

PLATTE RIVER BASIN COALITION (PBC) COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, August 3, 2023, 1 p.m. Mountain Time
North Platte Natural Resources District
100547 Airport Rd, Scottsbluff, NE 69363

MEETING MINUTES

1. Welcome/Call to Order

Called to order by Kent Miller (TPNRD), chair, at approximately 1:40 p.m. MT.
As directed by state statute, the Open Meetings Act displayed during the meeting.

2. Roll Call

PBC ILCA Voting Representatives

Kent Miller, TPNRD	Jennifer Schellpeper, NeDNR
Galen Wittrock, SPNRD	Jesse Mintken, CPNRD
John Thorburn, TBNRD	Scott Schaneman, NPNRD

Others in Attendance

Ryan Reisdorff, SPNRD	Danielle Madden, NPNRD
Craig Uhrig, NPNRD	Thad Kuntz, ARI
Avery Dresser, NeDNR	Ryan Kelly, NeDNR
Caitlin Kingsley, NeDNR	Brooke Mott, NeDNR
Devin Brundage, CNPPID	Dean Edson, NARD
Annie Folck, City of Gering	Judy Eggleston
Arik Vossler, NeDNR	Shelly Julian, NeDNR
Kari Burgert, NeDNR	Margeaux Carter, NeDNR

Shaded areas indicate online attendees

3. Publication of Meeting Notices ([Attachment 3](#))

- *North Platte Telegraph*: July 22, 2023
- *Sidney Sun-Telegraph*: July 27, 2023
- *Grand Island Independent*: July 20, 2023
- *Kearney Hub*: July 22, 2023
- *Scottsbluff Star Herald*: July 22, 2023

4. Agenda Review and Approval ([Attachment 4](#))

MOTION: *To approve the August 3, 2023, agenda.*

Move: Scott Schaneman

Second: John Thorburn

Discussion: None

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Motion approved.

5. Review and Approval of the June 15, 2023, Minutes (*Attachment 5*)

MOTION: To approve the June 15, 2023, minutes.

Move: Jennifer Schellpeper

Second: Scott Schaneman

Discussion: None

Motion approved.

NeDNR will distribute the approved June 15, 2023, minutes and post on the DNR website.

6. Budget Update (NeDNR)

A. General Updates

- i. Years 7-9 (*Attachment 6Ai*)
 - a. No significant updates or changes
- ii. FY 2023-2024 (*Attachment 6Aii*)
 - a. No significant updates or changes
- iii. Studies (*Attachment 6Aiii*)
 - a. Added HDR and TFG invoices

B. Invoices for Approval

- i. HDR Invoices (for Drought Contingency Plan Development – Status Report from HDR included as *Attachment 6Bi*):
 - a. HDR Invoice #1200531967 (*Attachment 6Bia*)
 - b. HDR Invoice #1200537414 (*Attachment 6Bib*)

MOTION: To approve the HDR invoices for development of the Upper Platte Drought Contingency Plan for the amounts of \$33,881.16 and \$55,144.66*.

Move: Galen Wittrock

Second: Jennifer Schellpeper

Discussion: None

Motion Approved

NeDNR to send the approved HDR invoices to the NRDs for payment.

**Note – The approved amount from the meeting agenda for the second HDR invoice (\$55,144.66) was incorrect; a motion to approve a corrected total cost (\$56,292.97), which is the amount that was shown on Attachment 6Aiii (Studies budget) and Attachment 6Bib (HDR Invoice #1200537414), will be included on the agenda for the upcoming (October 5, 2023) PBC meeting.*

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ii. TFG Invoices:

a. Contract 571A (Conservation Study Phase IV) –
TFG Invoice #23-3207 ([Attachment 6Biia](#))

1. *Distribution spreadsheet ([Attachment 6Biia1](#))*

b. Contract 571C (Robust Review) –
TFG Invoice #23-3208 ([Attachment 6Biib](#))

MOTION: *To approve the TFG invoices for efforts on the Conservation Study Phase IV and 2023 Robust Review for the amounts of \$4,995.00 and \$21,220.00.*

Move: Scott Schaneman

Second: Jennifer Schellpeper

Discussion: Kent Miller (TPNRD) stated that when invoices are emailed out for payment, NRDs have issues accessing encrypted documents. Shelly Julian (NeNDR) stated that the State of Nebraska email system encrypts emails with financial data. NeDNR will explore alternative ways to distribute invoices, such as ShareFile or physical mail.

