



PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (PRRIP or Program)
Finance Committee (FC) Virtual Meeting Minutes
May 27, 2020

Finance Committee (FC)

State of Wyoming

Harry LaBonde – Member

Brandon Gebhardt – Alternate

Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)

Brock Merrill – Alternate

State of Colorado

JoJo La – Member (Vice Chair)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)

Tom Econopouly – Member

Matt Rabbe – Alternate

State of Nebraska

Jesse Bradley – Member

Environmental Entities

John Denton – Member

Upper Platte Water Users

Dennis Strauch – Member

Colorado Water Users

Alan Berryman – Member

Rich Belt – Member

Downstream Water Users

Devin Brundage – Member

Executive Director's Office (EDO)

Jason Farnsworth, ED

Justin Brei

Chad Smith



WELCOME & ADMINISTRATIVE

Introductions – La (Vice Chair) called the meeting to order at 3:02 PM Central Time. Smith noted the WebEx participant list would be used to identify meeting attendees.

Agenda – No modifications.

FC Structure – La mentioned the departure of Chris Beardsley from Reclamation because of his promotion. La had talked to several FC members about how to handle the roles of Chair and Vice Chair for the rest of 2020.

FC Motion: *Labonde moved and Merrill seconded to promote La to 2020 Chair and nominated Gebhardt to serve as 2020 Vice Chair. Appointment approved.*

Farnsworth discussed the FC Charter from the Program Document and FC membership and structure for the remainder of the Extension. The FC is different because it can take binding action on behalf of the Program and it is not a general committee where every single person participates as they do on the Governance Committee (GC). The GC has several members. Farnsworth asked the various Water Users from the Program to talk offline and determine who would serve as the one Water User representative member and the one Water User representative alternate on the FC as identified in the Charter. La asked if we should set a deadline for that input. Farnsworth asked for that information to be submitted at some point before the June 10, 2020 GC Virtual Quarterly Meeting.

Farnsworth said to have a quorum the FC needs to have all three States present as well as representatives from both Reclamation and the Service. Econopouly said for the Service he would be the member and Rabbe would be the alternate.

Minutes – **FC Motion:** *Gebhardt moved and Econopouly seconded to approve the February 05, 2020 FC minutes. Minutes approved.*

FC Action Item Table – Farnsworth noted the three items in the Action Item Table to be discussed during the FC today.

REMOTE SENSING DATA COLLECTION

Quantum Contract – Brei discussed the results of the competitive selection process for this RFP. Three proposal were submitted, Quantum was the winner and is the current service provider. Quantum was the low bidder. The EDO put together a four-year contract with annual approval by the FC based on PRRIP Fiscal Year budget approved and available and the necessary Scope of Work. Half of the billing for the fall data acquisition flight in November will not be billed until 2021 so the FY2021 request will reflect that staggered billing.

FC Motion: *LaBonde moved and Bradley seconded to approve the Quantum contract for remote sensing data collection. Contract approved.*



SURFACE WATER LEASING

NPPD and CPNRD – Farnsworth said he would talk about both agreements simultaneously; they are separate agreements but are for the same things in terms of how the agreements work. This is the third or fourth year for the CPNRD version and the second year for the NPPD version. Water under these agreements is placed into the Environmental Account (EA) and the Program pays for that water on a per acre-foot basis. There is just a place-holder in the Program budget for these projects, they will be brought to the GC in June to ask for GC approval of the agreements and simultaneously as the GC to approve FY2020 budget modifications for the agreements.

PRRIP INDEXING

Final Indexing Proposal – Merrill discussed the process leading to the proposed method to complete indexing for the Extension. It does look different than the previous indexing process for the First Increment. Instead of three categories, the proposal does away with the Land category and the Other category (because it included federal salaries that are not indexed for inflation). All Program costs will be included in one calculation making the process easier. La said the Colorado money situation is a little different now related to severance tax issues. Merrill said the States and Reclamation will need to keep an eye on expenditures and appropriations. The Program will spend more than the appropriation this year because of cash carried over from the First Increment. Indexing expenditures have to be limited to what has been appropriated and obligated and we do not want to limit the buying power of our dollar. This means making sure we keep things even by focusing on the cost share ratio. This will not really be an issue until about Year 6 or Year 7 of the Extension when most of our water is acquired and expenditures start to slow down.

Farnsworth asked Merrill to remind the FC what happens with unexpended First Increment funding. Merrill said it is not adjusted it is just sitting there. For Colorado, they can put their interest income for contributions in the future.

FC Motion: *Gebhardt moved and Strauch seconded to recommend the GC concur with the Final Indexing Proposal for the Extension. Motion approved.*

FC MEETING REVIEW & WRAP-UP

La discussed action items from the meeting. Smith asked for feedback on the new agenda format. La said she appreciated the new format and found it helpful but will take a little bit of time to get used to.

La asked about what the impacts of COVID-19 might be on the Program budget and operations. Farnsworth said the biggest challenge we have had relates to implementation. The EDO had to make some adjustments to how we handled Spring 2020 whooping crane monitoring (flights, biologists conducting monitoring, etc.). There has been some urgency from Program contractors asking for bills to be paid as quickly as possible. The Program disbursement and payment process has never been speedy but thanks to Merrill and the other Signatories we have moved this to a paperless process and the electronic approval process has really sped things up. Otherwise, we have not had any significant impacts in getting Program work done.

The next FC meeting will be set via Doodle poll when items accumulate that need to be discussed by the FC.



Meeting adjourned at 3:46 PM Central Time.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS/DECISIONS FROM MAY 27, 2020 FC MEETING

- 1) Appointed La as 2020 FC Chair and Gebhardt as 2020 FC Vice Chair.
- 2) Directed the Water Users to identify their joint Member and Alternate for the FC.
- 3) Approved the February 05, 2020 FC meeting minutes.
- 4) Approved the Quantum contract for remote sensing data collection.
- 5) Recommended the GC concur with the Final Indexing Proposal for the Extension.