

# **Platte Basin Habitat Enhancement Project**

Meeting Minutes

North Platte, NE – Twin Platte NRD

August 6, 2013

**Call to Order and Attendance** – With a quorum present, Chairman Kent Miller called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m. Sponsors in attendance were: Kent Miller and Ann Dimmitt (Twin Platte NRD), 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, John Berge, and Tina Kurtz (North Platte NRD), and Jesse Bradley and Heather Stream (Nebraska Department of Natural Resources). Guests present were: Jerry Kenny (PRRIP), Dustin Wilcox (NARD) 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 Horn, second by Cacek to approve the minutes of the June 3, 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 August 1, 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).

**Cozad and Thirty-Mile Canal Rehabilitation Project Updates** – Mintken provided a status report on both canal rehab projects. Mintken noted that Central Platte NRD has recently met with the Cozad Ditch Company board of directors and they appear interested in converting from a private company to a public irrigation district (as is being considered by Thirty-Mile Canal Company and Southside Irrigation Company). Advantages to becoming a political subdivision include tax benefits. The election to decide whether Thirty-Mile Canal Company forms an irrigation district will be held in September. At the same election, the voters (which include landowners of 15 acres or more) will also consider the election of three irrigation district directors. Construction on the remaining portions of both canals will resume in September and are scheduled to be completed by May 2014.

**Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Project (N-CORPE)** – Miller provided an update on the N-CORPE Project. Miller noted that bid openings related to work on the wellfield and pipeline south to the Republican River will take place tomorrow and contracts could be awarded later this month. Current plans are to have water flowing to the Republican by the end of this coming January. The construction of the pipeline north to the Platte will commence next summer. Ongoing litigation with the Frenchman-Cambridge and Bostwick Irrigation Districts continue to affect Project bonding and construction scheduling. All the participating N-CORPE Project NRD's anticipate initiating a \$10/acre

occupation tax to help finance the Project.

**Next Meetings** – Future meetings are scheduled for October 1, and December 2, 2013. The PBHEP meetings are scheduled to start at 12:30 p.m. Central time either via teleconference or at the offices of Twin Platte NRD in North Platte. The starting time of the PBC meetings has been moved to 10:30 a.m. commencing with their next meeting.

**Adjourn** – The meeting was adjourned at 11:09 a.m.