



**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**

**Land Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Executive Director's Office – Kearney, NE**

**April 6, 2011**

**Attendees**

Scott Woodman, Chair, Central Platte Natural Resources District, landowner  
Mark Czaplewski, Vice Chair, Central Platte Natural Resources District  
Jerry Kenny, Executive Director  
Bruce Sackett - ED Office  
Justin Brei - ED Office  
Jason Farnsworth - ED Office  
Tim Tunnell - ED Office  
Greg Wingfield - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Matt Rabbe – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Matt Steffl – Nebraska Game & Parks Commission  
Harry LaBonde - State of Wyoming, Wyoming State Engineer's Office  
Jennifer Schellpeper – State of Nebraska, Nebraska Dept. of Natural Resources (by phone)  
Jim Jenniges – Nebraska Public Power District  
Brock Merrill - U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Suzanne Sellers – State of Colorado, Colorado Water Conservation Board (by phone)  
John Heaston – The Nature Conservancy  
David Raffety - Tri-Basin Natural Resources District, landowner  
Bill Taddicken – Audubon Rowe Sanctuary  
Jonas Davis – Ducks Unlimited (by phone)

**Welcome and Administrative**

Chairman Woodman called the meeting to order at 9:10 am Central Time and the group proceeded with introductions.

Woodman asked for agenda modifications. None were provided.

**LaBonde made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 9, 2011 LAC meeting and the February 22, 2011 LAC conference call. The motion was seconded by Wingfield and passed unanimously.**

**GC Meeting Update**

Czaplewski gave the LAC an update on the latest GC activity. The GC met last on March 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> in Kearney, NE.

- The modified Land Plan language covering “tiered” management plans was approved.
- The GC discussed the concept and logistics of counting acres under management agreements towards the 1<sup>st</sup> Increment goal. The GC agreed that the agreements should be counted, but should be indicated separately in the reporting document to ease tracking of



- 45 these more “fluid” acres. In order management agreement acres to be counted, they must  
46 receive a LAC recommendation and GC approval.
- 47 • Approved land management plans for 2009006, 2009007, 2009008, and 2010001.
  - 48 • Declined further pursuit of tracts 1018.
  - 49 • Approved proceeding with appraisal and negotiations for tract 1019 as non-complex  
50 habitat.
  - 51 • Authorized the purchase of tract 1001.
  - 52 • Approved counting the current six management agreements, totaling 392 acres, towards  
53 First Increment goals.

54  
55 The GC meets next on June 14 & 15, 2011 in Cheyenne, WY.

56  
57 **Other Committee Coordination Information**

58 Farnsworth gave a brief update on recent TAC activities. The AMWG will meet on April 12 to  
59 hear a presentation on the progress of the 1-D modeling and sediment augmentation teams and  
60 discuss scope for the next phase of the project. The ED Office will be working with the TAC  
61 and the LAC to form a grassland/wet meadow workgroup to help define management targets and  
62 evaluation of Program management of grassland areas. The TAC will meet next on May 11, and  
63 will cover a number of topics including the latest draft of the implementation plan and synthesis  
64 report.

65  
66 Kenny gave an update on recent WAC activities. The WAC has not met since the last LAC  
67 meeting. The next meeting is April 26 in Ogallala, NE. The WAC will hear updates from  
68 Wyoming, Colorado, and the Federal Government on 2010 depletions plan activities. They will  
69 also hear presentations from Olsson Associates on the J-2 reregulating reservoir and Elm Creek  
70 reservoir feasibility studies. Progress on the groundwater recharge pilot study, now under way,  
71 will also be discussed.

72  
73 **Executive Session**

74 **Czaplewski moved to go into executive session with LAC members, alternates, and**  
75 **technical staff to review details of land offerings. The motion was seconded by LaBonde.**  
76 **The motion carried and the committee entered executive session at 9:26 a.m.**

77  
78 **LaBonde moved to come out of executive session. Czaplewski seconded and the motion**  
79 **carried. The committee came out of executive session at 11:10 a.m.**

