



- 1 **PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (PRRIP -or- Program)**
- 2 **Governance Committee (GC) Quarterly Meeting – Berthoud, CO**
- 3 Northern Water Campus
- 4 *Tuesday, December 5, 2023 & Wednesday, December 6, 2023*
- 5 Tom Riley, State of Nebraska – 2023 GC Chair
- 6 Jason Farnsworth, PRRIP Executive Director (ED) – Moderator
- 7

PRRIP Governance Committee (GC) Meeting Attendees Day #1 – Tuesday, December 5, 2023		
Name	Affiliation	Member or Alternate
Department of the Interior		
Brock Merrill	Bureau of Reclamation (USBR)	Member
Mark Porath	USFWS	Alternate
Matt Rabbe	USFWS	Alternate
State of Wyoming		
Jason Mead	Wyoming Water Development Office	Alternate
State of Colorado		
Amy Ostdiek	Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) (virtual)	Member
Emily Zmak	CWCB	Alternate
Kara Scheel	CWCB	Alternate
State of Nebraska		
Tom Riley	Department of Natural Resources (DNR) – 2023 Chair	Member
Jennifer Schellpeper	DNR	Alternate
Upper Platte Water Users		
Dennis Strauch	Pathfinder Irrigation District	Member
Bob Mehling	Goshen Irrigation District (virtual)	Alternate
Owen Williams	Upper Platte Water Users Association (virtual)	Alternate
Colorado Water Users		
Kyle Whitaker	Northern Water	Member
Jason Marks	Denver Water	Alternate
Deb Freeman	Trout Raley	Alternate
Downstream Water Users		
Devin Brundage	Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District (CNPPID)	Member
Kent Miller	Twin Platte Natural Resources District (TPNRD)	Member
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Environmental Entities		
Rich Walters	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)	Member
Brice Krohn	The Crane Trust	Member
Melissa Mosier	Audubon Nebraska (virtual)	Member



Executive Director’s Office (EDO)	
Jason Farnsworth, BCES	Executive Director
Chadwin Smith, Ph.D.	Science Policy Coordinator
Tim Tunnell, M.S.	Land Plan Coordinator (virtual)
Seth Turner, P.E.	Water Plan Coordinator
Malinda Henry, Ph.D.	Science Plan Coordinator
Justin Brei, P.E.	Engineering/Colorado Coordinator
Alicia Uribe, B.S.	Executive Office Manager (virtual)
Patrick Farrell, M.S.	Statistical Ecologist (virtual)
Jason Bruggeman, Ph.D.	Species Monitoring Coordinator (virtual)
Mallory Jaymes, M.S.	Wildlife Biologist (virtual)
Kristen Cognac, Ph.D.	Hydrogeologist (virtual)
Ed Weschler, E.I.T.	Junior Civil Engineer
Libby Casavant, P.E.	Hydraulic Engineer (virtual)
Other Participants	
Jennifer Hoeting, Ph.D.	Independent Scientific Advisory Committee (ISAC) (virtual)
Justin Levene	NE Attorney General’s Office
Mike Drain	CNPPID
Caitlin Kingsley	Nebraska DNR
Ryan Kelly	Nebraska DNR
Rich Belt	SPWRAP
Cory Steinke	CNPPID (virtual)
Dave Zorn	CNPPID (virtual)
Jeff Shafer	NPPD
Jim Jenniges	NPPD
Andy Nicewicz	CO Attorney General’s Office

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#1	WELCOME & ADMINISTRATIVE	<i>Agenda Item Objective:</i> Greetings, roll call, review agenda.
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9 **Introduction** – Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM Mountain Time. The in-person and
 10 virtual groups proceeded with introductions.

11
 12 **Agenda** – No modifications offered.

