



1 **PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (PRRIP or PROGRAM)**
2 **Governance Committee (GC) Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

3
4 Tuesday, June 11, 2019 – 2:00 PM – 5:45 PM

5 **Note: All times Mountain.**

6
7 **Meeting Location:**

8 Wyoming Water Development Commission – Basement Meeting Room
9 6920 Yellowtail Road
10 Cheyenne, WY 82009

11
12 **Governance Committee (GC)**

13 **State of Wyoming**

14 Bryan Clerkin – Alternate

15
16 **State of Colorado**

17 Don Ament – Member

18 JoJo La – Alternate

19
20 **State of Nebraska**

21 Jeff Fassett – Member

22 Jesse Bradley – Alternate

23
24 **Upper Platte Water Users**

25 Dennis Strauch – Member

26 Bob Mehling – Alternate

27 Owen Williams – Alternate

28
29 **Downstream Water Users**

30 Mark Czaplewski – Member

31 Devin Brundage – Member

32 Joe Citta – Member

33 Kent Miller – Member

34
35 **Executive Director's Office (EDO)**

36 Jason Farnsworth, ED

37 Chad Smith, DED

38 Bridget Barron

39 Dave Baasch

40 Patrick Farrell

41 Scott Griebing

42 Bruce Sackett

43 Seth Turner

44 Kevin Werbylo

13 **Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)**

14 Chris Beardsley – Member

15 Brock Merrill – Alternate

16 **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service)**

17 Matt Rabbe – Alternate

18 Tom Econopouly – Alternate (by phone)

19
20 **Environmental Entities**

21 Bill Taddicken – Member

22 Brice Krohn – Member

23 Rich Walters – Member

24
25 **Colorado Water Users**

26 Alan Berryman – Member

27 Deb Freeman – Alternate

28 Jason Marks – Alternate (by phone)

29
30 **Audience Members**

31 Ned Andrews - ISAC

32 Mike Drain – CNPPID

33 Chris Elliott – NPPD

34 John Shadle – NPPD

35 Kyle Whitaker – Colorado Water Users

36 Jim Jenniges – NPPD

37 Brandi Flyr – CPNRD

38 Jeff Cowley – State of Wyoming

39 Jeremy Manly – State of Wyoming

40 Harry LaBonde

TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2019

Welcome & Administrative

Ament called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM Mountain Time and the group proceeded with introductions.

GC Decision – Czaplewski moved to approve the March 4-5, 2019 GC Quarterly Meeting minutes as amended; Beardsley seconded. Minutes approved.

GC Decision – Berryman moved to approve the March 29, 2019 GC Conference Call minutes; Fassett seconded. Minutes approved.

Program Committee Updates

Land Advisory Committee (LAC)

Czaplewski provided an update on the latest LAC activities. The LAC met on May 8 in Kearney. The main order of business was addressing potential changes in the PRRA program (on the GC agenda later today).

Water Advisory Committee (WAC)

Turner provided an update on the latest WAC activities. The WAC met on May 7 in Ogallala. Several items were updated that are on the GC agenda later today. The next WAC meeting is on August 6.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Merrill provided an update on the latest TAC activities. The TAC met on April 30 in Kearney. The TAC discussed edits to monitoring reports, new off channel sand and water habitat on the Dippel tract, plans for predator monitoring with cameras, and other items.

Finance Committee (FC)

Farnsworth said there has not been an FC meeting since the last GC meeting. Smith will be sending out a Doodle poll to set an FC meeting for later this month to address a couple large bid packages.

Program Outreach Update

PRESENTATIONS

- Justin Brei was part of the Rowe Sanctuary Speaker Series on March 7, 2019 at the Kearney Public Library in Kearney, Nebraska. His presentation was titled, *“Past, Present, and Future Water Projects for the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program”*.
- Dave Baasch presented on Whooping Cranes to the Woman’s Educational Society of Colorado College on March 18, 2019 in Kearney, Nebraska.
- Patrick Farrell presented at the Audubon Crane Festival in Kearney, Nebraska on March 23, 2019. His presentation includes updates on the avian species and discussion of the process to reach Program Milestones.
- Scott Griebling presented at the American Water Resources Association Spring Specialty Conference titled, *“Setting Conditions for the Success of Integrated Water Resources Management”* in Omaha, Nebraska on March 25, 2019. His presentation was titled, *Collaboration for Environmental Benefits and Regulatory Compliance: The Role of Integrated Water Resource Management in the Successful Operations of the Lake McConaughy Environmental Account”*.
- Kevin Werbylo presented at the American Water Resources Association (AWRA) Spring Specialty Conference titled, *“Setting Conditions for the Success of Integrated Water Resources Management”* in Omaha, Nebraska on March 25, 2019. His presentation was titled, *“Applying IWRM to Managed Groundwater Recharge for Environmental Purposes”*.



