



PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (PRRIP or Program)
Finance Committee (FC) Meeting Minutes
November 04, 2019

Finance Committee (FC)

State of Wyoming

Andrea O'Dell – Alternate

State of Colorado

JoJo La – Member

State of Nebraska

Jeff Fassett – Member

Upper Platte Water Users

Dennis Strauch – Member

Downstream Water Users

Mark Czaplewski – Member

Devin Brundage – Member

Executive Director's Office (EDO)

Jason Farnsworth, ED

Chad Smith, DED

Bridget Barron

Dave Baasch

Justin Brei

Scott Griebeling

Tom Smrdel

Tim Tunnell

Seth Turner

Kevin Werbylo

Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)

Brock Merrill – Alternate

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)

Eliza Hines – Member

Tom Econopouly – Alternate

Environmental Entities

N/A

Colorado Water Users

Alan Berryman – Member

Rich Belt – Alternate



Welcome & Administrative

La (Vice Chair, filling in for Beardsley) called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM Central Time and Farnsworth completed a roll call.

FC Decision – *Czaplewski moved to approve the June 27, 2019 FC minutes; O'Dell seconded. Minutes approved.*

PRRIP Cottonwood Ranch (CWR) Land Management

Tunnell discussed the RFQ for perimeter fence repair on the Morse Tract at Cottonwood Ranch. Czaplewski asked about project dates and noted the need to change dates. Tunnell said that change would be made.

FC Decision – *Fassett moved to approve the CWR fence repair RFQ; Czaplewski seconded. RFQ approved.*

PRRIP FY20 Budget & Work Plan

Farnsworth and EDO staff presented the draft FY20 budget line items and work plan descriptions. Group discussion followed:

- Czaplewski – have reservations about Water Coordinator position given where the Program is heading with its water priorities now. The time may have passed for the need for a “water czar”. Barron said that position was a specific request of the Signatories and GC in 2018. Fassett said he echoes Czaplewski on this. He has not noticed any lack of ability or knowledge on staff to get the water work done now, issues now are more water management, water rates, water rights, and state-based items. There needs to be more coordination between the Program and Nebraska but maybe we do not need a Water Coordinator. It is probably best to think about how best to handle this work given new realities.
- Czaplewski – wondering if: 1) day-in and day-out contracts are getting more routine and maybe don't need as much attorney work on those, and 2) if land acquisition is coming down maybe there is less need for attorney fees related to the Program overall. Maybe there is a way to push that amount down a little. There seems to be local attorneys that could be used at a cheaper rate than the estimated \$250/hour. Farnsworth said we will take a hard look at this but \$250/hour is generally the going rate for good attorneys to work on issues like water contracts which is a priority now.
- Czaplewski – seems like moving into the Extension now is the time to look at some of the outreach costs. Not sure we are getting a benefit out of \$25,000 for the time-lapse project for example. Barron said we expect that cost to go down in the future. Czaplewski said it may be time to zero this item out. Farnsworth said they did place two cameras on Cottonwood Ranch that look at the broad-scale recharge project and they have agreed to provide the Program with some production-level results. Econopouly said he saw Forsberg give a presentation at the South Platte Forum and it was really good, we should consider having him give another presentation to the GC.
- La – would the insurance cover the choke point test release? Farnsworth – yes.
- La – recall from the LAC meeting that we need to note when funding will be carried over when invoices will come in later than expected. Sackett said the EDO attempted to address that in the work plan description for LP-7 but will review the text and make it clearer.
- La – will the claim related to the broad-scale recharge project be resolved before the end of this year? Werbylo – we are pushing very hard to make that happen.
- O'Dell – asked if we could consider an up-front cost for water storage contracts to reduce costs by making more periodic payments over time. Farnsworth said that is a great comment and we will explore that option.



- Czaplewski – think about ways to reduce the Special Advisor line item in the Water Budget if at all possible. Turner – we have cut it from the past, will continue to look at whether there can be any further refinement of that line item to bring costs down.
- Fassett – he recalls an endowment for phragmites would have to be something like \$14 million? Farnsworth – on the low side it would need to be about \$12 million. Fassett – is that the size of endowment you are hearing about now? Farnsworth – yes, if the money comes together the endowment could be put together yet this year or next year (non-wasting contributions). O'Dell – have other funding partners been identified? Farnsworth – yes, all the previous contribution partners are working on this. O'Dell – is it appropriate for us to be first on this, and should we be part of creating an endowment that may exist past the Extension or past the life of the Program? Farnsworth – these are good questions we have to get answers to before writing a check. La – not sure what the agreement would be that would be more than just a handshake to make sure everything is memorialized for when current partners retire or move on. The Program also needs to sit on the endowment board if/when it is created.
- Czaplewski – need to step back and make sure we are getting what we need with LiDAR; maybe we don't need summer and fall imagery every single year, for example. Need to think about this as we prepare to enter the Extension and develop a new contract for LiDAR acquisition. Farnsworth and Brei – we will review all this and move it through the TAC to get input on what we really need and how to compare/contrast costs.
- La – is the liability insurance related to whooping crane monitoring separate from insurance in GFC-2? Baasch – yes this is separate insurance for placing temporary technicians in planes to conduct WC monitoring on behalf of the Program.
- La – don't fully understand why this task item PS-1 is in the budget with no expected funds. Fassett – think you can pull it. Farnsworth agreed.
- O'Dell – rates for 2008 SUV charged back to the Program seems high. Farnsworth said we typically charge a standard rate for SUVs and trucks. Czaplewski – maybe you could multiply by four months instead of 12 by items like the airboat when you only use that item for a small number of months. Farnsworth – we don't make money on these items, just try to break even with expenses.
- Czaplewski – need to think about what the ISAC looks like into the Extension and consider possible new members, new areas of expertise, etc. Smith – agree, we commit to having that discussion internally and then with the GC next year to chart a course forward.

Farnsworth said the EDO would be sending out a Doodle poll sometime soon to schedule an FC meeting for early 2020 to deal with several contracts and agreements that need to be re-upped as we enter the Extension and start a new Program calendar year.

Meeting adjourned at 2:07 PM Central Time.

Summary of Action Items/Decisions from November 04, 2019 FC Meeting

- 1) Approved the June 27, 2019 FC minutes.
- 2) Approved the Cottonwood Ranch fence repair RFQ.
- 3) Discussed the draft FY2020 PRRIP budget and work plan.