



PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM **Governance Committee Meeting Minutes**

Warwick Denver Hotel – Denver, CO
 December 2-3, 2014

Meeting Attendees

Governance Committee (GC) Table

State of Wyoming

Harry LaBonde – Member (Chair)

State of Colorado

Don Ament – Member

Suzanne Sellers – Alternate

State of Nebraska

Jim Schneider – Member

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)

Michael Thabault – Member

Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)

Gary Campbell – Member

Environmental Entities

Marian Langan – Member

John Heaston – Member

Duane Hovorka – Alternate

Upper Platte Water Users

Dennis Strauch – Member

Colorado Water Users

Alan Berryman – Member

Kevin Urie – Member

Deb Freeman – Alternate

Downstream Water Users

Brian Barels – Member

Don Kraus – Member

Mark Czaplewski – Member

Kent Miller – Member

Executive Director's Office (EDO) Staff

Jerry Kenny, Executive Director (ED)

Bridget Barron

Jason Farnsworth

Scott Griebing

Bruce Sackett

Sira Sartori

Chad Smith

Seth Turner

Kevin Werbylo

Audience Members

Christine Reed – UNO

Lisa Reynolds – State of Colorado

Brock Merrill – BOR

Cory Steinke – CNPPID

Philip Stuckert – State of Wyoming

Ned Andrews – ISAC

Diane Hoppe – CWCBC

Tom Econopouly – Service

Monte McDonald – Riverside Technology

Mike Drain – CNPPID



Tuesday, December 2, 2014

Welcome & Administrative

LaBonde called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Mountain Time. The group proceeded with introductions. Kraus asked if the HDR permitting contract discussion can be moved to Wednesday morning for discussion to give the GC more time to consider the document.

Heaston moved to approve the September and November 2014 GC minutes; Kraus seconded. Both minutes approved.

Program Committee Updates

Land Advisory Committee (LAC)

Czaplewski provided an update on the latest LAC activities. The LAC met on October 20 and November 17. The committee reviewed budget and work plan items; advanced a motion recommending acceptance of 2015 land work plans for GC approval; and Heaston notified the committee he will no longer be the environmental group representative on the LAC. Czaplewski said the consensus of the group is that there is not a need to replace Heaston as the GC liaison on the LAC. There has not yet been a volunteer to serve as Chair of the Public Access Subcommittee to replace Heaston. There may not need to be a subcommittee at this point but that will be discussed further by the LAC.

Barels asked what the Program document says about the GC Liaison and maybe the GC needs to appoint that liaison to fulfill the requirements of the Program document. Barels asked if Czaplewski would serve; Czaplewski said yes.

Barels moved to appoint Czaplewski as GC Liaison to the LAC; Schneider seconded. Motion approved.

Water Advisory Committee (WAC)

Steinke provided an update on the latest WAC activities. Groundwater depletions for leasing projects needs to be addressed and Jesse Bradly from DNR presented on that at the last WAC meeting.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Sellers provided an update on the latest TAC activities. Several TAC members attended the CAMNet Rendezvous on the Trinity River in California in October. There was good discussion about the structure of the Program relative to other similar programs. Sellers also said the milestones approach of the Program seemed to be a good structure compared to other similar programs that are struggling to report successes and progress toward goals. TAC members participated in the AMP Reporting Session in Omaha in October. The TAC met by phone November 5 to review the draft FY15 Program budget and work plan.

Finance Committee (FC)

Campbell provided an update on the latest FC activities. The FC met on November 4 and discussed the draft FY15 Program budget and work plan.



Program Outreach Update

PRESENTATIONS

- Scott Griebeling and Kevin Werbylo presented at the Sustaining Watersheds Conference in Avon, Colorado on October 8, 2014. Their presentation was titled, “*Impacts of the 2013 Colorado Floods on Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat in the Platte River Basin*”.
- Jerry Kenny and Bridget Barron attended the America’s Watershed Initiative (AWI) Mississippi River Watershed Report Card meeting in Louisville, Kentucky September 30 – October 2, 2014. The draft report card was the focus of the meeting and incorporated assessments from each of the five basin workshops conducted earlier in the year. AWI plans to release the final report card in spring 2015.

Campbell asked who created the Missouri River section of the draft report card. Barron said staff from the University of Maryland did the bulk of the work. Campbell said he would like to have a discussion with the GC about future PRRIP participation in this effort because he has concerns.

- Chad Smith and David Marmorek were part of a panel, *How to Make Adaptive Management More Successful*, at the CAMNet Rendezvous on October 6-8, 2014 in Weaverville, California. David Galat of the ISAC presented a session titled, *Overview of Collaborative Adaptive Management*. Other Program attendees included David Baasch, Matt Rabbe, Suzanne Sellers, and Kevin Urie. The CAMNet Rendezvous brings together innovative natural resource managers, scientists, policy makers, and citizens to share successes and challenges from programs and projects that are conducting collaborative adaptive management on the ground in order to advance the practice of CAM.

