



For the period of November 30th, 2004 through March 1, 2005

LPRCA Retreat

On January 21st, an LPRCA retreat was held at Camp Kitaki near South Bend for LPRCA members and partners. We had a great turn-out and the facilities created an environment conducive to an enjoyable and relaxing retreat with a crackling fire and a view of the Platte River valley. Our facilitator was also excellent and led us through several activities including building paper airplanes and designing models with plastic discs in order to help uncover our strengths and highlight our past efforts. We also had group discussions to funnel everything down into what we can do to keep the momentum going, improve the Alliance, and determine what contributions members can make. Overall, it was a wonderful experience with great food and a setting that really emphasized the beauty of the Platte River area. A summary of the event is available.



Corridor Connections Newsletter

Submissions for the upcoming edition of the "Corridor Connections" newsletter are still being sought. If your organization would like to reach over 1000 people regarding a project or program that is pertinent to the Alliance or issues the Alliance is also focusing on, submit your information to us before March 15th, 2005.

Cumulative Impact Study

The CIS partner group met recently at the PMRNRD to finalize details of Phase I - Scope of Work (SOW). The SOW was originally scheduled to be completed by January 1, but details of some data costs were difficult to determine. Final assignments were given to CIS partners with hopes to complete the SOW within a week. Following the meeting, all assignments were completed and the SOW is now in final form. The next phase is to acquire the data and do trend analyses. Additionally, hydrologic data and other water resources information will be compiled. The end product of the CIS project is a GIS that is accessible via the internet to all partners and the development of a predictive model. The next meeting is planned March 3rd, 2005 at the LPSNRD in Lincoln.

Affiliation with the Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF)

It's official, we now have an affiliated fund established with the Nebraska Community Foundation (NCF) called the "Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance Fund." Since the Alliance does not have nonprofit status of its own, by affiliating, we are now able to share the nonprofit status of the NCF through creation of this fund. Certain grants are only available to groups with such a status. Additionally, contributors may be inclined to donate if they are able to receive a tax incentive. Donations welcomed.

[Sand and Gravel Working Group – P.A.C.E.](#)

The P.A.C.E. group met February 17th at Crane Meadows Nature Center. The final version of the brochure was distributed and is now available is ready for distribution. There will be a demonstration site to show how a sand and gravel mining operation goes from initial stages through the mining to reclamation. This demo will help those outside the mining business and the PACE group better understand these types of operations and how the final result can be wetland habitat and recreational areas rather than just a hole left in the ground. Unfortunately, the group did not get funded for the demo through the NETF, but the group plans to move forward with the project.

[60-mile Radius Committee](#)

The 60-mile Radius Project just finished its 3rd and final year, but has been recommended for another three years of funding through the NETF. This second phase will be implementation of the recommendations and ideas for sustainable land use planning identified in the first phase of the project. Much of the information from this project can be found online at www.ecospheres.com.

[Agro-Environmental Trail Project \(formerly Nature Trail Project\)](#)

This project is getting back on track after some changes to its focus and personnel. The UNL ARDC site is located near Mead and .

[Lower Platte Weed Management Area \(LPWMA\)](#)

The LPWMA group continues to meet monthly and is moving forward on inventorying areas infested by purple loosestrife (PLS), salt cedar, and phragmites. The group has decided to expand its focus beyond PLS and to include the other weeds listed above. We are currently working on an outreach and education plan to spread the word of both the LPWMA and noxious weed eradication efforts. It also looks like the group will be receiving a second round of the Pulling Together Initiative (PTI) grant they received last year.

[2004 Water Quality Open](#)

Looks like we will be going to Quarry Oaks this year, which is located on the banks of the lower Platte River near Ashland. We are still working on an exact date but late August and early September will be the target. We hope to have a mini-conference prior to the event focusing on water resources issues.

[River Obstruction Project](#)

For the past several months, this project has been focusing on determining ownership and responsible parties along with an assessment and inventory of river obstructions. The Nebraska Airboaters Association helped prioritize the obstructions with those north of Cedar Bluffs as the highest priority and those near Hwy 50 a close 2nd. The LPNNRD is currently working on the area north of Cedar Bluffs since it consists of large chunks of cement pilings left from a previous demolition done in 1998. The LPRCA has decided to use Hwy 50 obstructions as a pilot project in order to get an idea of effort and cost to remove obstructions for the entire corridor. There are 2 sets of pilings and we will focus on the westernmost set, which often lurks just beneath the water surface and can cause considerable damage to boats and trap debris. The pilings consist of wood, cement and rebar and extend across the entire reach of the river. Our preliminary plan is to build a causeway to reach them. However, details are still being worked out including sources of funding.

[Environmental Carrying Capacity Project](#)

On February 9th, the LPRCA held the kick-off meeting for this project, which will look at land use and sustainability of resources in the corridor. HDR will be conducting this study using a similar methodology employed with the N. Cass County Infrastructure Feasibility Study. Their approach is both comprehensive and includes a significant public input process. For this project, we have a cooperative agreement between all NRDs since the LPSNRD is serving as the sponsor for the project. The agreement lays out responsibilities and initial funding issues. Additionally, the LPSNRD has a general services agreement with our consultant to undertake the study. Right now, we are just working on Phase I - Data Identification, Collection, Evaluation, and Organization. This phase includes initial stakeholder meetings, collecting comprehensive and zoning plans, acquisition of land use and suitability maps. We hope to have this phase wrapped up in several months so we can plan Phase II and look for funding.