



from the Coordinator...

Monthly Report from the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance for the period of MARCH 1 through MARCH 31, 2004

Rodney L. Verhoeff, Coordinator

Next LPRCA Quarterly Meeting – Tuesday, April 27th, 2004

The time is drawing near again for the next LPRCA quarterly meeting. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 27th, 2004 starting at 9:30 a.m. at the Lower Platte South NRD (LPSNRD) office. Discussion items include the FY04 and FY05 budgets; the Airboat Tour; the Water Quality Open; Strategic Planning for FY05; Project updates; the Water Quality Workshops (Water Wellness meetings); and a host of other informational items. Following the LPRCA meeting, the Cumulative Impacts Study group will meet at 1:30 p.m. to discuss the study including grant funding, priorities, and the GIS.

Cumulative Impact Study Meeting This project is moving forward and the group continues to meet on a monthly basis. A small working group of several primary partners meets in the interim to come up with recommendations for the entire group to consider. Recently, the working group met to discuss the GIS and what time periods we would like to include and which method of determining changes over time to consider. Recommendation/options will be presented to the entire group at the April 27th meeting. A small grants committee will also be meeting soon to look into an EPA grant to cover cost associated with development of the GIS. **NEXT MEETING - - Tuesday, April 27th, 2004 at the LPSNRD starting at 1:30 p.m.**

Sand and Gravel Working Group – P.A.C.E. P.A.C.E. met April 7th at the Aurora City Library. The group discussed the administrative history document that is nearly ready. Another agenda item was public relations and press coverage. The group feels it is ready to do some press releases to reach a broader audience and illustrate the cooperative spirit that P.A.C.E. is all about. There has been some recent negative press about planned mining operations and the perception they are dirty and noisy. John Heaston with TNC said he served in an informal capacity to mediate a potential conflict related to this issue. The group felt P.A.C.E. could continue to serve in this capacity in the future. Two members of the Land Committee for the Platte River Cooperative Agreement were in attendance and gave their support for the efforts of P.A.C.E. Attendees also chose a general logo format and discussed creating a brochure for P.A.C.E. UN-K students are currently working on these items. The PMRNRD has pledged to pay for $\frac{1}{2}$ of the cost of the brochure, which is needed by June 9th for the UN-L Water Tour. Carl Roberts will be taking members of the tour to a reclaimed and an active mine near Linoma Beach. I mentioned that I am on the UN-L Water Tour planning committee and feel that this is a grand opportunity to showcase our area of the Platte River and our efforts to manage and protect the area. The next meeting will be sometime in July at the UN-L East Campus Union in Lincoln.

Annual UN-L Water Tour As a reminder, the UN-L Water Tour will be touring at the Lower Platte River area from Columbus on down to Plattsmouth. The dates of the tour are June 7 - 9, 2004. A rough itinerary is as follows: Tour buses leave Lincoln and Kearney and rendezvous at Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's Jeffery Island wildlife restoration project near Overton. There will be a presentation on habitat restoration efforts for Piping Plover and Least Tern nesting, Lunch will be at the Audubon Society's Rowe Sanctuary near Gibbon. The tour will continue to Columbus for a BBQ near the river and an overnight stay. On the way to Columbus, the tour will stop at the Central Platte NRD in Grand Island for a presentation by NDEQ on efforts to contain and clean-up groundwater aquifer contamination that has threatened both private and municipal water wells since last fall. The second day begins with a breakfast presentation on goals of the LPRCA by coordinator Rodney Verhoeff before the tour proceeds to Schuyler. There, the East-Central District Health Department will outline opportunities and challenges presented by immigration and increasing ethnic diversity in the Platte, Colfax, Boone and Nance County area. Later that day, there will be a presentation on control of algae blooms in sand pit lakes near Fremont and the geology of the Platte River's bluffs in regard to suitability for development. Prior to an overnight stay near Omaha's Old Market, the buses will stop at the city's historic Joslyn Castle for a presentation on the Joslyn Castle Institute for Sustainable Communities. The tour's final day begins with a presentation by HDR Inc. providing insight on water and wastewater planning in

