

# **Platte Basin Habitat Enhancement Project**

Meeting Minutes

North Platte, NE – Twin Platte NRD

June 3, 2013

**Call to Order and Attendance** – With a quorum present, Chairman Kent Miller called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. Sponsors in attendance were: Kent Miller and Ann Dimmitt (Twin Platte NRD), Ron Bishop, Lyndon Vogt, Duane Woodward, Jesse Mintken, and 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). Guests present were: Nancy Shank (UNL Public Policy Center) and Jeff Shafer (NPPD). Chairman Miller noted that the PBHEP abides by the Nebraska 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 Bishop, second by Bradley to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2013, 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 May 29, 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. He also noted that two items listed in the summary have the potential to have committed but unspent funds by this time next year, when current NET funding ends (i.e., TBNRD Water Lease from CNPP&ID and DNR/CNPP&ID Groundwater Recharge Project). TBNRD may chose to use some of the water lease funds for specified North Dry Creek Streamflow Augmentation Project (Phase 1) purposes.

**CPNRD Request for Funding Transfer – Cozad / Thirty-Mile Canal Rehabilitations** - Czaplewski reviewed the proposal distributed on April 29<sup>th</sup> related to Central Platte NRD's request to transfer funds anticipated from a budget surplus on the Cozad Canal Rehab Project (recently estimated at \$1,184,509.31) to the Thirty-Mile Canal Rehab Project where a budget shortfall is projected (recently estimated at \$1,372,507.00). Motion by Thorburn, second by Horn to approve the requested transfer of funds. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**Cozad and Thirty-Mile Canal Rehabilitation Project Updates** – Bishop reported considerable progress continues to be made on both Rehab Projects. Central Platte NRD and the NDNR have executed a Cozad Canal Agreement necessary for NDNR to distribute their funding for the Rehab Project and are close to finalizing a similar agreement for the Thirty-Mile Canal. All phases of both Projects have now been awarded. Construction work is suspended during the irrigation season with both canals starting to run water. Construction work on both Projects is expected to be completed in the spring of 2014.

**Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Project (N-CORPE)** – Miller provided an

update on the N-CORPE Project. Miller noted ongoing activities related to the lawsuit filed 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 effect on Project bonding and construction scheduling. Project design work, pipeline routing and land management activities continue to progress. Plans are to commence water deliveries to the Republican River late this year and to the Platte in late 2014. Twin Platte NRD anticipates initiating an occupation tax to help finance its share of the Project costs.

**DNR / CNPPID Groundwater Recharge Project Update Spring 2013** – Bradley noted that water leases for the current year are on hold, but opportunities for leases this fall remain an option if an agreement can be worked out between Tri-Basin NRD and Central NPP&ID.

**North Dry Creek Streamflow Augmentation Project** – Thorburn reviewed recent Project pumping operations and related studies, noting no appreciable Project pumping affect on base flows in the creek. A University of Nebraska-Kearney student has been monitoring the creek’s fishery and noted a positive affect of Project pumping on local fish populations. Plans for a second augmentation well located upstream from the first are being studied.

**Other** – Czapski reminded the group that the end of June marks the end of the second quarter and he will be requesting in kind and reimbursable contribution information from the sponsors and partners to provide to the NET.

**Next Meetings** – Future meetings are scheduled for August 6, October 1, and December 2, 2013. ‘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 11:20 a.m.