



PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
Choke Point Workgroup Call
Conference Call Meeting Notes

June 20, 2012

Attendance (all by phone)

Steve Smith, Beorn Courtney – ED Office
Cory Steinke –CNPPID
Jeff Shafer - NPPD
Tom Econopouly – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Pat Goltl – NDNR
Kent Miller – TPNRD
Marian Langan – National Audubon Society (in lieu of Bill Taddicken)

1. Overview (Smith)

- First meeting of the Choke Point Workgroup. Call is scheduled for 1.5 hours.
- Purpose of the meeting to get workgroup input on flood-proofing RFP, and use whatever time remains to discuss engineering options to get to the full 3,000 cfs capacity objective.

2. Flood-Proofing RFP (Smith)

- Three flood-proofing projects were conceived with City Administrator, County Roads, and County emergency manager to protect flood-prone areas. WAC supported spending \$150k for these projects at May meeting. Projects would demonstrate Program efforts towards reducing flood impacts, and may result in increased flood stage to 6.5' (2,380 cfs capacity).
- Smith and Kenny got positive feedback from NWS in a May meeting for potential for these projects to reduce flooding impacts. NWS could potentially raise flood stage if benefits are proven out. However, NWS has since told ED Office their policy requires FS change to be coordinated with local public officials and communicated to partners and general public. MOA is not their policy or practice.
- Three flood-proofing projects were summarized. Smith mentioned that State Channel reactivation was partially achieved already in May this spring after Program-supported deep disking was done.
- Discussed engineering/permitting/surveying SOW with TC Engineering (local N Platte firm), and they gave us cost estimate of \$75k. Put us into category of advertising in RFP.
- RFP addition – Permitting section (Line 190) need to add wetlands inventories where necessary for 404 permitting.
- Workgroup discussion:
 - Cory – maybe extend completion of work date to end of 2013 to allow time to complete permitting.



- Marian Langan – Is there any guarantee with these flood-proofing projects? Steve – none, other than good public perception towards progress.
- Jeff – suggested clarifying that cost will be an evaluation criterion.
- Cory – suggest a mandatory pre-bid meeting to prevent multiple landowner contacts from consultants bidding. Tell consultants that land access will go through EDO. Maybe should do a virtual site tour at pre-proposal meeting.
- WAC motion of support and workgroup supported. Make it clear that WAC didn't know there would be an RFP, but WAC did support hiring consultant to do the work. Steve will send a short email to WAC saying we need RFP.

3. Workgroup Memo (Smith)

- Flood stage may increase to 6.5 (2,380 cfs), but still short of 3,000 cfs objective. Memo describes engineering options to get to 3,000 cfs, and ED Office requests workgroup input on which options to pursue.
- Approaches summarized: first two approaches were explored in PRRIP WMS for SDHFs. Screened out during WMS, but is it worth revisiting these options now that we're considering smaller amounts? Also dredging and sediment collector.
- Workgroup discussion:
 - Tom – does property buyout outline move after flood-proofing projects implemented? Steve will estimate how flood-proofing projects would affect buyout costs. Beorn – even if costs change, we still have a potential willing seller issue.
 - Cory – what about flood easements? ED Office will work with Cory and Drain on easements concept and cost estimate.

4. New Infrastructure around North Platte Choke Point (Smith)

- What type/location of new infrastructure beneficial to PRRIP and NPPD?
- Workgroup discussion:
 - 2009 flow routing spreadsheet assumptions – Shafer thinks assumptions are right, but will confirm with NPPD operations. Cory thinks assumptions are right.
 - Jeff – there was a feasibility study done a few years ago for a potential Sutherland East Reservoir, which may include useful information. However, a new reservoir would not be a quick solution.
 - Jeff – also might be possible to stage Program water in existing Sutherland Reservoir. Could divert using existing Korty or Keystone diversions. But would need a new return to the South Platte. Canals below NPPD hydro were originally sized for 3rd hydro, but would need to extend to river.
 - Cost share – NRD might be interested for depletions offset water. NPPD might want a 3rd generator at North Platte. Might be a cheap option if just building a new return. Couple miles from the river, and would have to go under interstate. Might cost about \$10M for new return, and maybe \$30M to update Paxton Siphon



if additional capacity is needed into Sutherland. Expansion of the Paxton Siphon could potentially be avoided by staging water in Sutherland.

- Beorn – if just use existing Sutherland Reservoir, would any new improvements be needed? Jeff – would need a new outlet gate, and maybe stabilization if need to hold reservoir higher. Jeff needs to check with upper management to see whether NPPD would consider this alternative.

5. Existing Storage on CNPPID's system (Smith)

- Explored in WMS for larger amounts and screened out. But should this be revisited for smaller amounts?
- Up to 2,400 cfs additional capacity (up to 14,000 AF storage) for full 8,000 cfs SDHF.
- Workgroup discussion
 - Cory – Storage capacity is the limiting factor. Little bit more to squeeze, but definitely not another 10,000 AF. Plum Creek Reservoir was studied, but that's very expensive. Elwood Reservoir, but return to river kills us (max couple hundred cfs). Should try to get as much as possible out of NPPD first.

6. Dredging (Smith)

- Focused on Hwy 83 to UPRR Bridge based on biggest benefit per modeling results.
- Main channel dredging provides lowering of channel bed with like amount of benefit to flow stage.
- Workgroup input
 - Pat and Marian – high cost for non-sustainable solution.
 - Pat – maybe more sustainable using structures like bendway weirs being studied by DNR. DNR stateline project is considering weirs made of sand tubes in a reach about a couple hundred meters long. \$54,000 study included 2D hydraulic/sediment transport modeling, surveying, and a physical model.

7. Sediment Collector (Smith)

- Based on Fountain Creek demonstration project and conditions, may be feasible for North Platte. Similar sediment load but finer material, more flow, and wider channel on North Platte River.
- Workgroup discussion
 - Smith recommended a low priority for this option because of similar cost with dredging but higher uncertainty in the outcome. Workgroup agreed.

8. Workgroup Request on Path Forward (All)

- Sediment collector should be shelved for now because cost is comparable with dredging, but outcome is more uncertain.



- Regulating storage in CNPPID’s system should be shelved for now, unless Cory can think of any other way to squeeze out more storage.
- Alternatives that need more information and may want to move forward with are: NPPD system expansion, and dredging with channel structures (e.g., bendway weirs). Also maybe move forward with dredging only alternative, but there are some concerns with sustainability.

9. Next Steps and Action Items (Smith)

- ED Office will email WAC to let them know flood-proofing engineering/surveying will be contracted through RFP process.
- ED Office will edit RFP per workgroup input and ask for FC approval of the RFP next week. Will let them know WAC supported \$150k to complete projects, but that the RFP is new based on an initial cost estimate since the May WAC meeting.
- ED Office will redraw property buyout boundary for scenario where flood-proofing projects are completed, and report back what the revised cost would be.
- ED Office will meet with Mike Drain and Cory regarding flood easements. Workgroup will then discuss whether to consider easements further, including what the process would be (e.g., public meeting). May need to get GC input because of non-willing sellers.
- Jeff will send ED Office the Sutherland East Reservoir Study.
- Jeff will check with NPPD management regarding potential for using Sutherland Reservoir for staging, and what improvements would be needed (e.g., new return and reservoir stabilization).
- ED Office will follow up with Pat regarding stateline bendway weir project, and report back to workgroup on feasibility of combining initial dredging with bendway weirs or jetties (like current DNR stateline project).