

**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM****Governance Committee Meeting Minutes****DIA County Inn & Suites – Denver, CO****June 10-11, 2008****Tuesday, June 10, 2008****Welcome & Administrative**

Mike Purcell called the meeting to order and the group proceeded with introductions. Mike Purcell offered comments on the loss of Mark Butler with the Fish and Wildlife Service and the group held a moment of silence.

John Lawson announced that the Program was the recipient of the Cooperative Conservation Award from the Department of the Interior and presented a certificate to Mike Purcell. Lawson asked that the certificate be posted in the Executive Director's office in Kearney. Lawson mentioned that the former Reclamation Commissioner John Keys, a supporter of the Program, also recently passed away. The group held a moment of silence.

Don Anderson offered comments about Mark Butler and passed around a card for the Governance Committee (GC) to sign for Mark's family. Anderson also spoke about the recent memorial service for Mark. Anderson provided information about possible charitable entities that Mark's family thought would be appropriate for donation in lieu of flowers. Anderson also suggested that the GC consider possibly naming a Program land holding or other feature after Mark in the future as a memorial to his legacy for the Program.

Jerry Kenny suggested that the discussion of the recent high flow event be moved to today's budget item discussion.

**Tom Dougherty moved to approve the April 2008 GC minutes; Norm DeMott seconded. The April 2008 minutes were approved.**

**Program Committee Updates****Water Advisory Committee (WAC)**

Frank Kwapnioski (NPPD) provided an update on the latest WAC activities. He summarized recent work related to the Boyle effort on the Water Management Study (WMS). Kwapnioski mentioned the WMS workshop held after the GC meeting in Kearney in February and indicated changes made to the draft WMS Phase I report. The WAC has been working with Boyle on Phase II of the WMS. The WAC held a water tour with Boyle in mid-May followed by a WAC meeting focusing on discussion of the scope of the Phase II alternatives. Boyle will be circulating a set of criteria for ranking various alternatives prior to the scheduled July 16<sup>th</sup> workshop in Denver to discuss alternative evaluation and selection. The WAC also discussed gage locations on the central Platte and supported installation of gages at both Lexington and Shelton; that effort will be discussed with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) at their July



44 meeting before the ED Office moves forward with gage installation. Kwapnioski mentioned that  
45 the ED Office and WAC are working on developing a tracking process for depletions plans.

46

47 Kwapnioski said the WAC recommends that the Phase I WMS report be approved. **John**  
48 **Lawson moved to approve; Don Kraus seconded. The GC approved Boyle’s Phase I WMS**  
49 **report.**

50

51 Deb Freeman asked about Boyle’s evaluation criteria for WMS alternatives. Beorn Courtney  
52 said there are four categories: 1) technical feasibility; 2) liability and risk; and two additional  
53 categories. Boyle is developing information on the ranking within each category (e.g. 0-5 scale  
54 with definitions for assigning a value to each alternative). Kwapnioski said the WAC just  
55 discussed general ranking categories with Boyle and that Boyle would take that information and  
56 develop categories that would be discussed with the WAC during the July meeting in Denver.  
57 Brian Barels said the Program Document states the alternatives should be consistent with First  
58 Increment Water Plan goals – pulse flows, and how they meet First Increment water objectives.  
59 Lawson asked if this would be discussed during the July workshop. Kwapnioski said Boyle  
60 would provide a proposal ahead of that workshop for discussion, and then it would be discussed  
61 at the workshop on July 16<sup>th</sup> in Lakewood, CO from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the USFWS office.

62

63 Lawson reminded the group that Mark Butler had worked on a great deal of modeling to  
64 determine how projects could grade out and the group would have to work with Don Anderson  
65 and others to pick up Butler’s institutional knowledge and make sure the WMS fits into that  
66 process.

