

**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (PRRIP -or- Program)****Land Advisory Committee (LAC) Virtual Meeting**

Wednesday, February 14, 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 (online)

**Environmental Entities**

Cody Wagner – Member (Vice-Chair) - online

Tim Smith - Member

**Power Districts**

Dave Zorn – Member (Chair)

Jim Jenniges – Member (online)

John Shadle – Member (online)

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

Dave Carr – Member (online)

**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 Mosier – Audubon (online)

Josh Weise – Crane Trust (online)

Cody Miller – TNC (online)

**WELCOME & ADMINISTRATIVE**

Chairman Zorn called the meeting to order at 10:00 am Central Time. Tunnell recognized members who were attending in-person at the PRRIP conference room and acknowledge members attending virtually. Zorn asked for agenda modifications. Kingsley stated that motions for items 3 & 4 on the agenda were switched. Zorn noticed and will be rectified when discussed. Zorn asked for the LAC's recommendation on the minutes of the October 18, 2023, LAC meeting. None offered.

**LAC MOTION:** *Rabbe moved, and Thorburn seconded to approve the October 18, 2023, LAC Meeting minutes. Minutes approved.*

**GENERAL UPDATE AND OTHER COMMITTEE COORDINATION**

Rabbe gave an update of TAC activities.

TAC discussed the framework document as related to WC riverine roost site selection paper. Discussion on whether to change metrics based on updated science. It was agreed to take those on a case-by-case scenario with a subgroup to evaluate different properties that might provide an opportunity to widen channel roosting sites. Other metrics were consistent and confirmed like distance to nearest forest. Lots of discussion on sed augmentation with no clear decision from TAC as science still has uncertainty. Subject will be framed up for GC discussion and decision.

Farnsworth updated the group on WAC and GC.

WAC met recently and 2 main items:

- 1.) final speed run through what can or can't be done at the NP chokepoint to get to 3,000 cfs. Anderson Consulting and subs are working through all alternatives that have been provided and looking at alternatives that are on the board with more detailed processes with more information so that a trade-off analysis can be done.
- 2.) Feasibility study for expanded recapture are Elwood and Phelps recharge complex.

Rabbe report that plans are to have an abbreviated whooping crane release out of EA. Have water in the river April 1- 21. No idea of the total amount. The goal is to keep 1000 cfs in reach during this time. Germination suppression release is still on target to release 1500 cfs for 30 days.

GC will meet on March 11 & 12. At the December meeting the discussion was about a parcel of ground south of Kearney.

Tunnell updated the group that there is no change to the Land Objective status. Tunnell update group on a few land management items. An RFQ was put out earlier this year to demo that lodge and Quonset at the Dyer tract. This was done after advertising for sealed bids for the removal of the lodge with no bids submitted. After RFQ was put out a neighbor expressed interest in moving the lodge at his expense. An agreement is being drafted for this and will be in place soon. At the site showing for Quonset, a contractor questioned whether there was any asbestos. Testing will be done, and contractors bid on that demolition or removal after results are in. Have a contract with Cook Constructs for tree removal on the eastern end of the Dippel tract where we have the management agreement with the neighbor. Work will be done before migration. Ag leases are in various stages of development. All crop land leases are draft and being reviewed by NCF. Grazing leases are being developed and will go to NCF next week. Planning has begun with Scholl Fire for Rx fire this spring.

**FY 2023 LAND WORK REPORT**

Tunnell went through the expenditures for land work line items for 2023. Budget savings for the year occurred in LP -2 was RX fire due to not being able to complete units but went over budget in in-channel



disking as the Rowe reach was not planned for. LP- 4 was under budget.

**LAC MOTION:** *Thorburn moved, and Shadle seconded to approve the FY 2023 Land Work Report and move to send it to GC. FY 2023 Land Work Report approved.*

### **LAND RESTORATION & MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK- 2023 REVISION**

Tunnell began discussion with a brief review of the reason for the framework and the past years editing and review process. The current and final version includes TAC edits from the January TAC meeting. Tunnell asked for an additional edits as the EDO plans to take this to the GC in March for approval. Zorn added that although its final- it is a “living document” and can be reviewed and updated as science and learning evolves with new information. Rabbe discussed changes/ updates to the document as far as target for UOBCW and other technical edits on WC migration dates. Zorn asked for additional comments or discussion. Kinglsey asked about the increase in buffer of construction work from 0.25 to 0.50 from the channel and does that change create any substantial impact. Rabbe stated that he was unaware that 0.25 miles was used in many Program documents but to remain consistent with other statewide regulatory documents- the increase to 0.50 mile keeps them consistent. This also is consistent with Program data that disturbance is greatly with the 0.50-mile buffer. Tunnell verified that 0.25 miles was used in the Program document and Biological Opinion. Rabbe said it was, but the data was outdated. Tunnell report that its kind of a pain for contractors to move equipment that far every evening but the alternative that EDO prefers is to not put contractors in that position by not scheduling construction work during spring and fall migration. In most cases there is the ability to put equipment behind a tree line.

**LAC MOTION:** *Rabbe moved, and T. Smith seconded to approve the Framework Document and move to send it to GC. Framework Doc approved.*

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion** to go into Executive Session at 10:36 AM by Shadle.

Information and discussion.

**Motion** to come out of Executive Session AT 10:47 AM by Thorburn and Rabbe second.

**Recommendations** on Land Offerings, etc.

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

Chairman Zorn asked for public comments, none were offered.

**LAC MOTION:**

- October 18, 2023, LAC Meeting minutes approved.
- 2023 Land Work Report approved.
- Restoration and Management Framework for PRRIP Habitat Complex’s document approved to send to GC.

*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 10:49 AM Central Time.