



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

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MEMORANDUM

Date: June 6, 2025

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 Thursday, June 5th, 2025, at 5:33 p.m., the Recreation, Forestry, and Wildlife subcommittee met in the NRD Large Conference Room. Subcommittee members present: Seth Hawkins- Chair, Christine Lamberty, Suzanne Mealer, Don Jacobson, Anthony Schutz, and Melissa Baker. Director Bob Andersen and Corey Wasserburger (legal counsel) were present, as were NRD staff: David Potter, Eric Zach, Drew Ratkovec, and Will Inselman. Robb Lutz from EA Engineering, Science, and Technology was also present. There were four items on the agenda for consideration.

The first item on the agenda was the consideration of a license agreement for agricultural crossing on the Homestead Trail. The District was contacted by a property owner along the Homestead Trail near Hickman about entering into a license agreement for an existing trail crossing. The 9-acre parcel of farmland was recently purchased by Red Wing Acres, LLC, Aaron Schepers (contact). Mr. Schepers has rented out a 9-acre parcel of farmland. The farmland is accessed off South 25th St. where the District has a gate. The tenant then drives on the trail for 0.1-miles where there is access off the trail into the field. The District has had no issues with the use of the trail to access the field. Staff recommended the approval of the license agreement.

It was moved by Jacobson, seconded by Lamberty, and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors authorize the Assistant General Manager to sign a license agreement for private crossing for agricultural purposes on the Homestead Trail with Red Wing Acres, LLC.

Motion Passed: 6-0

The second item on the agenda was the consideration of a permanent easement request from Lancaster County. Lancaster County (County) is replacing a culvert approximately 100 feet east of the Homestead Trail on Olive Creek Road. The County requests a permanent easement to reshape the road ditch and associated backslope that includes work in District ROW. The easement allows the County to grade the ditch to improve drainage to the new culvert and perform necessary maintenance in the future. The County has agreed to special conditions proposed by the District and will not be disturbing the trail surface. It is not anticipated that the trail will need to be closed for construction. The County will purchase the permanent easement including payment for 0.02

acres of ROW and reimbursement for wooden posts and cable that will be removed. The total payment will be \$421.00. The work is not anticipated to impact the trail surface. Staff recommended the approval of the permanent easement.

It was moved by Baker, seconded by Jacobson, and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors authorize the Assistant General Manager to sign the Lancaster County Engineering Department Right-Of-Way Contract for their purchase of a permanent easement of 0.02 acres on the Homestead Trail.

Motion Passed: 6-0

The third item on the agenda was the consideration of a professional services agreement with EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc. for a bank stabilization project on the Oak Creek Trail. Over the last couple of years, District staff have been observing areas along the Oak Creek Trail where the bank is slowly eroding along Oak Creek. The main area to be repaired is located approximately 1/8 mile west of Valparaiso. This area is in immediate need of attention as the bank is slowly falling away and getting closer to our trail surface. In a recent round of RFQ interviews, EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc. (EA), was asked to provide a scope of work for professional services to design and engineer repairs for the identified problem areas. EA was also asked to provide a conceptual design for the second site for future work, as that site does not require attention at this time, which is included in the attached scope of work. The agreement has a firm fixed price of \$65,700.00. Staff fielded questions regarding land rights, protecting trees, and project timelines. Staff recommended entering into an agreement with EA for this project.

It was moved by Jacobson, seconded by Mealer, and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors authorize the Assistant General Manager to sign the agreement for professional services with EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc., for a firm-fixed price of \$65,700.00 for the bank stabilization project on the Oak Creek Trail.

Motion Passed: 6-0

The fourth item on the agenda was the consideration of approval of the guidelines and rules for the Recreational Trails Assistance Program. The District has supported trail and trail facility construction in the past as part of the Community Assistance Program (CAP). In 2023, however, the CAP was modified to focus on stream stability, streambank stabilization, flood control, stormwater quality, etc. The District would like to continue to provide funding assistance for trail projects by creating a new program with its own policy. The Recreational Trails Assistance Program (RTAP) would provide up to \$25,000 in cost-share to develop trails and trail facilities within communities. The policy document was edited after the discussion was tabled at the last subcommittee meeting. Guidance from Chair Lamberty was to make clearer the requirement for public access. Staff fielded questions on the program requirements, public access, and current requests or future participants. Comments were made about the need to get the program started and see what applications come in.

It was moved by Lamberty, seconded by Mealer, and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors approve the guidelines and rules for the Recreational Trail Assistance Program.

Motion Passed: 6-0

Meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

PC: RF&W subcommittee file