67

#### 68 **Land Advisory Committee (LAC) Update**

69 Mark Czaplewski reported the next LAC meeting will be July 14<sup>th</sup> in Kearney, NE. The Land  
70 Interest Holding Entity (LIHE) agreement is now finalized and signed, forming the Platte River  
71 Recovery Implementation Foundation. The LAC has initiated the land evaluation process and  
72 has held two site visits to evaluate potential Program properties. The LAC will discuss those site  
73 evaluations at the July meeting and hopefully will be ready to make its first land  
74 recommendations. Alan Berryman asked how many parcels are being discussed. Czaplewski  
75 said the LAC has seriously discussed fifteen parcels. Berryman said it is important to keep  
76 federal dollars in mind and try to find ways to use available funding on potential Program  
77 parcels. Czaplewski said the LAC appreciates the need to get going.

78

79 Ted Kowalski asked if the LAC would discuss the opportunity to work with The Conservation  
80 Fund or a similar entity to help with land purchases, especially quick purchases this year.  
81 Czaplewski said that certainly could be on the July agenda. Kraus asked how a group like the  
82 Fund could fit into the land evaluation process. Czaplewski said the process does allow that kind  
83 of partnership. Kowalski emphasized the need to find ways to move quickly on land deals when  
84 possible. Barels said we need to be careful about circumventing the process and need to be  
85 sensitive to central Nebraska land owners. Jason Farnsworth said that it is likely that there will  
86 be at least two parcels in front of the GC at the August meeting for approval to move forward.  
87 Czaplewski said we might need to consider a special meeting or call of the GC to move land



88 deals forward. Kowalski said that might be a good way to keep things moving. Purcell said if  
89 the LAC decides the time is right to move on land deals, then we can pull together a GC call to  
90 accommodate those decisions. John Heaston said generally conservation groups have not lost  
91 properties due to slow process, so the LAC process should work well.

92

93 **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)/Adaptive Management Working Group**

94 Chad Smith said the next joint AMWG/TAC meeting would be July 9-10 in Kearney, NE,  
95 focusing on discussion about the five-year work plan for implementation of the Adaptive  
96 Management Plan.

97

98 **Program Outreach Update**

99 Bridget Barron said the Program was included in a story in the Grand Island paper related to tern  
100 and plover use of the Platte and discussion of a recent grant to UNL for the Tern and Plover  
101 Partnership. Several stories occurred in late April/early May related to President Bush signing  
102 the Program into law. John Lawson was featured in a story in the Casper paper about his work.  
103 Kenny was recently interviewed for a story in the August issue of NEBRASKAland.

104

105 Barron mentioned the following presentations:

106

107 May 21 presentation – Smith at UNL/USGS climate change conference

108 May 6 – Kenny at Riparian Vegetation Management Task Force

109 May 20 – Kenny at Colorado chapter of Engineering Companies

110 June 17 – Kenny at Colorado Water Education Foundation

111 July 28 – Smith at UNL/CAMNet adaptive management short course

112

113 Barron handed out fact sheets about various aspects of the Program for use as educational  
114 material.

115

116 **EA Bypass Agreement**

117 Kowalski said the legal ad hoc committee and EA bypass group have a conference call scheduled  
118 for June 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss the status of the bypass agreement. Kowalski said a key issue is who the  
119 signatories on the agreement will be. The legal ad hoc and bypass committees will discuss this  
120 next week and will have something to discuss with the GC in August. At this point, the USFWS  
121 will not be a signatory but will provide a formal statement from the agency as to their  
122 interpretation and what they believe they are agreeing to through the bypass agreement. Other  
123 outstanding issues remain that will also be discussed.

124

125 **FY08 Budget Items**

126 Kenny discussed the revised Program budget spreadsheet, changes made from previous versions,  
127 and the new columns in the spreadsheet. John Heaston asked if we could add a column that  
128 shows remainder of project money for the year to help keep track of what is still available.

129 Purcell clarified that Heaston is talking about including a column that reflects the division of  
130 money for various Program aspects that make up the \$187 million in anticipated Program  
131 funding during the course of the First Increment. Lawson said this is a good point and will



132 continue to be discussed with the ED Office and the Finance Committee. Lawson also said we  
133 need to work on cost escalation and inflation issues.

134  
135 Dougherty asked about the process for releasing RFPs and publishing results from monitoring  
136 and research. Smith said the tern/plover foraging habits study RFP includes language about  
137 publishing, and that work is underway to formalize the process of analyzing monitoring and  
138 research data and publishing reports/studies as a result.

