



**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (PRRIP or Program)**  
**Governance Committee (GC) Conference Call Minutes**  
October 14, 2016

**Meeting Attendees**

**Governance Committee (GC)**

**State of Wyoming**

Harry LaBonde – Voting Member

Brian Clerkin – Alternate

**State of Colorado**

Don Ament – Voting Member (GC Chair)

Carlee Brown – Alternate

Suzanne Sellers – Alternate

**State of Nebraska**

Jennifer Schellpeper – Alternate

**Upper Platte Water Users**

Dennis Strauch – Voting Member

Bob Mehling – Alternate

**Downstream Water Users**

Mark Czaplewski – Member

Don Kraus – Member

Brian Barels – Member

Kent Miller – Member

Mike Drain – Alternate

**Executive Director's Office (EDO)**

Jerry Kenny, ED

Jason Farnsworth

Bruce Sackett

Chad Smith

**Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)**

Chris Beardsley – Voting Member

Brock Merrill – Alternate

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)**

Tom Econopouly – Alternate

**Environmental Entities**

Rich Walters – Member

Duane Hovorka – Member

**Colorado Water Users**

Alan Berryman – Voting Member

Kevin Urie – Alternate

Deb Freeman – Alternate



### **Welcome & Administrative**

Kenny ran through the list of conference participants. Ament called the meeting to order at 10:06 AM Central Time.

*Econopouly moved to approve the September 13-14, 2016 GC Quarterly Meeting minutes; Berryman seconded. Minutes approved.*

*LaBonde moved to approve the October 6, 2016 GC Conference Call minutes; Barels seconded. Minutes approved.*

### **First Increment Extension**

The GC discussed the latest draft of the First Increment Extension Proposal and Budget. The following edits were discussed:

**Proposed Edit #1** – delete Footnote 2 regarding Jeffrey Island.

**Discussion** – LaBonde asked for clarification related to Jeffrey Island. Is FERC requiring that it enter the Program? Drain said there is no requirement from FERC for it to become part of the Program. There seems to be concern about the Program managing it for slightly different purposes than the purposes contained in the FERC licenses. Farnsworth said the requirement is that the Service has to ask to bring in Jeffrey Island. Kraus said it was never the intent that the Service or the Program would buy the land.

**GC Decision** – delete Footnote 2.

**Proposed Edit #2** – ‘up to’ 1,500 acres and change Land Management Objective to 11,500 acres.

**Discussion** – Econopouly said the Service wants it to read “acquire at least” 1,500 acres of complex of land, no matter what is achieved by 2019. Sellers asked if there has been a look as to whether there are 1,500 acres of complex land that might be available during this time period. Kenny said the words don’t specify this now but discussion in the past centered around the Gibbon to Shelton reach. There is the potential for 1,500 acres (willing seller/willing buyer) in this reach. Ament asked what if we only find 1,450 acres. Econopouly said the Service considers 1,500 the floor, we would need “at least” or slightly more. Barels said we know non-complex habitat lands like sandpits benefits the species while we are not sure how much benefit comes from 1,500 acres. Being a species-focused program, we ought to allow the acquisition of sandpits to benefit the species if they are available. Barels said the Downstream Water Users are interested in what the new goal is with these new acres. The current Land Objective is 10,000 acres, so why would it now be 11,500 acres in the Extension. Freeman said her understanding is the 1,500 acres was intended to “true up” the calculations for land heading into the Second Increment. Barels said to be consistent with the First Increment goal, should this instead read “at least 11,500 acres” for the First Increment Goal. Farnsworth said we already have over 12,000 acres so he was under the impression that the 1,500 acres was supposed to be a plus-up. Merrill said that was his understanding as well. Econopouly said that is correct. Merrill said he doesn’t want land to not count toward the new 1,500 acres if we buy it before 2020. Barels said we need to understand what the basis of the measurement is. Kraus said we need to have this figured out.

Kenny said there appears to be two issues related to the 1,500 acres:

- 1) Are the 1,500 acres complex only or complex AND non-complex?
- 2) 1,500 acres in relation to what? The current Land Objective, the current holdings of 12,000 acres, how much we have at the end of 2019, making the total at least 11,500, 1,500 plus some number setting a higher target?

**GC Decision** – change bullet point to read “Acquire at least an additional 1,500 acres with the intent of establishing a new habitat complex.”



**Proposed Edit #3** – delete “maximum amount of.”

**Discussion** – Barels said the Downstream Water Users did not want to infer we would take money away from the 1,500 acres to achieve the water objective. Our concern was this language would require all the Extension money to spent on this if necessary.

**GC Decision** – accept edit.

**Proposed Edit #4** – change “the Program is” to “the Signatories are.”

**Discussion** – Barels said it was semantics, the resources come from the Signatories. Ament said the Signatories have the resources but this is a Program and he gets nervous if we split things up. Beardsley said this language change seems divisive and suggests leaving the language as “the Program is”.

**GC Decision** – reject edit.

**Proposed Edit #5** – change choke point capacity to 4,000 cfs (Service) or 5,000 cfs (Environmental Entities).

**Discussion** – Kenny said the capacity right now at the Choke Point is right at 2,000 cfs. Based on modeling work, at a stage of 6.5 feet we might not make the 3,000 cfs capacity. We investigated with regard to easements and acquisitions, if we jumped to a stage of 7 feet how much more would that involved. The model results indicated not a lot. At the September GC meeting, the specter of groundwater was raised and that is now an issue we have to address if we are going to contemplate a raise in flood stage. That may open up a larger area of concern. Kenny said his preference is to keep the language as “at least 3,000 cfs” because right now there is a large amount of uncertainty related to achieving 4,000 or 5,000 cfs and those higher numbers might lock the Program into a much more expensive structural alternative. Walters said he understands the constraints at North Platte, but we need to be able to get water through this choke point to be able to test flow management actions.

**GC Decision** – change language to “...maintaining at least 3,000 cfs conveyance capacity while remaining below flood stage, with additional capacity developed as practicably achievable with available resources.”

**Proposed Edit #6** – add bullet points on updating AMP and evaluating target flows.

**Discussion** – Barels said the bullet on target flows is just a statement in reference to a sentence regarding target flows in the introductory language of this proposal. Regarding the AMP update language, it should be clear where we have gotten in relation to the AMP in the First Increment. It seems like we should move into the Extension with a new AMP that contains the hypotheses that will be tested during the Extension based on what we have accomplished or not accomplished during the First Increment.

**GC Decision** – delete the “Management Objective” section and all related bullet points.

Beardsley asked how do we continue to move this document forward and still have conversations regarding Signatory funding? Ament said we need to ask the questions now so that we can approved the Extension Proposal on November 2 and then start our work to put the dollars together for implementation.

### **Future Meetings & Closing Business**

2016 AMP Reporting Session:

- **October 18-19, 2016** @ Omaha, NE (ISAC meets alone with EDO on Oct. 20)  
Hilton Garden Inn Downtown

Upcoming GC meetings:

- **November 2, 2016** @ Denver, CO (Special Session – FY17 Budget and First Increment  
Extension Proposal & Budget)  
Country Inn & Suites – Denver International Airport



- **December 6-7, 2016 @ Denver, CO (Quarterly Meeting)**  
Warwick Denver

**Meeting adjourned at 11:58 AM Central Time.**

**Summary of Action Items/Decisions from October 14, 2016 GC Conference Call**

- 1) Approved the September 13-14, 2016 GC Quarterly Meeting minutes.
- 2) Approved the October 6, 2016 GC Conference Call minutes.
- 3) The GC discussed and agreed to edits for the Extension Proposal.