



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 8th & 9th 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 1st Increment goal. The GC agreed that the agreements should be counted, but should be indicated separately in the reporting document to ease tracking of



these more “fluid” acres. In order management agreement acres to be counted, they must receive a LAC recommendation and GC approval.

- Approved land management plans for 2009006, 2009007, 2009008, and 2010001.
- Declined further pursuit of tracts 1018.
- Approved proceeding with appraisal and negotiations for tract 1019 as non-complex habitat.
- Authorized the purchase of tract 1001.
- Approved counting the current six management agreements, totaling 392 acres, towards First Increment goals.

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

Other Committee Coordination Information

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

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

Executive Session

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

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

Discussion of Land Reviews at 1101 and 1102

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



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

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

Discussion of Remaining Conservation Easement at 2010004

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

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

Public Access Contract

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

Public Access Policy Discussion

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



LaBonde moved to recommend GC approval of the Public Access Policy, as amended. Czaplewski seconded, motion carried.

Present Work in Progress

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

Public Comment/Next Meeting

Chairman Woodman asked for public comments, none were offered.

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

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

Closing Business

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