



**Lower Platte River  
CORRIDOR ALLIANCE**

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**LPRCA MEMBER MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, May 13, 2019 – 9:30 a.m.**

**Lower Platte South NRD**

**3125 Portia Street, Lincoln, NE 68501**

1. Welcome / Introductions: David Potter welcomed everyone and thanked the members for attending. Those in attendance introduced themselves. Corridor Alliance member representatives in attendance included: Marlin Peterman-PMRNRD, Eric Williams-PMRNRD, Larry Vrtiska-NE Guard, Jim Swenson-NGP, Jennifer Schellpeper-DNR, Sue Dempsey-DHHS, Carla McCullough-DEQ, Ron Yoder-UNL, Dana Divine-UNL, Paul Zillig-LPSNRD, and David Potter-LPSNRD. Others present included: Eric Lee-LWS, Crystal Powers-Ext, Tom Mountford-LPNNRD, Matt Pillard-HDR, Steve Peterson-USGS, Matt Moser-USGS, Gary Aldridge-LPSNRD, and Luke Peterson-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 if the two individuals could not attend. All eight Alliance members were represented. The purpose of the meeting was also stated. The meeting began at approximately 9:30 a.m.
2. Review of October 24, 2018 Meeting: Minutes of the last meeting were distributed. Minutes approved by consensus.
3. FY2020 Budget/dues/invoices: Potter explained that six of the eight agencies paid their \$1,000 dues. This was enough to pay the costs of ESRI, website, and memberships. We're hoping that all eight agencies can pay their dues but we understand that there are certain limitations on State agencies. There is no paid coordinator so administrative costs are down. It was restated that projects would be finished up and we would seek opportunities for new projects. Minutes from the bi-annual meetings will serve as the newsletters/correspondence.

There are currently two funds – administrative and project funds. The administrative fund is supplied by dues from the participating members as per the interlocal agreement. The annual dues of \$1,000 will be invoiced to the current members for administrative expenses such as website, ESRI,

memberships, etc. 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.

The Water Quality Management Plan has been approved by EPA and final invoices will be sent out to the NRDs in the next couple weeks who agreed to pay for Supplement No. 3 to the contract. Invoices will also be sent out later in the year (likely October-November) to those NRDs and agencies participating in the various stream gage agreements. In addition, draft budget numbers for the Alliance will be distributed to the agencies so they can plan for FY20 expenditures.

#### 4. Reports and Updates

A. Platte River Flooding (Marlin Petermann - PMRNRD, Eric Lee – Lincoln Water System, Tom Mountford – LPNNRD, Larry Vrtiska - NE National Guard, and Jim Swenson - NGPC): All five individuals presented photos, presentations, and/or videos on the flooding to their jurisdictions or properties.

B. Western Sarpy Clear Creek Levee status (Tom Mountford, LPNNRD): Tom gave an update of the damaged levee and that they are working with the USACE.

C. Lower Platte River Sandbar Dynamics Study - update: Potter stated that Jason Alexander, a grad student at the University of Wyoming, was nearing completion of his work on the Sandbar Dynamics Study. Jason was employed by the USGS when the project was commissioned. He is currently pursuing his PHD at the University of Wyoming and had been working continuously on the study, which has also become his dissertation. The project was originally funded by the Lower Platte South NRD through the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance and also by a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust. Jason presented the study at the last LPRCA meeting via conference call. He has since received the manuscript back from the journal (Water Resources Research) review back in December and re-submitted it in February. He received it back again a couple weeks ago asking for minor revisions and plans to resubmit it this week. Jason will keep LPSNRD updated on the status. When published, the project/study would be complete. Upon completion, the study will be placed on file with the LPRCA and LPSNRD.