139  
140 Barels said the Program budget has run on an annual calendar year budget as opposed to the  
141 federal fiscal year budget. Barels said there have been questions about resolving the federal  
142 budget cycle, the state budget cycle, and the Program budget cycle. Kenny said we are keeping  
143 very detailed accounting in coordination with Reclamation. Lawson said he is working through  
144 how best to determine how to obligate/spend federal dollars based on what is received as an  
145 appropriation. Barels said we need to budget at a higher level to be able to track long-term  
146 spending and match it with Program needs and appropriation availability. Lawson said he is  
147 working on a cost escalation table to help.

148

149 **TP-4: Tern/Plover Foraging Habits Study**

150 Kenny discussed the tern/plover foraging habits study and the estimated \$120,000 from 2008-  
151 2010. **Tom Dougherty moved to approve the RFP and the Proposal Selection Team; Julie**  
152 **Lyke seconded. The GC approved the RFP and Proposal Selection Team.**

153

154 Purcell asked if anyone opposed dropping the TP-4 budget from \$85,000 down to \$40,000 for  
155 FY08. Kraus said he did not have a problem, but that there are other options. Lawson said a key  
156 is that the federal government does not carry over large sums of money, so the proposal is to  
157 follow that kind of process. **Don Kraus moved to approve; Dennis Strauch seconded. The**  
158 **GC approved lowering the TP-4 budget line item from \$85,000 to \$40,000.**

159

160 **WMV-3: Central Platte River Vegetation Monitoring**

161 Kenny discussed moving \$45,000 from TP-4 to this new budget line item. Funds would be to  
162 get contractor on board to help revised monitoring protocol, develop budget and monitoring plan,  
163 and ultimately implement monitoring. Purcell asked for a motion to approve adding line item  
164 WMV-3 to the budget at a funding level of \$45,000. **John Heaston moved for approval; John**  
165 **Lawson seconded. The GC approved.**

166

167 **PD-4: Contract for Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) Implementation Modeling**  
168 **Workshop**

169 Kenny discussed the sole-source justification for Dr. Drew Tyre to lead a Rapid Prototyping  
170 workshop in July to do some simple modeling related to AMP implementation. The contract  
171 would be for no more than \$10,000 for Dr. Tyre to lead the workshop. **John Heaston motioned**  
172 **to approve the contract; Brian Barels seconded. The GC approved.**

173

174 **LP-2(a) – 2008 Cottonwood Ranch Enhancement Activities**



175 Kenny discussed the 2008 Cottonwood Ranch enhancement agreement for 2008. Kenny said the  
176 only difference from past agreements is the paragraph stating that the Program has liability  
177 insurance that will cover any potential downstream impacts related to enhancement activities.  
178 Kenny said we need GC approval of the proposed enhancement activities, proposed budget, and  
179 form of the agreement. Kowalski asked what would be left in LP-2(a). Kenny said the available  
180 budget would cover maintenance and enhancement activities in both 2007 and 2008. Lawson  
181 said to be sure to adjust the actual amount of obligations in LP-2(a) and LP-2(b). **Dennis**  
182 **Strauch moved to approve the contract; Jennifer Schellpeper seconded. The GC approved.**  
183

#### 184 **ISAC-1 & PD-3: ISAC/Peer Review Panels**

185 Smith provided an update on the process to select contract help with finding members for the  
186 Independent Scientific Advisory Committee and five peer review panels. The proposal teams  
187 Sustainable Ecosystems Institute and PBS&J will be interviewed on June 19<sup>th</sup> in Lincoln, NE.  
188

