



PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
Land Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Kearney, NE
May 27, 2015

Meeting Participants

Land Advisory Committee (LAC)

State of Wyoming

Matt Hoobler – Alternate, Wyoming State Engineer's Office

State of Colorado

Suzanne Sellers – Member, Colorado Water Conservation Board

State of Nebraska

Ted LaGrange – Member, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

Matt Rabbe – Member, USFWS

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBOR)

Brock Merrill – Member, USBOR

Power Districts

John Shadle – Member, Nebraska Public Power District (by phone)

Environmental Entities

Andrew Pierson – Member, Audubon Rowe Sanctuary

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

Mark Czaplewski – Member (Chair), CPNRD

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

Larry Reynolds – Member, TBNRD Landowner
Dave Raffety – Alternate, TBNRD Landowner

Local Nebraska Rep. – Joint CPNRD/TBNRD

John Thorburn – Member, TBNRD

Executive Director's Office (EDO)

Bruce Sackett
Justin Brei
Jason Farnsworth
Tim Tunnell

Other Participants

Justin Haahr, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission



1 **Welcome and Administrative**

2 Chairman Czaplewski called the meeting to order at 9:30 am Central Time and the group
3 proceeded with introductions.

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5 Czaplewski asked for agenda modifications, none were requested.

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7 Czaplewski asked for the LAC's recommendation on the minutes of the March 31, 2015
8 meeting.

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10 **Merrill made a motion to approve the minutes from March 31, 2015 LAC meeting. The**
11 **motion was seconded by LaGrange and passed unanimously.**

12 **GC Update and Other Committee Coordination Information**

13 *GC Update*

14 The GC has not yet met since the last LAC meeting.

15 The next GC meeting is June 9-10, 2015 in Cheyenne, WY.

16
17 *Other Committee Coordination*

18 Sellers updated the LAC on recent TAC activities. The TAC met May 11 in Ogallala, NE. They
19 reviewed and recommended GC approval of a tern and plover breeding pair manuscript.
20 Additionally, they discussed and approved the revised whooping crane monitoring protocol. At
21 the last GC meeting, the TAC was requested to discuss the possibility of reassigning some non-
22 complex acres, currently designated for palustrine wetlands, for acquisition of additional off-
23 channel sand and water areas. The TAC's recommendation is not to give up on wetlands
24 altogether, but the Program should seek and consider additional off-channel sand and water sites.

25
26 Sellers then updated the LAC on recent WAC activities. The WAC met on May 12 in Ogallala,
27 NE. The J-2 Reservoir is progressing with permitting activities and land acquisition discussions.
28 One property has been acquired by CNPPID so far. The WAC was also updated on the North
29 Platte Chokepoint progress. The next option to be considered for the chokepoint may involve
30 approaching landowners in the area to purchase agreements similar to flood easements.

31
32 Reynolds said that CNPPID has said that the PRRIP has not discussed the willing-seller willing-
33 buyer means of acquiring property with them. Sellers said that this has indeed been discussed at
34 the GC in the past, and that ultimately the PRRIP is leasing the J-2 water from CNPPID, and that
35 CNPPID is responsible for land acquisition, construction, ownership, and operations of the
36 reservoir. Both CNPPID and the GC would of course prefer that property is acquired through
37 willing sellers. Reynolds asked if taxes would be paid on the land. Sackett said the GC has
38 committed to making the counties whole for any lost property taxes, and referred Reynolds to the
39 September 2014 GC meeting discussion.

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43 Reynolds asked what the Program's target flow was through the North Platte chokepoint area.
44 Brei said that the target is 3,000 cfs, which currently equates to a stage of under 7 feet. Current
45 minor flood stage is 6.0 ft.
46
47 Reynolds asked if PRRIP has had success so far with in-channel tern and plover nesting. Baasch
48 said that success so far has been limited, but we have dealt with both high and low water
49 extremes over the last 3-4 years. Reynolds asked if PRRIP has considered abandoning in-
50 channel nesting. Farnsworth said that the GC has committed to certain activities through the first
51 increment of the Program, and has not yet discussed changes to in-channel habitat. PRRIP only
52 begun creating in-channel habitat in 2013.

53
54 **Recommendation for 2015 and forward Work Plans**

55 Farnsworth gave the LAC an update on the status and plan for completion of new management
56 plans and 5-year management plan updates. The TAC is still working to finalize and approve
57 results of data analysis and formation of habitat objectives. Initial targets will likely include
58 creation of channel widths of at least 600 feet and unforested widths of an additional 200 feet
59 from the river bank. PRRIP already meets or exceeds this at several locations, so sweeping
60 changes are not expected. The EDO will produce drafts of plans and updates based on the
61 existing templates over the next few months. The LAC should expect to start seeing drafts in the
62 August-September timeframe.

63
64 **Work in Progress Update**

65 Tunnell distributed the Work in Progress handout and gave the LAC the tract-by-tract update of
66 upcoming work and work that has been completed to-date.

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68 **Public Forum**

69 Chairman Czaplewski asked for public comments, none were offered.

70
71 **Closing Business**

72 **The next meeting was scheduled for August 12, 2015 at 9:30 a.m. central time.**

73
74 With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Czaplewski at 11:12 a.m.