



1                   **PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**  
2                   **Water Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
3                   **Headwaters Corp – Kearney, NE**  
4                   **May 15, 2008**

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6    **Attendance**

7 Frank Kwapnioski – WAC Chairman, NPPD  
8 Jerry Kenny – Executive Director, Headwaters Corp  
9 Becky Mitchell – Headwaters Corp (conf call)  
10 Beorn Courtney – Headwaters Corp  
11 Blaine Dwyer – Boyle Engineering Corp  
12 Chad Smith – Headwaters Corp  
13 Cory Steinke, CNPPID  
14 Dennis Strauch – Upper Platte Water Users  
15 Duane Woodward – Downstream Water Users/Central Platte NRD  
16 Frank Albrecht – Nebraska Game & Parks Commission  
17 Jennifer Schellpeper – Nebraska DNR  
18 Jeff Bandy – Boyle Engineering Corp  
19 Jesse Bradley – Nebraska DNR  
20 Jon Altenhofen – Colorado Water Users/NCWCD (conf call)  
21 Kent Miller – Downstream Water Users/Twin Platte NRD  
22 Mahonri Williams – Bureau of Reclamation (conf call)  
23 Mark Butler – US Fish & Wildlife Service (conf call)  
24 Matt Hoobler – Wyoming State Engineer’s Office  
25 Mike Besson – Wyoming Water Development Commission  
26 Mike Drain – CNPPID  
27 Pat O’Brien – Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality

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29    **Welcome and Administrative**

30 On May 14, 2008, in preparation for this workshop, several members of the Water Advisory  
31 Committee (WAC) joined staff from Boyle Engineering Corp and the Executive Director’s office  
32 on a field tour of the system from Lake McConaughy downstream to the Kearney Canal. The  
33 group was guided by Cory Steinke, Jeff Shafer, and Mike Drain of CNPPID. The primary focus  
34 of the meeting on May 15, 2008 was on Phase II of the Water Management Study (WMS), with a  
35 workshop led by Boyle Engineering. Following the workshop, the Executive Director’s office  
36 provided updates on two other water-related Program matters: potential new stream gage  
37 locations and depletions plans.

38  
39    **Water Management Study**

40 Jerry Kenny provided an overview of the Phase II Water Management Study purpose and scope.  
41 The purpose of the workshop was to identify up to 25 alternatives for consideration in Phase II  
42 which would be screened at a broad level to evaluate the ability to contribute to the pulse flow  
43 and annual average flow objectives of the Program. Boyle will present the results of the initial  
44 screening to the WAC in a workshop to be held in Lakewood, CO on July 16, 2008. With



45 consent from the WAC, Boyle will then move forward with 3 alternatives that will be  
46 investigated at a reconnaissance level with more detailed analyses including site visits. A draft  
47 report will be provided mid-October and Boyle will present the final results at the December 3,  
48 2008 Governance Committee (GC) meeting in Denver, with the final report provided by end of  
49 2008.

50

51 Boyle presented a preliminary matrix of screening criteria and recommended that weights not be  
52 applied to the individual screening criteria. The WAC discussed ways to evaluate the benefit-to-  
53 cost ratio of individual alternatives. Boyle indicated that they could evaluate cost per acre-foot  
54 of yield or cost per cfs yield toward the pulse flow. This led to discussions on clarification of the  
55 WMS Phase II objective. Phase I focused on evaluating how a release from the Lake  
56 McConaughy Environmental Account could contribute to the pulse flow. Mike Drain  
57 emphasized that Phase II is focused on the pulse flow analysis. Frank Kwapnioski recommended  
58 that alternatives should be evaluated comprehensively, considering opportunities for conjunctive  
59 management and cooperative/coordinated projects. Boyle suggested that alternatives could be  
60 evaluated with respect to contributions to the pulse flow and additional broader benefits. **The**  
61 **WAC agreed that alternatives should be screened individually as well as considered in a**  
62 **combined approach. The WAC further agreed that while the focus of Phase II is on the**  
63 **pulse flow, the extent to which excess flows could be credited toward annual reductions to**  
64 **target flows should also be quantified.**

65

66 Boyle presented a table of potential alternatives which were identified from several sources:  
67 individuals interviewed in Phase I of the WMS, comments from WAC members on the Phase I  
68 report, CNPPID Depletion Mitigation Study (2000), and the Boyle Water Conservation/Supply  
69 Reconnaissance Study (1999). The draft table identified whether alternatives were most suited to  
70 (a) meet the pulse flow objective; (b) provide water for management in Lake McConaughy,  
71 Johnson Lake, or other storage; and/or (c) contribute to the 800 cfs irrigation season flow/reduce  
72 shortages to annual target flows.