#### 189 **G-1: LiDAR Implementation**

190 Kenny discussed the status of LiDAR acquisition. A group of partners coalesced last fall around  
191 a need for topographic data; LiDAR was generally understood to be the best form of data.  
192 Acting together, the partners could get high-quality services at a lower price. The consortium is  
193 the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture; the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources; the Program;  
194 the State of Kansas; and the USGS Nebraska Science Center. Several avenues were explored for  
195 evaluating and selecting potential contractors. The USGS has a list of approved contractors, but  
196 decided to first estimate what it would cost for the USGS to manage the process. The estimate  
197 was significantly higher than expected. Another contractor from the Corps of Engineers list  
198 offered an estimate that was also higher than expected. The team then worked through a more  
199 comprehensive Department of Interior list of contractors and ended up with a cost estimate more  
200 in line with expectations. Kenny said it is likely that we can get LiDAR from North Platte to  
201 Chapman for the approved budget amount of \$250,000. The contractor of choice for flying  
202 LiDAR is Merrick; Dewberry will be brought on as a contractor to manage LiDAR data  
203 acquisition and processing.  
204

205 There will be a MOU between all the parties. Funding will be passed through the Rainwater  
206 Basin Join Venture. The intent is to fly LiDAR this fall with leaves off, no snow, and low water  
207 conditions. Kenny asked the GC to approve proceeding on this path, and also to provide any  
208 advice on additional GC or Program involvement with the ED Office in the process. Purcell  
209 asked what the total budget is for the full project. Kenny said it would be about \$2.5 million;  
210 20,000 square miles will be flown, and Program data will be collected on about 200 square  
211 miles. Kowalski asked where Merrick and Dewberry were based. Merrick is based in Aurora,  
212 CO; Dewberry has an office in Colorado but is headquartered in Virginia.  
213

214 Kowalski said procedure should dictate that the GC needs to approve this kind of activity as a  
215 sole-source project, and the scope of the project and size of the budget obligation means the GC  
216 should provide approval now but get written justification from the ED Office for this in August.  
217 Lawson asked about the MO and what kind of contracting mechanism is being utilized. He  
218 asked if the MOU is the contracting agreement and how it fits into the partnership. Purcell said



219 the MOU is with the partners in this agreement and will specify that the RBJV is the contracting  
220 entity. Lawson asked who the budget line item for this effort is obligated to – RBJV, or  
221 Merrick/Dewberry? Kenny said the money will go to the RBJV. Lawson said the motion should  
222 be about the MOU, since that will serve as our contract. Barel said the MOU would come to the  
223 Finance Committee for approval because the Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF) will be  
224 signing on behalf of the Program.

225  
226 **Purcell said the motion would be for the Program to enter into the consortium for**  
227 **implementation of LiDAR, with the understanding that the consortium may enter into sole-**  
228 **source contracting and the Program agrees to accept the contracting procedure of the**  
229 **partners in the consortium. The final MOU will be approved by the FC.** Kowalski said that  
230 motion is good, but should also include written justification for the GC as to why and how this  
231 process was entered into. Purcell asked if Kenny's presentation in the minutes was good enough.  
232 Kowalski said he wanted something in writing, and in the minutes would work. **Kowalski**  
233 **moved to approve; Dougherty seconded. The GC approved.**

234

235 **LiDAR justification presentation text from Jerry Kenny**

236 The following is a summary of the LiDAR acquisition process initiated in the fall of 2007.

237

238 A consortium of project partners coalesced in the fall of 2007 around the common need of  
239 obtaining topographic data covering various portions of central and south central Nebraska.  
240 Further, each partner had independently arrived at the conclusion that LiDAR was the preferred  
241 method for obtaining the topographic data, that economies of scale could be achieved if the data  
242 were collected by a common contractor, and that consistency among the datasets would be  
243 ensured by use of a common contractor. In other words, a better product could more easily be  
244 obtained at a lower cost by acting in concert in selection of a contractor.

245

246 The consortium of partners consists of:

247

- 248 • The Rainwater Basin Joint Venture
- 249 • The State of Nebraska Department of Natural Resources
- 250 • The Platte River Recovery Implementation Program
- 251 • The State of Kansas joined to acquire some data in the Republican Basin
- 252 • Personnel from the United States Geological Survey – Nebraska Division have served as
- 253 advisors through the process because of their experience and expertise in LiDAR acquisition.

