



Lower Platte River  
CORRIDOR ALLIANCE

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

**QUARTERLY MEETING AND RETREAT MINUTES**

**Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017 - 9:00 a.m.**

**Camp Ashland Training Site – Memorial Hall**

**220 County Road A, Ashland, NE 68003**

1. Call to Order / Introductions: The quarterly meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m.

David Potter called the meeting to order and gave a brief introduction. Larry Vrtiska with the National Guard welcomed everyone to the facility and took care of some housekeeping items. The 40 attendees introduced themselves shortly after the meeting started to allow those arriving late to be seated. The National Guard was thanked for allowing the meeting to be held at Camp Ashland. Vrtiska identified and commented on the many projects the Guard has been involved in with the Corridor Alliance, including the pier removal and levee projects, and can see the benefits first hand.

2. Proof of Legal Notice/Publication: The meeting notice was published in the Omaha World Herald on February 9, 2017.

3. Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was approved by consensus.

4. Approval of LPRCA Minutes from November 15, 2016 Meeting: The minutes were approved by consensus.

5. Water Quality Management Plan – Matt Pillard, HDR and Laura Johnson, NDEQ

Pillard gave an update of the draft management plan. The draft plan was finalized in October of 2014, but based on the needed NDEQ and EPA changes, HDR prepared a 3<sup>rd</sup> amendment to the management plan. The added services will address the methodology for identification of *E. coli* contributions and reductions, perform the calculations to determine the contributions and reduction potential, and reformulate the plans, goals and objectives, priorities, and the change in focus to *E. coli*, and also include document reorganization. The Alliance has received an additional grant from NDEQ for \$17,225 (50% of amendment cost) to complete the project. The grant was approved and the contract with HDR was executed. The project is underway and should be completed by the end of the year.

Johnson commented that there are many management plans being done throughout the state. All management plans must address the nine elements. She indicated the collaborative effort by the Alliance on this project is a huge benefit. There are various projects possible with the plan in place and these projects would now be potentially qualified for 319 funds.

Potter stated that the remaining cost of the 3<sup>rd</sup> amendment will be split by the three NRDs. It was also mentioned that the NRDs are doing their own district-wide plans and would likely use the information in the Corridor Alliance Water Quality Management Plan.

#### **6. Lower Platte River Watershed Restoration Study - Paul Zillig, LPS NRD**

Zillig informed the group that a letter of intent dated April 13, 2016 had been submitted for the proposed Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Comprehensive Study. The project had not yet been initiated but the Army Corps of Engineers had sought 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. We have not heard anything more since the last quarterly meeting but a number of NRD staff and directors are headed to Washington, D.C. in late March for a NARD conference and will follow up, if possible.

Potter again mentioned the 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.

#### **7. Website and ESRI Map Gallery – David Potter, LPS NRD and Matt Pillard, HDR**

Part of the responsibility of the coordinator (and an interim coordinator) is to manage the Corridor Alliance website. The website has all the information about the Corridor Alliance, including minutes, agendas, projects, and activities. Also included is the Map Gallery. This gallery includes all the geospatial data that has been collected and/or developed for or by LPRCA and utilizes ESRI's services to serve as the platform for sharing LPRCA data for viewing and creation of maps by users. One example of the gallery's benefit will be the utilization of maps from the water quality management plan by the individual districts for their plans.

**8. Next Quarterly Meeting Date:** The next quarterly meeting was discussed and determined to be held on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 at Lower Platte South NRD starting at 9:00 a.m. The scheduling of the next quarterly meeting was approved by consensus.

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THE QUARTERLY MEETING BUSINESS ENDED AT 9:30

9. Planning Retreat – Steve Wolf, JEO Consulting Group and David Potter, LPS NRD

Potter explained that with the resignation of Meghan Sittler and questions about the future direction of the LPRCA, the Alliance decided at its last quarterly meeting to hold a “planning retreat” instead of a Summit and possibly 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. The last professionally facilitated “Strategic Planning Retreat” was held in 2009 at Camp Ashland. A contract was negotiated and approved to hire a facilitator and it was agreed by the NRDs to split the cost of the retreat. The retreat was held at Camp Ashland because of its location along the river and availability. JEO will provide a retreat report and a retreat presentation to the Alliance members.

- a) Introduction of Planning Retreat Facilitator – Potter introduced Steve Wolf of JEO. Steve told the group a little about himself.
- b) Purpose of Retreat – Potter and Wolf explained the purpose of the retreat and what was to be accomplished. Wolf also set some ground rules for the retreat and thanked everyone in advance for their involvement and participation.
- c) Case Study – Mike Murphy, General Manager of Middle Niobrara NRD in Valentine, was introduced and thanked for coming. Mike talked about the Federal intervention in the management of the Niobrara River and how the area has lost local control. Working together and keeping local control will keep this from happening to the area of the Platte River that the Alliance is working with.
- d) Problem Solving Exercise – Wolf conducted an ice breaker exercise and a problem solving exercise to get the group thinking about working together to solve issues in the Platte River Corridor.
- e) Review of Survey Results – Wolf presented and discussed the results of the questionnaire that was mailed to each Corridor Alliance member and each director from the three NRDs. Also included in the discussion was the results from the 12 one-on-one interviews with board members from the three NRDs.

- f) *Following a break for Lunch and networking, Marlin Petermann with PMR NRD gave an update on the river ice jams over the years, the process to deal with jams, and the agreements currently in place.*
- g) Brainstorming Session – Wolf worked with the group to refine the Alliance mission, goals, and operations and to set priorities. As part of the current interlocal agreement that formed the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance, the identified purposes were discussed and refined. The results will be recorded in a separate report summarizing the retreat. Members present agreed the Corridor Alliance is important but some individuals questioned the need for a coordinator. Much discussion was had on the need and importance of a coordinator and on his/her duties. The kayak tour and golf tournament were also discussed. Without a coordinator these two events will not likely be held this year. LPN NRD informed the group of being a non-paying dues member. Determination will need to be made if Papio-Missouri River NRD and Lower Platte South NRD (and other paying members) would be willing to pick up member cost vacated by the Lower Platte North NRD or what other options there are. Representatives from other member agencies expressed their continued support of the Corridor Alliance. It was decided to redraft the interlocal agreement based on the revised purposes and group discussion and have the draft ready for the next quarterly meeting and for review of the NRD Boards prior to that meeting.

**10.** Comments: Thanks were given. There was no additional public comment.

**11.** Adjourn: The meeting and retreat ended (was adjourned) at approximately 3:45 p.m.

Submitted by: David Potter, Assistant General Manager LPS NRD and Interim Coordinator

#### **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)