- 49 • On March 26, 2018 the Program had a panel at the AWRA conference titled, “The Role of IWRM in
50 Creation, Governance, Success of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program”. The panel was
51 moderated by Scott Griebling and Panelists were:
 - 52 ○ Jesse Bradley, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, Lincoln, NE
 - 53 ○ Thomas Econopouly, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lakewood, CO
 - 54 ○ Brandi Flyr, Central Platte Natural Resources District, Grand Island, NE
 - 55 ○ Jojo La, Colorado Water Conservation Board, Denver, CO
 - 56 ○ Bill Taddicken, National Audubon Society (Rowe Sanctuary), Gibbon, NE
- 57 • Dave Baasch presented on the Program to a youth group from Big Red Agricultural Growers (BRAG)
58 on March 28, 2019 in Kearney, Nebraska. BRAG educates youth ages 12-15 about ag-related issues
59 and encourages them to speak up for agriculture.
- 60 • Dave Baasch and Patrick Farrell presented on the Program and were part of a panel discussion about
61 large landscape architecture on April 5, 2019 in Lincoln, Nebraska. The panel was part of the University
62 of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Architecture annual Landscape Architecture Symposium. The title of
63 the 2019 symposium was, “Nexus: design, horticulture, ecology”.
- 64 • Chad Smith presented an overview of the Program, adaptive management, and decision-making at a
65 national Bureau of Reclamation workshop on river restoration programs on May 2, 2019 in Sacramento,
66 CA.
- 67 • Jason Farnsworth presented an overview of the Program to the Nebraska Floodplain and Stormwater
68 Managers Association annual seminar on May 3, 2019 in Ogallala, Nebraska.

70 EXHIBITS/SPONSORSHIPS

- 71 • The Program exhibited at the Audubon Crane Festival in Kearney, Nebraska on March 23, 2019. We
72 made 100 contacts.
- 73 • The Program exhibited at the AWRA conference in Omaha, Nebraska on March 25- 27, 2019. We
74 made 105 contacts over the three days.

76 UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS/EXHIBITS

- 77 • Staff and Governance Committee members will be presenting on the Program at the Lower South Platte
78 River Basin Tour on June 17-18, 2019. The tour begins and ends in Sterling, Colorado.
- 79 • Don Ament and Scott Griebling will be presenting on the Program; what it is, how it works and the
80 Program’s future as the Colorado response to the ESA listings.
- 81 • Jojo La will be presenting on the role of the State of Colorado’s government in the Program and how
82 Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) implements this role.
- 83 • Jon Altenhofen will be presenting on how Tamarack works as a site in the context of the Program.

85 MEDIA/OTHER

- 86 • After the March 2019 Governance Committee meeting, the Kearney Hub published an article regarding
87 the Program’s extension.
- 88 • After the March 2019 Governance Committee meeting, the Kearney Hub published an article regarding
89 the Broad Scale Recharge and Slurry Wall projects.
- 90 • In March 2017 the Program, along with the Crane Trust and Rowe Sanctuary; hosted in their respective
91 blinds on the river, videographers from Silverback Films who were working on their natural history
92 series, *Our Planet*. Produced in partnership with the World Wildlife Fund, Our Planet used a
93 combination of stunning photography and technology to present Earth’s remaining wilderness areas and
94 their animal inhabitants. The project took four years to complete, with more than 600 crew members
95 filming in 50 countries across the world to showcase the diversity that exists among habitats, from the
96 remote Arctic wilderness to the jungles of South America. Silverback filmed the sandhill cranes on the



97 Platte River as part of the Fresh Water episode of the series. The eight-part series was released on April
98 5, 2019 and continues to be available on Netflix.

99

PRRIP FY19 Budget Update

100 Farnsworth discussed the status of the FY19 budget, expenditures, and forecast for the rest of 2019.
101 Beardsley asked about the Elwood recharge projects budget line item and why it is showing a negative
102 balance. Farnsworth said we are over on that line item because of having to pay 2018 invoices with 2019
103 funds.

