



Lower Platte River  
CORRIDOR ALLIANCE

LEAD. ORGANIZE. INSPIRE. The voice of the Lower Platte.

**QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES**

**Tuesday, November 15th, 2016 - 10:00 a.m.**

**Papio-Missouri River NRD**

**8901 S. 154<sup>th</sup> St**

**Omaha, NE 68138**

1. Call to Order / Introductions: The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m.
2. Proof of Legal Notice/Publication: The meeting notice was published in the Omaha World Herald on November 2, 2016.
3. Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was approved by consensus.
4. Approval of LPRCA Minutes from August 9, 2016 Meeting: The minutes were approved by consensus.
5. LPRCA Coordinator Replacement Timeline – Paul Zillig, LPS NRD

The current status of the Corridor Alliance Coordinator was discussed. Meghan Sittler resigned at the end of September. Since that time David Potter, Assistant General Manager for Lower Platte South NRD, has stepped in to help coordinate a few current projects, distribute the Fall Newsletter, and plan the quarterly meeting. A concern of the Alliance is the funding for the Coordinator. The position is largely funded by the three member NRDs (Lower Platte South, Papio-Missouri River and Lower Platte North), however Lower Platte North has decided to be a non-paying member and has not budgeted for their 1/3 share. Without the share from the LPN NRD, only 2/3 of the Coordinator's position is available for the year. Without a coordinator, the work and coordination of the Alliance is in question. The plan is to continue working to find funding and a coordinator replacement.

**6. Water Quality Management Plan**

- Requirements and Update on Plan—Carla McCullough and Laura Johnson, NDEQ

McCullough commented that there are many management plans being done throughout the state. The draft plan for the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance was completed but needed some

additional information and emphasis on *E. coli*. This is a required addition according to NDEQ and the EPA. All management plans must address the nine elements. In recognizing the needed amendment/requirement, NDEQ will award an additional \$15,000 grant. The original grant has been closed out.

- Update and 3<sup>rd</sup> Amendment – Matt Pillard, HDR

Pillard gave a brief history of the draft management plan. The original contract dates back to February 2013. The draft plan was finalized in October of 2014. Based on the needed NDEQ and EPA changes, HDR has prepared a 3<sup>rd</sup> amendment to the management plan. The proposed scope of services addresses the methodology for identification of *E. coli* contributions and reductions, performing the calculations to determine the contributions and reduction potential, and reformulating the plans, goals and objectives, priorities, and the change in focus to *E. coli*, and also includes document reorganization. The Alliance has received the proposed amendment for consideration. The total fee will be \$34,451. It was agreed by those LPRCA representatives present that coordination should be made with NDEQ for the grant and for the Alliance to enter into contract with HDR for Supplemental (Amendment) No. 3.

- Benefits and Potential 319 Projects – Matt Pillard, HDR

There are various projects possible with the plan in place. These projects would now be potentially qualified for 319 funds. NDEQ also indicated that a huge benefit was that the plan is being done by a collaborative effort. The individual plans being done by the NRDs may utilize some of this plan but if projects along the corridor are proposed, the emphasis will likely be weighed more by a collaborative effort.

## 7. Lower Platte River Watershed Restoration Study

- April 13, 2016 Letter of Request – Paul Zillig, LPS NRD

A letter of intent had been submitted for the proposed Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Comprehensive Study. The project had not yet been initiated and we were in the process of finalizing in-kind accounting and cost share. LPS NRD recently received word from the Army Corps of Engineers seeking our interest in proceeding. Lower Platte South on behalf of the Corridor Alliance responded with interest in starting in 2017 and the regional office has submitted the request to headquarters.

- Potential Benefits/Projects from Study – John Miyoshi, LPN NRD

There are many direct and indirect projects that could stem from this study. With such a study in place, opportunities for projects on tributaries up and down the Platte River Corridor may be eligible for funding. Many of these are located in Lower Platte North. A project such as the one on Deadman's Run in Lincoln could also be eligible.

