



Lower Platte River CORRIDOR ALLIANCE

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LPRCA MEETING MINUTES

Friday, May 14, 2021 – 10:00 a.m.

Virtual Zoom Bi-Annual Meeting

1. Welcome / Introductions: David Potter welcomed everyone and thanked the members for attending the meeting. Corridor Alliance member representatives participating included: Marlin Petermann-PMRNRD, Eric Williams-PMRNRD, Paul Woodward-PMRNRD, Larry Vrtiska-NE National Guard, Bob Bergholz-NGP, Shuhai Zheng-NeDNR, Andy Kahle-DHHS, Ryan Chapman-DEE, Zach Reid-DEE, Tara Anderson-DEE, Brandon Beethe-DEE, Ron Yoder-UNL, Rachel Herpel-UNL (Water Center), Paul Zillig-LPSNRD, and David Potter-LPSNRD. Others present included: Tom Mountford-LPNNRD, Jennifer Swanson-NARD, Matt Pillard-HDR, Dave Rus-USGS, Matt Moser-USGS, Steve Peterson-USGS, and Kathy Hauschild-LPSNRD. Invites were sent out to at least two individuals from each of the eight members/agencies of the Alliance, including the person that was authorized to sign any documents. Alternates were recommended to participate if the two individuals could not attend. A meeting notice was published in the Lincoln Journal Star on May 4, 2021. All eight Alliance members/agencies were represented at the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was also stated. The LPRCA meeting began at 10:07 a.m.
2. Review of December 3, 2020 Meeting and Approval of Minutes: Potter stated that the minutes of the last meeting were distributed prior to the meeting and are on the LPRCA website. There were no changes or corrections. Minutes were approved by consensus. Minutes from the bi-annual meetings will continue to serve as the newsletters/correspondence.
3. Budget Update: Potter presented the Draft FY2022 budget. Each of the eight agencies were invoiced \$1,000 for dues and six were received. It was noted that there are certain limitations on State agencies. All but DEE and DHHS paid their dues. The dues are deposited into the administrative fund and pay for the costs of ESRI, website, and memberships. A draft budget spreadsheet was displayed during the meeting and explained. A copy of the draft budget will be sent to each member agency. Besides the administrative costs, the only active projects currently are the stream gages with USGS and a possible sandbar study. It was noted that some share of payments by the agencies are handled through separate agreements. Invoices are usually sent out in November or December to those NRDs and agencies participating in the various stream gage agreements. The project fund holds monies for current and future projects. In addition, the Reserve funds are in place to initiate potential projects such as the Lower Platte River Restoration and Resiliency Study.
4. Current LPRCA Activities/Projects
 - A. Agreements for Gages at Leshara, 3 Long-Term Sites, and Platte River Chutes: Potter briefly discussed the agreements for the various stream gages. The agreements for the 3 long-term sites and

Leshara will expire June 30, 2022. The Leshara site is jointly (and now equally) funded by LPSNRD, LPNNRD, PMRNRD, LWS, and MUD, and also by USGS. The three long-term sites are jointly funded by LPSNRD, PMRNRD and USGS. The cost-share information on the gages was identified in the FY22 budget presented by Potter. The new agreements will need to be considered at the meeting in April/May. Expenditures for the new agreements will not occur until FY23. The agreement for the gage(s) on the Platte River Chutes funded by the National Guard expired April 30, 2021 (It was set to expire in 2020 but was extended for one year due to the flood damage at no additional cost). As of now, no agreement for continuation of the gage(s) is expected. If the National Guard wants to continue monitoring the chutes, they will likely enter into a contract directly with USGS.

B. Status of USGS Stream Gages/Monitors, Reports from Gages: Matt Moser provided information and an update on the current stream gages contracted through the Alliance and what information/data they're providing. Moser went through some of the data being collected from the various stream gages. He discussed the preliminary estimates and work to begin in late spring of 2022. Moser also explained how monitoring the chutes is now not possible due to the sandbar at the entrance(s). More information on the sandbar was discussed later in the meeting.

5. Reports and Updates on Related Corridor Activities and Projects

A. Flooding/Levees/Recovery on the Missouri River and Statewide Levee Update: Shuhai Zheng with NeDNR provided an update on a study between Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa, Missouri and the Corps of Engineers (USACE) on the Missouri River. This study identifies flooding areas along the Lower Missouri River and potential solutions by engaging stakeholders. The study is wrapping up and should be completed soon. Shuhai reminded the group that NeDNR and other three states' representing agencies signed a feasibility cost share agreement last September with USACE to develop flood reduction alternatives that are feasible and implementable. This Lower Missouri River General Investigation Study will be kicked off soon and it is expected to be completed in three years. USACE is also planning for a study to update the stage-frequency of the Missouri River. NeDNR will be involved in the Lower Platte River Infrastructure Task Force as outlined in LB-406. Shuhai provided an update on the state flood mitigation plan and shared some meeting dates and other related information. NeDNR's levee inventory (USACE levees, public levees, and private levees) is not moving forward as efforts found the information for private levees is very limited. Related to this, Petermann stated that PMRNRD has developed a cost-share program to help repair private levees.

B. NRD Updates on Platte River Flood Repair Projects: Petermann and Mountford provided updates on PMRNRD and LPNNRD projects, respectively. Most of the projects resulting from the flooding have been completed. There are a couple USACE warranty projects underway and will be completed soon. Petermann also informed the Alliance members that the operation and maintenance manual for the Western Sarpy/Clear Creek Flood Control Project is nearing completion. Mountford commented specifically on the completed flood repairs to the Clear Creek Levee and the Fuse Plug and some projects near North Bend and Schuyler.

