



# Lower Platte River CORRIDOR ALLIANCE

*Meghan Sittler, Coordinator*

## MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 27, 2009 9:30 a.m.

Location – Papio-Missouri River NRD  
8901 S 154<sup>th</sup> St, Omaha, NE 68138

1. **CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS.** Meghan Sittler, LPRCA Coordinator, called the quarterly meeting of the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance (LPRCA) to order at 9:35 a.m. An attendance sheet was distributed and those in attendance signed in. A copy of this attendance sheet is available for inspection upon request. Approximately 24 people were in attendance.
2. **PROOF OF LEGAL NOTICE/PUBLICATION.** Proof of publication was presented. The legal notice was published in the Omaha World-Herald. Notifications were sent to those on the e-mail list, mailing list, and press releases sent to area newspapers.
3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA.** No changes were made to the agenda and it was adopted as presented.
4. **APPROVAL OF LOWER PLATTE RIVER CORRIDOR ALLIANCE (LPRCA) MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 20, 2009 MEETING.** No modifications were made to the August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009 minutes. Minutes were approved via general consensus.
5. **LPRCA MEMBERSHIP/DUES UPDATE**—Meghan Sittler reported that all members that were able to pay dues for FY2010 had paid with the only exception being UNL. Meghan reported that she met with Don Wilhite (Director of the School of Natural Resources) and Mark Kuzila (Director of Conservation and Survey Division) to discuss UNL representation to the LPRCA with Mike Jess having left UNL. They also discussed a potential change in membership from just CSD to SNR as a whole. Meghan will be meeting with Don again in late November to discuss UNL's decision on representation. If UNL representation changes to all of SNR then the Interlocal Agreement may need to be altered.
6. **Cumulative Impact Study (CIS) –Phase III**  
Steve Rothe (USACE) provided an update on the progress of the scoping of Phase III of the CIS.
  - a. **In-kind accounting:** Meghan has located approximately 4 years of records (1998-2001) for all study components of the Lower Platte River & Tributaries authority. The largest amounts of contributions during that time period were from DNR and P-MRNRD. Meghan Sittler will be continuing to work with all partners to accumulate more records but we are confident that we should be able to accurately account for most if not all of the approximate \$1 million in in-kind. Future record keeping will continue to increase in its importance.
  - b. **Scoping progress:** Steve discussed that through conference calls with USFWS and USGS as well as discussions with others at the USACE, NRDs and preliminary review of on-going or recently completed studies, we have confirmed that threatened and endangered species are the resources of concern and therefore the drivers of the CIS project. Geomorphology—particularly a focus on sediment erosion, transport and deposition—is the most likely area of study focus due to the habitat value of sandbars, channels and islands. While we continue to keep in mind that singularly identifying the impact of levee's and bank stabilization may be very difficult to establish without further research or data acquisition. Interim steps may also include investigating different regulatory solutions or discussions. Additionally, we continue to look at the outcomes of Phase II and ways they can be improved and then linked to efforts such as the conceptual model.
  - c. **Conceptual model:** Following our conference calls with USGS and USFWS as well as continued discussions between the project managers, we decided that an integral portion of the scoping work and gap analysis for Phase III would be developing a conceptual model for the lower Platte. The conceptual model would help

ensure that we have general consensus on the dynamics and function of the river system as well as identify areas where more research is needed to answer some of the complex questions within identifying the impacts of bank stabilization and levee projects on habitat and the river's geomorphology. The model will be drafted through assembling a group of researchers working on the lower Platte, central Platte and/or some tributaries for a facilitated one-day workshop. We hope that will be sufficient to at least allow the project managers and the facilitator to continue the drafting process with some input and review from participants. The model can be drafted while remaining scoping work continues and it could possibly serve as the primary product of the scoping phase. We will be asking for input from all project partners and members of the LPRCA as we identify who we should include within the workshop.

In discussion, Marlin Petermann asked if the feeling was that the issue is so complex was that the effort was futile. Meghan Sittler and Steve Rothe both indicated that they felt the effort was positive and will help to further our understanding of the river, needs for increased study and also may help to resolve organizational, regulatory, or procedural gaps. John Miyoshi suggested that John Remus (USACE) be included in the CEM workshop. Marlin Petermann suggested that we contact Musseter Engineering in Boulder, Colorado to include in the CEM workshop as well. They led a study on the Western Sarpy-Clear Creek levee project which focused on small reaches and associated conservation measures.

**7. Environmental Suitability Assessment (ESA)**—Matt Pillard (HDR) provided an update on the ESA project and presented an overview of the Land Suitability Analysis component of the ESA. The completion of the LSA and the launch of the ArcGIS sites are the remaining project tasks before moving to the outreach component of the project. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for the LSA will be meeting in early December to finalize the weights for each factor and features. Tom Mountford suggested that the ArcGIS viewer include NRCS and NRD structures which would allow stakeholders to identify the project site and sponsors.

