




LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

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Memorandum

Date: August 16, 2024
To: Board of Directors
From: David Potter, Assistant General Manager 
RE: Platte River Subcommittee – August 15, 2024, Meeting Minutes.

The Platte River Subcommittee met at the NRD office on Thursday, August 15, 2024. Subcommittee members in attendance included Ken Vogel, Gary Aldridge, Seth Hawkins, Gary Hellerich, Don Jacobson, Luke Peterson, and Susan Seacrest. Director Christine Lamberty was not able to attend. Others in attendance included David Potter with the NRD, Mark Vrtiska with Tern & Plover Conservation Partnership, and Elsa Forsberg with Nebraska Game & Parks. The meeting was called to order by Chair Vogel at 6:06 p.m. and the agenda was reviewed.

The first agenda item was a presentation on the Tern and Plover Conservation Partnership. Mark Vrtiska and Elsa Forsberg presented background information, ongoing efforts to protect the species and habitat, and study results. Discussion followed. The NRD provides funding annually to the Partnership.

The next item was the first of two action items on the agenda and pertained to the **Interlocal Cooperation Agreement for Platte River Obstruction Removal Project**. The 2019 floods substantially damaged the railroad bridges on the Platte River north of Plattsmouth and west of the Highway 75 bridge. The quick and necessary repair process on these railroad bridges required a causeway to be built for access. This emergency action to save the bridges by the railroad was done without any permits. The causeway allowed the Platte River to form a sandbar downstream several hundred yards and the new channel caused by the sandbar is pinching the river along the south bank. Cass County sent a letter to the Nebraska Attorney General in February 2022 with concerns that this pinch point will not only cause significant damage to both railroad bridges, but also the Hwy 75 bridges, and could also cause floodwaters to push southwards throughout the residential, recreational and commercial areas east of Hwy 75.

PMRNRD, LPSNRD, Sarpy County and Cass County all have an interest in getting this corrected before major problems arise. Sanitary Improvement District No. 101 in Sarpy County also has a concern. There have been meetings with the railroads and removal of the obstruction has been discussed. An application was submitted to Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to assist in the removal. DED awarded PMRNRD federal disaster recovery assistance through the agency's Infrastructure Match Program. According to a DED press release, the awarded dollars will "restore the Platte River water flow to near pre-disaster conditions by removing sand, rock and silt from the river at Highway 75 near La Platte. The naturally occurring sandbar's growth was accelerated due to a bridge washout during the 2019 flood. The removal of the sandbar will reduce the stress placed upon the bridge pilings and provide increased flood resiliency for future disasters." The CDBG is responsible for 90% of the project costs (federal portion), not to exceed an amount of \$6,300,000. The participating agencies/partners would be responsible, collectively, for 10% of the project costs (local portion), not to exceed an amount of \$700,000. The typical cost-share requirement for these grants is 25% local match, however DED staff was able to get approval from the federal program to allow only 10% local cost share. The proposed Interlocal

Cooperation Agreement between PMRNRD, LPSNRD, Sarpy County, Cass County, and SID 101 outlines the costs for each contributing partner and identifies PMRNRD as the project administrator. LPSNRD would be responsible for 7% of the local portion of the grant for the project costs up to an amount of \$50,000. The removal project is expected to begin in October-November 2024 and be completed in Spring 2025.

It was moved by Hawkins, seconded by Hellerich, and approved (with Aldridge voting present and others voting yes), to recommend the Board of Directors approve the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement for the Platte River Obstruction Removal Project between PMRNR, LPSNRD, Sarpy County, Cass County, and SID 101, with LPSNRD costs to be 7% of the local portion of the CDBG grant for the project costs not to exceed \$50,000.

The next action item was consideration of the FY25 **Measurable Goals**.

As directed in the LPSNRD 2019 Master Plan, a list of measurable goals is to be developed for each subcommittee for the fiscal year and then those goals are to be reviewed each year to see what has been accomplished. The 12-month review of the FY24 measurable goals and the proposed goals for FY25 for the Platte River Subcommittee were provided to the subcommittee and Potter described each in detail. Discussion was had by the subcommittee.

It was moved by Seacrest, seconded by Jacobson, and approved (with Aldridge voting present and others voting yes), to recommend the Finance and Planning Subcommittee include the identified measurable goals as part of the FY25 Long Range Implementation Plan.

With no further business or discussion, Vogel declared the meeting adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Attachment: 1

Pc: file