



1 **PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**
2 **Water Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**
3 Nebraska Game and Parks Commission – Lake McConaughy Visitors Center
4 October 11, 2016

7 **Meeting Attendees**

9 **Water Advisory Committee (WAC)**

10 **State of Colorado**

11 Suzanne Sellers – Member

13 **State of Wyoming**

14 Bryan Clerkin – Member

16 **State of Nebraska**

17 Jessie Winter – Member

18 Colby Osborn

20 **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

21 Jeff Runge - Alternate

23 **U.S. Bureau of Reclamation**

24 Brock Merrill – Alternate

26 **Downstream Water Users**

27 Cory Steinke – Chair

28 Duane Woodward – Member

29 Jeff Shafer – Member

30 Landon Shaw – Member

31 Nolan Little

32 Tyler Thulin

33 Rich Walters

35 **Colorado Water Users**

36 Jon Altenhofen – Member

37 Luke Shawcross

39 **Upper Platte Water Users**

41 **Environmental Groups**

42 Jacob Fritton – Member

43 Bill Taddicken – Member

44 Duane Hovorka – Member

9 **Executive Director’s Office (ED Office)**

Jerry Kenny, ED

Kevin Werbylo

Sira Sartori

19 **Contractors**

Matt McConville – HDR

Rick Wilson – JEO Consulting



48 **Welcome and Administrative:** *Cory Steinke, WAC Chair*

49 Introductions were made. There were no agenda modifications. There were no edits reported on
50 the August 2016 WAC meeting minutes. Motion to approve meeting minutes was made by
51 Woodward, seconded by Merrill, unanimously approved.

52

53 **WAP Projects and Other Brief Water Updates**

54 ***J-2 Regulating Reservoir: Cory Steinke, CNPPID & Jerry Kenny, ED***

55 The amendment to the J-2 Reservoir Water Service Agreement should be ready for distribution
56 later this week. The updated agreement states the project is on hold; however, the CNPPID can
57 discuss land acquisition if interested landowners come forward. The updated agreement will
58 require approval from the GC at the next meeting. Data and studies collected for the J-2
59 Reservoir site are wrapping up for now.

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61 ***CPNRD Water Leasing Permits: Duane Woodward, CPNRD***

62 Woodward discussed the estimated volumes of excess flows delivered for recharge in the 30
63 Mile, Cozad and Orchard-Alfalfa Canals for this fall to-date, as well as for the year. The
64 Orchard-Alfalfa Canal is recharging at a low rate and the CPNRD is doing some work on the
65 bottom of the canal to increase rates. The CPNRD is also working on the temporary surface
66 water transfers for the year. They are working with the CNPPID to address objections to the
67 permit applications.

68

69 ***NPPD Water Leasing Permits: Jeff Shafer, NPPD***

70 The surface water transfer permit application has not been approved by the DNR. The NPPD has
71 been operating recharge of excess flows at the Dawson County and Gothenburg Canals this fall.
72 They are in the process of compiling the volumes delivered into each canal.

73

74 ***CNPPID Water Leasing: Jerry Kenny, ED***

75 Kenny said that the Program entered into a second year of agreements to lease irrigator water in
76 the CNPPID system. The CNPPID acts as the administrator for the project and will be sending
77 out offers to the irrigators soon. The Program put a cap of 2,000 acres to be leased. Those acres
78 would be converted to dryland farming for the following irrigation season. Due to a lot of rain in
79 the past year, dryland crops likely did well for the irrigators during the last round of leasing.
80 There are no projections as to how many irrigators will participate in the leasing this year.

81

82 ***COHYST Update: Jerry Kenny, ED***

83 The COHYST schedule is on-track and everyone seems happy with the progress and capabilities
84 of the GUI (graphical user interface). COHYST should be wrapping up the project by
85 approximately June 2017. Woodward mentioned some additional analysis updates and
86 calibration tweaks that will be wrapping up soon.

