



1 **PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**
2 **Land Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**
3 **Executive Director's Office – Kearney, NE**
4 **August 17, 2010**

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7 **Attendees**

- 8 Scott Woodman, Chair, Central Platte Natural Resources District, landowner
9 Mark Czaplewski, Vice Chair, Central Platte Natural Resources District
10 Jerry Kenny - Executive Director
11 Bruce Sackett - ED Office
12 Justin Brei - ED Office
13 Jason Farnsworth - ED Office
14 Tim Tunnell - ED Office
15 Dave Baasch – ED Office
16 Greg Wingfield - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
17 Matt Steffl - Nebraska Game & Parks Commission
18 Jennifer Schellpeper - State of Nebraska Department of Natural Resources
19 Harry LaBonde - State of Wyoming (by phone)
20 John Shadle - Nebraska Public Power District
21 Kent Aden – Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District
22 John Thorburn - Tri-Basin Natural Resources District
23 Larry Reynolds - Tri-Basin Natural Resources District, landowner
24 Brock Merrill - U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
25 Joe Frank – State of Colorado (by phone)
26 John Heaston – The Nature Conservancy

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28 **Welcome and Administrative**

29 Chairman Woodman called the meeting to order at 9:05 am Central Time and the group
30 proceeded with introductions.

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32 Woodman asked for agenda modifications. Sackett added that discussion of easement details for
33 tract 0805 would take place during executive session.

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35 Czaplewski noted an error on line 67 of the June minutes: “TAC” should be changed to “WAC”.

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37 **Czaplewski made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 15, 2010 LAC meeting, as**
38 **amended. The motion was seconded by Shadle and passed unanimously.**

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40 **GC Meeting Update**

41 Czaplewski reported no new GC news, as the GC did not meet in the time since the previous
42 LAC meeting. The GC meets next on September 14 & 15, 2010 in Kearney, NE.



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Other Committee Coordination Information

Farnsworth gave a brief update on recent TAC activities. At the suggestion of the ISAC, work continues on prioritizing priority hypotheses. The ISAC has indicated that testing all of the many Program priority hypotheses within the First Increment is probably too much to tackle. The ISAC met in Kearney in July. At that meeting, the importance of the mock report and an adaptive management implementation plan was reinforced, and Program staff are shifting some focus to those topics. The next TAC meeting is September 1, 2010 in Kearney, NE.

Kenny gave an update on recent WAC activities. The WAC last met August 10. Items discussed included the progress on the feasibility studies for the Elm Creek and J-2 reservoirs, and groundwater recharge investigations. A RFP for groundwater recharge feasibility investigation and potential pilot project is being crafted and will be released after WAC and Finance Committee review and approval. Landowners in the areas of the potential reservoirs have been contacted and made aware of the potential projects. The WAC meets next on October 12, 2010 in Ogallala, NE.

Update on Land Management

Tunnell distributed a document to the LAC that provided a tract-by-tract update of ongoing, planned, and completed management activities. Czaplewski asked if work on the Elm Creek Complex and 2008002 was expected to be accomplished this year. Farnsworth said both bid packages are finished and awaiting permits from the US Army Corps of Engineers. The main contact at USACE has been on extended vacation and will return August 19, and the course of action and schedule will be better known after that time. Thorburn noted that if any wells on 2009004 are intended to be kept, paperwork must be filed with DNR to repurpose them as domestic, as opposed to irrigation, and they must not be capable of pumping greater than 50 gallons per minute.

Executive Session

Wingfield moved to go into executive session with LAC members, alternates, and technical staff to review details of land offerings. The motion was seconded by Czaplewski. The motion carried and the committee entered executive session at 10:04 a.m.

Wingfield moved to come out of executive session. Heaston seconded and the motion carried. The committee came out of executive session at 12:40 a.m.

The committee broke for a short lunch and returned at 1:10 p.m.

Wingfield moved to resume executive session with LAC members, alternates, and technical staff to review details of land offerings. The motion was seconded by Merrill. The motion carried and the committee entered executive session at 1:13 p.m.

Wingfield moved to come out of executive session. Steffl seconded and the motion carried. The committee came out of executive session at 1:25 p.m.



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Public Comment/Next Meeting

Chairman Woodman asked for public comments, none were offered.

The next meeting of the LAC will be held in Kearney, Nebraska at the Executive Director’s Office on Friday, October 8, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. central time.

