




LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

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Memorandum

Date: March 12, 2025
To: Board of Directors
From: David Potter, Assistant General Manager 
Subject: Platte River Subcommittee March 10, 2025, meeting minutes

The Platte River Subcommittee met in person at the District office on Monday, March 10, 2025. Subcommittee members present included Gary Aldridge, Chuck Hassebrook, Gary Hellerich, Don Jacobson, Christine Lamberty, Suzanne Mealer, and Larry Ruth. Members absent included Seth Hawkins. Others attending the meeting were Bob Andersen, Matt Moser with USGS, Mike Sousek, Bryce Jensen, and David Potter. The meeting was called to order by Chair Hellerich at 5:30 p.m. and the agenda was reviewed. There were five action items on the agenda.

The first item pertained to the repair of a sponsored levee on the right bank of the Platte River. As the official sponsor for the Cedar Creek Levee (since September 1987), LPSNRD submitted a request for US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) assistance (Public Law/PL 84-99) in July 2024 on behalf of the Omaha Fish & Wildlife Club (OFWC) to restore their levee that was damaged during the June flood. This is very similar to the request that was submitted by LPSNRD last time in April 2019 for the March 2019 flood. The request for assistance was with the understanding that OFWC will be responsible for all landrights and costs of the sponsor. A large stretch of the right bank was approved by the USACE. The USACE sent a cooperative agreement to LPSNRD and the OFWC for approval and 20% of the construction cost. The total estimated cost-share of the project is \$3,505,032 with the estimated sponsor portion (20%) of the cost at \$701,000. All funding shall be secured by OFWC as a requirement before construction can begin. An agreement letter between LPSNRD and the OFWC pertaining to these terms has been signed and a pre-approval letter from First State Bank Nebraska of OFWC's secured funding has been received. The full underwriting and appraisal of the property is currently underway.

A copy of the cooperative agreement from the USACE, certification regarding lobbying, maps showing the location of the damaged levee, the agreement letter, and photos of the damaged levee were provided to the subcommittee.

It was moved by Jacobson, seconded by Lamberty, and approved, with Aldridge voting no, to recommend the Board of Directors, pending Omaha Fish & Wildlife Club agreeing to fulfill all project sponsor

responsibilities, approve the Cooperative Agreement between the Department of the Army, Omaha Fish & Wildlife Club and the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District for the 2025 Levee Rehabilitation of the Omaha Fish & Wildlife Club Platte River Right Bank Cedar Creek Levee Project (PL84-99), subject to legal counsel review.

The next four agenda items all pertained to the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance (LPRCA) streamgauge agreements for USGS monitoring in the Platte River Corridor. As a member of the LPRCA, the District has been involved with real-time water quality monitoring network sites to provide comprehensive real-time water quality data for the Lower Platte River. Past agreements through the LPRCA have led to three long-term existing testing locations: Platte River at Louisville, Salt Creek at Ashland, and Elkhorn River at Waterloo. An additional location was added in the Platte River at Leshara.

These sites are operational approximately March through October with data collected at 15-minute intervals. The data is publicly available over the internet in near real time and historical data are available. Additional constituents can be monitored upon request. Data have been collected since 2007 for the long-term sites, and since 2016 from the gage at Leshara. Matt Moser with USGS gave a power point presentation on the gages showing what type of information is collected and described what that public data is and can be used for.

Potter informed the subcommittee that the long-term gages are a partnership between the LPSNRD, Papio-Missouri River NRD, and USGS. The gage at Leshara is a partnership between LPSNRD, Papio-Missouri River NRD, Lower Platte North NRD, Metropolitan Utilities District, Lincoln Water System, and USGS. These agreements are handled by LPSNRD acting as the administrating agency on behalf of the LPRCA.

A copy of the proposed supplemental agreements, the proposed joint funding agreements, and additional information on the gages, including a description of the benefits of the gages and a breakdown of funding from each partner in each of the agreements by the federal fiscal year and the fiscal year used by the NRDs, was provided to the subcommittee.

