



# PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

## Land Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

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

April 9, 2010

#### Attendees

Scott Woodman, Chair, Landowner, Central Platte Natural Resources District  
 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  
 Chad Smith - ED Office  
 Greg Wingfield - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
 Matt Steffl - Nebraska Game & Parks Commission  
 Ted LaGrange - Nebraska Game & Parks Commission  
 Jennifer Schellpeper - State of Nebraska Department of Natural Resources  
 Harry LaBonde - State of Wyoming  
 Ted Kowalski - State of Colorado (by phone)  
 Joe Frank - State of Colorado (by phone)  
 Jim Jenniges - Nebraska Public Power District  
 Kent Aden – Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District  
 John Thorburn - Tri-Basin Natural Resources District  
 John Heaston - The Nature Conservancy  
 Brock Merrill - U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

#### Welcome and Administrative

Chairman Scott Woodman called the meeting to order at 9:00 am Central Time and the group proceeded with introductions.

Woodman asked for agenda modifications. The agenda listed an incorrect date for the action item of approval of the prior meeting minutes. The date was changed from January 19 to January 29.

**LaBonde made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 29 LAC meeting. The motion was seconded by Czaplewski and passed unanimously.**

#### GC Meeting Update

Czaplewski gave an update on GC activities since the LAC last met. The GC met on March 9 & 10, 2010 in Kearney, NE.



GC action items for their recent meeting included the approval of: tern and plover monitoring protocol, water quality monitoring protocol, process for indexing of Program funds (which adjusts Program allocations for inflation), and agreement with CNPPID for pursuing reregulating reservoirs.

In addition, the GC approved the land management and complex management plans that were previously approved by the LAC.

The next GC meeting is scheduled for June 8 & 9 in Cheyenne, WY.

### **Other Committee Coordination Information**

Smith gave a brief update on recent TAC activities. Work is beginning to prioritize the subset of “priority hypotheses” as well as the triggers that will determine when these hypotheses are valid or not. The TAC has been reviewing and refining tern and plover monitoring and research protocols as well as the wet meadow information review RFP.

Kenny gave an update on recent WAC activities. The WAC has been focusing on the reregulation reservoir investigations. Contractors have completed exploratory soil borings near the proposed J-2 reregulating reservoir and are working on a feasibility analysis scope to be completed by the end of 2010. The Program has also partnered with CPNRD for analysis of the Elm Creek Reservoir alternative.

### **Discussion of Evaluation Team Recommendation 0919 & Reconsider a Portion of 818 as a Lease**

Sackett introduced tract 0919 and discussed the evaluation team’s site visit. The evaluation team recommended that the LAC not pursue tract 0919. NPPD maintains a management lease on the property through 2026 for the purpose of maintaining tern and plover habitat.

Sackett offered that TAC may wish to pursue the tract as a source of sediment for sediment augmentation. LaBonde asked if those actions could take place within the terms of NPPD’s lease agreement. Jenniges said it is not likely. The lease is for tern and plover management activities. Steffl asked if the owner was anxious to sell or was there time for the TAC to examine the potential for other purposes. Sackett said probably not more than a few months.

**Czaplewski moved to accept the evaluation team’s recommendation to decline pursuit of 0919 for habitat and recommends that the TAC or WAC examine potential for sediment augmentation. LaBonde seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

Sackett then discussed the terms of a proposed management lease on tract 0818. The lease would cover approximately 15 acres of sandpit habitat through 2019. The Program pursued the purchase of this property in its entirety in 2009, but the negotiations were not successful. Several LAC members expressed concern over the lease requirement that the Program take on liability for fines for activities on the leased area.



**LaBonde moved to recommend that the GC pursue the lease under the presented terms, and asked that the ED office identify past or future MSHA liabilities before presentation and approval by the GC. Motion seconded by Czaplewski and passed unanimously.**

### **Update on Land Management**

Tunnell gave a PowerPoint presentation on a number of land management activities under way.