C. Camp Ashland - Post Flood Building Rehab Project and Floodwall Extension Project: Vrtiska provided an update on Camp Ashland, including the repairs to the levee/river bank (now completed) and reconstruction of the camp and buildings. He also noted that there is an issue now with outflow

from Turner Lake to the Platte River. Part of it has to do with fill in the Salt Creek Floodway and is now part of the USACE warranty project. Construction to resolve the issue should begin soon.

D. State Parks: Bergholz gave an update on the parks along the corridor. All flood repairs have been completed, for the most part. Potential projects include more canoe launch areas. Bergholz also informed the Alliance of Director Douglas' retirement at the end of the year.

E. Hwy 34/75 Platte River Bridge Trail and Lied Platte River Bridge Repair: Williams provided an update on the status of the two bridge projects. The Platte River Bridge Trail is out for public comment until June 10th and bid letting is expected in November 2021 with construction in Spring 2022. The project is Federally funded with 20% local match and PMRNRD, LPSNRD, Sarpy County, Cass County, Plattsmouth, Bellevue and others participating in the project. The Lied Platte River Bridge is currently open from the south/west end in Cass County but remains closed on the north/east end. The Highway 31 Connecting Link Trail on the north/east side in Sarpy County will be completed by July 2nd, just in time for the July 4th weekend. The FEMA assisted repairs on the bridge were placed in three phases – 1) debris removal, 2) super structure repair, and 3) substructure repair including ice breakers.

F. Updates from DHHS and DEE, Sampling: Chapman discussed the surface water sampling being done Lower Platte Basin and also and groundwater sampling across the state. Kahle updated the group on the new organization of the DEE and DHHS. He explained that DHHS drinking water division will now fall under DEE as of July 1st (LB-148) and all of DEE is now in the new facility located in Fallbrook in Lincoln. There was some discussion if DHHS would want to continue as a LPRCA member now. DHHS will be contacted. Chapman and Kahle also presented the new agency organizational chart.

G. Update from UNL: Yoder gave a brief update on the issue with the ethanol plant at Mead and it's effect on UNL property. He also explained their role in the current Deadmans Run project through East Campus. Herpel shared information about the support the Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute provides to faculty. A competitive process is used to award funding to DWFI Faculty Fellows throughout the NU system for research (student) support. Faculty match the funds 1:1. Nearly 40 such support agreements are planned for FY 2022. She mentioned a few of the projects during the meeting and stated they will publish a complete list of the faculty, students, and the titles of their projects early in the fiscal year.

6. Future Projects/Studies:

A. Status of Platte River Chutes, Morphodynamic Study, and Possible Sandbar Study: Vrtiska, Rus and Petermann all discussed the status of the chutes and the two studies. The Platte River chutes on the east side of the river are not functioning as they were before the flood. Flow into the chutes is now blocked by a sandbar and therefore restricting water flow through them. The chutes were created for habitat for the levee project and coordinated with US Fish and Wildlife. Rus provided technical information on both studies. The Morphodynamic Study is currently funded by the National Guard and USGS. Rus indicated that the Sandbar Study was specific to the area near the chutes and would help provide information on the operation and maintenance of the chutes. Potter commented that the study cost was placed in the draft budget but would now be less based on proposed scope and fees provided by USGS. It would be a two-year project with recommended participation from LPSNRD, PMRNRD, LPNNRD and the National Guard, along with USGS. This potential study could expand on or

use information that was found in the Lower Platte River Sandbar Dynamics Study recently completed by Jason Alexander. It was suggested that a meeting be scheduled with the proposed participants. A meeting with PMRNRD and the Guard with FWS and USACE is scheduled for May 20th at noon, so such a meeting should be scheduled after that but before the NRD's subcommittees meet. Potter will send out a doodle poll and get a meeting scheduled.

B. Water Quality Management Plan – 319 Projects and Implementation, Application to EPA: Potter informed the group that there have been a couple meetings (Feb. and March) between LPSNRD, PMRNRD, LPNNRD and HDR to discuss possible 319 Projects within the priority areas identified in the LPRCA Water Quality Management Plan. With an approved WQMP, projects within the priority 1 areas of the plan within the corridor are now eligible for 319 funding. Any community or agency within the corridor is eligible to apply. To date, there has not been any Project Implementation Plans (PIP) submitted to EPA but PMRNRD is preparing two of them. LPSNRD is also budgeting for possible implementation in the Turkey Creek-Platte River Watershed. This particular watershed is on both sides of the river so there has been coordination between LPSNRD and PMRNRD. LPNNRD is also looking at submitting a PIP for their watersheds. The WQMP is a five-year plan, so development of the next LPRCA WQMP will be budgeted in FY24 and FY25. Ryan Chapman reminded the Alliance members again of the Septic Tank Program stated in the WQMP. More information and discussion will be given on the Septic Tank Program and on the 319 projects at the next LPRCA meeting.

C. Lower Platte River Watershed Restoration and Resiliency Study – Update/Status: Zillig briefly discussed the possible Restoration and Resiliency Study and its current status. There has been no change and a meeting is still needed between the three NRDs to determine whether the project is still viable.

D. Discussion of Any Other Possible Projects for LPRCA: Potter asked the group to identify and consider any other projects for the LPRCA. No additional projects were identified at this time.

7. Schedule Next Meeting: The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 2021. A doodle poll to the members will be used to determine the best date to have a meeting.
8. Comments, Questions, Adjourn: No questions or comments. The meeting ended at approximately 12:35 p.m.

Submitted by: David Potter, Assistant General Manager LPSNRD and Interim LPRCA Coordinator