



Lower Platte River CORRIDOR ALLIANCE

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, July 26, 2010 9:30 a.m.

Location – Lower Platte South NRD

3125 Portia St, Lincoln, NE 68501

1. **CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS:** The meeting was called to order at 9:37 by Meghan Sittler. Introductions were made at this time. Meghan thanked interns Sara McClure and Anthony Marshall for their time with the Alliance. Sara has taken a job with the Nature Conservancy and Anthony is returning for his final year at UC Denver where he's studying Landscape Architecture.
2. **PROOF OF LEGAL NOTICE/PUBLICATION:** Meeting notice was published July 6, 2010 in the *Omaha World Herald*.
3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** The agenda was approved by consensus.
4. **APPROVAL OF LPRCA MINUTES FROM APRIL 22, 2010 MEETING:** The minutes were approved by consensus.
5. **RIVER OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL PROJECT AT TWO RIVERS STATE RECREATION AREA**
The parameters for funding via the Coast Guard changed so the project is no longer eligible. Don Day of Olsson Associates said the entire project will cost approximately \$300,000 and about half of the funds are in hand - \$75,000 in the budget with carryover of about \$50,000 from the previous year. A permit for obstruction removal has been submitted to the Corps of Engineers out of the Kearney office. A tribal site was discovered so the removal will have to be coordinated with that in mind. A nationwide permit is being sought for removal. Although there is not enough funding in hand to start and complete the entire project, since the removal involves the creation of a temporary causeway into half the river at a time, it is thought that one side can be completed while funds are obtained to then do the removal on the other side. The piers were surveyed and only 10 were found. They will use a backhoe during the removal process to insure that there really are no more there; there are 6 piers above water and 4 slightly submerged. The project cost estimate is being worked on now. There was discussion about the creation of the causeway (where will the sand come from – can it be taken from the site or must it be trucked in. Can it be left to wash down stream over time or does it need to come back out?); this is still to be determined. While the permitting process is being done, Meghan Sittler will be investigating opportunities for additional federal funds.
6. **WATER QUALITY IMPACTS OF JUNE 2010 FLOODING**
Dave Rus of the USGS looked at the sediment issue and estimated the amount of scouring during the recent June floods. At Louisville the scour was roughly 8 feet and at 10-15 foot depths E-coli samples were

taken. At the start of the flood the samples were very high – 198 per 100 ml on the Elkhorn and when the flood receded e coli went down as did the turbidity.

Meghan and Dave are resubmitting a proposal to the Nebraska Environmental Trust for development of predictive equations and additional sediment sampling.

It was asked whether or not a photo comparison would be helpful to see changes after the flooding. Brian Henkel said that there's a possibility to get this done at a 50% discount due to a prior MAPA project with NIROC. Brian was asked to look into this and get back to Dave and Meghan. Larry Vrtiska offered up photos that were taken near Hwy 6 during the flood.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

Matt Pillard from HDR updated everyone on the rollout of the outreach plan. There was not a lot of response to the user survey and they still need to gauge public interest in seminars. The plan is to have a group seminar in the lower Lower Platte area the week of September 13th at the P-MNRD. There will be an open house, presentations with local press and a mailer to advertise it. The target audience for this is mostly community members. There will be another seminar at a later date targeting planning commission people with some local elected officials and some residents.

Product branding – templates have been created for a newsletter, letterhead and other commonly used items and the full complement will be rolled out over the next couple of months.

Land Suitability Analysis: Right now the model is being run. There are 6 types of use: land-based recreation, water-based recreation, niche agriculture, agriculture, water quality protection and conservation.

8. NEBRASKA'S AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PLAN

Karie Decker, Coordinator of the Invasive Species Project, presented on the status of the Nebraska Invasive Species Plan. The NE Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Project is addressing the problem of an increasing number of invasive species both flora and fauna – such as zebra/quagga mussels, Asian carp, purple loosestrife and phragmites. The goals of effort is to: 1) coordinate, 2) detect and monitor, 3) prevention of and rapid response to new ANS, 4) control and eradication of established ANS, 5) ANS research, 6) outreach and education, and 7) legislation.

Part of the work being done now is developing an on-line database for reporting invasive species. Priorities for the next 5 years include forming an ANS steering committee, identify funding, identify gaps in ANS legislation, hire an ANS coordinator, increase monitoring and surveys, develop response plans for high priority species and increase state-wide and regional collaboration. Most states have developed ANS plans and the status of the plan for Nebraska is: it was drafted and revised after a public comment period. It will be submitted to the governor within a month and once approved, will be submitted to the National ANS task force at which time Nebraska will be eligible for federal funding. Although other states are ahead of the game, Nebraska can learn from the other states on how best, or how not to do things. An example of legislation surrounding ANS in our neighboring states include Colorado now has mandatory boat inspections specifically for mussels, as well as having an emergency response quickly deal with any outbreaks. Wyoming also has boat inspections but they are not mandatory; it is funded through decal sales. Kansas has boat inspections on high risk waterways and the program is funded through fees, grants and some local municipality support.

9. **ASHLAND AREA FARM PROCESS MODEL.** Brian Henkel from P-MNRD talked about the farm process model. This is a cooperative venture between LPSNRD, P-MNRD, LPNMRD & USGS.

10. WRDA AUTHORIZED PROJECT UPDATES

- a. Antelope Valley: Glenn Johnson spoke and said that there was a party for the completion of the flood reduction projects. An operations and maintenance manual is being written
- b. Sand Creek: the Lake Wanahoo portion of Sand Creek is being finished including the spillway and concrete work. The recreation components are being completed with the Corps of Engineers. They are building seven new upstream dams and working on an easement instrument; Stimulus funds/ARRA are being used which need to be spent quickly.
- c. Fremont and Schuyler 205: They are gathering input on the levee systems from the communities of Schuyler for Shellcreek flooding and Fremont for Platte flooding.
- d. Western Sarpy Clear Creek: Land rights are still being gathered for some segments. The levee on the Sarpy side is under contract. The Corps of Engineers has begun an upstream project on the Saunders County side. There will be Guard Camp work that will close the gap at Hwy 6. An appropriation has been approved in the Senate Energy and Water Committee and will move on to the full senate. The request is \$2.5 million to complete the project which totals \$38 million.
- e. Lower Platte River Watershed Authority: There are positive steps toward getting it appropriated. The Corps of Engineers is implementing guidance. This will be communicated to the delegation since they are looking for an appropriation in the next year or so.

11. PLANNED OUTREACH EVENTS

- a. Kayak Tour – it was held Tuesday, August 20th and was very successful with 30 participants not including staff and assistants. A nice article was written in the Lincoln Star and will be placed on the website for others to see.
- b. Water Quality Open – the date has been set for September 2 and registration is open. It will be held again at Quarry Oaks Golf Course.
- c. The Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance Bi-Annual Summit will be held October 21st at Mahoney State Park.

12: MEMBER UPDATES/CURRENT EFFORTS

None reported

13. OTHER BUSINESS

None reported

14. PUBLIC COMMENT

None made

15. NEXT MEETING DATE

By consensus the next meeting was scheduled for October 12th at 9:30 at the P-MNRD office.

16. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50.