## **8. Southern Sarpy County Watershed**

- Southern Ridge Wastewater Treatment Study – Mark Wayne, Sarpy Co. & Leanne Zietlow, HDR  
Mark Wayne, Sarpy County Administrator, introduced the Wastewater Treatment Study and explained the history and intent of the project, the location, and cooperation with the communities within Sarpy County and the Papio-Missouri River NRD. Leanne then described the project in detail. The concern is with the development of Southern Sarpy County and where will the sewer go because of the ridgeline. The study has identified a number of needed temporary treatment facilities but ultimately locating a larger, main facility as an expanded Springfield treatment plant or locating a new one south of Springfield adjacent to Highway 50. The system will discharge into the Platte River. There was some concern about the discharge but both presenters indicated that NDEQ recommended the discharge of treated water into the river in order to keep water levels up during times of drought.

- Southern Sarpy Watershed Partnership (SSWP) – Marlin Petermann & Eric Williams, P-MR NRD  
Because of the potential development of Southern Sarpy County, the Papio-Missouri River NRD and partners have looked at the need to look at this entire area for drainage and flood control. Petermann and Williams walked through the Partnership project and what the intent and requirements will be for future development. The Partnership will be similar to the one developed for Papio Creek Watershed. Developers will need to detain water on their sites and be able to possibly coordinate with other developments for a more regional approach to drainage detention. Identification and location of these regional flood control structures will be important to the development of the area and flows into the tributaries and the Platte River.

## **9. ESRI Map Gallery (Going Live) – Matt Pillard, HDR**

The geospatial data that has been collected and/or developed for or by LPRCA is currently housed on Map Maker on the LPN NRD server. This platform is no longer supported by ESRI, is antiquated, and does not allow for expansion into new technologies. The LPRCA decided to utilize ESRI's services to serve as the platform for sharing LPRCA data for viewing and creation of maps by users. The Corridor Alliance has a contract with ESRI and everything is ready to launch the map galleries which represent many of the LPRCA projects. The LPRCA representatives present gave the go-ahead for the Corridor Alliance to launch the gallery and make the connection available on the LPRCA website.

## **10. Platte Basin Timelapse Update – Mike Farrell**

Farrell presented a series of short videos that described the Timelapse projects that were done on the river and those that they are currently working on. The videos provided a great visualization of

the ever-changing river. One interesting segment illustrated the changes and dynamics of the banks of the river. These images can assist in the maintenance, stabilization, enhancement and protection of the river and its resources. Other projects and education modules described were the Marsh Wren project, agriculture timelapse, and a segment on “the life of a snowflake”.

#### **11. Water Quality Monitoring Network and Sandbar Dynamics Study – Dave Rus and Matt Moser, USGS**

Dave gave an update and overview of the Monitoring Network and Matt discussed the Sandbar Study. These projects have been going on for several years. Rus also identified project benefits and gave insight into the future of the Water-Quality Monitoring Network moving forward. The sandbar project will assist with better understanding the availability of in channel habitat for terns and plovers as well as potentially assist with the permitting process. The sandbar project has completed about four years of surveys as well as water level data and time lapse camera imagery.

##### Water Quality Monitoring Network update

Objective: Provide real-time water quality data at four sites within the Corridor.

- The water quality equipment monitors the rivers continuously from March to October with the data being reported in near-real time to the web
- Parameters that are monitored include Water Temperature, Specific Conductance, Dissolved Oxygen, Nitrate (3 of 4 sites), and Turbidity
- Sites monitored include the Platte River near Louisville, Platte River near Leshara, Salt Creek near Ashland, and Elkhorn River near Waterloo (Shell Creek near Columbus is also monitored separately)
- Sampling for E. Coli and other selected nutrients
- Continuous prediction of various contaminants, like E. Coli, available in real-time

Benefits:

- Improves understanding of hydrology and water quality in the Lower Platte Corridor and can lead to more effective resource management
- Continuous nitrate data can serve as an early warning for drinking water utilities
- Useful to municipalities, resource managers, recreational users & fellow researchers
- Captures water-quality variation that traditional sampling misses
- Improves concentration and load estimates over traditional methods
- Better understanding of the incidences of potential contaminants and changes in overall water quality for the purposes of protecting public drinking water supplies, threatened & endangered species, and the overall health of the Lower Platte River.