254

255 The consortium of project partners have explored several potential contractor selections and  
256 contracting mechanisms. The options explored were:

257

258 United States Geological Survey – This mechanism included project cost estimate development  
259 by USGS staff followed by submittal of scope of work to prequalified contractors. The  
260 contractor who could most closely match the cost estimate (lowest) would be selected to perform  
261 the work. All of the project partner's monies would be paid to USGS who would take a  
262 percentage and pay the contractor. The group abandoned this mechanism after the USGS cost



263 estimate was on the order of four times greater than preliminary estimates provided by area  
264 contractors.

265  
266 United States Army Corps of Engineers – This contracting process is similar to the USGS  
267 mechanism except that the consortium could select a contractor based on predetermined rates.  
268 However, the USACE contractor rates were also significantly higher than preliminary estimates  
269 provided by area LiDAR contractors.

270  
271 Acquisition Services Directorate (ASD) – This contracting mechanism, available through the  
272 Department of the Interior, allows the consortium to contract with LiDAR providers who have  
273 won IDIQ contracts through the DOI. The ASD IDIQ contracts include previously negotiated  
274 rates, which are significantly lower than the USGS and USACE rates. A top-tier ASD contractor  
275 (Merrick) can perform the LiDAR work at a cost of approximately half of the USACE rates and  
276 one quarter of the USGS estimate.

277  
278 Based on the cost comparisons and State of Kansas experience utilizing Merrick through the  
279 ASD contracting mechanism, the consortium has decided to pursue LiDAR acquisition  
280 contracting utilizing Merrick through the ASD IDIQ contract. In addition, the group decided to  
281 also retain the firm of Dewberry through the GSA contracting process to perform program  
282 management and QA/QC for the LiDAR project. The management and QA/QC costs will  
283 roughly equal 10% of total project costs. Dewberry is the industry leader in LiDAR program  
284 management and QA/QC and is considered to be invaluable in making sure that the LiDAR  
285 acquisition contractor (Merrick) collects and delivers a quality product.

286  
287 The preliminary cost estimate for LiDAR acquisition and processing for the Platte River channel  
288 from Chapman to Lexington (an area of 134 sq. mi.) is on the order of \$130,000. Our data will  
289 provide 1 foot contours (+/- 6 inch or 0.7 m GSD), whereas the other areas will be mapped at a 2  
290 foot contour interval. Once program management and data storage costs are tallied, there should  
291 be approximately \$60,000 to \$80,000 additional dollars available based on the Program's FY  
292 2008 LiDAR budget. We are now in the process of developing additional acquisition areas for  
293 the reach from Lexington to North Platte. These will be added to the current acquisition reach  
294 and as much LiDAR will be acquired as possible utilizing the current budget. The LiDAR will  
295 be collected this fall and should be in-hand by late spring 2009.

296  
297 The State of Nebraska is working on a draft MOU that will allow all of the partners to distribute  
298 their funding to the USFWS, which is the only entity among the consortium partners able to  
299 enter into a contract through the ASD. The consortium will meet again in mid-June to discuss  
300 the MOU and begin coordination with Dewberry to develop a scope of work and contract. Based  
301 on the discussions and coordination over the last six months, I am confident that the group has  
302 made wise and fiscally responsible decisions both in pursuing the ASD contracting process and  
303 in hiring Dewberry to manage the project.

304  
305 **G-5: Central Platte River Geomorphology Monitoring/Geomorphology Research**



306 Smith discussed the status of the geomorphology monitoring protocol and RFP. Lawson  
307 suggested that there be an update for this budget line item at the August GC meeting that reflects  
308 how the \$40,000 will be obligated for geomorphology monitoring and the \$10,000 for  
309 geomorphology research.

310

311 **PS-1: Pallid Sturgeon Information Review**

312 Smith provided an update on the status of selecting a contractor to complete the pallid sturgeon  
313 information review. Kraus asked what happened if the selection team comes up with a split vote  
314 or one person does not support selection of a particular contractor. Czaplewski was a part of the  
315 Proposal Selection Team and discussed his view of the process and how differing opinions were  
316 handled during the process. Kenny said the Procurement Policy is not detailed on how to  
317 overcome split votes – it just says the highest ranked proposal that can do the work gets selected.  
318 Kenny said within those guidelines, the process worked this time. Kraus said it didn't seem to be  
319 a large objection on this process, but it could be a problem in the future. Purcell said his process  
320 in Wyoming is to direct the selection team to ensure that the selected contractor can do a credible  
321 job, even if it is not their top selection. Czaplewski and Kevin Urie said it was helpful to get the  
322 questions clarified and factor that into the final selection, including making sure the contract  
323 reflects Program needs and the RFP scope and not a different scope in the proposal.

