



1                                   **PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**  
2                                   **Land Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
3                                   **Executive Director's Office – Kearney, NE**  
4                                   **December 1, 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   Bruce Sackett - ED Office  
11   Justin Brei - ED Office  
12   Jason Farnsworth - ED Office  
13   Tim Tunnell - ED Office  
14   Greg Wingfield - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
15   Ted LaGrange – Nebraska Game & Parks Commission  
16   Matt Steffl – Nebraska Game & Parks Commission  
17   Harry LaBonde - State of Wyoming (by phone)  
18   John Shadle - Nebraska Public Power District  
19   Jim Jenniges – Nebraska Public Power District  
20   Mark Peyton – Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District  
21   John Thorburn - Tri-Basin Natural Resources District  
22   Brock Merrill - U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (by phone)  
23   Suzanne Sellers – State of Colorado  
24   John Heaston – The Nature Conservancy

25  
26   **Welcome and Administrative**

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

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30   Woodman asked for agenda modifications. None were provided.

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32   **Czaplewski made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 8, 2010 LAC meeting.**  
33   **The motion was seconded by Wingfield and passed unanimously.**

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35   **GC Meeting Update**

36   Czaplewski gave the LAC an update on the latest GC activity. The GC met on two conference  
37   calls since the last LAC meeting. The topic of the first call was discussion of tract 0918. On that  
38   call, the GC approved proceeding with the purchase. The topic of the second call was to go over  
39   the FY2011 Program budget. No action was taken on that conference call.

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41   The GC meets next on December 7 & 8, 2010 in Denver, CO.  
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44



45 **Other Committee Coordination Information**

46 Farnsworth gave a brief update on recent TAC activities. The TAC has been discussing 2011  
47 tern & plover monitoring activities, as well as going over the adaptive management/research &  
48 monitoring portion of the 2011 Program budget. In addition, the TAC supported the sole-source  
49 proposal for PBS&J to assemble as-needed peer review panels for the Program. The TAC has  
50 received early drafts of the mock report and AM implementation plan and will begin the review  
51 process. The next TAC meeting is December 7, 2010 in Denver, CO.

52  
53 Wingfield reported that the WAC is moving forward with groundwater recharge feasibility  
54 investigations for two sites: one site near Gothenburg, NE and one site along the Phelps Canal in  
55 Phelps County. Sackett is assisting the contractor with landowner contacts for this project.

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57 **Update on Land Management**

58 Tunnell distributed a document to the LAC that provided a tract-by-tract update of ongoing,  
59 planned, and completed management activities.

60  
61 **Platte River Caddisfly Experiment**

62 Farnsworth informed the LAC of a potential upcoming PRCF research opportunity that the  
63 Program may pursue in 2011. The research proposal is from the University of Nebraska –  
64 Kearney and is intended to assess impacts to the PRCF from manipulation of habitat. The  
65 proposal will go before the TAC and if approved in the budget, may begin in the spring of 2011.

66  
67 Sellers inquired about the reasons that the Program would undertake this study. Farnsworth  
68 stated reasons to conduct study. First, the results of this study would help the Program decide  
69 whether or not to clear trees where caddisfly populations and/or potential caddisfly habitat exist.  
70 In addition, conducting this study allows the Program to be involved in information gathering  
71 related to the caddisfly, which is being considered for listing by the USFWS. Listing of another  
72 species in the Program's area would have significant impact on the Program. Sellers asked how  
73 this study could help or hinder a potential listing of the caddisfly by the USFWS. Farnsworth  
74 said it is unknown at this point, as the 12-month finding has not yet been initiated.

75  
76 Sellers asked if the Program were to wait and do nothing, leaving in place the stands of woody  
77 growth where caddisfly populations have been identified on Program lands, how would Program  
78 target species goals be affected. Farnsworth said it must be determined case by case. If woody  
79 growth exists and is detrimental to target species, doing nothing has an impact on Program goals.  
80 If acceptable target species habitat exists already and woody growth is peripheral to the areas of  
81 the tracts used by target species, doing nothing may not have an impact.

82  
83 Sellers asked how widespread are caddisfly population on Program lands? Farnsworth said a  
84 few Program properties have caddisfly populations, and some have no populations but contain  
85 what is considered potential habitat. Caddisflies have been found in a slough on the McCormick  
86 Tract.

87



88 Sellers asked who else is likely to do research of this type. Farnsworth said USFWS and UNK  
89 are the only ones that would have the interest or expertise, and they currently do not have the  
90 funding to perform caddisfly research.

