



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

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MEMORANDUM

Date: November 9, 2022

To: Lower Platte South Natural Resources District Board of Directors

From: Will Inselman, Resources Coordinator *WI*

Subject: Minutes for Recreation, Forestry & Wildlife Subcommittee Meeting

On Wednesday, November 9, 2022, at 5:35 p.m., the Recreation, Forestry and Wildlife subcommittee met in the Large Conference Room. Subcommittee members present; Anthony Schutz – Chair, Luke Peterson, John Yoakum, Christine Lamberty, Tom Green, Ray Stevens, and Don Jacobson. Other attendees were Paul Zillig, Ariana Kennedy, and Will Inselman.

First item on the agenda was the transfer of ownership of the Bobcat Prairie property, located within the Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch. The City of Lincoln is requesting that LPSNRD accept ownership of the Bobcat Prairie property located in the Prairie Corridor on Haines branch. This property consists of approximately 320 acres of mixed grassland and riparian woodlands. The area has a parking lot and access pass that allow the public to access the property. This acceptance of this property falls within the interlocal agreement with the City, that states the NRD will hold land in areas outside of the City's 3-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The property will continue to be jointly managed by LPSNRD and the City of Lincoln. Because there were NET funds initially used to purchase the property, the City and LPSNRD will continue to pay in-lieu of taxes on this property. The area will take on Wildlife Management Area designation under the LPSNRD rules and regulations.

It was moved by Yoakum and seconded by Stevens and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors accept fee title interest in the City of Lincoln's property for the Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch Project known as Bobcat Prairie, and apply Wildlife Management Area designation, subject to legal counsel review.

Second on the agenda, was USFWS agreement with LPSNRD to provide financial assistance for a grassland restoration project. The USFWS has agreed to provide cost-share assistance for the grassland restoration project at Bobcat Prairie. The money from USFWS will be used to enhance the local ecotype seed mix to provide more species diversity and supplement some of the seeding cost. The seeding project would take place this winter or spring 2023.

It was moved by Stevens and seconded by Yoakum and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors authorize the General Manager to approve the USFWS agreement that provides Lower Platte South NRD with funds to assist with a grassland renovation project at Bobcat Prairie.

Third on the agenda, was the approval to acquire the ~40 acre Melichar-Martens property within the Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch. After approval by the NRD Board of Directors in October, staff began the acquisition of land rights process to acquire the Melichar-Martens property from Solidago Conservancy. Staff sent letters to the landowners notifying them of the public hearing process and a public hearing was held November 4th at the LPSNRD office. No public showed up to provide comment. At this point, staff would like to recommend approval of the next stage in the process which would be to approve the acquisition and authorize the General Manager to approve an necessary legal documents.

It was moved by Stevens and seconded by Jacobson and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors approve the acquisition of the 40 acre Melichar-Martens Property for the Haines Branch Prairie Corridor Project and authorize the General Manager to approve the necessary legal documents approved by NRD Legal Counsel.

Fourth on the agenda, was the Wildwood Lake boat ramp and kayak launch project. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC) recently acquired a federal grant to conduct a boat ramp improvement project on Wildwood Lake. The boat ramp as well as some of the ADA walking/parking pad are in poor condition, and this money would be used to renovate those areas. Also, money would be used to redesign the parking lot for better flow and access and provide a new kayak launch facility. NGPC and LPSNRD staff have been communicating on this for the past couple months. During that time, NGPC has been working with JEO Consulting Group to design and oversee the project. Currently, we have received 50% plans and staff will be working with JEO and NGPC to finalize the design. The project is anticipated to begin August 2023 and be completed by the end of October 2023. Staff would like to recommend approval for NGPC, in cooperation with LPSNRD staff, to proceed with the project and allow LPSNRD to contribute \$15,000.00 to be used as match. This \$15,000.00 was budgeted for the development of a kayak launch at Wildwood Lake in FY 2023. The total project is anticipated to cost ~\$200,000.00 with a construction timeline of August 2023 – October 2023. JEO will place signs on the property this winter/next spring to illustrate the upcoming project.

It was moved by Yoakum and seconded by Stevens and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors approve the Wildwood Lake boat ramp improvement project led by Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and provide \$15,000.00 to be used as matching funds.

Fifth on the agenda, was the new Backyard Prairie Pollinator Program to be offered by LPSNRD. This fiscal year money was budgeted to create a new program at LPSNRD. The intent of the program is to provide local ecotype native prairie seed mixes to households residing within the District. Staff has purchased approximately 50 acres worth of a local ecotype seed mix, specifically designed for urban/suburban settings. The program is geared toward small acreage owners and urban/suburban homeowners. From a ¼ acre patch out back or a small prairie garden in someone's front yard. Staff is looking for approval of the proposed program rules. The program would begin accepting applications sometime after January 1st, allowing ample time for distribution so folks can plant in the spring.

It was moved by Peterson and seconded by Green and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors approve the program rules for the Backyard Prairie Pollinator Program.

Last on the agenda, were staff updates and reports on various projects. Reports/updates: Oberg property appraisal for conservation easement and update on the status of WMA/Community Wetland Management Plans.

Meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m.