EXHIBITS/SPONSORSHIPS

- The Program exhibited at Husker Harvest Days in Grand Island on September 9, and 11, 2014 in the Natural Resources Districts building. We made 2,361 contacts over the course of the two days. Due to the muddy conditions at the location, the exhibits were closed on September 10, 2014.
- The Program exhibited at the Natural Resources Districts annual conference at the Younes Conference Center in Kearney, Nebraska on September 21 through 24, 2014. We made 361 contacts at the conference.
- The Program exhibited at the South Platte Forum on October 22 & 23, 2014 in Longmont, Colorado. We made 256 contacts at the event. The Program was also a break sponsor of the event.
- The Program exhibited at the joint conference of the Nebraska Water Resources Association and the Nebraska State Irrigators Association on November 23 -25, 2014 in Kearney, Nebraska. We made 83 contacts at the conference.
- The Program exhibited at the Booseum at the Kearney Children’s Museum on October 30, 2014. Children attending the event were given materials to make paper cranes and age appropriate crane fact sheets.

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS/EXHIBITS

- The Program will be a break sponsor and will be exhibiting at the annual meeting of the Four States Irrigation Council in Fort Collins, Colorado on January 14-16, 2015.
- The Program will be exhibiting at Colorado Water Congress in Denver, Colorado on January 28 – 30, 2015.
- The Program will be attending Water Tables in Denver, Colorado on January 29, 2015. Don Ament will be hosting a table focused on the Program titled, *Partnering is for the Birds*.

**OTHER**

- The Kearney Hub published articles on the on the J-2 reservoir project on September 11, September 13, October 7, November 4, November 7, and November 8, 2014.
- On September 27, 2014 the North Platte Telegraph published an article on Program work to increase flows at the North Platte River by Cody Park. Justin Brei was interviewed for the article.

PRRIP FY14 Budget Update

Kenny discussed the status of the FY14 PRRIP budget and associated expenditures and contracts. Smith discussed the draft contract for PRRIP permitting services. Barels asked what permitting would be required. Smith discussed the three categories – sediment augmentation, tern/plover nesting island construction, and wetland activities (berms or other features needed to ensure water remains). Freeman asked how we are strategically looking at how to handle permitting for Program projects and consider packaging items up into a more broad-scale approach. Farnsworth said the Corps previously has been resistant to options like a Regional General Permit or some other tool to tie things together and we have always ended up needing to seek permits for individual projects. Thabault asked if the Corps explains this rationale. Kenny said the amount of information they would require for something like a RGP would be very extensive. Freeman said she was thinking more about how the Program is approaching projects and brainstorming how to present these projects to the Corps. Kenny said the successful approach so far has been to focus on the complex level which is how this work is presented in the scope and the agreement. Freeman asked if the Program is going to have to conduct a separate EIS for these projects. Smith said no and that language will be cleaned up in the final version of the contract; these projects simply tier off alternatives identified in the programmatic EIS for the Program as a whole.

PRRIP FY15 Budget & Work Plan

Kenny discussed the latest draft of the FY15 budget and work plan and small changes since the November 2014 GC Special Session. The work plan language for WP-5, Management Tool, was changed to clarify roles and responsibilities. The budget for IMRP-5 increased to \$403,700.

*Schneider moved to approve the FY15 PRRIP budget and work plan; Berryman seconded. **FY15 budget and work plan approved.***

*Heaston moved to approve the FY15 ED contract; Strauch seconded. **FY15 ED contract approved.***

Independent Scientific Advisory Committee (ISAC) Commentary

Smith discussed the two versions of the State of the Platte Report Cards included in the GC meeting packet. Andrews gave a presentation highlighting ISAC responses to questions and recommendations related to the 2014 AMP Reporting Session.

Sellers asked about comparing availability of habitat types and their relative abundance. Andrews said that is likely going to be addressed in the habitat selection analysis being conducted by WEST. Smith said the EDO is thinking through how best to synthesize multiple lines of evidence regarding whooping cranes and how best to push data and related analysis in a way that helps to address Program hypotheses and Big Questions. That will be discussed with the TAC in late January or early February and should help provide a clearer picture of what data. Kraus asked about the big picture and how the GC can be informed as to where we are at in addressing hypotheses and Big Questions. Smith said one recommendation from the ISAC is to track how we are moving through the steps of adaptive management for each Big Question. The EDO intends to work on that and that should give the GC a pretty clear



178 picture as to where things are. The 2014 State of the Platte Report will be another way to provide that
179 information. Campbell and Berryman said it would be good to show the cost implications of things like
180 sediment transport in addition to how long would it take. Smith said the EDO is working on ways to
181 incorporate that information.

