

Platte Basin Habitat Enhancement Project

Meeting Minutes

North Platte, NE – Twin Platte NRD

February 5, 2013

Call to Order and Attendance – With a quorum present, Chairman Kent Miller called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. Sponsors and Partners in attendance were: Kent Miller and Ann Dimmitt (Twin Platte NRD), Mark Czaplewski (Central Platte NRD), Rod Horn, Ryan Reisdorff and Travis Glanz (South Platte NRD), John Thorburn (Tri-Basin NRD), Ron Cacek and Tina Kurtz (North Platte NRD), and Jesse Bradley and Heather Stream (Nebraska Department of Natural Resources). Guest present was: Jerry Kenny (PRRIP). Chairman Miller 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 – Chairman Miller 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 November 29, 2012, meeting as distributed in advance of the meeting. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Financial Report – Czaplewski provided the financial report including a discussion of the PBHEP Funding Summary spreadsheet (dated January 31, 2013) distributed in advance of the meeting. Total PBHEP funds spent and committed are \$15,000,000.00 leaving no remaining balance. Czaplewski noted that the spreadsheet includes updates on funds expended and reimbursements requested for the Cozad and Thirty-Mile Canal Rehabilitation Projects.

North Dry Creek Streamflow Augmentation Project – Thorburn reviewed recent reimbursement requests related to the Project and budget adjustments he supported given the lack of available PBHEP funding (reference Thorburn letter dated December 20, 2012, to Czaplewski). Thorburn requested the group consider allowing the transfer of \$5,000.00 in funds currently committed to the Tri-Basin NRD water lease from Central NPP&ID to the North Dry Creek Project to cover lease payments and other associated operation and maintenance expenses. Motion by Cacek, second by Horn to reassign \$5,000.00 in funds from the Tri-Basin water lease from Central NPP&ID budget line-item to the North Dry Creek Streamflow Augmentation Project (Phase 1). Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Project (N-CORPE) – Miller provided an update on the N-CORPE Project. Miller discussed the lawsuit filed recently by the Frenchman-Cambridge and Bostwick Irrigation Districts against the State of Nebraska, N-CORPE, Bureau of Reclamation and the Upper Republican NRD and its possible affects on Project bonding and construction scheduling. He also discussed LB 185 introduced by Senator Christensen which would authorize a loan for the N-CORPE Project that would be paid back in no more than five years. Under the bill, \$40 million would be transferred from the Cash Reserve Fund to the Water Contingency Cash Fund for the N-CORPE Project. An Appropriations Committee hearing was held on the bill on February 1st.

Cozad and Thirty-Mile Canal Rehabilitation Project Updates – Czaplewski reported considerable progress is being made on both Rehab Projects. Central Platte NRD and the NDNR have nearly completed

drafting of the Cozad Canal Agreement necessary before NDNR can begin to distribute their funding for the Rehab Project. Formal execution of the document is expected in the near future followed directly by work on a similar Agreement for the Thirty-Mile Canal Rehab Project. Construction work on both Projects is expected to be completed in the spring of 2014.

NET Grant Extension Request – Czaplewski reported on the recent submission of a request to the NET for a one year extension of the use of NET funding. The current grant is available through June of 2013 and the request asks for an extension through June of 2014. The NET Board is scheduled to take up the request at their February 12, 2013, meeting.

Other – Czaplewski passed along an update provided him by James Huntwork (NRCS) regarding the Ogallala Aquifer/Platte River Recovery AWEPP Project including fund allocation, priorities, payment rates, and application timeframe.

Next Meetings – Future meetings are scheduled for April 2, June 3, August 6, October 1, and December 2, 2013. The group discussed the possibility of holding some of these meetings via teleconference when the agenda was primarily status reports and no formal votes were anticipated and the same would be true for the coincident Platte Basin Water Project Coalition (Coalition) and Platte Over Appropriated Committee (POAC) meetings. The consensus of the group was to defer to the PBHEP, Coalition and POAC chairs to decide on whether or not a meeting would be held via teleconference based on the makeup of future draft agendas. The PBHEP meetings are scheduled to start at 10:30 a.m. Central time either via teleconference or at the offices of Twin Platte NRD in North Platte.

Adjourn – The meeting was adjourned at 11:29 a.m.