
PLATTE RIVER BASIN COALITION ILCA MEETING

Friday, February 11, 2022, 1 p.m. CST

Twin Platte Natural Resources District

111 South Dewey Street, North Platte, NE 69101 and via Zoom conference call

MEETING MINUTES

The meeting agenda is Attachment A.

1. Welcome, by Kent Miller, Twin Platte NRD, chair, at approximately 1:02 p.m. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is present in the Twin Platte NRD office.

2. Open Meeting Publication (*Attachment B*)

- *North Platte Telegraph*: February 3, 2022
- *Sidney Sun Telegraph*: February 9, 2022
- *Grand Island Independent*: February 2, 2022
- *Kearney Hub*: February 3, 2022
- *Scottsbluff Star Herald*: February 3, 2022

3. Agenda approval

MOTION: To approve the agenda.

Move: Jennifer Schellpeper, NeDNR

Second: Scott Schaneman, NPNRD

Discussion: none

Motion passed

4. Roll call of the ILCA Representative

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Kent Miller*, TPNRD | Jennifer Schellpeper*, NeDNR |
| Galen Wittrock*, SPNRD | Brandi Flyr*, CPNRD |
| John Thorburn*, TBNRD | Scott Schaneman*, NPNRD |

* voting representatives during the meeting; shaded areas are online attendees

Others in Attendance

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Ann Dimmit, TPNRD | Thad Kuntz, ARI | John Engel, HDR |
| Ryan Reisdorff, SPNRD | Shelly Julian, NeDNR | Dan Sternkopf |
| Ryan Kelly, NeDNR | Jean Eichhorst, NeDNR | Jeremy Gehle, NeDNR |

5. Approval of the December 10, 2021 minutes

Kent asked for any corrections or additions to the electronically provided December 10, 2021 minutes. There were none.

MOTION: To approve the December 10, 2021 minutes.

Move: Scott Schaneman, NPNRD

Second: Galen Wittrock, SPNRD

Discussion: none

Motion passed

NeDNR will distribute a final copy of the minutes to the group and will post them on the website.¹

6. Budget Update

- General Updates

- *Years 7-9 (Attachment C)*

Shelly Julian, NeDNR, reported that there currently are no updates except for a few reimbursements that will be addressed in the near future. Some dollars remain to be obligated and spent before the end of the fiscal year. Ryan Reisdorff, SPNRD, said that they have no eligible projects, so their remaining dollars are available to other NRDs. Jennifer reminded the group that they had received a 1-year extension from NET and potentially may not receive additional 1-year extensions for years 7-9 funds in the future. Jen pointed out that any remaining unspent funds may be subject to loss.

- *Years 10-12 (Attachment D)*

The draft memos for Year 11 are setting the budget for the NET grant funds as well as the study and operation budget. Some studies may be added to the current list. Each NRD should review these budget memos and send comments back to NeDNR by March 1st so that final versions can be distributed before the April meeting.² Jennifer reminded everyone that budget action is expected at the April PBC meeting.³

- Studies

- *2023 Robust Review (Attachment E)*

Thad Kuntz, ARI, provided an update cost estimate for ARI to complete the 2023 Robust Review for the WWUMM. They used the POAC scope-of-work document and summarized it into 12 different tasks such as Allocation Effects and Total Depletion Run. Each task is allocated a dollar amount and described. The document includes appropriate information to replicate the model.

MOTION: To approve ARI's cost estimate for the for the Western Water Use Management Model completion and documentation.

Move: Scott Schaneman, NPNRD

Second: Galen Wittrock, SPNRD

Discussion: none

Motion passed

ARI will send a contract to complete the WWUMM Robust Review work to NeDNR with updated details. ⁴

- *WaterSMART Grant (Attachments F and G)*

Several items relative to the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART grant for the drought contingency plan were discussed

Ryan Kelly, NeDNR, reminded the group about the signed WaterSMART contract and cost share splits among the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), NeDNR, and NRD members of PBC. Ryan talked about how funding for the grant takes place in 2 phases. Phase 1 of the WaterSMART grant requires a work plan to be approved by BOR. Following that, the remainder of funds committed by the BOR become available for project work. Phase 1 work, consisting of the creation of a work plan and identifying Task Force members, has been undertaken by HDR on behalf of the PBC. NeDNR will be responsible for meeting Reclamation's deadlines.