182 **J2 Regulating Reservoir Update**

183 Kraus introduced Huzjak from RJH who gave a presentation on the status of the J2 project. LaBonde
184 asked how many landowners will be part of negotiations. Huzjak said 11. Freeman asked if all
185 permitting would be done concurrently (FERC, construction permits, etc.). Huzjak said yes.

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188 Sellers asked if the GC can get a copy of the presentation from today's meeting. Kenny said yes they
189 would be posted on the web site today.

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191 Kenny discussed recent communications regarding the J2 project. LaBonde said he had recently been
192 contacted by the office of Nebraska Sen. Deb Fischer and that he was still attempting to get connected
193 with a staffer in Sen. Fischer's office to respond. Miller said the Twin Platte NRD and the Central Platte
194 NRD would not be sending a letter similar to the letter sent by the Tri-Basin NRD.

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196 Miller said the J2 history document was really good and he is likely to share it, but it should identify who
197 wrote the document. Hovorka asked if the Program gets water credit for the 1,000 acres that would be
198 coming out of production. Steinke said knowing the market that will be hard to deal with in the
199 negotiations especially in regard to swap lands. Hovorka asked if Central anticipates having to use
200 eminent domain. Steinke said the goal is to use willing sellers. Kraus said that is always the goal but no
201 tools have been taken off the table. Campbell asked how many negative comments have been negative.
202 Drain said there were just under 100 comments received, the number of commenters was much smaller.
203 Most of the comments are from the affected landowners. Schneider said Kenny might add a monetary
204 component to the buy-and-dry option in the J2 history document to help make the point about the cost
205 effectiveness of J2.

206 **Hydroclimatic Indices**

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208 Kenny introduced the work that has been done on hydroclimatic indices in the Platte River basin. Henz
209 and Smirnov from Dewberry gave a presentation on the results of their work to predict potential impacts
210 of climate change on runoff in the Platte River basin. Barels asked why the analysis does not look at fall
211 precipitation. Henz said some budget constraints, but also this is just the beginning of the project and
212 with more time additional time periods can be included. Barels asked if there has been any looking at
213 areas further upstream to see if there are better correlations with snowpack. Henz said they are hoping to,
214 they did not have enough resources at this time to complete those analyses. Drain asked at what point you
215 look out too far ahead and the correlations no longer are strong enough to make good predictions. Henz
216 said that tends to happen in October and November because of the influence of hurricanes, typhoons, and
217 tropical storms.

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219 **Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time.**



Wednesday, December 3, 2014

Welcome and Administrative

LaBonde called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. Mountain Time and the group proceeded with introductions.

Kraus moved to elect Campbell as GC Chair for 2015; Ament seconded. Campbell elected.

Ament moved to elect Schneider as GC Vice Chair for 2015; Kraus seconded. Schneider elected.

PRRIP Permitting Services

Kraus moved to approved the contract with HDR for 2014-2016 Permitting Services; Berryman seconded. Contract approved.

Water Service Agreement

Kenny discussed the Water Service Agreement with Central for Phelps Canal groundwater recharge. He recommended taking this up again in March because of recent changed circumstances and the temporary agreement now in place can stay in place until a final formal agreement can be presented to the GC in March 2015 for consideration.

Schneider said the NDNR has been working on how to address the water pricing situation. The NDNR recently met with an economist from Duke University (David McAdams) and he is now under contract with the NDNR to help work through some of the challenges of pricing water and setting up a related market. Schneider said he hopes NDNR has something ready to launch in fall 2015. LaBonde asked if we could get him to talk to the GC. Schneider said he would try to get him to attend the March meeting.

Public Comment

LaBonde asked for public comment. None offered.

Executive Session

Heaston moved to enter Executive Session; Schneider seconded. GC entered Executive Session at 8:18 a.m. Mountain time.

Ament moved to end Executive Session; Berryman seconded. GC ended Executive Session at 9:55 a.m. Mountain time.

Future Meetings & Closing Business

Upcoming 2015 GC meetings:

- March 17-18, 2015 @ Kearney, NE
- June 9-10, 2015 @ Cheyenne, WY
- September 8-9, 2015 @ Kearney, NE
- December 1-2, 2015 @ Denver, CO

2015 AMP Reporting Session:

- October 13-15, 2015 @ Denver, CO

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m. Mountain Time.



Summary of Action Items/Decisions from December 2014 GC meeting

- 1) Approved the September 2014 and November 2014 GC minutes.
- 2) Appointed Mark Czaplewski as GC Liaison to the LAC.
- 3) Approved the FY15 PRRIP budget and work plan.
- 4) Approved the FY15 ED contract.
- 5) Appointed Gary Campbell as 2015 GC Chair.
- 6) Appointed Jim Schneider as 2015 GC Vice Chair.
- 7) Approved the contract for 2014-2016 Permitting Services.