87

88 ***Project Scoring Efforts: Sira Sartori, ED Office***

89 Sartori said the GC accepted the Cook recapture well score of 160 acre-feet (AF) at the last GC
90 meeting. The GC also approved the increase in the Phelps County Canal groundwater recharge



91 score to represent 75% of the deliveries, per temporary and permanent water service agreements
92 with the CNPPID. The total score for both projects is 2,860 AFY. The Cook tract recapture well
93 was turned on in the past week, as there was a shortage to target flows. This project is now
94 officially active. The well may be turned off in the next couple of days due to an increase in
95 streamflow.

96

97 **Broad-Scale Recharge and Slurry Wall Storage Update:** *Kevin Werbylo, ED Office*

98 Updates were given on the feasibility testing completed to-date for broad-scale recharge projects
99 and slurry wall storage projects. Project concept updates were also provided during the
100 discussions.

101

102 Werbylo discussed the preliminary results derived from data collected at the two infiltration pits
103 constructed to test the feasibility of recharge operations at the Cottonwood Ranch site. He also
104 discussed the groundwater model of the site developed by the ED Office. The U.S. Geological
105 Survey completed geotechnical investigations at the site in September; the data is currently being
106 processed and will be provided soon. The Program is still continuing to focus on Cottonwood
107 Ranch as a broad-scale recharge site because it has a dual purpose as a water project and crane
108 habitat, it is land already owned and managed by the Program, the site is in close proximity to
109 the river and the costs are more affordable than or similar to those of the other concepts. The
110 Program will soon develop an RFP (request for proposal) on the engineering design work for the
111 project. Evaluations of other potential sites and the permitting aspects of the project will also be
112 evaluated by the ED Office in the near future.

113

114 Taddicken asked if there are issues with high groundwater for other landowners. Kenny
115 mentioned that the Program may be working out an agreement with the immediate downstream
116 landowner to incorporate the land into part of the design. The ED Office will also monitor
117 groundwater levels in the area and may develop recapture wells to prevent adverse impacts
118 downstream.

119

120 Werbylo went over the concept of a slurry wall storage projects. Geotechnical evaluations of
121 potential sites were done through work with Aqua Geo Frameworks (using airborne
122 electromagnetic surveys) and by drilling boreholes on potential sites, including the Plum Creek
123 complex, Cottonwood Ranch complex, Elm Creek complex and the Lindstrom/Stall properties.
124 The sites appear to have a low permeability layer, based on the draft logs to-date. The next steps
125 include compiling all the data collected, developing conceptual designs and drafting an RFP for
126 the engineering design work to be completed. Werbylo noted that the ED Office is currently
127 working with the CNPPID to develop a delivery system to bring excess flows to the areas where
128 broad-scale recharge and slurry wall projects will be sited.

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130 Altenhofen asked how water would be recovered from the slurry wall aquifer storage project.
131 Werbylo responded that the project would serve as a controlled holding space and water would
132 be pumped out when needed. Kenny noted that the Cook/Dyer properties are anticipated sites for
133 slurry wall storage, as these sites might be mined for sediment augmentation.



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2017 Draft Water Plan Budget: *Jerry Kenny, ED*

Kenny went over the draft Water Plan work plan distributed to the WAC. It was stressed that the budget numbers are subject to change, as the work plan and project budgets are works in progress. If any WAC members have suggestions or comments, please let the ED Office know. The work plan and budget line items will be discussed at the November FC meeting and then presented for approval at the December GC meeting.

The WP-1 (Chokepoint Activities), WP-4 (Water Action Plan projects), WP-5 (Management Tool) and WP-8 (Special Advisors) and the individual line items under each budget item were discussed. Kenny noted that there will be a change in the broad-scale recharge and slurry wall storage project costs, as some land acquisition will be added into the 2017 budget. There was some discussion about Water Management Incentives, as these types of projects are not shown in out years. These projects will continue to be evaluated; however, there is currently no budget in 2017 through 2019 allotted for these types of projects. It was noted that the conservation of water should be from the consumptive use portion of water rights, not the return flows. Historical return flows should be maintained to avoid impacts to water users and instream flows.

Additional Business: *Cory Steinke, WAC Chair*

The next WAC meeting is February 7, 2017. The October 2017 meeting may be rescheduled at the February 2017 meeting.

Action Items

General WAC

- n/a

ED Office

- n/a