



from the Coordinator...

Monthly Report from the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance for the period of January 1st, to January 31st, 2004

Rodney L. Verhoeff, Coordinator

LPRCA Quarterly Meeting

The LPRCA held a quarterly meeting on Thursday, January 13th, 2004 at the LPSNRD. Approximately 40 people attended the meeting, which adjourned around noon. There were a variety of agenda items ranging from the Water Quality Open for 2004 to project updates to the upcoming water quality meetings. The minutes will be available in a week or so both in paper format and on the Alliance website at www.lowerplatte.org. One item I wanted to bring up is supplemental funding for the Alliance. As budgets continue to get tight all around, we need to look into other supplemental funding sources. One idea suggested at the quarterly meeting was affiliation with the Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF). If we affiliate, then the NCF would create a fund for us and we could use the benefits of their nonprofit status without having to get our own nonprofit status or create our own foundation. A small committee of existing LPRCA members would govern the use of any monies in our fund. Through this process, we could then accept grant funding and donations. There have been examples where the Alliance would not accept funds/grants because we did not have nonprofit status. LPRCA members agreed to meet with the NCF and discuss the option further.

Cumulative Impact Study Meeting On January 13th, 2004, the second meeting of the cumulative impact study partners was held following the quarterly LPRCA meeting. GIS personnel from the partner organizations were also in attendance to discuss the idea of creating a GIS for the project. The first order of business was to do a quick overview of the project and point out that we are in the first phase - - the scoping phase. The group then discussed the concept of an unsteady flow model for the corridor. This type of model would allow resource managers to predict what impact a project such as a levee would have on the flow regime and on other areas. Someone pointed out that FEMA just spent \$500,000 on new floodplain maps and this model could alter the floodplain, resulting in a need for new, updated maps. The group then discussed what the boundary of the project should be. Ideas ranged from the floodplain to a certain number of miles on each side of the river. The comment was made that the incremental cost of going out another mile or two can be low enough to justify extending the boundary further out. A suggestion was made to use the Lower Platte River Corridor as the boundary. However, because of the large size of this boundary and possibly the need to include other areas of interest not in the corridor, the consensus was to use the 100-year floodplain and then "capture" the other areas of interest. Steve Cacioppo with the LPNNRD went through a demonstration of the MapMaker system and how it can be used to generate maps showing a variety of data using your own computer and the internet. The suggestion was made to use the framework of the MapMaker system as the basis for the GIS we hope to build for this study. I went through the long "wish List" of parameters a subcommittee had come up with several weeks earlier. These parameters represented desired data layers of the GIS. The group felt that the GIS people should go through the data first and determine what is available before the group prioritizes them. Steve Cacioppo will serve as the contact for data information from GIS personnel and I will be the contact to distribute information and compile priorities. The next meeting for the group was scheduled for Thursday, February 19th starting at 9:30 at the LPSNRD.

Lower Platte River Utilities Board (RUB) The LPSNRD Platte River subcommittee met on January 15th to review an amended interlocal agreement to create the Lower Platte River Utilities Board (RUB). Previously, there were five parties to the agreement - - LPSNRD, Louisville, South Bend, Cass County, and Ashland. However, Ashland has chosen not to join at this time, so the interlocal agreement needed to be revised to remove them. Additionally, the subcommittee reviewed a proposal to move forward with a preliminary engineering study for Phase II of the project - Wastewater system for the Fountain Creek Sub-basin. Recall, that there is already a Phase I preliminary engineering study underway. Phase I looks at developing a wellfield and providing a water supply to South Bend and Louisville. The RUB should meet for the first time towards the end of February.

Sand and Gravel Working Group – P.A.C.E. On January 14th, P.A.C.E. (Planning- Aggregate - Community - Environment) met to discuss the next move for this cooperative group, which includes sand/gravel operators, conservation organizations, and governmental entities. Items discussed included a logo for the group, committee assignments, taking the message to the street and who we want to target, other PR items such as a brochure and website, and updates on the administrative history of mining operations/issues in Nebraska. If anyone would like to learn more about this group, there are several individuals who can come and speak. Please contact me at (402) 476-2729.

2004 Water Quality Open We've settled on a place and time for the 2004 Water Quality Open: The place will be Arbor Links in Nebraska City and the date will be September 1. There will be a 1:00 p.m. shotgun start with a presentation on conservation issues prior to starting around 11:00 a.m. Attendees at the LPRCA meeting discussed the idea to change venues and felt that there is a very big conservation message at Arbor Links that could really enhance the educational component of the event. In the past, we've gone to Quarry Oaks and had a great experience and we hope to return in future years, but the membership thought a different environment may be beneficial to our message. Here are a few photos of Arbor Links, which uses a multitude of conservation practices, native grasses, and limited chemical applications to protect water quality:



LPRCA Quarterly Meeting – Tuesday, April 27th 9:30 a.m. at the LPSNRD

Upcoming NRD and Alliance Meetings:

- **NEXT LPRCA QUARTERLY MEETING** - Tuesday, April 27th, 2004* 9:30 a.m. * LPSNRD Meeting Room located in Lincoln.
- **LPNNRD Board Meeting** - Monday, February 9th, 2004 * 5:30 p.m. - Wahoo @ 511 Industrial Road
- **PMNRD Board Meeting** - Thursday, February 12th, 2004 * 8:00 p.m. - Omaha @ Chalco Hills Rec. Area
- **LPSNRD Board Meeting** - Wednesday, February 18th, 2004 * 2:00 p.m. - Lincoln @ 3125 Portia Street

Future Meetings - Meetings and Events in the Not-So-Distant Future:

- **60-Mile Radius Committee** - Thursday, February 12th, 2004 * 2:00 p.m. * Joslyn Castle Institute in Omaha
- **Cumulative Impact Study Meeting** - Tuesday, February 19th, 2004 * 9:30 a.m. * LPSNRD in Lincoln
- **UNL College of Law - Multi-Jurisdictional Water Conflicts Conference** - March 4th and 5th, 2004 * UNL College of Law