- The other effort is the choke point work, which the next WAC meeting will focus on. So, those are the two big things that are going on from there to the governance committee.

GC meeting coming up in September at the Crane Trust is going to be very heavily water focused. The Nebraska Water users will update the GC on the future of those projects, things like the exchange projects and potential for more storage water at Central and follow that up with some broader water talk.

### **LAND OBJECTIVE STATUS & TRACT2024001 (Lindstrom) & 2024002 (Broadfoot South) LMPs**

Tunnell updated the committee on Land Objective Milestone summary, noting that there remains 183.5 acres to fulfill the 1,500-acre acquisition goal for the Extension. Tunnell reviewed the LMP for the newly acquired BFS tract and the Lindstrom tract focusing on the restoration design and maintenance activities. Rabbe pointed out PRRA and Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act items in the plan that need to be updated/clarified. There was also discussion regarding the monitoring and research sections of the 2 plans. Tunnell noted that the differences relate to the templates used and developed years ago for Non-complex vs. Complex tracts. Group agreed to make the plans consistent. Tunnell and Rabbe will update the plans as needed and send them out to LAC for review and approval. Then to the TAC in October and GC in December.

### **GRASSLAND WORKING GROUP**

Farnsworth led the discussion of potentially shifting management of grasslands from managing for short



structure and whooping crane habitat to managing for higher structure and flowering species for the benefit of pollinators. The committee decided to use Shoemaker Island and Cottonwood Ranch as examples to work with and create a 3–5-year plan for each complex over the next year. This will give plenty of time for the Grassland Working Group to guide the plan development with EDO and farm managers to give tenants time to react. Various management strategies were discussed including rotational grazing, prescribed fire, and haying and the timing of these activities to suppress cool-season exotic grasses. Infrastructure needs will also be a subject for the management plans and a short discussion whether the EDO puts out an RFQ for vegetation monitoring as have in the past. Next year will be the year monitoring will be needed to remain consistent with the 3-year monitoring cycle.

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

No items for discussion within executive session.

### PUBLIC FORUM

Chairman Zorn asked for public comments, none were offered.

#### LAC MOTION:

- May 15, 2024, LAC Meeting minutes approved.

#### *Future calendar events:*

~~February 14, 2024 – 10:00 – noon CDT~~ [1st Quarter LAC meeting](#), Kearney, NE

~~May 15, 2024 – 10:00 – noon CDT~~ [2nd Quarter LAC meeting](#), Kearney, NE

~~August 14, 2024 – 10:00 – noon CDT~~ [3rd Quarter LAC meeting](#), Kearney, NE

October 16, 2024 - 10:00- noon CDT [4<sup>th</sup> Quarter LAC meeting](#), Kearney, NE

### LAC MEETING END

The LAC meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM Central Time.