91

### 92 Executive Session

93 **Heaston moved to go into executive session with LAC members, alternates, and technical**  
94 **staff to review details of land offerings. The motion was seconded by Shadle. The motion**  
95 **carried and the committee entered executive session at 10:17 a.m.**

96

97 **Heaston moved to come out of executive session. Wingfield seconded and the motion**  
98 **carried. The committee came out of executive session at 10:50 a.m.**

99

100 **Heaston made a motion to support the exchange of services for land on tract 2009008 and**  
101 **1017. Motion seconded by Czaplewski and passed unanimously.**

102

### 103 Public Comment/Next Meeting

104 Chairman Woodman asked for public comments, none were offered.

105

106 **The next meeting of the LAC will be held in Kearney, Nebraska at the Executive Director's**  
107 **Office on Wednesday, February 9, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. central time.**

108

### 109 Outdoor Recreation Policy Discussion

110 Heaston provided a summary of topics discussed by the ad hoc recreation policy workgroup.  
111 The group felt that the Program could allow (to start with) the following activities: mushroom  
112 collecting, deer hunting, fishing, bird watching/hiking, and turkey hunting. These activities  
113 would all be subject to blackout areas and dates defined by target species needs, and all would  
114 require written permission. Peyton asked if public must pay for access. Sackett said no, because  
115 if you charge a fee you lose coverage under the Nebraska Recreational Liability Act. Heaston  
116 recommended that approved access activities could be kept up to date on the Program website.  
117 LaBonde said those uses should also be documented in the GC approved policy, recognizing that  
118 things can be added or removed according to Program needs.

119

120 Farnsworth said that \$50,000 has been included in the FY2011 Program budget to procure  
121 services related to creating and enforcing an outdoor recreation access policy. Chairman  
122 Woodman asked that the ad hoc workgroup reconvene to further refine the policy into something  
123 that can be brought to the GC, and asked that Matt Steffl or Ted LaGrange, representing the  
124 Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, provide a proposal by the February 9, 2011 LAC meeting  
125 outlining how NGPC might implement public access for the Program. The ad hoc workgroup set  
126 a meeting date of December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and 9 a.m.

127

128 **Heaston made a motion to show LAC support for inclusion of the \$50,000 in the FY2011**  
129 **Program budget for recreation policy implementation. Seconded by Thorburn. LaGrange**  
130 **abstained. Motion carried.**

131



132 **Review Management Plans for LAC Recommendation for Tracts 2009006, 2009007,**  
133 **2009008, 2010001 and Cottonwood Ranch Complex**

134 Copies of final drafts of the management plans were distributed to the LAC the week prior to the  
135 meeting. Farnsworth said significant comments were received after these drafts were distributed,  
136 which was after the formal comment period. Farnsworth gave an overview of the structure of the  
137 land plans which were approved in early 2010. This structure includes tract-specific plans  
138 covering operations & maintenance activities and any tract-specific research & monitoring not  
139 covered under the complex plan. The structure also included complex plans which covered most  
140 research & monitoring activities and species habitat construction activities. Tract-specific plans  
141 and annual budget work plans are included as appendices to complex plans. Shadle said he  
142 appreciated the usefulness of the current division of tract and complex plans, but is receiving  
143 pressure from GC membership that the Program document currently asks for all-inclusive tract-  
144 specific plans unless the GC approves otherwise.

145  
146 Heaston said one thing that could be considered is the creation of a Program-wide operations &  
147 maintenance policy/plan that provides for approved property maintenance and good neighbor  
148 activities that must be undertaken on any property.

149  
150 One of the comments received asked for more detail for projects that are planned, where this  
151 detail cannot be reasonably included in the management planning time frame. Farnsworth said  
152 that baseline habitat creation maintenance activities can be developed for known projects, but  
153 development for unknown activities could be deferred. Jenniges would like the plans to state  
154 what information is outstanding, and address when these topics or planning efforts would be  
155 completed. Farnsworth also said that Program staff needs guidance on if/what activities could  
156 occur outside the envelope of adaptive management, whether necessary for upkeep, provide  
157 general benefit, or for other reasons, versus what activities must carry through the full adaptive  
158 management process. Jenniges said if work is planned for some goal, be it for target or non-  
159 target species, monitoring or assessment should take place to determine if the activity was a  
160 success. Jenniges also believes that the Program should not be spending a great deal of time or  
161 money creating habitat for non-target species. Farnsworth said that the USFWS, NGPC, and  
162 other organizations will want some benefits for other species, as allowed by the Program  
163 document. Jenniges said those projects should be accompanied by defined goals and monitoring.

164  
165 **Heaston moved to recommend to the GC that the current plan structure – tract operations**  
166 **and maintenance plans, in conjunction with complex plans – satisfy the Program document**  
167 **requirement that management plans be created within one year.**

168  
169 **Presentation of 2011 Work Plans and Budget**

170 Prior to the meeting, the LAC was presented with the work plan and budget overview for land-  
171 related activities in the 2011 Program budget. Farnsworth said there are approximately \$2M in  
172 expenses and \$200K in income. Budget line LP-2 encompasses species related actions and has a  
173 budget estimate of \$483,000. Budget line LP-4 encompasses operations and maintenance  
174 activities and has a budget estimate of \$365,000. Other expenses and incomes are covered in the  
175 distributed overview document.



176  
177 Shadle mentioned that sediment augmentation costs are associated with one or two tracts, where  
178 the cost may better be distributed across all tracts that will assume the benefit. Farnsworth said  
179 the cost is listed where the bulk of the activity will occur. Heaston said that although the major  
180 cost occurs on one property, it should be clear that the cost effects are shared across all  
181 downstream properties.

182  
183 **Heaston moved to recommend GC approval of the land budget & work plans as presented.**  
184 **Motion seconded by Wingfield and passed unanimously.**

185  
186 **Closing Business**

187 With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Woodman at 1:40 p.m.