73

74 Several additional alternatives were added to the initial table. The WAC discussed each  
75 alternative and agreed to strike several alternatives which did not warrant further screening under  
76 Phase II objectives. The table is **attached**, including general information provided through  
77 discussions. **The direction from the discussion was to move forward with projects that are**  
78 **most suited to contribute to the goal of a pulse flow.**

79

80 All of the projects discussed are included on the attached table. Those projects that will not be  
81 evaluated as a part of Phase II of the WMS are shaded gray in the table. It is important to note  
82 that these projects were not removed from consideration for the overall objectives the Program;  
83 only that they will not be considered in Phase II. The WAC agreed that several projects could be  
84 evaluated outside of the Phase II as part of Program operations. Several projects were also  
85 removed from the focus of Phase II because they are already included under the draft Water  
86 Action Plan.

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88



89 **Stream Gage Station Locations**

90 Jerry Kenny distributed a map showing current gage locations and proposed two new gage  
91 locations in areas where there is currently a significant distance between stream gages.

92  
93 The first potential gage location would be near a bridge at Lexington, the upstream side of the  
94 critical habitat reach. Lexington was previously gaged and abandoned due to the formation of  
95 multiple channels. This location would benefit the Program during times of nesting and would  
96 assist in planning efforts with the pulse flow – to predict flow attenuation and aid in the timing of  
97 any coordinated releases from CNPPID's system. Cory Steinke indicated that this would assist in  
98 CNPPID operations, however it is not absolutely critical for CNPPID to coordinate their  
99 operations with Program pulse-flow objectives.

100  
101 The second potential gage location would be near a bridge at Shelton below the Kearney power  
102 return. This location is specified in the Geomorphology Protocol, and would provide data in an  
103 area that currently has a large distance between gages at Kearney and Grand Island.

104  
105 Frank Kwapnioski inquired whether Jerry had received feedback from the Technical Advisory  
106 Committee (TAC) or Adaptive Management Work Group (AMWG) committees. Jerry indicated  
107 that he is approaching the WAC first, and will be approaching these other committees next.

108  
109 Jerry reported on costs to install and monitor. He obtained cost information from the USGS and  
110 Nebraska DNR (NDNR). NDNR estimated a stage/flow gage could be installed this year and  
111 monitored for approximately \$5,000 to \$6,000 per site; these two sites would each have roughly  
112 the same costs. Annual monitoring costs would be half or less of these first-year costs. USGS  
113 indicated installation and monitoring for the first year would cost over \$20,000, with subsequent  
114 annual monitoring costs around \$3,000 to \$6,000. Jerry recommended having NDNR install  
115 both gages this year; NDNR indicated they could get both installed if the Program provided a  
116 formal request soon as they get busy starting mid-July. NDNR also confirmed that they can  
117 make continual real-time data available on-line; this was also confirmed by Cory Steinke.

118  
119 General discussion was in support of the plan to install gages at both sites with the advice that  
120 the TAC and AMWG also be consulted. Frank Kwapnioski inquired whether anyone on the  
121 WAC was opposed. With no opposition, Jerry took this as approval of the plan and will proceed  
122 to have similar discussions with the TAC and AMWG.

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124 **Depletions Plans Reporting**

125 Beorn Courtney provided an update of the status of depletions plans reporting. At the April 2008  
126 GC meeting, the GC clarified that standard annual depletions plan reports will be directed to the  
127 WAC for review, with the WAC reporting to the GC. Amendments to the depletions plans are to  
128 be brought to the GC first and only referred to the WAC if necessary. Colorado presented an  
129 amendment to its depletions plan at the April 2008 GC meeting.

130  
131 The Executive Director's office has received a standard annual report from Wyoming. Prior to  
132 circulating this report, staff from the Executive Director's office is reviewing the depletions



133 plans in the Program document and developing a tracking spreadsheet to assist the WAC in (a)  
134 tracking information as it is reported, and (b) determining whether the information meets  
135 obligations committed to under the Program document. This information will be provided to the  
136 WAC when reports are distributed. **The Executive Director’s office will circulate the tracking**  
137 **information and the Wyoming report prior to the June 2008 GC meeting.**

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139 **Report to the Governance Committee**

140 **Frank Kwapnioski will report the conclusions of this meeting to the Governance**  
141 **Committee and can do so even if the minutes of the meeting have not been approved.**

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143 **Future Meeting Dates and Locations**

144 A follow-up WMS Phase II workshop meeting was set for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mountain time on  
145 July 16, 2008 at the USFWS offices in Lakewood, CO (doors open at 8:30 a.m. Mountain time):

146  
147 1st floor Wolf Conference Room  
148 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
149 134 Union Blvd  
150 Lakewood, CO 80228