



PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Finance Committee Conference Call Minutes

November 30, 2012

Meeting Attendees

Finance Committee (FC)

State of Wyoming

Harry LaBonde – Member

State of Colorado

Suzanne Sellers – Member

State of Nebraska

Jim Schneider – Member

Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)

Gary Campbell – Member

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)

Mike George – Member

Environmental Entities

No participants

Colorado Water Users

Alan Berryman – Member

Kevin Urie – Member

Downstream Water Users

Don Kraus – Member

Brian Barels

Welcome and Administrative

FC Chair Campbell called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m. Central time. Kenny announced that former GC member Norm DeMott unfortunately passed away on November 27, 2012.

FC Minutes

Kraus moved to approve the October 6, 2012 FC minutes; George seconded. Minutes approved.

Draft PRRIP FY2013 Budget

Kenny discussed the latest drafts of the FY13 PRRIP budget and work plan that will be presented to the GC next week for approval. Kenny highlighted changes to line items GFC-1, G-5, and IMRP-5 that were made since the last FC meeting and the previous GC discussion about the budget. No additional FC discussion.

Executive Director's Office (EDO) & Other Staff

Jerry Kenny, Executive Director (ED)

Jason Farnsworth

Bruce Sackett

Chad Smith

Consultants

Larry Schulz

**Geomorphology/Vegetation Monitoring Contract Amendment**

Farnsworth discussed the contract amendment for PRRIP system-scale geomorphology/vegetation monitoring and associated data analysis.

LaBonde moved to approve the contract amendment; Schneider seconded. Contract amendment approved.

Elm Creek FSM Contract Amendment

Farnsworth discussed the contract amendment for modeling, monitoring, and data analysis activities at the Elm Creek Complex FSM “Proof of Concept” site.

Campbell moved to approve the contract amendment; LaBonde seconded. Contract amendment approved.

Shoemaker Island FSM Contract Amendment

Farnsworth discussed the contract amendment for modeling, monitoring, and data analysis activities at the Shoemaker Island Complex FSM “Proof of Concept” site. Schneider asked if this work was secured through a competitive selection process. Farnsworth said yes and they have been operating under an initial small contract to work with the EDO to scope out a more fully fleshed-out project. The results of that discussion are now reflected in this contract amendment with a more detailed scope of work. Schneider asked if the full set of work was part of the selection process. Farnsworth said yes but we will seek review and approval of annual scopes of work, budgets, and contract amendments. Kraus asked if the work at Shoemaker is tied into the pulse flow concept. Farnsworth said monitoring at both FSM locations will occur before and after the planned SDHF, including sand bar formation and translation as water moves through. Kraus asked about the magnitude of the SDHF in 2013. Farnsworth said it will likely only be about 5,000 cfs but extensive learning opportunities still exist.

Kraus moved to approve the contract amendment; Schneider seconded. Contract amendment approved.

Whooping Crane Stopover Site Evaluation Project Sole Source

Smith discussed the whooping crane stopover site project and the sole source request to be brought before the GC at the December 2012 meeting. Campbell asked about the amount of funding the Program was being asked to contribute. Smith said based on the project’s budget the Program would be contributing just over \$307,000 in cash which would constitute about 46% of the total project budget. LaBonde asked whether the first year of funding for the project is included in the draft FY13 budget. Smith said yes.

Sellers commented on the discussion she was part of regarding this study at recent TAC meetings and said she still had questions about the usefulness of the data to the PRRIP. Sellers said the TAC discussion at that time suggested the data would be helpful for those that have to do environmental compliance on wind farms and that there is also some applicability to the Program. But, she said it was hard to get an enthusiastic answer to the question of PRRIP applicability. It seems like at the TAC level the biologists had a hard time saying no to grab the data. But, given limited budgets and high cost items in the future, we may want to look at if this is a good place to spend Program money for the benefit.

Kenny said from a scientific standpoint, it seems the incremental cost from including most of the migratory area within the continental U.S. was low and it made for a better story to tell in terms of data



95 interpretation. George said there is a certain amount of logic to the distance from the Platte contained in
96 the study proposal and this will help with learning about how critical the Platte is to the whooping cranes.
97 Urie said he agreed with George's perspective on the biological side of things. This may be a once in a
98 lifetime shot to get good data from telemetry that likely won't be repeated. This project will allow us to
99 get information about the types of habitat the cranes are using around the Platte, which should help the
100 Program with its adaptive management approach in dealing with whooping cranes and their habitat. It
101 may not be directly applicable right now, but it could help us in the future

102
103 Campbell said he assumes that before wind farms are built, there has to be some kind of NEPA/EIS
104 evaluation. George discussed some of the issues related to wind development and how there are currently
105 not biological opinions required because there is a not a clear federal nexus. Campbell asked if anyone
106 has approached WAPA about their involvement. George said the USFWS is working on that.

107
108 Kenny said he appreciated the discussion and will be helpful in framing the GC discussion on this issue
109 next week.

110 **Closing Business**

111 The next FC meeting is from 2:00-4:00 p.m. Central time on January 22, 2013.

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114 **FC meeting adjourned at 2:43 p.m. Central time.**

115 **Summary of Action Items/Decisions from November 30, 2012 FC meeting**

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117 1) Approved the October 6, 2012 FC minutes, as amended.
118 2) Approved geomorphology/vegetation monitoring contract amendment.
119 3) Approved Elm Creek Complex FSM contract amendment.
120 4) Approved Shoemaker Island Complex FSM contract amendment.