**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**

**Land Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

**no QUORUM – informal meeting**

**Teams Conference Call**

**September 1, 2021**

**Meeting Participants**

**Land Advisory Committee (LAC)**

**State of Wyoming**

Jay Smith, Alternate, Wyoming State Engineer’s Office

**State of Colorado**

JoJo La – Member, Colorado Water Conservation Board

**State of Nebraska**

Ted LaGrange – Member, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission

Elizabeth Esseks, Nebraska

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)**

Matt Rabbe – Member, USFWS

**U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBOR)**

Brock Merrill – Member, USBOR

**Power Districts**

Dave Zorn – (Chair) Member, Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District

John Shadle – Member, Nebraska Public Power District

**Environmental Entities**

Josh Wiese - Alternate Crane Trust

Melissa Moser – Member, Audubon Rowe Sanctuary

Cody Miller – The Nature Conservancy

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

None

**Local Nebraska Rep. – Tri-Basin Natural Resources District (TBNRD)**

None

**Local Nebraska Rep. – Joint CPNRD/TBNRD**

None

**Executive Director’s Office (EDO)**

Tim Tunnell

Jason Farnsworth

**Other Participants**

None

**Welcome and Administrative**

Chairman Zorn called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm Central Time and the group proceeded without introductions. Zorn asked for agenda modifications. None were offered.

Zorn asked for the LAC’s recommendation on the minutes of the April 5, 2021, LAC meeting.

None were offered, no discussion, and were not approved as there was not a quorum of LAC members in attendance.

**General Update and Other Committee Coordination**

Merrill updated LAC on the activities of the TAC. Last met on July 14, 2021 and talked about the island tree clearing on the main channel of the Speidell tract, discussed the spring 2021 WC season and report, reviewed the 2021 LT/PP Predator management actions and monitoring effort, and then discussed the Pallid sturgeon research project with UNL and UNI. TAC next meeting will be October 13, 2021. Farnsworth provided GC update. Next GC is September 14- 15 in Kearney at the Younes Conference Center and online. Main items of discussion will be the Adaptive Management Working Group’s progress on updating the Program’s Extension Science Plan, discussion on how the Program addresses species of concern, and land updates. Farnsworth updated the LAC on the activities of the WAC. Basin is in drought this year. It is the first time since 2009 that we received no water from the municipal lease at Pathfinder Reservoir, usually 4–5,000-acre feet and up to 9,000-acre feet. EA is in good shape and using water in a wise, targeted way. Tunnell provide quick update on Land Objective status in which there has been no change since last LAC meeting.

**Land Management Update**

Tunnell updated the LAC on 2021 work items:

* No Rx fire in the2021 spring season due to contractor unable to mobilize a crew due to COVID.
* Cottonwood Ranch broad-scale recharge project fencing is complete and will work with NPPD for grazing in 2022 and beyond.
* Map & drone footage of progress to date on the tree clearing and disking at the 2021 Chapman Complex Habitat Enhancement work.

**Land Reviews**

Tunnell gave background of the Tract 2103 offering from the landowner to the Program. Rabbe discussed the topic of management agreements and how they contribute to the 1,500-acre plus- up land objective in the Extension. Tract 2103 discussion will be during the upcoming GC meeting and Rabbe will present the Service’s viewpoint of the tract. La brought-up discussion about land acres and requested a copy of the Platte River Management joint study and asked if the study provided land objectives, guidelines, or advice for management agreements. Rabbe clarified that differences between management agreements and long-term land objectives are different topics. Farnsworth sent a link to Platte River Management joint study to La. Farnsworth discussed that in the mock negotiation or policy framework for the Second Increment, there is a need to take an inventory of all the conservation lands in the AHR and identify gaps from a species perspective. This should be done in the next 5-6 years and identify the long-term goal is appropriate and provide clarity on what does and does not count. Tunnell and Farnsworth provided updates on other offerings and management agreements that are in various stages of negotiations following Bruce Sackett’s retirement in August.

**Public Forum**

Chairman Zorn asked for public comments, none were offered.

**The next LAC meeting is planned for mid to late October 2021. A Doodle Poll will be sent to the committee members for the best date.**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Zorn at 2:16 p.m.