**8. Water Quality Monitoring Network - Update** Dave Rus provided a brief, early discussion of the outcomes of the 2009 monitoring season. The sites were pulled on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Dave will be providing a more in-depth recap of the 2009 season at the next Quarterly Meeting. Dave also provided information that due to some additional federal year-end funds the USGS was able to increase their contribution to the monitoring by \$9500. This resulted in a decrease of \$9500 for the NRDs. Dave also gave a synopsis of the recently submitted NET grant to develop predictive equations for contaminants at the existing gage sites.

**9. River Obstruction Program – Update** Don Day of Olsson Associates discusses a proposed scope of services for the next obstruction removal effort near Two Rivers State Recreation Area. OA is preparing the scope with costs for both a nationwide permit and an individual permit given new permitting requirements related to constructing causeways in river channels. OA will hope to begin the survey and design portion this winter and complete work during late spring.

**10. Invasive Species Efforts**—Meghan Sittler and Chris Poole provided an update on the Lower Platte Weed Management Area efforts. An interlocal agreement between LPNNRD, LPSNRD, and P-MRNRD was agreed upon to assist the LPWMA and local landowners with controlling invasive species. P-MRNRD will administer the program which provides landowners a 50-50 cost-share.

#### **11. WRDA-Authorized COE Projects & WRDA**

- i. **W. Sarpy/Clear Creek – Camp Ashland (P-MRNRD / NE Military Dept).** Progress on WSCC continues to move more rapidly because of considerable funds received through the federal stimulus package.
- ii. **Sand Creek (LPNNRD).** Approximately half of the auxiliary spillway of Lake Wanahoo is left to be constructed. NGPC recently killed carp and other trash fish. They plan to release other species of fish in the upcoming months.
- iii. **Antelope Valley (LPSNRD).** Glenn Johnson noted that the flood control portion of the AV project is 99% complete. Work will continue on the other aspects (landscaping/aesthetics; roadways) of the project.
- iv. **205 Studies (LPNNRD).** LPNNRD has entered is partnering with Nebraska Department of Roads on the roadway portion of the Fremont project. Highway 77 will be operated as an expressway. There continues to be delays in the construction of the bridge due to permitting issues. Floodplain maps are currently being reviewed for the Schuyler 205 project.

- v. **LPR Watershed Authority Updates.** There have been no new developments related to appropriations for the LPRWA. However, we will continue to work with the Corps and our delegation to seek funding in the FY2011 Federal Budget.

**8. Presentation—“LPRCA Strategic Planning Retreat Outcomes”—Meghan Sittler**

Meghan Sittler gave a brief presentation on the outcomes of priorities, needs, and projects discussed at the LPRCA Retreat in September. Meghan will be meeting with LPRCA members not present at the October Quarterly to discuss her presentation with them. Following that, Meghan will work to develop a formal strategic/long-range plan over the winter months. She will be seeking review and input from all members throughout the development of the plan. She will hope to have it finalized prior to or in conjunction with the development of the FY2011 LPRCA budget.

**9. UPCOMING CONFERENCES/MEETINGS/EVENTS**

- a. **Next LPRCA Meeting** – The next meeting will be January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009 at the LPSNRD in Lincoln starting at 9:30 am.
- b. Upcoming NRD Board Meetings
- i. Lower Platte North NRD—November 9, 2009 \* 5:00 p.m. \* 511 Commercial Road – Wahoo, NE. Go to: <http://www.lpnrd.org> for more information or call (402) 443-4675
  - ii. Papio-Missouri River NRD – November 12, 2009 \* 7:00 p.m. \* Natural Resources Center at 8901 S 154<sup>th</sup> Street – Omaha, NE. Go to: <http://www.papionrd.org> for more info or call (402)-444-6222.
  - iii. Lower Platte South NRD – November 18, 2009 \* 7:00 p.m. \* 3125 Portia Street – Lincoln, NE. Go to: <http://www.lpsnrd.org> for more information or call (402)-476-2729
  - iv.

9. **OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST – PUBLIC COMMENT.** There was no public comment or additional discussion.

10. **ADJOURN** . The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:45 a.m.

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**NOTES**

- **Location** – The Lower Platte South NRD is located at 3125 Portia Street in Lincoln (near 14<sup>th</sup> and Adams behind white fire station). Go to <http://www.lpsnrd.org/graphics/Maps/NRDOOffice.jpg> for a map to the office or call (402) 444-6222 for driving directions.
- **To be removed / added from our mailing or e-mailing list**, please contact the LPRCA at (402) 476-2729 or via e-mail at [msittler@lpsnrd.org](mailto:msittler@lpsnrd.org).
- **Meeting information (past and present)** can be found at [www.lowerplatte.org/meetings.html](http://www.lowerplatte.org/meetings.html).