



For the period of August 17th, 2005 through November 15th, 2005

Back to Permanent Office Location

Well the big news this month is that the Lower Platte South NRD in Lincoln (where the LPRCA is housed) has finally moved back to a renovated office at 3125 Portia Street in Lincoln. A new wing was added at the east side of the original office on two floors to accommodate the increase in staff and allow for future growth. You might notice that the brown garage north of the office is gone and the area now offers additional parking. The redone office has many "green" features including recycled materials, low VOC paints and carpets, two-stage toilets, a rain garden to capture rainfall and runoff, and a center interior atrium with plants and a tree. The LPRCA office/cubicle is located in the basement in the far northwest corner. Please come visit me in a couple of weeks when we finally get everything completed. We will begin having LPRCA meeting at the LPSNRD starting with the next meeting sometime in February/March of 2006. Our physical address is 3125 Portia Street, Lincoln, NE 68521 while our mailing address is PO Box 83581, Lincoln, NE 68501-8351. Our phone is the same (402) 476-2729 as is the fax line (402) 476-6454. E-mail is also the same rverhoeff@lpsnrd.org OR alliance@lprca.org.



Environmental Carrying Capacity Project We received a recent update on this project from HDR and they plan to be complete with Phase I by mid-November. This encompasses collection of land use plans, creation of a database, and development of a base map. We will need to review the deliverables and strategize for Phase II.

Cumulative Impact Study (CIS) The CIS partners recently met with CALMIT and they are interested in helping us with aerial photo land classification and QA/QC. The COE GIS people and our other partners have been working hard to acquire the 2003 and 1993 digital aerial photos along with the 1850's transect maps and the 1938 aerial photos, which have now been scanned and digitized. Due to Hurricane Katrina, we may be losing the COE GIS people for a while as they are reassigned to help out with efforts to rebuild and clean-up after the hurricane. Our UNL rep has left the university so we are working on revising interlocal agreement to reflect this change. An NETF grant was submitted in Sept for additional funding to complete the project and undertake the hydrologic study. We should hear back by early 2006.

Update on LB 962 Recall, this piece of legislation passed this past session will look at a way to integrate management of ground and surface water resources when there is a determination they are hydrologically-connected. LB 962 requires the NDNR to look at all major river basins in Nebraska and determine if they are "Over-Appropriated", "Fully-Appropriated", or still have water resources remaining for future development. If a basin is determined to be over or fully-appropriated, then NDNR and the respective NRD(s) must work together to develop an Integrated Management Plan. **The DNR has now issued a statement that the Lower Platte River Basin is NOT considered "fully-appropriated."** This means the basin is still open to additional irrigation development. We were expecting to hear back from DNR by Dec 31, but the ruling came early. There are a lot of sighs of relief but it doesn't mean we can sit back and do nothing as we will be evaluated annually. We still need to be proactive and develop management options before we have a problem.

River Obstruction Project - Hwy 50 Pilot Project Survey is completed for the Hwy 50 project and bids went out last month. There were several contractors initially interested, but we only ended up with two bids. Our hopes are to award a contract soon with work beginning this January. There are several options available for removal including pulling out the obstructions, breaking off below the riverbed, and using a hydraulic "scissors" to cut them off. Currently, we are looking into NG&PC Boating Safety funds to help finance the project. Camp Ashland project is moving forward with the submission of the 404 permit application to the COE. We are awaiting notification from the NE Nat'l Guard on whether or not we receive funding through their Legacy Program for the project. Plans are to do a test pit to assess the obstructions.

Project Management Professional (PMP) Certification Recently, I received my "Project Management Professional" or (PMP) designation, which is granted by the Project Management Institute (PMI). The certification requires 4500 hours of previous project management experience, a minimum of a bachelor's degree, and at least 35 hours of specific project management training. Once my application was approved, I then had to pass a four-hour/200 question exam. This designation is similar to a P.E. (engineers) or A.I.C.P. (planners) certification. The knowledge I gained through this process will benefit LPRCA projects through strict adherence to fundamental principles of project management, improved organization, and more thorough planning.

PACE The PACE group met on November 9th at TNC's Derr House near Wood River. The group went through a variety of issues including a work plan template for the Feala Family Project; a recent presentation given in D.C. to a national sand and gravel association; the hiring of Adam Zwickle to assist John Heaston at the TNC with PACE issues; the 25/50 long-term plan; the possibility of getting a donated large tire machine to travel down the river in areas with little to no water; the 2006 calendar of events; the potential to get some funding through Brownfield Grant programs; and finally a review of recent media coverage. The next meeting will be sometime in January of 2006. Handouts are available upon request.

LPNNRD Levee Tour As part of my "Spend a Day at the NRDs" initiative, I spent November 10th touring a couple of levees and a streambank protection project. Along with John Miyoshi of the LPNNRD, I got to see firsthand the Cotterell Dike just east of North Bend. This dike (levee) provides protection up to a 100-year flood frequency. Mike Eason, former LPNNRD Director and current Diking District board member, gave us a great tour of the area. We were able to see firsthand the amount of work that has gone into maintaining this dike and what protection it affords. Currently, the diking district is working on removing trees and other vegetation that has grown up too close to the dike. The dike is constructed with a sand core and clay cap. Diking district members and other area residents mobilize during severe flooding events to help sandbag weak point in



the dike.