#### 4. Current Projects/Activities

- A. Stream Gage Agreements and updates: Matt Moser with USGS presented a power point and information regarding the status of the stream gages and data collected. The agreement for the gages on the Platte River Chutes funded by the National Guard was recently renewed for another two years and the LPRCA again was the contracting agent. Stream gage agreements with USGS for the Leshara site and the three long-term sites were also recently renewed for another three years by LPSNRD on behalf of the Alliance. The Leshara site is jointly funded by LPSNRD, LPNNRD, PMRNRD, LWS, MUD and USGS. The three long-term sites are jointly funded by LPSNRD, PMRNRD and USGS. Potter stated that he will get budget information for FY20 out to all participating agencies.
- B. Water Quality Management Plan: Matt Pillard with HDR presented a power point on the recently approved WQMP and identified the priority areas. The group was reminded that HDR was hired to develop and complete the WQMP. 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 was approved a 3<sup>rd</sup> amendment to the management plan that addressed the methodology for identification of *E. coli* contributions and reductions, performed the calculations to determine the contributions and reduction potential, and reformulated the plans, goals and objectives, priorities, and the change in focus to *E. coli*, and also included document reorganization. One half of the cost of that amendment (Supplemental No. 3) was covered by a 319 grant and the other 50% was the responsibility of the LPRCA and billed equally to each of the three participating NRDs.

The revisions were made and the revised Plan was submitted to NDEQ and then to EPA for review in July 2018. During that review, EPA commented on the priority areas and indicated that additional information was needed. In that review, it was also noted that only the primary priority areas could be considered for Section 319 funded projects. Those listed as secondary would not be eligible. As a result, all three districts participating in the LPRCA WQMP suggested some changes to the priority areas based more on what is implementable. With the requested changes to the priority areas and the needed information identified by EPA, HDR submitted another proposed agreement to make the changes and complete the WQMP. The plan would not have been accepted without the priority specifications completed and future 319 funds for projects in the corridor will not be possible without the plan. The Alliance agreed by consensus to authorize

LPSNRD approve the agreement for Supplement No. 4 and to utilize funds from the LPRCA Reserve to pay for the project completion, as specified in the agreement, without having to go back to the individual NRD's Board of Directors. LPSNRD, on behalf of the Alliance, approved that agreement on November 14, 2018. The WQMP as amended was submitted to EPA at the end of March and was approved by EPA on April 9, 2019. With the plan completed, Potter said he would begin working on reimbursements and send out invoices to the NRDs for their portion of Supplement No. 3. Adoption of the WQMP Plan was discussed. DEQ indicated that the plan did not need formal adoption because authority was given to submit the plan to EPA and that it was approved by EPA. The members thought it would still be good to take some formal action. The WQMP was approved by the Alliance by consensus. Potter stated that Lower Platte South will take it to their Board at the June meeting on behalf of the Alliance. LPNNRD and PMRNRD will likely take it to their Boards as well and would like Matt Pillard and Carla McCullough to present the WQMP. McCullough stated that with the plan approved by EPA, projects within the priority 1 areas of the plan within the corridor are now eligible for 319 funding. The 2019 WQMP will be uploaded to the LPRCA website following the meeting.

C. Website Hosting and ESRI Agreement: The annual fee for the website hosting and the ESRI Agreement will be paid through the administrative fund financed by the annual dues. Potter stated that he has been updating the website with meeting agenda and notices, important dates, and relevant information. The website is [www.lowerplatte.org](http://www.lowerplatte.org)

5. Future Projects/Studies: The Lower Platte River Restoration and Resiliency Study (as it's now called) and its current status was discussed again. Paul Zillig stated that LPSNRD recently received correspondence from the US Army Corps of Engineers. He discussed with USACE that more emphasis should be given to the recent flooding and more resiliency. He signed the letter of interest on behalf of the Alliance, as was determined at the last meeting. The study may allow for the ability to use the 75/25 cost sharing and to look globally at establishing a restoration vision/master plan for the Lower Platte River Corridor probably including some lower reaches on the major tributaries. Currently, the three NRDs (LPS, PMR, and LPN) have all committed to the project and a request has been made to the US Army Corps of Engineers. It was discussed that money in the existing project fund and reserve could and should be used as matching money needed for starting the project. If Lower Platte North NRD wants to participate in the study, they would need to do so under a separate interlocal agreement based on their current position with the LPRCA. A fact sheet on the Restoration and Resiliency Study was distributed to the members.

With the recent flooding and with the WQMP completed, Potter asked the group to identify and consider any other projects for the LPRCA. None were identified at this time.

7. Schedule Next Meeting: The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 2019. A doodle poll to the members will be used to determine the best date to have a meeting.

8. Comments/Adjourn: HDR agreed to make all presentations available to those that attended.

Meeting ended at approximately 12:10 p.m.

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