



**PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**  
**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**  
October 22, 2015

**Meeting Attendees**

**Finance Committee (FC)**

**State of Wyoming**

Harry LaBonde – Member (Chair)

**State of Colorado**

Suzanne Sellers – Member

**State of Nebraska**

Jesse Bradley – Member

**Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)**

None

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

None

**Environmental Entities**

Marian Langan – Member

**Colorado Water Users**

Alan Berryman – Member

Kevin Urie – Member

**Downstream Water Users**

Don Kraus - Member

**Welcome and Administrative**

Kenny listed everyone on the call. FC Chair LaBonde called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Central Time.

*Sellers moved to approve the August 25, 2015 FC minutes as amended by Sellers and Kenny; Berryman seconded. Minutes approved.*

**PRRIP Draft FY16 Budget and Work Plan**

Kenny and EDO staff discussed the draft FY16 budget spreadsheet and work plan. Specific items of discussion included:

- Sellers said the EDO line looks to be about \$500,000 or so more than will be spent this year. Kenny said the expenses Sellers was looking at are for the end of September but the expenditures only go through the end of August so when you appropriately account for the additional month the ED-1 line is projected to come in on budget. Sellers said she is still coming up \$500,000 short and is thinking that line item should not be any more than what is spent in FY15. Colorado is feeling like staff levels don't need to increase so if you use your budget as a determination as to how you staff then maybe we



49 need to put a limit on that. Kenny reiterated that his projection is that ED-1 is going to come in right at  
50 budget accounting for September through December 2015 so that is what is being used to estimate the  
51 budget for FY16. We do not anticipate major staffing shifts. Costs are mostly labor and our intent is  
52 to keep it at the levels of previous years. We are not overstaffed by any means but we are not looking  
53 to increase staff. The GC will get the full details of the staffing plan in November and how that  
54 translates into budget.

- 55 • Sellers said the J-2 payment is in the WAC budget but why is it in the budget estimate if we are not  
56 going to make a payment. Kenny said it is in the budget to remind everyone that at some time that  
57 money is going to be due. When the FC and GC were asked previously how to show the J-2 payments,  
58 the answer was always to show it in a distributed fashion in the water budget. It is a three-year number  
59 moving forward until we make that payment. If it is the desire to do that differently, and to not show  
60 budget for water items unless there is an agreement in place that also could be done.
- 61 • Kenny said the note for GFC-2 will be edited accordingly but the number of \$250,000 will be used  
62 until he gets a better number from Brock Merrill or Diane Wilson. It is based on a complex calculation  
63 from the Department of Interior.
- 64 • Sellers said looking at the current year budget minus the J-2 payment it would be about \$12 million  
65 (FY15). It would appear we would only spend about half that \$12 million and a similar thing happened  
66 in 2014. It gives the impression that the budget is roughly a third over-inflated. She is wondering if it  
67 would be more helpful to have a budget that better reflects what is going to happen. It seems like there  
68 is a lot of fluff and we need to get a little closer to what is actually going to happen. Kenny said the  
69 budget has always been constructed such that the money is there if we are able to move forward with  
70 certain items. Due various reasons (inability to get a permit, inability to decide on a direction, etc.)  
71 sometimes money remains but the philosophy has always been it is easier to not spend than to amend  
72 the budget mid-year if something is ready to move forward but the money is not there. Kenny said  
73 there are a number of items on the water side that will bring the numbers down and that is where a lot  
74 of the money has not been spent in the past couple years. We will probably hit around \$8-\$9 million  
75 in expenditures by the end of 2015 but there is a chunk of money in the water items this year that will  
76 not be spent.
- 77 • Kraus said there is a question about COHYST as to whether the work will be done in June 2016 or if  
78 the dry river issue will have to be addressed which might take the work to June 2017. There is a  
79 conference call later today to discuss that issue. Kenny was aware of the issue and call, but indicated  
80 that Program budget projections did not include work on the dry river issue or other model improvement  
81 activities in compliance with NDNR wishes. The COHYST budget is a little fluid still (WP-5), but  
82 would likely settle in the \$30,000 to \$40,000 range, currently shown at about \$33,000.
- 83 • Urie asked how long habitat availability analyses (IMRP-6) will occur. Smith and Baasch said the  
84 expectation is every year through the First Increment because it is critical data to assessing target  
85 species use of Program habitat. Baasch said the agreement with RBJV has been extended year-to-year  
86 but it would be a good step to enter into a multi-year agreement. For the last contract, the RBJV  
87 estimated budget came in at about \$50,000 but the next nearest estimate was about \$250,000 so RBJV  
88 provides substantial cost efficiency.
- 89 • Urie asked about WC monitoring expenditures for FY15 and whether they would approach the  
90 approved budget amount. Baasch said fall monitoring would end up costing about \$80,000-\$85,000  
91 which would put final FY15 expenditures very close to the FY15 approved budget for that line item.



**Closing Business**

Kenny said there may not be contracts for FC discussion ready until about February 2016. LaBonde said to wait until January to set the next FC meeting. Kenny agreed to distribute a Doodle poll to set that meeting.

**FC meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m. Central time.**

**Summary of Action Items/Decisions from October 22, 2015 FC meeting**

1) Approved August 25, 2015 FC minutes as amended.