We then toured the North Bend Dike located directly south and then extending west of North Bend. The City of North Bend manages this dike rather than a separate diking district. A couple of new developments are directly adjacent to the Platte River and will certainly benefit from the protection afforded by the dike although they are built above the 100-year floodplain.



Following the tour of the dikes (levees), we headed just north of Fremont along the Elkhorn for a tour of a large-scale private bank stabilization project. Because of the fast flows, ice jams, and curves in the river at this point, many acres of land were being lost every year with the potential for much more to be lost. The landowner, Chuck Folsom - - also a former LPNDRD board member - - showed us the stabilization efforts he is implementing including using jetties with rip-rap filling the gap between jetties to reduce erosion of his farmland. Chuck showed us his knowledge of river hydrology through the design of the stabilization practices. The Elkhorn is considerably different than the Platte with higher flows, more sediment load, and a gumbo bottom.



I-80 Summit #2 Friday, Nov 4th was the date for the I-80 Summit #2 at the SAC Museum near Ashland. Last year was the first year for this summit, which was attended by various community and government leaders, university experts, and business leaders. Ultimately, the gathering resulted in the development and passage of LB 546 - The Opportunity Zone Legislation. This legislation created the I-80 Innovation Zone Commission to explore and recommend economic opportunities along I-80 between Lincoln and Omaha and will be in effect for the next two years. The summit this year, continued to build upon the results of last year with a broad range of speakers and interests. The event kicked off with Gov. Dave Heineman bestowing the virtues of the recently-passed Jobs Creation Economic Incentive Plan. He pointed out that there are 9 higher education campuses in Lincoln and 12 in Omaha and we need to continue to partner and bring business and educational institutions together to become a strong economic player in the future. The president of the University of Nebraska, J.B. Miliken, spoke next and reiterated what the Governor stated adding that Nebraska competes in the global economy and regional economic vitality is important. The university's biggest contribution to economic development might be the development of a qualified talent pool to draw from. In addition to the Governor and the president of the University of Nebraska, we heard from Chamber of Commerce representatives and private business in the manufacturing industry all stating the need for talented individuals and a reduction in talent leaving the state. The next item was a panel discussion on how the university is and will continue to meet business demands through programs such as the Peter Kiewit Institute. After experiencing technical difficulties which took away most visuals for the rest of the summit, Doug Bisson of HDR Consulting, gave a nice presentation on what quality of life means. Doug has been working on the LPRCA's Environmental Carrying Capacity Project and emphasized the need to take into account the natural resources of the I-80 Corridor. He also pointed out the recent demand for open spaces and sustainable developments. The final discussions of the day focused on insurance issues, defense/military issues, and finally a stirring call to action by private consultant, Robert Siegel. Once again, the summit proved to be interesting and brought together diverse interests who need to start talking if we want to shape the I-80 Corridor in a way that leads to resources sustainability in a rapidly developing area.

Innovation Zone Commission Prior to the I-80 Summit on November 4th, I attended a meeting of the I-80 Innovation Zone Commission. This commission was created out of last year's LB546 - The Opportunity Zone Legislation to explore opportunities in the I-80 Corridor between Omaha and Lincoln and make recommendations for future programs, projects, partnerships, to stimulate economic growth for the area. The I-80 Corridor is slated to reach 2 million people in 50 years and there is a real need to have planned growth to not only stimulate economic growth, but to ensure this growth does not degrade the sustainability of our natural resources. Both the LPSNRD and the PMRNRD sit on the commission. The group is in the process of hiring a director, who will be an employee of the Nebraska Dept. of Economic Development (NDED) and most likely be housed in Lincoln at NDED. The group is now gathering statistics, data, and information and requested anyone with pertinent

info let them know. I am in the process of developing a list of available from the LPRCA such as land use plans / zoning matrices, special studies, and aerial photos.

LPRCA Database We have been working to update the LPRCA database which includes contact lists, project/program information, and data entry forms. We hope to tie this database into the GIS we are working on to have images, maps, and other pertinent info tied together to these contacts. Part of the database is our mailing and e-mailing lists, which we are trying to continuously update and refine.

Outreach/Educational Items I've been meeting with several companies to gather more info on our PR items including kiosks, Public Service Announcements (PSA's), a corridor map, and a few other new ideas such as playing cards, calendars, and trading cards. I hope to meet with Snitily-Carr this week to finalize more details. Recently, I got together with Troy Thompson of the LPNNRD to go over our website redesign. Troy is putting together a rough design to look over. Hopefully we can have the site redone by spring of 2006.

Antelope Valley Tour On Sept 21, I took a tour of the Antelope Valley (AV) Project area. Highlights included completed Phase I of the flood conveyance channel, review of future flood channel locations, new road construction including the big "T" intersection near the Devaney Center, and community redevelopment projects. Recall, this project along with the W. Sarpy/Clear Ck and Sand Creek Projects grew out of the original LPR Feasibility Study with the COE.

