



**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (PRRIP -or- Program)**

**Governance Committee (GC) Virtual Special Session**

Wednesday, November 8, 2023; 10:00 AM-12:00 PM Central Time

Tom Riley, State of Nebraska – 2023 GC Chair

Jason Farnsworth, PRRIP Executive Director (ED) – Moderator

PRRIP GC Special Session Attendees Wednesday, November 8, 2023		
Name	Affiliation	Member or Alternate
<b>Department of the Interior</b>		
Brock Merrill	Bureau of Reclamation (USBR)	Member
Mark Porath	USFWS	Alternate
<b>State of Wyoming</b>		
Brandon Gebhart	Wyoming State Engineer	Member
<b>State of Colorado</b>		
Amy Ostdiek	Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB)	Member
Emily Zmak	CWCB	Alternate
Kara Scheel	CWCB	Alternate
<b>State of Nebraska</b>		
Tom Riley	Department of Natural Resources (DNR) – 2023 Chair	Member
Caitlin Kingsley	DNR	Alternate
<b>Upper Platte Water Users</b>		
Bob Mehling	Goshen Irrigation District	Alternate
<b>Colorado Water Users</b>		
Jason Marks	Denver Water	Alternate
<b>Downstream Water Users</b>		
Devin Brundage	Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District (CNPPID)	Member
Jeff Shafer	Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD)	Alternate
Brandi Flyr	Central Platte Natural Resources District (CPNRD)	Alternate
<b>Environmental Entities</b>		
Melissa Mosier	Audubon Nebraska	Member
<b>Executive Director’s Office (EDO)</b>		
Jason Farnsworth, BCES	Executive Director	
Chadwin Smith, Ph.D.	Science Policy Coordinator	
Tim Tunnell, M.S.	Land Plan Coordinator	
Seth Turner, P.E.	Water Plan Coordinator	
Malinda Henry, Ph.D.	Science Plan Coordinator	
Justin Brei, P.E.	Engineering/Colorado Coordinator	



<b>#1 WELCOME &amp; ADMINISTRATIVE</b>	<b>Agenda Item Objective:</b> Greetings, roll call, review agenda.
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8 **Introduction** – Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM Central Time. The Teams  
 9 participation list will be used to record meeting attendees.

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 11 **Agenda** – Two items to add:

- 12 1) Announcement from CO about contributed funding – Ostdiek announced that CO recently
- 13 transferred \$19M to the NCF as Colorado’s final funding contribution for the Extension.
- 14 2) Potential federal government shutdown – Farnsworth said there is talk of a potential federal
- 15 government shutdown around November 17, 2023. The PRRIP got GC approval earlier this year to
- 16 spend only state funds in the event of a shutdown and wanted to asked the GC how to proceed with
- 17 this authorization (new vote today or extend previous authorization). Riley suggested extending the
- 18 previous authorization (30 days from the date of the shutdown). The GC agreed.
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<b>#2 PRRIP FY24 BUDGET</b>	<b>Agenda Item Objective:</b> Group discussion of draft FY24 budget, work plan, and EDO contract.
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20 Farnsworth summarized the proposed budget for PRRIP administration line items in FY24, including ED-1  
 21 and the draft 2024-2028 PRRIP EDO Contract for Headwaters; Tunnell summarized the proposed budget  
 22 for PRRIP Land Plan line items in FY24; Turner summarized the proposed budget for PRRIP Water Plan  
 23 line items in FY24; and Henry summarized the proposed budget for PRRIP Science Plan line items in  
 24 FY24. General GC discussion:

