



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

TO: GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (GC)
FROM: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE (EDO)
SUBJECT: PROPOSED CHANGES TO UNL PALLID STURGEON RESEARCH BUDGET
DATE: MARCH 1, 2024

I. CONTEXT

The Extension Science Plan prioritizes learning about how much water is needed to provide Program-defined benefits to target species and how to best allocate this water. Accordingly, Extension Big Question (EBQ) #7 asks *"What are the effects of Program flow management to benefit whooping crane, piping plover, and interior least tern in the central Platte River on pallid sturgeon in the lower Platte River?"* To address this question, the Program is working its way through the Pallid Sturgeon Framing Document¹ which outlines a three-step process for synthesizing information from pallid sturgeon habitat research with hydrologic and hydraulic modeling efforts to identify potential impacts and benefits to pallid sturgeon in the lower Platte from Program water management in the central Platte. As the first step in the process, the Program is actively engaged in a collaborative research project with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) with the following four objectives:

1. Identify relations among environmental conditions with the timing and extent of pallid sturgeon movement into and within the LPR.
2. Identify pallid sturgeon spawning habitat in LPR.
3. Verify successful spawning in LPR.
4. Collect pallid sturgeon genetic samples for further population and hybridization assessment.

II. PROPOSED CHANGES TO UNL PALLID STURGEON RESEARCH BUDGET

The original UNL pallid research proposal included support for one Ph.D. student and two M.S. students over the 5-year contract period. Dr. Mark Pegg proposed keeping his current M.S. student, Christopher Pullano, working on the project as a Research Associate following his graduation, expected in December 2024. Therefore, the changes proposed to the contract budget reflect adjustments in the labor costs associated with the project beginning in January 2025 and running through December 2026 (end of contract). These changes have been highlighted in the revised budget in Section III. It is worth noting that Year 1 labor costs were 64% of the original budgeted amount because project funding began in July 2021, with students coming on board mid-term in January 2022.

¹ [Pallid Sturgeon Framing Document](#)

² [2022 UNL Pallid Sturgeon Annual Report, 2023 UNL Pallid Sturgeon Annual Report](#)

³ [Jan 16-17, 2024 Quarterly TAC Meeting Minutes](#)

⁴ [2024 PRRIP Science Plan Reporting Session](#)

**I. COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL CONTRACT BUDGET TO REVISED BUDGET**

The EDO requests GC consideration of the following changes to the UNL Pallid Research Budget.

Original Contract Budget

CATEGORY	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	TOTAL
Labor						
Ph.D. Student	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,900	\$ 31,827	\$ 32,782	\$ 33,765	\$ 159,274
Master's Student	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,750	\$ 26,523	\$ 27,318	\$ 28,138	\$ 132,728
Research Associate	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,210	\$ 7,426	\$ 7,649	\$ -	\$ 29,285
Field Technicians	\$ 22,560	23,237	23,934	24,652	14,046	\$ 108,429
Labor Subtotal	\$ 84,560	\$ 87,097	\$ 89,710	\$ 92,401	\$ 75,949	\$ 429,717
Fringe Benefits	\$ 8,356	\$ 9,106	\$ 9,938	\$ 10,864	\$ 8,740	\$ 47,004
Tuition Remission	\$ 20,460	\$ 21,278	\$ 22,130	\$ 23,014	\$ 23,936	\$ 110,818
Facilities and Admin*	\$ 24,158	\$ 25,013	\$ 25,908	\$ 26,849	\$ 22,019	\$ 123,947
Total Labor Costs	\$ 137,534	\$ 142,494	\$ 147,686	\$ 153,128	\$ 130,645	\$ 711,486
Expenses						
Equipment	\$ 74,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 74,000
Travel	\$ 23,740	\$ 24,452	\$ 25,186	\$ 25,941	\$ 9,432	\$ 108,751
Supplies	\$ 15,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 40,000
Other	\$ 102,500	\$ 44,500	\$ 23,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 1,500	\$ 174,500
Rent	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	\$ 8,000
Facilities and Admin**	\$ 36,722	\$ 20,528	\$ 13,828	\$ 8,825	\$ 4,142	\$ 84,045
Total Expenses	\$ 253,962	\$ 101,480	\$ 69,014	\$ 44,766	\$ 20,074	\$ 489,296
TOTAL BUDGET	\$ 391,497	\$ 243,973	\$ 216,700	\$ 197,894	\$ 150,719	\$ 1,200,783

*26% of Labor Subtotal & Fringe Benefits

**26% of Travel, Supplies, and Other



Revised Budget

CATEGORY	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	
	(21-22)	(22-23)	(23-24)	(24-25)	(25-26)	TOTAL
Labor						
Ph.D. Student	\$15,000	\$30,900	\$31,827	\$32,782	\$33,765	\$144,274
Master's Student	\$12,500	\$25,750	\$26,523	\$13,659	\$0	\$78,432
Research Technologist	\$7,000	\$7,210	\$7,426	\$22,947	\$47,271	\$91,854
Field Technicians	\$22,560	\$23,237	\$23,934	\$24,652	\$14,046	\$108,429
Labor Subtotal	\$57,060	\$87,097	\$89,710	\$94,040	\$95,082	\$422,989
Fringe Benefits	\$5,578	\$9,106	\$9,938	\$15,032	\$23,278	\$62,932
Tuition Remission	\$10,230	\$21,278	\$22,130	\$17,261	\$11,968	\$82,867
Facilities and Admin*	\$16,286	\$25,013	\$25,908	\$28,359	\$30,774	\$126,340
Total Labor Costs	\$89,154	\$142,494	\$147,686	\$154,692	\$161,102	\$695,128
Expenses						
Equipment	\$74,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$74,000
Travel	\$23,740	\$24,452	\$25,186	\$25,941	\$9,432	\$108,751
Supplies	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$40,000
Other	\$102,500	\$44,500	\$23,000	\$3,000	\$1,500	\$174,500
Rent	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$ -	\$8,000
Facilities and Admin**	\$36,722	\$20,528	\$13,828	\$8,825	\$4,142	\$84,045
Total Expenses	\$253,962	\$101,480	\$69,014	\$44,766	\$20,074	\$489,296
TOTAL BUDGET	\$343,116	\$243,974	\$216,700	\$199,458	\$181,176	\$1,184,424

*26% of Labor Subtotal & Fringe Benefits

**26% of Travel, Supplies, and Other