Hwy 50 Bridge/Road Improvement Project The Nebraska Dept of Roads will be widening the Hwy 50 Bridge near Louisville to four lanes in the next 5 years along with improvements to Hwy 50 itself including two additional lanes and new alignments. Several LPRCA partners including the PMRNRD and the LPSNRD have been in discussions with the NDOR to add a separate pedestrian lane. Since the Mo-Pac Trail and several recreation areas are in the vicinity, a pedestrian bridge would be a prudent, safe way to connect everything. No better time to get involved than in the planning stages. Preliminarily, the NDOR has agreed to consider the option of adding expandable guiders on the bridge so when we do develop a trail plan for the area and get funding, we can add the pedestrian lane on. We have also asked the NDOR to consider removing a set of old bridge pilings directly adjacent to the existing bridge. This request is under consideration. Recall, the LPRCA is removing a second set further west that has caused a lot of problems with boaters in the area (see last month's report).

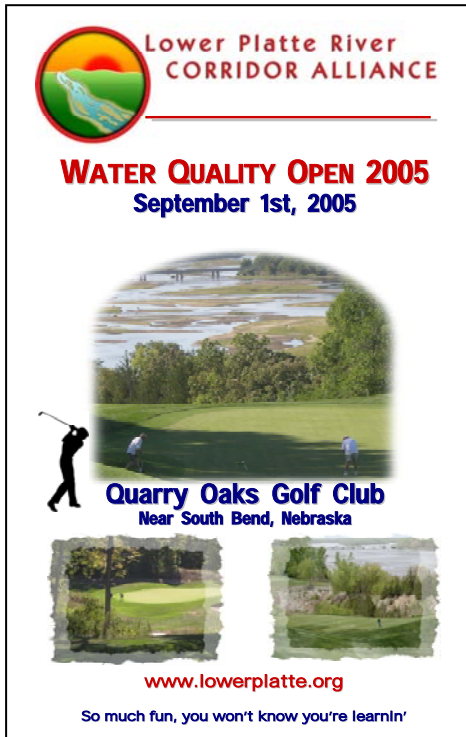
2005 LPRCA Water Quality Open

The 2005 LPRCA Water Quality Open was held on Thursday, September 1 at Quarry Oaks Golf Course near South Bend, Nebraska. This event is a way to bring together diverse stakeholders with an interest in the Lower Platte River for a day of recreation, discussion, and education. We use presentations, displays, trivia signs on the course, and demos on specific tees to educate attendees on various natural resources issues. This year, we had five demos including Geo-caching (LPNNRD), Creatures of the Platte (PMRNRD), River of Knowledge (LPSNRD), T&E Species (NG&PC), and Ground and Surface Interactions (Groundwater Foundation). In addition, 12 of the tees had trivia signs for players to read while waiting their turn to golf. We brought in over \$2,500 in donations for the event, which is funded through donations and registration fees. **A very special thank you to this year's sponsors: Union Bank & Trust, CDM, Nebraska's Natural Resources (NARD), Midwest Laboratories, JEO Consulting Group, Cornhusker Bank, Olsson Associates, BIZCO Technologies, Bob Stephens & Associates, PeopleService Inc, LPSNRD, LPNNRD, and the PMRNRD.** I know I say this every year, but we had the best weather we could have asked for at 85 degrees and no rain. With a full docket - 36 teams and 144 golfers ranging from private businesses, to government to legislative representatives, the tourney started off with presentations prior to golfing by Dave Sands, Nebraska Land Trust Executive Director, on Watershed Protection/Conservation Easements and then Tina Kurtz, NE Dept of Natural Resources, on LB 962 - Integrated Water Resources Management. Nearly half of the golfers attended the presentations probably spurred on by the two strokes off the team score, but nonetheless we had great attendance. Below are a few pictures from the event:



The demo entitled "River of Knowledge" was dubbed the Landshark Award demo and those attending were given a ticket for a shot to win the "Landshark Award." Following golfing, we had a burger and brat buffet and then the awards ceremony. Trophies were given for 1st, 2nd, 3rd places with 20th place also receiving a prize. First place this year again went to the defending champs, the Bash Brothers, which consisted of Rick Andrews, Mike Bernard, John Hawkins, and Doug Nodgaard. We also had a number of door prizes donated for the tourney and handed those out while final scores and places were being tallied. I've heard a lot of positive comments on the event and the opportunities to learn at the tourney. Thank you to everyone who helped plan, execute and played in the Water Quality Open! Below are a few more photos and excerpts from the tournament booklet:






WQ Open 2005 Summary Statistics

Presentation Speakers - - 2

Attendees at Presentation Prior to Event - - 60

Players/Teams - - 144 players / 36 Teams

Trivia Signs on Tees - - 12

Demos on the Greens - - 5

Donations - - 17 (cash & prizes)

Donations Cash Total - - \$2,800

Trophies Given - - 1st, 2nd, 3rd Places. Also, prize for 20th Place and over 30 door prizes donated.

Landshark Award for Random Player who Attended Demos.