Ryan pointed out that the BOR contract requires the creation of a Task Force along with stakeholder identification and engagement. NeDNR and HDR originally identified 3 progressively larger stakeholder groups to be members of the Task Force for this project. These groups would be: PBC members & BOR representatives, selected representatives from stakeholder entities, and the general public. Jennifer detailed that current discussion in the basin necessitated the creation of a 4th stakeholder group that would include solely PBC members, CNPPID, and NPPD. Ryan also indicated that the identification of stakeholder members was the responsibility of the NRDs. To help facilitate NRD decision making on Task Force member identification, HDR provided an attachment to this meeting that listed stakeholders involved in the Upper Platte Basin-wide Plan creation efforts. Ryan and John noted that this list was to be used as a base for review when considering Task Force members. NeDNR also indicated that an email would be sent out to NRDs that included entities that may also warrant consideration for Task Force inclusion. This email is to be sent on or before 2/14/2022. ⁵

John Engel concurred with Ryan and stated that Reclamation has oversight for the Task Force to ensure that vulnerable sectors are brought to the forefront and not overlooked.

Per the BOR contract, Task Force participants need to be identified by the end of February. In turn, a letter of commitment from them is required. Jennifer asked if the NRDs should review the Upper Platte Basin-wide Plan stakeholder list provided by HDR and provide feedback to NeDNR. Ryan confirmed that the NRDs should review and comment on the list. NRDs should expect an email from NeDNR on or before February 14, 2022 with instructions and deadlines.⁵

PBC's contract with HDR will continue subject to the addition of several clauses that are required for federally related contracts.

MOTION: Following revisions to include the contract clauses required by the Bureau of Reclamation Grant, Kent Miller, as PBC Chair, to sign HDR's contract with PBC to provide Task Force planning and formation as well as Work Plan authoring for the Upper Platte Basin Drought Contingency Plan in the amount of \$16,430.

Move: John Thorburn, TBNRD

Second: Scott Schaneman, NPNRD

Discussion: none

Motion passed

NeDNR will work with Kent Miller and John Engel to finalize the contract with the Bureau required clauses and will distribute a final copy of the agreement to PBC members once signed.⁶

7. Ongoing Project Activities/Operations Update—Obligated and Remaining Expenditures

- CPNRD—Brandi Flyr
 - No updates.
- TPNRD—Kent Miller
 - No updates.
- NPNRD—Scott Schaneman
 - Waiting on recharge permits for Enterprise Irrigation Project; EPIC sign-ups start next week.

- TBNRD--John Thorburn
 - Progress on the Cottonwood Ranch project; power lines are going up but no pumps in the wells.
- SPNRD--Galen Wittrock
 - No updates.
- NeDNR--Jennifer Schellpeper
 - Jeremy Gehle reported that there Platte is exhibiting normal conditions and doesn't anticipate any excess flows between now and March 15 unless there is an unusual precipitation event.
 - The Acre Reserve Program is available. Several conversations have occurred, and interest seems to have increased from growers. Recent conversations have occurred with NeDNR, NPPD, CNPPID, and two canals in the TPNRD.
 - J-2 conversations with CNPPID continue about the water service agreement contract that expires in December.

8. Other Priority Items

None

9. Public Comment

None

10. 2022 Upcoming Meetings

- April 15, 2022 – at the Twin Platte NRD office. The PBC meeting will follow the POAC meeting. Lunch will be provided.

11. Adjourned at approximately 1:45 p.m.

Action Items

¹ NeDNR will distribute a final copy of the December 2021 minutes to the group and will post them on the website.

² Each NRD should review the budget memos and send comments back to NeDNR by March 1st so that final versions can be distributed before the April meeting.

³ NeDNR will finalize Year 11 budget memos for the April meeting

⁴ ARI will provide NeDNR with a WWUMM contract to complete the 2023 Robust Review.

⁵ NeDNR will email Task Force suggestions, instructions, and deadlines to the NRDS by February 14.

⁶ NeDNR will work with Kent Miller, TPNRD, and John Engel, HDR to finalize the BOR contract and distribute a final signed copy of the agreement to PBC members.