324

325 **WQ-1: Platte River Water Quality Monitoring**

326 Beorn Courtney updated the GC about the status of the WQ monitoring RFP. We received five  
327 proposals in response to the RFP. The Proposal Selection Team is reviewing the proposals and  
328 will have a conference call on June 18<sup>th</sup> to rank proposals and will hold interviews in Denver on  
329 June 26<sup>th</sup>.

330

331 Kenny said on this proposal, we will need some guidance from the WAC and TAC to clarify  
332 what we want to accomplish with water quality monitoring to help pin down details for the  
333 selected contractor.

334

335 **WP-3: Test Flow Routing Model/2008 EA Augmented Pulse Flow Pilot Study**

336 Smith provided a Power Point presentation showing some of the results of the recent heavy rains  
337 in central Nebraska and the related high flow event on the central Platte. The presentation is  
338 available on the Program website ([www.PlatteRiverProgram.org](http://www.PlatteRiverProgram.org)). To summarize:

339

- 340 • The rain event of May 22-23, 2008 and the associated runoff and high flows on the central  
341 Platte roughly constitute a 10-year event on the river; similar high flows were last seen in  
342 June of 1995.
- 343 • Peak discharge was 10,400 cfs at Overton on May 25; 13,300 cfs at Kearney on May 26;  
344 11,800 cfs at Grand Island on May 27.
- 345 • Unfortunately, the high flows did not appear to influence phragmites on most of the river.

346

347 Kenny discussed a potential Program monitoring response and data collection effort related to  
348 the high flow event that would require funding out of the WP-3 budget line item:

349





- 350 • Aerial photography in late June (Gothenburg to Chapman) for \$15,000  
351 • Transect surveys (Cottonwood Ranch, Uridil, Rowe Sanctuary) by Paul Kinzel, USGS for  
352 \$20,000  
353 • Additional Bureau of Reclamation transects (15-20) surveyed through three local survey  
354 crews for about \$30,000  
355 • Water surface elevation data on lower Platte by HDR Team for \$10,000  
356

357 **\$65,000 for central Platte and \$10,000 for lower Platte = \$75,000 total.**  
358

359 Kenny asked the GC for approval to spend WP-3 funds on the items identified above totaling  
360 roughly \$75,000. Kwapnioski asked about whether this was a one-time survey event or if it  
361 would be necessary multiple times throughout the First Increment. Kenny said this was a one-  
362 time monitoring response and that monitoring of similar events in the future would be  
363 accomplished through implementation of Program monitoring protocols such as the  
364 geomorphology and vegetation monitoring protocols, as well as scheduled aerial photography.  
365 Don Anderson asked if the ED Office had coordinated with Lisa Fotherby about opportunities to  
366 capture data that would help to calibrate the SedVeg model. Kenny and Smith discussed the  
367 coordination that had occurred relative to Fotherby's thoughts about data collection.  
368

369 **Tom Dougherty moved to approve the ED Office spending \$75,000 out of the WP-3 line**  
370 **item for this high flow event data collection effort; Brian Barels seconded. The GC**  
371 **approved.**  
372

373 Don Ament asked Kenny to make attempts to find partners like the USGS, USACE, or others to  
374 help with this effort. Kenny said he was working with the USGS on one set of transect re-  
375 surveys and would pursue those kind of partnerships if available.  
376

377 Meeting adjourned until 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 11, 2008.  
378

379 **Wednesday, June 11, 2008**  
380

### 381 **Welcome and Administrative**

382 Mike Purcell called the meeting to order and the group proceeded with a roll call.  
383  
384  
385

### 386 **Wyoming Property Update**

387 Bruce Sackett and Jason Farnsworth gave an update on the status of the Wyoming property  
388 sponsorship agreement and recent land management activities on the property. Farnsworth  
389 provided a Power Point presentation showing recent tern/plover nesting island development and  
390 boat ramp construction. A draft lease agreement between the Program and the State of Wyoming  
391 has been submitted to Mike Purcell for review.  
392