- 2008001: Fence reworking still under way. Power lines south of property have been removed and solar livestock watering well in place on south 2008001. Some seeding planned both north and south of river in late spring. Prescribed burn planned on islands between the high banks for late spring.
- 2008002: IFB 09:05 and 09:06 have been completed by Hood Construction (leveling of in-channel island and removal of tree piles in off-channel sand and water area). Tunnell is working with NPPD and CPNRD to plan a late spring prescribed burn for Lloyd Island and a half section of wheatgrass south of the river on 2008002.
- 2009001 & 2009004: Tree and debris removal in ditches along Kilgore Rd. is complete. Seeding is planned for later this spring. .
- 2009003: Residence removal is scheduled for April 15, 2010. Power lines to residence have been removed and power has been run to east entrance to run gate to be installed this spring. The lodge has been cleaned and brought into shape to house summer technicians, who will be moving in prior to tern and plover nesting season. IFB 09:08 has been completed (clearing of trees in and south of channel). Old food plots have been disced and seeded to grass.
- 2009005: Home site to be seeded this spring. Planning to develop bid package for tree removal, fence upkeep, for work to begin in late summer or early fall.
- 2009008: Vegetation has been cleared for tern and plover habitat. Preliminary discussions are under with Ducks Unlimited to assist with development of fencing bid package.
- 2010001: Ducks Unlimited is moving forward with habitat construction under a NAWCA grant on southern parts of 2010001 as well as adjacent NPPD and DU lands.

Brei asked the LAC for volunteers to participate in a subgroup to begin development of land management plans for the next round of recent land purchases. Steffl, Czaplewski, Jenniges, Aden, and Wingfield volunteered.

### **Land Trades**

Sackett distributed information on potential land trades prior to the LAC meeting. These trades are primarily to fix existing boundary issues to satisfy Program needs and good neighbor policy considerations.

**Wingfield moved to recommend approval of trades on 2009003 and 2009004 as presented. Heaston seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**

Sackett was asked about the status of potential land trades for the parts of 2009008. Jenniges asked if USFWS has considered whether one of the possible targets (East Odessa WMA), would



be considered complex habitat or not if acquired by the Program. Wingfield said USFWS is proceeding with the assumption it would be considered complex. Czaplewski recommends that the LAC perform a typical evaluation team site visit once trade terms are outlined.

### **Outdoor Recreation Policy Discussion**

Sackett said the Program needs to begin development of recreational access policies for Program property, including hunting. Calls are coming more and more frequently from interested public. The ED office invited interested public to a meeting on March 16 to provide ideas for possible access policies. Sackett provided the LAC a document outlining some of those ideas. To this point, the focus has been from the good neighbor policy perspective in reducing deer population. Wingfield asked what the purpose of the supervisors was. Sackett said they are to handle first level problems; primarily their function is to reduce administrative burden on Program staff. Jenniges asked how supervisors would be selected. Sackett said this is being treated as a private land situation, and the ED office would select supervisors. LaGrange asked why discussions to this point have not included hunting for waterfowl or upland species, potentially bracketing access dates. Sackett said experiences so far have been negative with other species, but they are not being ruled out completely at this time. Kenny said these recreational access discussions are just beginning, and they are important, but on the list of Program priorities it is fairly low. Sackett said the approach is to start small. The whole process will be probationary. If there are too many impacts to other Program priorities, access can be removed. Over the next few months, Sackett will flesh out a plan to solicit comments.

### **Public Comment/Closing Business**

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, June 15, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. central time.**

### **Executive Session**

**LaBonde moved to go into 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 12:46 a.m.**

**Wingfield moved to come out of executive session. Merrill seconded and the motion carried. The committee came out of executive session at 1:08 p.m.**

### **Discussion of Tabled LAC Recommendations**

Sackett brought forth four tracts which had been tabled at previous LAC meetings. These tracts were presented to remind the LAC of their status, and to give the LAC the opportunity to act on them should they desire. LaBonde asked of the status on 0917. Sackett said the property has changed hands, and is not a priority for the Program.



177 **LaBonde moved to take 0917 off of further agendas and remove it from further**  
178 **consideration by the Program. Heaston seconded and the motion passed unanimously.**  
179

180 Sackett gave status updates on 0918 and 0911 as well. Tract 0918 was tabled previously to give  
181 other conservation owners an opportunity to pursue it before the Program turned it down. These  
182 discussions have occurred and they are working to purchase the property.  
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184 **Heaston moved to remove 0918 from further consideration by the Program. Motion**  
185 **seconded by Jenniges and passed unanimously.**  
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187 0911 was being pursued as a potential trade land and has since been sold.  
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189 **Wingfield moved to remove 0911 from further consideration by the Program. Motion**  
190 **seconded by LaBonde and passed unanimously.**  
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192 With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Woodman at 1:17 p.m.