13
 14 **Minutes:**

15 **GC MOTION:** *Brundage moved and Ostdiek seconded to approve the September 2023 GC Quarterly*
 16 *Meeting minutes. Minutes approved.*

17
 18 **GC MOTION:** *Merrill moved and Strauch seconded to approve the November 2023 GC Virtual Special*
 19 *Session minutes. Minutes approved.*



#2 COMMITTEE UPDATES	Agenda Item Objective: General update on recent work of PRRIP Advisory Committees.
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20 **Land Advisory Committee (LAC)** – Wagner provided an update on the latest LAC activities. The LAC last
 21 met on October 18. The LAC received an update on 2023 land management activities and plans for 2024;
 22 discussed the land restoration and management framework; discussion on re-classifying three of the
 23 Water Tracts; approved the 2024 Land Budget.

24
 25 **Water Advisory Committee (WAC)** – Turner provided an update on the latest WAC activities. The WAC
 26 last met on October 24. The WAC discussed the North Platte Chokepoint study; the Expanded Recapture
 27 Study; the 2024 EA AOP; recent operations at recapture projects (cumulative recapture for the year is
 28 2,768 acre-feet and delivered 2,300 acre-feet to Cottonwood Ranch); and discussed the Wyoming
 29 Property flow split project.

30
 31 **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** – Scheel provided an update on the latest TAC activities. The TAC
 32 last met on October 10 with the ISAC. The TAC discussed the Wet Meadow Hydrology Report Peer
 33 Review panel; land management framework; update on whooping crane (WC) telemetry work; plan for
 34 tern/plover predator monitoring; a long discussion about sediment augmentation; and the FY24 science
 35 budget.

36
 37 **Finance Committee (FC)** – Merrill provided an update on the latest FC activities. The FC last met on
 38 November 2. The FC discussed some items related to peer review; RFQ for tree removal; RFQ for
 39 demolition of the lodge at the Cook-Dyer Property.

#3 OUTREACH UPDATE	Agenda Item Objective: General update on PRRIP outreach activities.
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 41 Uribe provided an update on the latest PRRIP outreach activities.

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 43 **PRESENTATIONS:**

- 44 • *Jonathan Wentz* (PRRIP EDO) represented the Program at the Leadership Kearney: Ag, Energy, and
 45 Environment Day on October 11th, 2023, at the Rowe Sanctuary. He provided participants with
 46 information on Program target species, land, and water management.
- 47 • *Jason Farnsworth* presented on structure and history of PRRIP to The Nature Conservancy staff
 48 meeting on October 25th, 2023.
- 49 • *Ed Heist* (*Southern Illinois University*), *Mark Pegg* and *Jon Spurgeon* (*University of Nebraska Lincoln*)
 50 contributed information presented by *Aaron Deonay*¹ and *Kimberly Chojnacki*¹ at the Missouri River
 51 Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC), Lower Basin Fish – Fall Science Meeting, November
 52 1st, 2023
- 53 • Progress Report: Telemetry Advances for Lower Missouri River Population Assessment, Effectiveness
 54 Monitoring, and Research and Updated Results (2023).
- 55 • *Ed Heist*, *Southern Illinois University*, presented a Progress Report on Genetic Analyses at the
 56 Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC), Lower Basin Fish – Fall Science
 57 Meeting on November 1st, 2023.

58
 59 **EXHIBITS/SPONSORSHIPS:**

- 60 • *Seth Turner* and *Justin Brei* exhibited at the South Platte Forum in Greeley, CO on November 30th,
 61 2023.



62 **MEDIA COVERAGE/OTHER:**

63 n/a

64
65 **UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS/EXHIBITS/SPONSORSHIPS:**

- 66 • *Jason Bruggeman* (PRRIP EDO) will be giving a presentation at the Nebraska Association of County
67 Officials Conference on December 13 – 14th, 2023 about the Phragmites research being conducted
68 by the Program to monitor Phragmites response to June channel inundation and spring and fall
69 herbicide application.
- 70 • *Chris Pullano*, Mark Pegg, Jonathan Spurgeon will be giving a presentation at the 84th Midwest Fish
71 and Wildlife Conference in Sioux Falls, SD on Jan 30th, 2024, entitled Between the Braids: Evaluation
72 of Acoustic Telemetry Detection Range in the Lower Platte River, Nebraska.