### 393 **Program Database**



394 Farnsworth provided the GC with an update on the status of development of both the Program  
395 database management system and the website. He showed the group screen shots of the latest  
396 version of the website. The technical team from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service working on  
397 the database and website are on schedule and doing good work. Farnsworth reported that he is  
398 working closely with the FWS team to ensure they stay on schedule. Jerry Kenny said that a  
399 priority related to this project for the next round is providing easy and central access to  
400 hydrologic/gage data on a real time basis. Purcell asked about the data transfer from WEST, Inc.  
401 Farnsworth said he is traveling to Cheyenne this afternoon to pick up all hard-copy files from  
402 WEST and key documents will be scanned and available on the Program website.  
403

#### 404 **Invasives Species Update**

405 Farnsworth gave an update on Program activities related to phragmites control efforts in  
406 conjunction with the Platte Valley Weed Management Association. Farnsworth mentioned that  
407 the State of Nebraska has now declared phragmites as a noxious weed which may ultimately  
408 require landowner control. The Weed Management Association, The Nature Conservancy, the  
409 Program, and others submitted a grant application under LB 701 to spray and remove  
410 phragmites. The group received \$300,000 in funding for the year, so spraying and removal  
411 actions are being planned for this fall that will involve helicopter spraying of much of the main  
412 channel upstream of Elm Creek. Farnsworth is also coordinating with UNL and others to keep  
413 tabs on phragmites related research  
414

415 Purcell asked about the status of the choke point project. Kenny said high flows were  
416 downstream of the choke point, so there was no high flow through the area. The island will be  
417 removed as will the sprayed phragmites yet this year. Greg Wingfield mentioned that the effort  
418 that will be undertaken to collect data related to the high flow event may provide useful  
419 information related to impacts on phragmites in areas downstream of Elm Creek that have  
420 received extensive management over the years (vegetation clearing, disking, etc.).  
421

#### 422 **Depletions Plan Tracking**

423 Beorn Courtney talked about development of a tracking inventory for information coming in  
424 related to individual depletions plans. Wyoming and Colorado information has been entered into  
425 an Excel spreadsheet because that information has already been submitted. Information is being  
426 entered according to guidelines in the Program document. This effort will provide information  
427 as to when information will be received, what information will be received, the titles of  
428 information to be submitted, and additional information of importance. The intention is to have  
429 one sheet per depletions plan, and then a general tracking sheet of all information received to  
430 date. When information is received, the ED Office will update this tracking sheet and will  
431 distribute it, along with the information received, to the WAC for review. Kenny said this effort  
432 is an inventory and procedural checklist at this time. A WAC meeting will be convened prior to  
433 the WMS workshop in July to discuss depletions plans and other issues.  
434

435 Kenny said another issue is that losses (conveyance and other) of flows to the critical habitat  
436 reach can be tracked with existing tools, but that there have been suggestions in the Program  
437 document and in the Wyoming and Colorado depletions plan reporting that the tools could be



438 improved or a new tool could be developed. Kenny said it would take time and resources to  
439 evaluate the tool and what other options might be available or be developed. Purcell said that  
440 this issue may not be as sensitive as in the past and questioned whether the Program still needed  
441 to investigate developing a comprehensive water tracking/accounting system. John Lawson  
442 talked about efforts to account for all the water and that prior work on this left the issue to be  
443 addressed with the existing tools, but that there could be discussion down the road about the best  
444 approach. Alan Berryman said it would be worth discussing but Colorado is not ready to throw  
445 their tracking system out. Don Anderson said it is worth keeping on a future WAC agenda. He  
446 talked about issues that could be discussed, including things like real-time tracking needs.  
447 Jennifer Schellpeper said Nebraska has a daily accounting/tracking process which includes the  
448 Environmental Account water. Purcell said one issue is how states get credit for water, and that  
449 influences how money is invested. Brian Barels said this effort is tied to crediting and Water  
450 Action Plan efforts, so that we are not quite there yet on some of these issues.