104

PRRIP First Increment Extension

105 Ament said Sen. Barrasso from Wyoming is the Senate sponsor and Rep. Neguse from Colorado is the
106 House sponsor. Work is underway to get legislators signed on in support. La said an attempt is being made
107 to get all Senators and Representatives from the basin in support of the legislation and we are close to
108 sending in a letter of support from all three governors. Sen. Barrasso has formally requested a hearing that
109 is likely to happen before the August recess and there may be a House hearing in June. Beardsley said he
110 had a briefing with the House Natural Resources committee staff led by Carli Brown. One question – for
111 the Senators who signed on to Sen. Barrasso's legislation, Sen. Sasse was not signed on. Any reason why?
112 La said she heard Gov. Ricketts sent a letter encouraging everyone to support the legislation.

113

PRRIP Adaptive Management Plan (AMP) Update Process

114 Smith discussed the status of the process of updating the Program AMP and how to address the issue of
115 examining target flows. Issues discussed:

- 116 • Differences between the specifics of the AMP and management objectives and higher-level Program
117 concerns of ESA compliance.
- 118 • How to address performance indicators for migratory species like whooping cranes that are affected by
119 so many things outside the control of the Program.

120

PRRIP Water Action Plan (WAP) Update

121 Turner discussed the Water Objective Summary and the WAP Accounting Memo. Rabbe asked about the
122 discrepancy between the score and the yield on some of these projects and whether we will look back at
123 projects over time and realize we are not getting as much water as anticipated. Turner said we just need
124 more time with these projects to see what the reality is of score vs. yield. Werbylo discussed the Cottonwood
125 Ranch broad-scale recharge project and the Lakeside slurry wall project. Andrews asked about the expected
126 yield for the BSR project. Farnsworth said around 3,000 AF/year.

127

CNPPID Irrigator Lease Scoring

128 Drain discussed the scoring recommendation for the CNPPID irrigator lease. Rabbe asked about the caveat
129 language and wanted to add "and modification" to the language. Drain and Turner agreed.

130

131 **GC Decision – Strauch moved to approve the recommended score of 1,900 AF for the CNPPID Irrigator
132 Lease project with the amended caveat language; Berryman seconded. All Downstream Water Users
133 abstained. Score approved.**

134

NPPD Surface Water Exchange Agreement

135 Farnsworth discussed the surface water exchange agreement. The Program is in the second year of a pilot
136 surface water exchange agreement with CPNRD. The NPPD agreement is identical to the CPNRD
137 agreement. NPPD will withhold water from irrigation and CNPPID will credit it to the Environmental
138 Account in the fall. The Program will pay the same amount as for CPNRD water.

145 The parties are working on ways to transition to a longer-term agreement that will revise cost to use a “cost
146 of service” approach. Farnsworth indicated that the current line item budget WP-4(f)ii was not sufficient to
147 cover the 2019 cost as more water is available than anticipated. He recommended that \$379,246 be moved
148 from WP-4(i) to cover 2019 costs.
149

150 **GC Decision** – *Mehling moved to approve the NPPD surface water exchange agreement and the associated*
151 *movement of \$379,246 funds from WP4-I to WP-4(f)ii; Fassett seconded. All Downstream Water Users*
152 *abstained. Agreement approved.*

153 **Elwood Recharge Agreement**

155 Farnsworth discussed the recharge agreement. Last year the Program amended the Elwood agreement to
156 increase the recharge cap to 30,000 acre-ft. In the fall of 2018, there was a lot of recharge water and the
157 State of Nebraska declined to take its share. As a result, the entire 30,000 acre-feet has been used and it is
158 a good time to transition to a longer-term agreement. The new agreement retains same general provisions
159 but specifies 30,000 acre-feet can be recharged annually over a five year term.
160

161 A portion of 2018 recharge water was not billed until 2019 and was posted to the 2019 budget. As such,
162 budget line item is currently over budget. CNPPID anticipates that 15,000 acre-feet of recharge could be
163 available in the fall. Farnsworth recommended transferring \$1,120,000 from WP-4(i) to cover previous
164 2018 expenditures as well as potential fall recharge operations.
165

166 **GC Decision** – *Williams moved to approve the Elwood recharge agreement; Taddicken seconded. All*
167 *Downstream Water Users abstained. Agreement approved.*

169 **GC Decision** – *Williams moved to approve the movement of \$1,120,000 from WP4-i to WP-4(b)i for the*
170 *Elwood recharge agreement; Taddicken seconded. Agreement approved.*

172 **Platte River Recreational Access (PRRA) Program**

173 Sackett discussed the NGPC agreement for managing the PRRA and recommended PRRA changes from
174 the LAC.
175

176 **GC Decision** – *Czaplewski moved to approve the agreement with the NGPC for PRRA management;*
177 *Berryman seconded. Agreement approved.*

179 The GC discussed issues at the Dippel tract related to waterfowl hunting in the channel and trying to work
180 with the adjacent landowner on a management agreement. The GC also discussed opening several
181 properties to use during the summer tern/plover nesting season.
182