73
74 Riley asked the GC to continue thinking about PRRIP outreach activities and asked for input to keep
75 coming in related to this work.

#4	PRRIP FY23 BUDGET	Agenda Item Objective: General update on current status of FY23 budget.
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77 Farnsworth provided a status update on the FY23 budget. All expenditures this year were Extension
78 cash, we will likely flip back to spending First Increment cash for a few months in 2024.

#5	PRRIP FY24 BUDGET	Agenda Item Objective: Discuss/approve FY24 Budget, FY24 Work Plan, and 2024-2028 EDO Contract; discuss Procurement Policy reporting for the coming year and GC action items.
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80 **PRRIP FY24 Budget, Work Plan, & EDO Contract** – Farnsworth summarized the PRRIP FY24 budget and
81 work plan, and the 2024-2028 PRRIP EDO Contract for Headwaters. The budget in front of the GC today
82 is \$25,000 more than the version of the budget discussed with the GC in November. That is due to an
83 increase of \$25,000 in the PRRIP outreach line item as per direction of the GC. All other line items are
84 the same as discussed in November.

85
86 Riley asked about equipment, computers, and other items and how those will be dealt with going
87 forward. Farnsworth said the Program will be charged mileage and basic expenses for vehicles and
88 equipment which is more traditional. Computers and office equipment will be purchased and owned by
89 Headwaters. Marks asked if there has always been multi-year contracts for the EDO. Farnsworth said
90 initially contracts were year-to-year, but the first five-year contract started in 2019 (2019-2023).

91
92 **GC MOTION:** *Mead moved and Walters seconded to approve the PRRIP FY24 Budget & Work Plan.*
93 Budget and Work Plan approved.

94 **GC MOTION:** *Shadle moved and Ostdiek seconded to approve the 2024-2028 PRRIP EDO Contract for*
95 *Headwaters Corporation.* Contract approved.

96
97 **PRRIP FY24 Procurement** – Smith summarized projected FY24 budget items related to the PRRIP
98 Procurement Policy.

99
100 **PD-8: Program Website and Database** – Brei summarized the 2024 contract for DJ Case to provide
101 PRRIP website and database services. Riley asked how data is backed up. Brei said all website
102 information is backed up in the cloud through Amazon Web Services. Species data and other Program
103 data is kept on servers in Lakewood and Kearney that the EDO maintains on behalf of the Program.



104 **GC MOTION:** *Ostdiek moved and Merrill seconded to approve the 2024 DJ Case contract. Contract*
105 *approved.*

#6	PRRIP SCIENCE PLAN	Agenda Item Objective: Discuss recent Science Plan implementation activities.
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107 **Whooping Crane (WC) Monitoring:**

108 Jaymes summarized highlight results of fall 2023 WC monitoring. The first observation was October 29.
109 New stay length for a pair of birds at 37 days. 512 crane use days so far in fall 2023 (522 crane use days
110 is the all-time record), and we observed longer stay lengths than usual. Marks asked about stay lengths
111 – is that a good thing or a bad thing? Jaymes said it suggests they are getting what they need and stay
112 because they have no reason to leave.

113
114 **GC MOTION:** *Vogt moved and Krohn seconded to approve the 2024 WC Monitoring RFB. RFP approved.*
115

116 **WC Telemetry Data Request:**

117 Henry summarized the status of securing additional WC telemetry data for use in Program analysis.
118 Freeman asked why the Telemetry Tracking Partnership will not share the full set of data. Henry said the
119 Partnership said to share the full dataset they will want to collaborate with the Program and they cannot
120 do so because Pearse is an existing PRRIP ISAC member. Farnsworth said the main issue would be the
121 conflict with collaborating with the Partnership with Aaron Pearse as an existing ISAC member. Vogt
122 asked if we are paying for data that we cannot access. Farnsworth said we are not contributing money
123 to this version of the telemetry work. Rabbe said the data is being housed in Canada now to protect it
124 from FOIAs and other data requests that led to data being using incorrectly during the first collection of
125 telemetry data. Rabbe said this is not unique to the Program. Krohn said the Crane Trust does not have
126 access to more data than the Program will get. Henry said Pearse presented on a paper that has been
127 submitted for publication related to the importance of rivers for WC stopovers during drought, so there
128 is overlap between questions the Program wants to answer and research questions being evaluated by
129 members of the Partnership.

