



PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (PRRIP or Program)
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
February 26, 2016

Meeting Attendees

Finance Committee (FC)

State of Wyoming

Harry LaBonde – Member (Chair)

State of Colorado

Suzanne Sellers – Member

State of Nebraska

Jeff Fassett – Member

Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)

Chris Beardsley – Member

Brock Merrill – Alternate

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)

None

Environmental Entities

Marian Langan – Member

Colorado Water Users

Alan Berryman – Member

Downstream Water Users

Brian Barels - Alternate

Welcome and Administrative

Kenny listed everyone on the call. FC Chair LaBonde called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. Central Time.

Fassett moved to elect LaBonde as 2016 FC Chair; Langan seconded. Motion approved.

Berryman moved to approve the October 22, 2015 FC minutes; Beardsley seconded. Minutes approved.

Geomorphology/Vegetation Monitoring and Data Analysis

Farnsworth discussed the 2016 contract amendment for geomorphology/vegetation monitoring and data analysis. LaBonde asked for a summary of what is being done under this contract. Farnsworth discussed monitoring at anchor points, topographic and vegetation data, sediment transport measurements, and bed, bank, and bar material. Fassett asked what aspects of the Program this data feeds into. Farnsworth said most parts of the Adaptive Management Plan and the related Big Questions. We use this data to look at how vegetation and unvegetated channel widths change through time, how sediment aggradation and degradation change over time, and how this information relates to management actions. We always try to relate this back to what we do in the field, though we may begin transitioning to more remote sensing of



data. Barels asked if we get an annual report and if we will also get an overall summary report. Farnsworth said it adds one year of data points to a comprehensive data analysis and report for all years to help look at Big Questions and underlying hypotheses.

Fassett moved to approve the contract amendment; Berryman seconded. Contract amendment approved.

Website Support, Maintenance, & System Enhancements

Farnsworth discussed the 2016 contract amendment for work on the PRRIP web site and database.

Fassett moved to approve the contract amendment; Barels seconded. Contract amendment approved.

Independent Scientific Advisory Committee (ISAC)

Smith discussed the 2016 contract amendments for all six (6) ISAC members. Fassett asked about what seemed to be increasing costs for this line item. Smith said the overall ISAC budget actually went down from 2015 because of cost-cutting in the FY16 budget prior to GC approval and that the ISAC per day rate has been held steady for 3-4 years.

Berryman moved to approve the contract amendments; Beardsley seconded. Contract amendments approved.

Grassland Vegetation Monitoring

Smith discussed the recommendation for a sole-source contract for Prairie Legacy to conduct grassland monitoring for the PRRIP in 2016. Fassett asked about the resume of Prairie Legacy. Smith said Kay Kottas is based in Lincoln, NE and has done similar monitoring work on central Nebraska grasslands for Program entities. Langan said Audubon had hired them to do work on their properties. LaBonde asked about the linkages to endangered species recovery. Smith said this was not part of the original AMP and there were no hypotheses related to it. Smith said his recollection was the Service brought this item to the table for discussion once the Program had acquired a sizable amount of grassland acres, with the link to endangered species possibly being grassland health in wet meadows and keeping track of invasives.

Langan moved approval of recommending the GC support a sole-source contract for 2016 grassland vegetation monitoring; Barels seconded and requested the GC get a comparison of the first results to see if we need to do this monitoring again in 2019. Motion approved.

LaBonde asked the Service to discuss with GC at the March meeting what the link of this monitoring is to endangered species recovery.

Hydroclimatic Indices

Kenny discussed the Phase III contract for Dewberry to continue work on hydroclimatic indices. This contract will be in partnership with the CWCB as has been done previously. LaBonde asked if there had been or if there will be a presentation to the GC on the outcome of Phase II of this work. Kenny said that will happen first in the WAC and then there will be a presentation to the GC. There will probably be a Phase II/III overview to the GC in September or December. LaBonde asked where the results were posted on the PRRIP web site. Kenny said for sure on the WAC site but would have to check if they were in Public Library. A link to the Phase II Reports was requested and has been provided to all FC and GC members.



*Sellers moved to approve the contract; Barels seconded and requested the EDO send a link to the FC and GC for the posted results. Kenny agreed. **Contract approved.***

PRRIP Indexing for 2015

Merrill discussed indexing related to 2015 and changes made to the method in 2012. LaBonde asked if any formal action is required by the FC. Merrill said if there was a motion of support from the FC to the GC for moving back to the original method that would be helpful.

*Sellers moved to return to the original indexing method; Fassett seconded. **Motion approved.***

Closing Business

The next FC meeting will be a conference call on May 17th, 2016 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. Central Time.

FC meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m. Central time.

Summary of Action Items/Decisions from February 26, 2016 FC meeting

- 1) Elected Harry LaBonde as 2016 FC Chair.
- 2) Approved October 22, 2015 FC minutes.
- 3) Approved the 2016 geomorphology/vegetation monitoring and data analysis contract amendment.
- 4) Approved the 2016 website and database contract amendment.
- 5) Approved six (6) 2016 ISAC contract amendments.
- 6) Approved recommending the GC support a sole-source contract for 2016 grassland vegetation monitoring
- 7) Requested the GC get a comparison of the first grassland vegetation monitoring results to see if we need to do this monitoring again in 2019.
- 8) Asked the Service to discuss with GC at the March meeting what the links are between grassland vegetation monitoring and endangered species recovery.
- 9) Approved the Phase III contract for hydroclimatic indices.
- 10) Asked the EDO to send around links to the information regarding Water Year 2016 forecasts (done).
- 11) Supported moving back to the original indexing method for Program funds.