Status:

- All monitoring has concluded for the 2016 field season. Monitors were removed in mid-October at the four sites
- This is the first year we have had nitrate monitors at multiple sites. Nitrate concentrations vary between the sites
- Current monitoring agreement continues through the 2018 field seasons

### Sandbar Dynamics Study update

Study Objective: To characterize the spatial and temporal variation in the height and area of sandbars in the Lower Platte River from the Loup River confluence to the mouth by evaluating:

- Sandbar erosion/survival rates over time and flow
- Sandbar height given a range of flows
- Locations/characteristics more conducive to sandbar formation

Benefits: Sandbar habitat is critical to the management of endangered species in the LPR

- If we know the 'natural' rate of sandbar erosion/survival, we can use that to quantitatively evaluate whether a construction project is having an impact on local sandbars
- If we know locations/characteristics that favor sandbars, we can use that to:
  - Better locate infrastructure projects; or
  - Better mitigate impacts from infrastructure projects by focusing restoration in other areas
- If we know expected sandbar heights given flows, we can manage flows to meet habitat goals, provided that we have the ability to manage flows.

Status:

- The sandbar erosion analyses are complete
- The height vs flow analyses are nearly complete, and is approaching a quantitative estimate of X inches of bar height for every Y cfs above a reference streamflow
- The identification of locations/characteristics conducive to sandbar formation has been hampered by the impact of the hydrocycling wave during the surveys, but is ongoing.
- The target date for the draft report is January 31, 2017.

### **12. Platte River Venture Parks Update – Matt Pillard, HDR**

Matt gave a very brief overview of the project and of HDR's involvement. The Venture Park program will be focused on Mahoney State Park, Platte River State Park, Louisville State Recreation Area, and Schramm State Recreation Area. The Venture Park project will be done in four phases. HDR and JEO are working with NGPC to prepare design documents for the Phase I projects. Included in the Phase I projects are three Platte River Access projects: 1)kayak/canoe launch on Decker Creek at Platte River State Park, 2)kayak/canoe launch at the existing access location near Schramm Park SRA, and 3)Airboat ramp at Louisville Lakes SRA.

### **13. Planning Retreat – David Potter, LPS NRD**

With the resignation of Meghan Sittler and questions about the future direction of the LPRCA, it was discussed and determined that the Alliance should plan for a "planning retreat" instead of a Summit and in place of the January quarterly meeting. The LPRCA Summit has been held every other year with

the last one being held at Camp Joy Holling in 2014. The 2016 Summit was actually being planned for Spring 2017. A Director's Workshop was held back in April 2014. Strategic planning workshops/meetings/surveys look to have been held in 2013, 2008, 2007, 2002 and 2001, however the only professionally facilitated "Strategic Planning Retreats" were held in 2009 at Camp Ashland and in 2005 at Camp Kitaki. It was suggested that an outside facilitator again be brought in to go through a planning/goal setting retreat workshop. It was also suggested that that a survey or questionnaire be sent out prior to the retreat. The Alliance will schedule a planning retreat in late February and look for a central location to have the half day or full day event. The retreat will fall on the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance.

**14. Next Quarterly Meeting Date:** The first quarterly meetings are usually in January at Lower Platte North NRD but with the decision to hold a planning retreat, it was decided to hold the quarterly meeting in conjunction with the retreat in February.

**15. Public Comment:** There was no additional public comment.

**16. Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 12:48 a.m.

#### **NOTES**

- **To be removed from/ added to our mailing or e-mailing list,** please contact the LPRCA at (402) 476-2729 or via e-mail at [dpotter@lpsnrd.org](mailto:dpotter@lpsnrd.org).
- **Meeting information (past and present)** will be kept up to date at:  
[http://www.lowerplatte.org/what\\_we\\_do/quarterly\\_meetings.html](http://www.lowerplatte.org/what_we_do/quarterly_meetings.html)