130
131 Whitaker asked what an incorrect use of data is. Porath said that is a question that would have to be
132 answered by the USGS. Rabbe said it looks like we will still be able to get a good amount of data that
133 may help us answer our questions. Henry said that could be true, it will be dependent on seeing what
134 we get in terms of data hits within the limited scale across which the Partnership is willing to grant
135 access. Henry said it is important for the GC to understand that we will not be able to assess corridor-
136 wide patterns or how the Platte might differ or what might be unique about the Platte. In addition, a
137 smaller data set limits our ability to evaluate multiple factors in a single analysis to assess the relative
138 importance of factors the Program can control compared to factors it cannot control. Freeman said we
139 should think through what the options are. One would be don't rock the boat, get what you get and let
140 it go, recognizing we may not answer Big Questions the GC has identified as important. Freeman said
141 she is still fuzzy on options for data agreements that would give us access to more data without
142 encumbering issues with data sharing, publication, how to protect that data, etc. Freeman expressed
143 disappointment that we have an issue with Dr. Pearse. She did raise concerns about conflicts of interest
144 when he was being considered for ISAC membership and said she should have been stronger in raising
145 those concerns. Walters said he wonders about whether a group of TAC members and GC members
146 should meet with the Partnership to see if we can explore options for greater access to the data.



147 Riley said we had a robust conversation about this issue when we went through the ISAC selection
148 process. Porath said Pearse could have been involved in developing the research from the onset or in
149 evaluating the integrity and relevance of the work after it is done. Porath said we would have the same
150 conflict no matter how this plays out. Vogt said this decision about data shows a lack of respect for the
151 GC and the Program.

152
153 Riley suggested the GC assemble a small group to go back to the Partnership to see if there is any way to
154 get access to Tier 2 Nebraska sand bed rivers data. Vogt and Miller suggested the Signatories comprise
155 that group, the GC generally agreed but also wanted to add additional TAC members with relevant
156 expertise. Ostdiek wanted to again note that she has a hard time understanding why the Program
157 cannot get access to all the data.

158
159 *WC Telemetry GC Discussion Group – Nebraska, Colorado (Freeman), Wyoming, USBR (Merrill), USFWS*
160 *(Porath and Rabbe), Krohn (Crane Trust), Walters (TNC).*

161
162 **Extension Science Plan on PRRIP website:**
163 Discussion tabled until the March 2024 GC Quarterly Meeting.

164
165 **Phragmites RFP:**
166 Henry summarized the RFP for *Phragmites* research. Riley asked if the TAC has discussed this item.
167 Henry said the idea of contracting out this research was part of the FY24 budget discussion. Riley asked
168 what the TAC would discuss if the GC approved this. Henry said the scope of work. Porath and Rabbe
169 said they would like to see things like this RFP go to the TAC first and then to the GC. Riley agreed. Henry
170 said the data collection and analysis plan annexed to the RFP and forming the basis for the scope of
171 work was discussed at the October joint TAC/ISAC meeting. The RFP was developed only after the GC
172 gave their initial feedback on the FY24 budget in November. Farnsworth said we can send the Scope of
173 Work for this RFP (including the data analysis plan) for TAC review and then come back to the GC for
174 approval of the RFP and appointment of Proposal Selection Panel members. The GC agreed.

175
176 **Break – 4:10-4:25 PM**

#7	PRRIP INDEPENDENT SCIENCE	Agenda Item Objective: Discuss issues related to the Independent Scientific Advisory Committee (ISAC) and Peer Review.
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178 Smith summarized the Sediment Augmentation Data Synthesis Compilation and the process to get the
179 document ready for peer review and to recommend candidates.

