



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

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MEMORANDUM

Date: November 13, 2024

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 Tuesday, November 12th, 2024, at 5:28 p.m., the Recreation, Forestry, and Wildlife subcommittee met in the NRD Large Conference Room. Subcommittee members present: Christine Lamberty- Chair, Lisa Lewis, John Yoakum, Anthony Schutz, Mark Spangler, Seth Hawkins, Don Jacobson, and Ray Stevens. Other attendees were Mike Sousek, Eric Zach, and Will Inselman. There were four items on the agenda for consideration.

The first item on the agenda was the consideration of the guidelines and rules for the new Recreational Trail Assistance Program. The District has supported trails and cost-shared for 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 support cities, villages, homeowners associations, and counties as they build and develop trail facilities within their 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. Other changes and comments were highlighted in the draft document. There was a lot of discussion about the eligible groups for the program, referencing trail definitions, suggestions to include maintenance, and lowering the dollar amount for project applications that require Board action. After further discussion a motion was made to table the document and bring back to the subcommittee after additional edits are incorporated.

It was moved by Yoakum, seconded by Hawkins to table this item indefinitely until staff determine the program rules and guidelines have fully incorporated the thoughts and comments of the subcommittee.

Motion passed: 8-0

The second item on the agenda was the consideration of an agreement with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for cost-share for habitat projects on Bobcat Prairie WMA. LPSNRD staff plan to restore approximately 25 acres of grasslands on Bobcat Prairie WMA this next FY in cooperation with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC). NGPC, using federal Pittman-Robertson funds, will provide 75% cost-share

on the projects. The project will remove all invasive woody vegetation with mechanical and chemical treatment. The woody vegetation removal portions of the project will be completed by April 15, 2025, with herbicide follow-up treatments in 2025 and 2026. Staff fielded questions on federal requirements for ground nesting birds and provided information on several other similar agreements we currently have in place with NGPC

It was moved by Stevens, seconded by Yoakum, and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors authorize the General Manager to sign an agreement with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission that provides funding to the NRD for grassland habitat projects on Bobcat Prairie WMA.

Motion Passed: 8-0

The third item on the agenda was the consideration of bids for tree removal projects on three Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch properties. LPSNRD staff received bids for tree removal projects on three properties within the Prairie Corridor. The projects aim to reduce eastern redcedar encroachment on prairies and riparian corridors. This project is being done in conjunction with the City of Lincoln and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Projects would be completed over the winter with a completion date of April 15, 2025. Staff have worked with Midwest Tree Cutters, Inc. in the past and recommend them as the low bidder. Staff answered a question regarding the discrepancy of bids, stating the second bidder was a new bidder who had never bid on a tree project before and was anticipating doing a lot of manual hand cutting with a crew of people.

Company Name	Bid Amount
Midwest Tree Cutters, Inc	\$32,300.00
Morrissey Enterprises	\$108,750.00
Gana Trucking and Excavating	No Bid

It was moved by Yoakum, seconded by Stevens, and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors approve the low bid of \$32,300.00 submitted by Midwest Tree Cutters, Inc. for tree removal projects on three Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch properties.

Motion Passed: 8-0

The fourth item on the agenda was the consideration of bids for a fencing project on the Oak Creek Trail. The LPSNRD was contacted by Jerry Hofpar, an adjacent landowner on the Oak Creek Trail about replacing the fence that runs along his property. Mr. Hofpar would like to be able to graze his parcels that lie on both sides of the trail. The current fence is old and repairing it is not feasible. The project will entail removing approximately 1 mile of existing fence, removal of brush and trees in the fence line, and building a new fence. The LPSNRD received bids from three contractors; the low bid was from Josoff Custom Contracting. Staff recommended awarding the low bid to Josoff Custom Contracting at a total project cost of \$25,080.00. Staff indicated they have not worked with Josoff Custom Contracting before, but they have no reason for concern to work with them. Staff also indicated that it is nice to have new fencing contractors bidding on projects to keep bids competitive. Staff answered questions regarding the NRD fencing policy and a discussion was held around staff looking into changes regarding the policy.

Company Name	Bid Amount
Josoff Custom Contracting	\$25,080.00
Morrissey Enterprises	\$25,905.00
Rock Creek Ventures LLC	\$47,029.40

It was moved by Lewis, seconded by Yoakum, and approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors approve the low bid of \$25,080.00 submitted by Josoff Custom Contracting for a fencing project on the Oak Creek Trail.

Motion Passed: 7-1 (Hawkins voting NO)

Last on the agenda were staff updates. Reports/updates: Staff reported on the recent completion of a Prairie Corridor trail concept study to build trail from Spring Creek Prairie Audubon Center north through the NRD's two conservation easement properties. Staff also provided an update on the Little Salt Creek WFPO Plan-EA and indicated there will be a public information meeting held on December 11th for that plan.

Meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

PC: RF&W subcommittee file