Outdoor Recreation Policy Discussion

Sackett gave an overview of items related to the development of an outdoor recreation policy for the Program. Some suggestions have come in since the last meeting, and interaction is encouraged. For the upcoming season, access is being allowed for deer hunting. Sackett said interest and pressure is high from interested public. Time budget and time expended up to this point strongly indicate that outsourcing management of public access may be necessary. Wingfield said from the USFWS perspective, Program property is for species habitat first and foremost and any other uses are OK, but secondary, where consistent with that purpose. Some discussion ensued about the cost of management, and potential for charging hunters to cover those costs. Woodman asked if limits could be set to the cost. Kenny said limits could be set to limit profit potential. Reynolds proposed that responsibility could be given to county commissioners/sheriff’s departments, if they would accept. Steffl mentioned that it could be managed via a website similar to NGPC’s youth hunt program. Heaston said tests or lessons given via a website would give a basis for enforcement. Heaston said The Nature Conservancy charges \$250/year/person for hunting on their property and loses money – administration is costly. Kenny indicated one potential option is to use PRRIP funds to pay an entity to manage hunting and not charge the public. Another is to allow a third party to charge to cover their costs. Kenny said other types of access than hunting should also be considered (hiking, bird watching, etc). Schellpeper said the policy should also consider use of Program property for “education” which is mentioned in the Program document. Farnsworth said a very basic cost calculation for hunting management would put the lower bound at around \$40,000/year. Given locations available and considerations of providing safe and quality hunting, costs per hunter would be in the \$1,000/year range if the Program wished to recoup costs. This is likely a very low estimate.

Heaston suggested that a small group be formed to focus on this issue and try to assemble a preliminary course of action for LAC review. This committee will consist of Heaston, Steffl, Woodman, Merrill, LaBonde. Heaston will organize the committee and report to the LAC.

Discussion of Management Plans for LAC Recommendation on Tracts 2009006, 2009007, 2009008, & 2010001

Sackett gave an overview of the current status of land management planning. Draft plans for tracts 2009006 and 2009007 were posted to the website for review. These are early drafts, but LAC comment on proposed activities is requested. The LAC is requested to return comments on these two plans by **September 10, 2010**. Activities on tract 2009006 are primarily maintenance related, as it was acquired with the purpose of flow consolidation in mind. Once flow



132 consolidation feasibility is completed and a plan is formed, habitat enhancement activities can be
133 planned to compliment that activity.

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135 Sackett said that tracts 2009006 and 2009007 are fast approaching the 1-year deadline given in
136 the Program Document for creation of management plans. Tracts 2009008 and 2010001 would
137 be due in December and January. The ED office requests an extension of the deadline for all
138 four management plans, with the intent that they can all be considered and approved together at
139 the LAC and GC levels. Heaston said in the future, the LAC could possibly request a
140 modification of the timeline to reflect that management plans for all tracts in one calendar year
141 are due at the end of the following calendar year (or another approved date).

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143 **Wingfield moved to recommend that the GC extend the deadline for management plan**
144 **approval of tracts 2009006, 2009007, 2009008 & 2010001 to no later than the March 2011**
145 **GC meeting. Schellpeper seconded and the motion carried.**

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147 **Discussion of trade with Lentz to fix boundary at 2009008**

148 Sackett discussed the proposed trade to fix the boundary at 2009008.

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150 **LaBonde moved to recommend approval of the 2009008 trade as presented. Heaston**
151 **seconded. Motion carried.**

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153 **Discussion of Land Evaluations for 1001 and 1002**

154 Sackett introduced the evaluation report for tract 1001. Heaston asked if the offering was “all or
155 nothing” or if it would be possible to acquire it in part. Sackett said at this point it is not “all or
156 nothing.” Merrill asked if there were plans for dealing with existing infrastructure. Sackett said
157 the Program would likely carve out the residence locations and sell it off with access easement
158 and use restrictions. Wingfield said that the east part of the tract is not attractive for the
159 Program, and that the evaluation team recommendation in the report did not reflect comments to
160 that effect from the evaluation team. Wingfield said if 1001 must come as a whole property, the
161 east tract should be disposed of as excess.

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163 **Shadle moved to accept the evaluation team recommendation and recommend that the GC**
164 **proceed with appraisal and negotiations for Tract 1001. LaBonde seconded.**

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166 **Wingfield moved to amend the motion to state that the land east of the road on tract 1001**
167 **be considered excess. Merrill seconded. The amendment was voted upon and did not pass.**

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169 **The original motion was voted upon and did not pass. Viewpoint documents for tract 1001**
170 **will be requested from the LAC and formatted for presentation to the GC in absence of a**
171 **recommendation.**

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173 Sackett introduced the evaluation report for tract 1002. Tract 1002 is a large tract of primarily
174 agricultural land adjacent to PRRIP tract 2009008. Tract 2009008 is primarily non-complex



175 sandpit habitat, and the LAC generally did not feel tract 1002 was a valuable addition to this
176 property.

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178 **Czaplewski moved to accept the evaluation team recommendation and recommend that the**
179 **GC not pursue acquisition of tract 1002. Shadle seconded. Motion passed.**

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181 **Closing Business**

182 With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Woodman at 3:25 p.m.