



Lower Platte River
CORRIDOR ALLIANCE

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3125 Portia St.
PO Box 83581
Lincoln, NE 68501-3581

p: 402.476.2729
f: 402.476.6454

www.lowerplatte.org

Monthly Report for December 2012

Meghan Sittler, Coordinator

Water Quality Monitoring Network Real-time Contaminant Prediction

USGS continued work on compiling and evaluating data related to the Real-time contaminant prediction project currently funded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust. The project builds on the on-going real-time water quality data collection and display effort that the LPRCA & USGS have continued throughout the past 5 years. The project is currently in its second year of funding and USGS is in the final stages of analyzing the data and developing relations that will generally predict when certain loads of contaminants could be expected at gage locations in the lower Platte River. They hope to have a draft final report completed on March 1st and then begin developing the website that will display those predictions and related data in real-time. The project should be finalized during late summer or early fall this year.

319 Grant for Water Quality Planning & Education

In mid-December I submitted a Project Implementation Plan (PIP) to NDEQ. The PIP was then sent to EPA Region 7 for review and hopeful approval. We hope to hear in mid-January that the PIP is approved and we can then begin the development of the plan. As a reminder, in late October I was notified that NDEQ would provide \$100,000 for the grant to develop a watershed management plan for the lower Platte River Corridor. The plan will assist the LPRCA and its members and stakeholders in identifying priority areas for water quality improvement measures as well as projects and efforts to help improve the water quality of the lower Platte. The plan will utilize the CALMIT remote sensing data that is currently being collected through the on-going 319 grant.

Remote sensing flights for non-point source pollution

Unfortunately unforeseen delays for conducting the flights of the lower Platte River and selected housing developments continued in December. The flights were interrupted in the spring of 2012 due to very rapid increase in soil and water temperatures. The warm temperatures continued through the fall after "leaf-off". A window appeared in mid-December but complications with the plane and helicopter availability delayed the flights and then the snow arrived. The delays obviously are frustrating but have been largely due to weather and constraints beyond CALMIT's control. Once the snow melts, flights can be attempted but that may be as late as March or April.

Conjunctive Water Use Management in the Central Platte

In mid-December representatives of Brown & Caldwell as well as Central Platte NRD and Twin Platte NRD presented their pre-feasibility study regarding potential conversion of surface water irrigated acres to

ground water irrigated acres in the Central Platte. The meeting was well attended by representatives of the LPRCA who heard the initial results of this study that has as its goal to utilize existing groundwater resources for irrigation in place of surface water to allow for potential higher flows in the Platte River while also allowing for the potential for groundwater recharge. A good discussion followed the presentation. More information about the pre-feasibility study can be found at http://nrdnet.org/news-detail.php?news_id=87 or at tpnrd.org or cpnrd.org.

Don Kraus of Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District will present their reaction and results of their initial review of the pre-feasibility study at **the next LPRCA Quarterly Meeting on January 17th at 9 a.m. at LPSNRD in Lincoln.**

Upcoming Events:

LPRCA Quarterly Meeting: January 17th, 9:00 a.m., LPSNRD

NARD Legislative Conference: January 28-30th, Embassy Suites, Lincoln