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- 26 • Riley – some of the proposed changes in the structure of the Headwaters contact, the ED-1 budget
- 27 line item, etc. directed by Signatories to reduce Program costs shouldered by Headwaters.
- 28 • Riley – direct cost/rate comparisons with other firms not totally 1:1 because this is a five-year
- 29 contract with several people working full time on the Program; Farnsworth – agree, I will talk shortly
- 30 about this in more detail but because of our high utilization we cannot credibly charge the Program
- 31 the exact same rates as the Program pays for other contractors. This results in Headwaters charging
- 32 rates that are about 35% less than market rates for similar rate categories/areas of expertise as we
- 33 see now being charged by other firms in 2023.
- 34 • Gebhart – will you include a rate sheet? Farnsworth – yes, it is included as Exhibit B.
- 35 • Gebhart – how will you handle cost escalation? Farnsworth – we will deal with that by going through
- 36 this annual process with the GC, detailing any proposed cost escalations for inflation, cost of living,
- 37 etc. and it will be up the GC to evaluate and approve any possible cost increases from year to year.
- 38 • Mosier – worked on the Outreach issue with Alicia Uribe (EDO) this year, I would support adding a
- 39 bit to this budget line item to give Uribe the ability to explore some other opportunities to be
- 40 flexible with the focus of PRRIP outreach work. Farnsworth said we would likely use such funding to
- 41 put out an RFP to get some professional help to dig into additional outreach opportunities. Riley said
- 42 the PRRIP is more mature and we need to think beyond some of the usual actions to anchor on what
- 43 we want people to know about the PRRIP, who are those people (right audiences), etc. Farnsworth
- 44 said we can propose some additional funding for this line item that would be subject to GC review
- 45 and approval in 2024 before spending any of the funds. Riley asked Mosier and any others with
- 46 interest to do some more thinking on this issue and provide more input at the December GC
- 47 meeting.
- 48 • Riley – whose weather stations are those (PRRIP budget line item WPWM-1)? Turner – Nebraska
- 49 MESONET stations.



- 50 • Brundage – what do the recapture wells average out to for a price per acre foot? Turner – not sure
- 51 off the top of my head but a low unit cost for that pumped water compared to other water projects.
- 52 • Riley – the evaluation of passive alternatives for sediment augmentation is exactly what I was
- 53 looking for when this was discussed in June at the GC meeting.
- 54 • Riley – not sure how stage gage data can be integrated with camera data for monitoring vegetation
- 55 response to inundation but should pair all cameras with stage gages to help with this. Also, some
- 56 work being done at UNL with machine learning to develop a stage rating curve from gages and
- 57 cameras, would be a worth a call to Troy Gilmore (East Campus). NDNR is deploying some additional
- 58 data collection gages too so maybe there can be some co-location and synergies between these
- 59 efforts. Riley asked Henry to send him where these sites are at, Henry agreed.
- 60 • Riley – what beaver control are we doing? Would like some more information on this. Farnsworth –
- 61 we have had issues with the State Channel at North Platte (the low flow culvert through the berm,
- 62 beavers plug it up), also some problems around recapture well sites.
- 63 • Riley – publications should come through the TAC and WAC and get those committees to guide what
- 64 is actually published by the PRRIP.
- 65 • Riley – re-organizing the budget is a good idea and we should continue to talk about how to do this
- 66 as we get into building the FY25 budget next year.
- 67 • Porath – agree that the re-organized budget would be a good approach and would be helpful in
- 68 thinking about how to plan for the Second Increment. Also, would be helpful to identify items that
- 69 have been previously recommended or approved by the GC, TAC, etc. in the budget and work plan
- 70 just to remind people which items are proposed or recommended by the EDO vs. items that have
- 71 previous commitments.
- 72 • Gebhart – appreciate the work the EDO did to update the draft contract, the structure of that
- 73 contract, and the re-organized budget approach.

<b>#3</b>	<b>GC MEETING REVIEW &amp; WRAP-UP</b>	<b>Agenda Item Objective:</b> Discuss action items, meeting feedback, and upcoming meeting schedule.
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75 Action Items and Meeting Feedback –None offered.

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77 **Upcoming GC meetings:**

- 78 • December 2023 GC Quarterly Meeting – December 5-6, 2023 @ *Berthoud, CO*

<b>GC MEETING END</b>	<b>11:39 AM Central Time</b>
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81 **Summary of Action Items/Decisions from November 2023 GC Special Session**

- 82 1) Agreed to extend the authorization for the PRRIP to spend only state funds for up to 30 days in the
- 83 event of a federal government shutdown.