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181 **GC MOTION:** *Merrill moved and Mead seconded to approve the Sediment Augmentation Data Synthesis*
182 *Compilation for peer review and appoint the following members to the Sediment Augmentation Data*
183 *Synthesis Compilation Peer Review Panel: James Brasington, Ph.D.; Mark Smith, Ph.D.; Richard Williams,*
184 *Ph.D. Motion approved.*

#8	ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNT (EA)	Agenda Item Objective: Discuss 2024 EA Annual Operation Plan (AOP).
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186 Rabbe discussed the FY24 EA AOP. Highest priority for releases in 2024 is germination suppression.



#9	PRRIP WATER PLAN	<i>Agenda Item Objective:</i> Update on recent Water Plan implementation activities.
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187 Turner provided a status update on the Water Milestone Summary, the North Platte Chokepoint
 188 Engineering Services Project, and the Expanded Recapture Reconnaissance Study.
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#10	PRRIP LAND PLAN	<i>Agenda Item Objective:</i> Update on recent Land Plan implementation activities.
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190 Tunnell provided a status update on the Land Milestone Summary. Tunnell said we have RFQs ready for
 191 tree removal at Clark Island and structure demolition/removal at the Cook-Dyer Tract. Farnworth
 192 summarized the three-year agreement with UFarm for PRRIP Farm Management Services including
 193 establishing a non-interest bearing farm account with UFarm to pay taxes, utilities, collect rent, etc.
 194 Riley asked if the GC or FC will need to approve the seed payment for taxes to the farm account.
 195 Farnworth said that money is in the FY24 budget and the ED is authorized to pay those taxes through
 196 an expedited request process so that will not come before the FC or GC.
 197

198 **GC MOTION:** Vogt moved and Whitaker seconded to approve the 2024-2026 UFarm contract for PRRIP
 199 Farm Management Services. Contract approved.
 200

#11	PUBLIC COMMENT	<i>Agenda Item Objective:</i> Public comment period on PRRIP activities.
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201 Riley asked for public comment. None offered.
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#12	EXECUTIVE SESSION	<i>Agenda Item Objective:</i> GC member discussion of sensitive land, water, and policy items.
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203 **GC MOTION:** Walters moved and Brundage approved to enter Executive Session. Motion approved, GC
 204 entered Executive Session at 4:58 PM Mountain Time. Motion approved.

205 **GC MOTION:** Krohn moved and Whitaker seconded to exit Executive Session. Motion approved, GC exited
 206 Executive Session at 5:18 PM Mountain Time. Motion approved.
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#13	EXECUTIVE SESSION MOTIONS	<i>Agenda Item Objective:</i> GC consideration of motions discussed during Executive Session.
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208 **GC MOTION:** Miller moved and Marks seconded to authorize the EDO to negotiate a price for acquisition
 209 of Tract 2024001. Motion approved.
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#14	GC MEETING REVIEW & WRAP-UP	<i>Agenda Item Objective:</i> Discuss action items, meeting feedback, and upcoming meeting schedule.
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211 **2024 GC Chair and Vice Chair** – The GC named Drue DeBerry (USFWS) as 2024 GC Chair and Brandon
 212 Gebhart (Wyoming) as 2024 GC Vice Chair.
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214 **2024 GC Meeting Schedule:**

- 215 1) **2024 PRRIP Science Plan Reporting Session:** February 20-22, 2024 @ Omaha, NE
- 216 2) **March 2024 GC Quarterly Meeting:** March 11-12, 2024 @ Kearney, NE
- 217 3) **June 2024 GC Quarterly Meeting:** June 11-12, 2024 @ Cheyenne, WY
- 218 4) **2024 Summer ISAC Meeting:** July 16-18, 2024 @ Kearney, NE
- 219 5) **September 2024 GC Quarterly Meeting:** September 10-11, 2024 @ Kearney, NE
- 220 6) **GC Virtual Special Session on FY2025 Budget & Work Plan:** Wednesday, November 13, 2024; 10:00
 221 AM-12:00 PM Central Time *via Teams*
- 222 7) **December 2024 GC Quarterly Meeting:** December 3-4, 2024 @ Loveland, CO
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224 Farnworth distributed Christmas gifts to GC members from Headwaters.



