

Platte Basin Habitat Enhancement Project

Meeting Minutes

North Platte, NE – Twin Platte NRD

November 29, 2012

Call to Order and Attendance – With a quorum present, Vice-Chairman Ron Bishop called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Sponsors and Partners in attendance were: Ann Dimmitt (Chairman Kent Miller arrived after agenda item 5) (Twin Platte NRD), Ron Bishop, Duane Woodward, Jesse Mintken and Mark Czaplowski (Central Platte NRD), Rod Horn and Ryan Reisdorff (South Platte NRD), John Thorburn (Tri-Basin NRD), Ron Cacek and Tina Kurtz (North Platte NRD), Jesse Bradley and Heather Stream (Nebraska Department of Natural Resources) and John Heaston (TNC). Guests present were: Dean Edson (NARD), Jerry Kenny (PRRIP), Ed Dekleva (NPPD), and Don Kraus (Central NPP&ID). Vice-Chairman Bishop noted that the PBHEP abides by the Open Meetings Act in conducting business and that a copy of the Act was provided in the meeting room.

Meeting Notices – Vice-Chairman Bishop reported that public notice of the meeting had been published in the Grand Island, North Platte and Scottsbluff newspapers as required by law.

Agenda Modifications – No changes were made to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes – Motion by Thorburn, second by Bradley to approve the minutes of the September 5, 2012, meeting as distributed in advance of the meeting. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Financial Report – Czaplowski provided the financial report including a discussion of the PBHEP Funding Summary spreadsheet (dated October 24, 2012) distributed in advance of the meeting. Total PBHEP funds spent and committed are \$14,698,299.87 leaving an estimated remaining balance of \$301,700.13. Czaplowski noted that the spreadsheet includes updates on funds expended and reimbursements requested for the Cozad and Thirty-Mile Canal Rehabilitation Projects.

Cozad and Thirty-Mile Canal Rehabilitation Project Updates – Czaplowski reported good progress is being made on both Rehab Projects. Central Platte NRD and the NDNR continue to develop the Cozad Canal Agreement necessary before NDNR can begin to distribute their funding for the Rehab Project. With the letting of a recent bid package, it appears that the Cozad Canal Rehab Project will come in under the initial engineer's cost estimates although exact numbers are not yet available.

Regarding the Thirty-Mile Canal Rehab Project, Czaplowski handed out a summary of cost over-runs and explained that, while all bids have not been let, our current estimates are that this Project is already over the original engineer's cost estimates by \$1,274,498.50. The cost overages are primarily related to a significant under estimate of costs related to tree removal and channel grading. Bishop noted that Central Platte NRD wanted to bring this cost over-run information to the administrators attention and hoped the group would be willing to allow the use of potential cost savings on the Cozad Canal Rehab Project to cover cost overages being realized on the Thirty-Mile Canal Rehab Project. The general consensus of the group was to allow Central Platte NRD to make such Rehab Project adjustments in funding and possibly take more formal action once more details are known.

Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Project (N-CORPE) – Miller provided an extensive description of the N-CORPE Project (with handout) being pursued jointly by Twin Platte NRD

and the three Republican River NRD's. The large-scale conjunctive management Project will transport water, via a pipeline, to the Platte and Republican Rivers. A significant amount of engineering design must still be completed, but it is expected that the Project could add in excess of 15,800 acft of water to the two rivers. An Interlocal Cooperation Agreement is in place, and the partnering NRD's earlier in the day closed on purchase of over 19,500 acres (approximately 15,800 irrigated acres) in southern Lincoln County near the river basin divide. The four partnering NRD's are each responsible for 25% of Project costs which include an \$83 million purchase price and an estimated \$20-\$30 million in pumping and pipeline costs. Engineering firms are being brought on board to finalize design and operating details, but it is anticipated that at least part of the Project could be operational by the summer of 2013. Project pumping to the Platte is anticipated to occur every year, while pumping to the Republican would not. A planned 30inch pipeline to the Platte is expected to supply annually the water needed by the Twin Platte NRD to return the river to 1997 conditions which is currently estimated to be 7,700 acft. Miller requested that funding for the Dawson County canal Rehab Projects not be interfered with, but asked to capture all remaining PBHEP dollars available.

The currently unspent and uncommitted funds available are \$301,700.13 and it was noted that completion of the Cozad and Thirty-Mile Canal Rehab Project would likely be in early-mid 2014 and authorized funding levels are based on estimates, as is funding for the Tri-Basin NRD water lease from CNPP&ID. Motion by Bishop, second by Thorburn to commit to the N-CORPE Project all remaining PBHEP funds, not including funds from any previously approved projects. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

DNR Ground Water Recharge Demonstration Project "Umbrella" Agreements – Bradley noted work with Twin Platte NRD to finalize language for multi-year "umbrella" agreements with local irrigation districts and canal companies. Such work could continue with other of the PBHEP NRD's, but is unlikely to advance with regards to PBHEP, given all existing funds have been exhausted. Umbrella agreements may be useful with Platte Basin Coalition funding or in association with other programs.

NET Grant Extension Plans – Czaplewski reported on recent conversations with NET personnel regarding PBHEP plans to request another one year extension of the use of NET funding in early 2013. The current grant is available through June of 2013 and plans are to request an extension through June of 2014.

Other – Motion by Thorburn, second by Bishop to go into executive session to discuss contractual matters. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. Time: 11:50 a.m. Motion by Bishop, second by Thorburn to reconvene from executive session. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. Time: 12:03 p.m.

Motion by Bishop, second by Thorburn to rescind the motion regarding the N-CORPE Project made earlier in the meeting. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote. Motion by Bishop, second by Horn to obligate the \$301,700.13 of currently uncommitted PBHEP funds to the N-CORPE Project and additionally, any committed funds released by a project sponsor when and if they become available. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Next Meetings – Future meetings are scheduled for February 5, April 2, June 3, August 6, October 1, and December 2, 2013. The meetings are scheduled to start at 10:30 a.m. Central time at the offices of Twin Platte NRD in North Platte.

Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.