183 **GC Decision** – *Williams moved to amend the LAC PRRA recommendation for Area P and remove in-*
184 *channel waterfowl hunting; Walters seconded. Motion approved.*

186 **GC Decision** – *Williams moved to accept the remaining PRRA recommendations from the LAC; Beardsley*
187 *seconded. Those recommendations included:*

- 188 • *Add Coyote and fur bearer incidental harvest (during open hunting seasons) to Appendix B of Public*
189 *Access Policy – list of compatible uses, but not allowing calls and trapping during open season on*
190 *other hunted species.*
- 191 • *Remove the “limited access” period from Appendix A of the Public Access Policy, effectively opening*
192 *Areas A, D, E, H, and I during tern and plover nesting season within the channel portion of the*
193 *properties.*



194 • *Keep Program-owned portion of the Cottonwood Ranch complex closed for public availability for this*
195 *year due to continued broadscale recharge project construction (Area B).*
196 • *Enroll remaining land on Area L and open to access (SE portion of property).*
197 • *Open river access to the center of the channel at the following properties: Area J, N, G, and western*
198 *half of L.*

199
200 Motion approved.

201
202 **Public Comment**

203 Ament asked for public comment. LaBonde said the Program is doing fine work and needs to keep it up.

204
205 **Executive Session**

206 *Berryman moved to enter Executive Session; Fassett seconded. GC entered Executive Session at 4:43*
207 **PM Mountain Time.**

208
209 *Fassett moved to e Executive Session; Beardsley seconded. GC exited Executive Session at 5:16 PM*
210 **Mountain Time.**

211
212 **PRRIP Executive Session Motions**

213 **GC Decision** – Czaplewski moved to approve the acquisition of Tract 1804 and all acquired acres would
214 count toward the 1,500-acre Extension plus-up; Beardsley seconded. Service abstained. Motion approved.

215
216 GC Decision – Williams moved to approve the exchange of Tract W1802 for a portion of Tract W201701;
217 Mehling seconded. Motion approved.

218
219 **Future Meetings & Closing Business**

220 Upcoming 2019 GC meetings:

- 221 ○ GC Quarterly Meeting – **September 10-11, 2019** @ Kearney, NE
- 222 ○ 2019 AMP Reporting Session – **October 8-10, 2019** @ Omaha, NE
- 223 ○ GC Special Session (FY20 Budget/Work Plan) – **November 12, 2019** (conference call/webinar
224 only)
- 225 ○ GC Quarterly Meeting – **December 3-4, 2019** @ Denver, CO

226
227 **Meeting adjourned at 5:20 PM Mountain Time.**

228
229 **Summary of Action Items/Decisions from June 11, 2019 GC Quarterly Meeting**

- 230 1) Approved the March 4-5, 2019 GC Quarterly Meeting minutes as amended.
- 231 2) Approved the March 29, 2019 GC Conference Call minutes.
- 232 3) Approved the recommended score of 1,900 AF for the CNPPID Irrigator Lease project with the
233 amended caveat language.
- 234 4) Approved the NPPD surface water exchange agreement and the associated movement of \$379,246
235 funds from WP4-I to WP-4(f)ii.
- 236 5) Approved the Elwood recharge agreement.
- 237 6) Approved the movement of \$1,120,000 from WP4-i to WP-4(b)i for the Elwood recharge agreement.
- 238 7) Approved the agreement with the NGPC for PRRA management.
- 239 8) Amended the LAC PRRA recommendation for Area P and remove in-channel waterfowl hunting.
- 240 9) Accepted the following PRRA recommendations from the LAC:



241 • Add Coyote and fur bearer incidental harvest (during open hunting seasons) to Appendix B of
242 Public Access Policy – list of compatible uses, but not allowing calls and trapping during open
243 season on other hunted species.

244 • Remove the “limited access” period from Appendix A of the Public Access Policy, effectively
245 opening Areas A, D, E, H, and I during tern and plover nesting season within the channel
246 portion of the properties.

247 • Keep Program-owned portion of the Cottonwood Ranch complex closed for public availability
248 for this year due to continued broadscale recharge project construction (Area B).

249 • Enroll remaining land on Area L and open to access (SE portion of property).

250 • Open river access to the center of the channel at the following properties: Area J, N, G, and
251 western half of L.

252 10) Approved the acquisition of Tract 1804 and all acquired acres would count toward the 1,500-acre
253 Extension plus-up.

254 11) Approved the exchange of Tract W1802 for a portion of Tract W201701.