GC MEETING END	5:25 PM Mountain Time
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Summary of Action Items/Decisions from December 2023 GC Quarterly Meeting:

- 1) Approved the September 2023 GC Quarterly Meeting minutes.
- 2) Approved the November 2023 GC Special Session minutes.
- 3) Approved the PRRIP FY2024 Budget and Work Plan.
- 4) Approved the 2024-2028 PRRIP EDO Contract for Headwaters Corporation.
- 5) Approved the 2024 DJ Case contract for PRRIP website and database support.
- 6) Approved the 2024 WC Monitoring RFB.
- 7) Authorized peer review of the PRRIP Sediment Augmentation Data Synthesis Compilation and appointed the following members to the Sediment Augmentation Data Synthesis Compilation Peer Review Panel: James Brasington, Ph.D.; Mark Smith, Ph.D.; Richard Williams.
- 8) Approved the 2024-2026 UFarm contract for PRRIP farm management services.
- 9) Authorized the EDO to negotiate a price for acquisition of Tract 2024001.
- 10) Named Drue DeBerry (USFWS) as 2024 GC Chair and Brandon Gebhart (Wyoming) as 2024 GC Vice Chair.
- 11) Set the 2024 GC Meeting Schedule:
 - 2024 PRRIP Science Plan Reporting Session: February 20-22, 2024 @ Omaha, NE
 - March 2024 GC Quarterly Meeting: March 11-12, 2024 @ Kearney, NE
 - June 2024 GC Quarterly Meeting: June 11-12, 2024 @ Cheyenne, WY
 - 2024 Summer ISAC Meeting: July 16-18, 2024 @ Kearney, NE
 - September 2024 GC Quarterly Meeting: September 10-11, 2024 @ Kearney, NE
 - GC Virtual Special Session on FY2025 Budget & Work Plan: Wednesday, November 13, 2024; 10:00 AM-12:00 PM Central Time via Teams
 - December 2024 GC Quarterly Meeting: December 3-4, 2024 @ Loveland, CO



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250 **Governance Committee (GC) Quarterly Meeting – Berthoud, CO**

251 Northern Water Campus

252 *Tuesday, December 5, 2023 & Wednesday, December 6, 2023*

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254 Jason Farnsworth, PRRIP Executive Director (ED) – Moderator

255

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Ryan Kelly	Nebraska DNR
Rich Belt	SPWRAP
Cory Steinke	CNPPID (virtual)
Dave Zorn	CNPPID (virtual)
Jeff Shafer	NPPD (virtual)
Jim Jenniges	NPPD (virtual)
Andy Nicewicz	CO Attorney General’s Office (virtual)
Barry Lawrence	State of Wyoming (virtual)
Michael Krondak	NPPD (virtual)
Randy Zack	NPPD (virtual)
Michelle Hubbard	State of Wyoming (virtual)
Mike Archer	Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (virtual)
Robert Sakata	(virtual)
Christopher Wright	USBR (virtual)
Abigail Boudewyns	(virtual)

256

#15	WELCOME & ADMINISTRATIVE	Agenda Item Objective: Greetings, roll call, review agenda.
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257 **Introduction** – Chair Riley called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM Mountain Time. The in-person and
 258 virtual groups proceeded with introductions.

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260 **Agenda Modifications** – none offered.



#16	PRRIP HISTORY/STRUCTURE/FUNCTION	Agenda Item Objective: Public session with GC to discuss the history of the PRRIP, organizational structure and function, and implementation direction for the remainder of the Extension.
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261 Farnsworth and Smith delivered a joint presentation to the GC on the history, structure, and context for
262 the PRRIP. General GC discussion occurred during and after the presentation. The presentation and
263 discussion were recorded in Teams and that recording is available as a public YouTube video here:

264
265 <https://youtu.be/rKrKu12gF4s>

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267 This video will also be made publicly available on the PRRIP website.

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GC MEETING END	10:00 AM Mountain Time
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