451  
452 Ted Kowalski said we had talked about efforts to allow North Platte depletions with South Platte  
453 offsets at the last GC meeting. SPWRAP has voiced support for a funding arrangement to  
454 address the issue, and Colorado is going to take the issue to North Platte water users. Then,  
455 Colorado may want to amend its depletions plan and there may be a need to amend the federal  
456 depletions plan.

457  
458 **Purcell said the spreadsheet form overuses the word “tracking” and it should be called a**  
459 **compliance log or something else to avoid using the word “tracking”. Kenny and Courtney**  
460 **said revisions would be made.** Purcell asked what the GC guidance to the WAC is on a  
461 comprehensive water tracking effort. Don Kraus said the priority should be the Boyle report and  
462 the WMS. Purcell agreed. **The GC agreed that the current focus of the WAC should be the**  
463 **Phase II WMS and that water tracking/accounting may or may not be considered down the**  
464 **road.** Frank Kwapnioski said that the spreadsheet was just intended to be an inventory of  
465 information.

466  
467 George Williams asked if there was a Program release of water this year. Kenny and Purcell said  
468 there was discussion, budgeting, and planning, but no release was made.

469  
470 Schellpeper said that Governor Heineman and the NRDs agreed last week to a funding  
471 mechanism for the Nebraska new depletions plan. Anderson asked about the status of Integrated  
472 Management Plans (IMPs). Schellpeper said they are waiting on the Overappropriated Basin  
473 overall plan before moving into the individual IMPs. The IMPs have to be done by September  
474 2009, so drafts are expected in spring of 2009. Dennis Strauch asked about the funding  
475 mechanism, and Schellpeper said it is specifically for the Program-related new depletions plan.

476  
477 **Public Comment**

478 Purcell asked for public comment; none was offered.

479  
480 **Future Meeting Dates and Locations**

481 The next GC meetings will be:



482

- 483 • August 12-13, 2008 at the Hampton Inn Convention Center in Scottsbluff, NE  
484 • October 7-8 meeting in Kearney, NE  
485 • December 2-3 meeting in Denver, CO

486

487 Meeting adjourned.

488

489 **Summary of Action Items/Decisions from June GC meeting**

490 1) GC approved April 2008 minutes

491 2) GC approved the Water Management Study Phase I report from Boyle Engineering.

492 3) GC approved the RFP for TP-4 (tern/plover foraging habits study) and the composition of the  
493 Proposal Selection Team as recommended by the ED Office

494 4) GC approved reducing available budget for TP-4 to \$40,000

495 5) GC approved creating new FY08 budget line item of WMV-3 (Central Platte River  
496 Vegetation Monitoring) and establishing a budget of \$45,000 for FY08 (available funds  
497 moved from TP-4)

498 6) GC approved sole-source contract with Dr. Andrew Tyre of the University of Nebraska-  
499 Lincoln for Structured Decision Making workshop in July related to Adaptive Management  
500 Plan implementation

501 7) GC approved plan for 2008 Cottonwood Ranch enhancement activities, estimated budget for  
502 enhancement activities, and form of the agreement between the Program and NPPD

503 8) GC approved Program entering into consortium for implementation of LiDAR, with the  
504 understanding that the consortium may enter into sole-source contracting and the Program  
505 agrees to accept the contracting procedure of the partners in the consortium; GC agreed that  
506 the final MOU related to this effort will be approved by the Finance Committee

507 9) GC approved spending \$75,000 out of the available funds in line item WP-3 (Test Flow  
508 Routing Model/2008 EA Augmented Pulse Flow Pilot Study) for data collection efforts  
509 related to the recent high flow event on the Platte in central Nebraska

510 10) GC asked ED Office to change depletions plan spreadsheet to remove work “tracking” and  
511 re-name it with “information inventory” or another word/phrase

512 11) GC agreed that the current focus of the WAC should be the Phase II WMS and that water  
513 tracking/accounting may or may not be considered down the road