The second agenda item was consideration of the Joint Funding Agreement between USGS and LPSNRD for Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance Water Quality Monitoring in the Platte River Corridor at Louisville in the Platte, at Ashland in Salt Creek, and at Waterloo in the Elkhorn River. The Funding agreement with USGS for the three long-term water quality monitoring sites expires on June 30, 2025. Staff recommended continuation of the agreement for monitoring in the Lower Platte Corridor for five years (instead of three) to an end date of June 30, 2030. The total amount of the agreement is \$631,200 or \$199,600 for the USGS and \$431,600 for LPSNRD acting on behalf of the LPRCA. Through a joint-funding agreement, the \$431,600 share is equally divided between PMRNRD and LPSNRD.

It was moved by Hassebrook, seconded by Jacobson, and unanimously approved to recommend the Board of Directors approve the five-year Supplemental Joint Funding Agreement between USGS and LPSNRD for Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance Water Quality Monitoring in the Platte River Corridor at Louisville in the Platte, at Ashland in Salt Creek, and at Waterloo in the Elkhorn River.

The third item was consideration of the Joint Funding Agreement between PMRNRD and LPSNRD for LPRCA water quality monitoring in the Platte River Corridor at Louisville in the Platte, at Ashland in Salt Creek, and at Waterloo in the Elkhorn River. The funding agreement with USGS for the three long-term sites is set to expire in

June 2025. The continuous water quality monitoring gages have been funded equally by LPSNRD and PMNRD for many years. The proposed agreement between the two NRDs will establish funds now for five years to match the USGS agreement. LPSNRD serves as the administrating agency for the LPRCA. USGS will bill the LPSNRD (LPRCA) quarterly and LPSNRD will then invoice PMNRD annually. The average cost per year for each NRD is \$43,160.

It was moved by Hassebrook, seconded by Jacobson, and unanimously approved to recommend the Board of Directors approve the five-year Joint Funding Agreement between PMNRD and LPSNRD for LPRCA water quality monitoring in the Platte River Corridor at Louisville in the Platte, at Ashland in Salt Creek, and at Waterloo in the Elkhorn River.

Item number four was consideration of the Joint Funding Agreement between USGS and LPSNRD for the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance Continuous Water Quality Monitoring in the Platte River at Leshara. The Funding agreement with USGS for the water quality monitoring at Leshara expires on June 30, 2025. Staff is recommending continuation of the agreement for monitoring on the Platte for five years (instead of three) to an end date of June 30, 2030. The total amount of the agreement is \$220,200 or \$59,200 for the USGS and \$161,000 for LPSNRD on behalf of the LPRCA. Through joint-funding agreements, the \$161,000 share is equally divided between MUD, LWS, LPNNRD, PMNRD and LPSNRD.

It was moved by Hassebrook, seconded by Lamberty, and unanimously approved to recommend the Board of Directors approve the Supplemental Joint Funding Agreement between USGS and LPSNRD for Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance Continuous Water Quality Monitoring in the Platte River at Leshara.

The fifth and last item was consideration of Joint Funding Agreements between MUD, LWS, LPNNRD, PMNRD and LPSNRD for LPRCA water quality monitoring in the Platte River at Leshara. The continuous water quality monitoring gage located near Leshara has been funded by five partners who, as of six years ago, decided to equally fund the USGS gage. Those joint funding agreements have expired and the funding agreement with USGS is set to expire in June 2025. The proposal is to extend the agreements now for five years to match the proposed USGS agreement with LPSNRD on behalf of the LPRCA. LPSNRD serves as the administration agency for the LPRCA. The terms of these four joint funding agreements are identical. USGS will bill the LPSNRD (LPRCA) quarterly and LPSNRD will then invoice each participating agency annually. The average cost per year for each partner is \$6,440.

It was moved by Hassebrook, seconded by Ruth, and unanimously approved to recommend the Board of Directors approve the four joint funding agreements between MUD and LPSNRD, LWS and LPSNRD, LPNNRD and LPSNRD, and PMNRD and LPSNRD for Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance water quality monitoring in the Platte River at Leshara.

Potter stated that the LRIP and budget process will soon begin, and the Platte River Subcommittee will likely meet towards the end of April. With no further business or discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Cc: Corey Wasserburger, Legal Counsel
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