80  
81 **Discussion of Land Reviews at 1101 and 1102**

82 Sackett introduced tracts 1101 and 1102 for LAC consideration. Evaluation reports for these  
83 properties were given to the LAC in advance. Sackett said 110 acres on these tracts are currently  
84 counted towards First Increment goals under a management agreement. If purchased, these  
85 management agreement acres would no longer be counted except as fee title land. In other  
86 words, they would not be counted twice. Wingfield said that tract 1102 is currently under a 10  
87 year agreement with the Partners for Fish & Wildlife for the wetland restoration work completed  
88 on the property. The cost of that project was around \$70,000, and the agreement carries the



89 expectation that the habitat will be kept in the restored condition for the term of the agreement.  
90 Davis said that tract 1102 is also under a 25-year NAWCA agreement, with the same  
91 stipulations. These agreements were signed in October of 2009. The Program may require some  
92 modification of the wetland project in order to fit Program needs, so stakeholders in PFW and  
93 Ducks Unlimited will be involved in tract planning efforts. Wingfield, in consideration that both  
94 of these tracts are currently under conservation ownership, reminded the LAC that the GC has  
95 stipulated that the 10,000 acre Program milestone is a “floor not a ceiling”, and more than 10,000  
96 habitat acres can be protected. LaBonde said that the NAWCA and PFW agreements seem to  
97 represent an encumbrance on the property and the appraisal should take that into account.  
98 Heaston said that if the property is sold by the current owner, NAWCA may make a claim to  
99 some value of the project. It is not clear if it would apply to this tract, but regardless it is the  
100 current owner’s responsibility.

101

102 **Jenniges moved to forward tracts 1101 and 1102 to the GC with a recommendation to**  
103 **commence appraisal and negotiations as complex habitat. Heaston seconded and the**  
104 **motion carried.**

105

106 **Discussion of Remaining Conservation Easement at 2010004**

107 The details and values of the easement at 201004 were discussed during executive session. The  
108 LAC feels that, for the needs of the Program, the easement is not appropriately valued by the  
109 appraisal. The LAC discussed other possibilities for acquisition, such as acquiring the easement  
110 at a lower price, receiving the easement as in-kind for restoration work performed on the  
111 property, or other acceptable options. LaBonde said that while full property ownership is  
112 valuable, the restrictions in this easement are not expected to conflict with Program actions and  
113 he believes efforts to acquire this easement should be a low priority.

114

115 **Steffl moved to recommend that the ED Office discuss options to acquire the easement with**  
116 **the current owner, other than purchase at appraised value. Heaston seconded, motion**  
117 **carried.**

118

119 **Public Access Contract**

120 Sackett gave a brief update on activities with Nebraska Game and Parks Commission in regards  
121 to their potential administration of the Program’s Public Access Policy. The ED Office will meet  
122 with NGPC representatives on April 12 to discuss and further refine the options.

123

124 **Public Access Policy Discussion**

125 Sackett distributed the proposed Public Access Policy to the LAC, created by the ad hoc  
126 committee. The LAC proposed several minor spelling and word changes which were included in  
127 the draft. LaBonde added a provision asking those who access Program property not only pack  
128 out everything they pack in, but also make an effort to pick up any litter they may find. Davis  
129 and Jenniges believe that waterfowl hunting fits with the proposed open use periods and day  
130 access policies. Sackett said the current approach is to start small, as it is easier to add allowed  
131 uses than to remove them later. LaBonde pointed out that the policy states that the list of  
132 acceptable uses would be reviewed and approved annually.



133  
134 **LaBonde moved to recommend GC approval of the Public Access Policy, as amended.**  
135 **Czaplewski seconded, motion carried.**  
136

137 **Present Work in Progress**

138 Tunnell distributed a document to the LAC describing work completed, planned, and in progress  
139 on Program properties and discussed the activities tract by tract.  
140

141 **Public Comment/Next Meeting**

142 Chairman Woodman asked for public comments, none were offered.  
143

144 Czaplewski asked that an event be scheduled so that interested LAC members could tour several  
145 Program properties and see some of the projects taking place. The LAC agreed it would be  
146 beneficial to see their efforts in the field.  
147

148 **The next meeting of the LAC will be held in Kearney, Nebraska at the Executive Director's**  
149 **Office on Wednesday, June 1, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. central time. On Thursday, June 2, 2011,**  
150 **the LAC will tour Program properties and projects. Logistics for the June 2 tour will be**  
151 **distributed when finalized.**  
152

153 **Closing Business**

154 With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Woodman at 1:20 p.m.