John Thorburn (TBNRD) asked what was left to be paid out to HDR for Drought Plan development and if some payment could be withheld until there is a final plan. Jennifer Schellpeper (NeDNR) stated they can hold 10%, but may discuss with legal to see if a retainer must be included in PBC contract.

Motion approved.

NeDNR to send the 2 approved TFG invoices (total costs of \$4,995.00 and \$21,220.00) to the NRDs for payment

NeDNR will find an appropriate method to send invoices to NRDs to rectify financial encryption system issue.

NeDNR will look into holding 10% from HDR for payments and will discuss with the legal team regarding revisions of the PBC contract.

C. New Budget Requests

i. CPNRD Decertifications

a. Maloley Farms LLC ([Attachment 6Cia](#))

b. Jamie Trampe ([Attachment 6Cib](#))

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Landowner	CPNRD Portion (40%)	WRCF Portion (60%)	Total (100%)
Maloley Farms LLC	\$96,003.48	\$144,005.22	\$240,008.70
Jamie Trampe	\$33,479.49	\$50,219.24	\$83,698.73
Combined Total	\$129,482.97	\$194,224.46	\$323,707.43

MOTION: To approve the CPNRD budget request for the two decertification projects summarized in the table above, understanding that the details must be reviewed under the PBC protocol document. The total amount of WRCF reimbursement requested is \$194,224.46 of the total \$323,707.43 project cost.

Move: John Thorburn

Second: Scott Schaneman

Discussion: None

Motion approved.

NeDNR to work with CPNRD to develop a contract for reimbursement.

ii. Other Budget Requests

- a. John Thorburn (TBNRD) indicated they will be applying for a WaterSMART Grant for their Net Recharge Tool. They are waiting to see if they are awarded the grant money before requesting matching funding from the Water Resources Cash Fund.

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

A. CPNRD

- i. No updates at this time.

B. TBNRD

- i. Working with PRRIP on Cottonwood Ranch augmentation project. The wells ran for about 6 weeks from April until mid-May and will be turned on again either this week or next.

C. TPNRD

- i. NCORPE has not been pumping for augmentation but did start pumping late last week for operations/maintenance.

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D. NPNRD

- i. The Enterprise Project to recharge water from lands leased on Enterprise Canal is operating differently this year than from its start last year. The second pit is full, overall infiltration is occurring at a slower rate due to the already saturated conditions. They are still pleased with how the project is currently working.
 1. John Thorburn: Do you any some concerns about them sealing up over time?
 2. Scott Schaneman said that they do think they are seeing some silting, especially in the first pit which is why there is more and more water in the second pit. The base of the second pit is fully inundated/saturated which did not occur during the prior year due to rapid infiltration. Now there is water in both pits, but they may have work to do in resolving some of the silting issue.

E. SPNRD

- i. Have been busy with excess flows this spring.

F. NeDNR

- i. Have been running excess flows but were shut off around July 24, 2023. Possibly expecting a large amount of water coming down the South Platte from communications with Colorado, which may result in more excess flows.

8. Public Comment

- a. No public comment.

9. 2023 Scheduled Meetings:

- October 5, 2023
- December 7, 2023

10. Wrap-up, questions, action items, next steps

See action item summary below.

11. Adjourn at approximately 1:55 p.m. MT.

Action Items

- NeDNR will distribute the approved June 15, 2023, meeting minutes and post on the DNR website.

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- NeDNR to send the approved HDR invoices (total costs of \$33,881.16 and \$55,144.66*) to the NRDs for payment.
 - **Approved amount; corrected total cost is \$56,292.97 as described above.*
- NeDNR to send the 2 approved TFG invoices (total costs of \$4,995.00 and \$21,220.00) to the NRDs for payment
- NeDNR to work with CPNRD to develop a contract for the two approved decertification projects.
- NeDNR will find an appropriate method to send invoices to NRDs to rectify financial encryption system issue.
- NeDNR will look into holding 10% from HDR for payments and will discuss with the legal team regarding revisions of the PBC contract.