



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

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MEMORANDUM

Date: August 12, 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 Thursday, August 8th, 2024, at 5:32 p.m., the Recreation, Forestry and Wildlife subcommittee met in the Large Conference Room. Subcommittee members present: Christine Lamberty- Chair, Anthony Schutz, John Yoakum, Mark Spangler, and Ray Stevens. Other attendees were Mike Sousek, Eric Zach, and Will Inselman. Jim Swenson and Jeff Fields from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission were also in attendance.

The first item on the agenda was the consideration of entering into an agreement with Theisen Construction, Inc as a sole source contractor for the repair of two railroad timber bridges on the MoPac Trail. The bridges are 134th St. West #1 and 298th St. West #1. These bridges were identified by Theisen Construction last fall during invasive bridge inspections of 9 trail bridges, as the bridges in most need of repair. They are the only company in Nebraska that we know of that specializes in railroad timber bridges. Theisen Construction is a reputable contractor and the District has used them as a sole source contractor multiple times from 2013-2023 for timber bridge repairs on our trails. Theisen has indicated they would be able to complete these repairs this fall/winter. Staff recommends that we enter into an agreement with Theisen Construction to complete these repairs.

It was moved by Yoakum, seconded by Stevens and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors authorize the General Manager to enter into an agreement with Theisen Construction Inc. for \$298,800 to repair two bridges on the MoPac Trail.

Motion Passed: 5-0

The second item on the agenda was the consideration for the approval of license agreements for private crossings on the Oak Creek Trail. Recently, District staff conducted a review of property ownership along the Oak Creek Trail and found several properties that require updated license agreements for trail crossings. Four properties need updated property owner information: Mark Wolf, Todd and Gary Kudlacek, Mike Vandenberg, and Gary Masek. Each landowner has one crossing on the Oak Creek Trail and has requested an updated license agreement. These license agreements are for pre-existing crossings that were in place when the NRD took ownership of the trail. The NRD agreed to honor these existing crossings as the railroad had done when it was in operation. Staff fielded questions about the use of these crossings, gates, and signage.

It was moved by Yoakum, seconded by Stevens and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors authorize the General Manager to sign a license agreement for private crossing for agricultural purposes on the Oak Creek Trail with Mark Wolf, Todd and Gary Kudlacek, Michael Vandenberg, and Gary Masek, pending legal counsel review.

Motion Passed: 5-0

The third item on the agenda was the consideration of a request to provide financial assistance for debris removal at the Lied-Platte River Bridge. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the Papio-Missouri NRD are requesting financial assistance to remove a large amount of debris that has recently piled up along all the piers of the Lied-Platte River Bridge. The debris that has piled up from recent flood events is now causing a hazard for river users and requires immediate attention. This was last performed in 2019 following the flooding that year. At that time, the LPSNRD did assist in the cost of that removal, however Papio-Missouri NRD was able to secure FEMA money to offset the cost. The Papio-Missouri NRD has agreed to take the lead on this project and estimates the total cost of removal to be \$600,000. It has been requested that the three entities in the agreement to manage the bridge split the cost. Deputy Director Jim Swenson and Parks Division Administrator Jeff Fields were present at the meeting and provided background on the project, agreement, and past removal projects (most recently 2019). It was noted that there were tubers that were pulled into the debris and nearly drowned. The original amendment held each party to split the project 1/3 each, however it was decided that it would be best to cap the District's contribution at \$200,000.

It was moved by Schutz, seconded by Yoakum and unanimously approved to submit the addition of \$200,000 to the Finance & Planning Subcommittee for inclusion in the FY25 LRIP and budget to cover the costs associated with the debris removal project at the Lied-Platte River Bridge.

Motion Passed: 5-0

It was moved by Schutz, seconded by Yoakum and unanimously approved to recommend the Lower Platte South NRD Board of Directors approve Amendment No. 3 to the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between Lower Platte South NRD, Papio-Missouri River NRD, and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to complete the debris removal project at the Lied Platte River Bridge with the Lower Platte South NRD obligation not to exceed \$200,000, pending legal counsel review.

Motion Passed: 5-0

The last item on the agenda was the consideration of a letter of support to the Wachiska Audubon Society for a Nebraska Environmental Trust grant application. The Wachiska Audubon Society recently reached out to District staff requesting a letter of support for an upcoming Nebraska Environmental Grant application. The request to the District is for a commitment of \$4,000 per year for two years beginning July 1 2026 to be used as match to the NET grant. This grant application is similar to the grant that the District is currently providing match for Wachiska's maintenance and management of their prairies located within the LPSNRD. The LPSNRD is currently in year two of its three-year commitment of \$3,000 annually to Wachiska. The Wachiska Audubon Society have been great stewards of tall grass prairie and great partners to the District. This request for funds is dependent upon Wachiska being awarded the grant. If they are awarded the grant, the action to approve the matching funds will come to the Board for approval. At this time the motion passed by the Recreation, Forestry, and Wildlife subcommittee was to direct staff to provide the letter and return to the committee if the grant is successful.

It was moved by Stevens, seconded by Yoakum and unanimously approved to recommend the General Manager provide a letter of support on behalf of Lower Platte South NRD to Wachiska Audubon Society for their Nebraska Environmental Trust grant application and provide matching funds of \$4,000 per year for two years beginning July 1, 2026, if the grant is awarded.

Last on the agenda were staff updates. Reports/updates: Staff provided an update on the MoPac Connector public meetings held July 30th.

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

PC: RF&W subcommittee file