the Lower Platte River corridor at the Papio-Missouri NRD. Next is a stop at Schramm State Park, where UNL fisheries biologist Ed Peters will detail research to track the movements and spawning activities of Pallid Sturgeon. A final stop near Ashland looks at sand and gravel mining and sand pit reclamation efforts by Lyman-Richey Corp. real estate broker Carl Roberts. The Tern and Plover Partnership will also talk about their work to enhance and preserve nesting habitat for Least Terns and Piping Plovers. After lunch, buses proceed to Lincoln and Kearney. Registration includes all food, (except on-your-own dining in Omaha), motel, and motor coach expenses. Registration details are available through the Kearney Area Chamber of Commerce at (800) 652-9435. Registration deadline is May 10 and participation is limited to the first 85 registrants. CONTACTS: J. Michael Jess, associate director, UNL Water Center, (402) 472-7570, email mjess3@unl.edu or Steve Ress, communications coordinator, UNL Water Center (402) 472-3305, email sress1@unl.edu.

Water Wellness Workshops/Meetings We have finalized the agenda, dates, and locations for the water quality meetings, which we have named "Water Wellness: Understanding your drinking water and septic systems. Locations, dates, and times are as follows:

Meeting Date	Day of Week	Meeting Time	Meeting Location
May 8, 2004	Saturday	9:00 to 11:30 a.m.	Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center near Gretna
May 12, 2004	Wednesday	6:30 to 9:00 p.m.	Maria's Lighthouse Tavern in Cedar Creek
May 18, 2004	Tuesday	6:30 to 9:00 p.m.	Papillion Gun Club - S. of Papillion by river
June 1, 2004	Tuesday	6:30 to 9:00 p.m.	Yutan Community Center
June 15, 2004	Tuesday	6:30 to 9:00 p.m.	City of Valley Office
June 16, 2004	Wednesday	7:00 to 9:30 p.m.	Dodge County Extension Office - Fremont
June 19, 2004	Saturday	9:00-11:30 a.m.	VFW Hall in North Bend
June 23, 2004	Wednesday	6:30 to 9:00 p.m.	Schuyler City Office Bldg.

National Association of Recreational Resource Planners (NARRP) Conference May 16th-20th, I will be assisting the PMRNRD on several tours of area trails and a classroom presentation for the NARRP Conference to be held in Omaha. My contribution will pertain to the Lied Bridge/Platte River Connection. I will also have the opportunity during the classroom presentation to discuss the LPRCA and our projects. On the first night of the conference, I will be displaying a poster presentation on the Lied Bridge/Platte River Connection. Log on to www.narrp.org for more information.

Earth Wellness Festival On Monday, March 19th, I participated in the earth wellness festival (EWF), which is a fun, educational festival for fifth graders in the Lincoln area to learn about their natural environments. This event is similar to the Children's Groundwater Festival in which the kids have a chance to see demonstrations, participate in activities, and play educational games related to a range of natural resource issues. I built a Plinko board and developed a companion water trivia game for my activity. Shaula Ross, our new GIS person assisted. I would be more than happy to bring the board to other venues for kids. Just give me a call.

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, April 12th, 2004 * 7:00 p.m. - Wahoo @ 511 Industrial Road
- **PMRNRD Board Meeting** - Thursday, April 14th, 2004 * 8:00 p.m. - Omaha @ Chalco Hills Rec. Area
- **LPSNRD Board Meeting** - Wednesday, April 21st, 2004 * 7:00 p.m. - Lincoln @ 3125 Portia Street

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

- **60-Mile Radius Committee** - Thursday, April 14th, 2004 * 2:00 p.m. * Joslyn Castle Institute in Omaha
- **Cumulative Impact Study Meeting** - Tuesday, April 27th, 2004 * 1:30 p.m. * LPSNRD in Lincoln

Don't Forget:

**Water Quality Open
Golf Tourney
Wed, Sept 1st, 2004
11 a.m.
at Arbor Links
in Nebraska City**