



**Lower Platte River  
CORRIDOR ALLIANCE**

LEAD. ORGANIZE. INSPIRE. The voice of the Lower Platte.

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

p: 402.476.2729  
f: 402.476.6454

[www.lowerplatte.org](http://www.lowerplatte.org)

## **Monthly Report for September 2012**

Meghan Sittler, Coordinator

### **River Obstruction Removal**

We were notified by the US Army Corps of Engineers in mid-September that the proposed project design submitted by Olsson Associates in August was an acceptable design. USFWS concurred in this initial evaluation. Olsson Associates will be preparing the form permitting documents over the next several months. We hope to be notified of the receipt of a successful permit by the beginning of the calendar year.

### **Events**

**Lower Platte River Summit:** I continued planning for the Summit during September. The Summit is set for October 18<sup>th</sup> at the historic Fremont Opera House. Mike Forsberg has agreed to be the keynote presenter and will begin the Summit at 9:00 a.m. He will be followed by two shorter presentations by Chad Smith (Headwaters Corporation) and Mark Pegg (UNL). We will then spend the afternoon touring project sites and unique resources in the Corridor. I've been very excited with the response to the Summit and the number of participants we have. I had originally planned on having only one bus but at this point it looks as if a second bus for the tour will be needed!

The route will include stops at Pahaku including a short hike and discussion of Nebraska Land Trust's work before continuing on over the river at North Bend and onto Schuyler. We'll stop at the Colfax Movie Theater in Schuyler and hear from Neil Seuss of the Loup Power District. Following his presentation we'll get back on the buses and head towards Fremont. We'll then visit the Fremont State Lakes and then a final quick stop at Hormel Park before heading back to the Opera House for a short reception. Registration continues to be open at this time. I look forward to another great day focusing on the many efforts and issues within the Lower Platte River Corridor.

### **Land Suitability Analysis**

HDR delivered a draft of the final project report and data for the predictive/future scenario additions to the Land Suitability Analysis. I am currently reviewing the draft and will work with HDR on any comments as well as the transfer of the data files to be put into the Environmental Suitability Assessment viewer on the Mapmaker site. Matt Pillard, HDR, will provide an overview of the new data at the next LPRCA Quarterly meeting.

### **Cumulative Impact Study & Conceptual Ecological Model**

At the end of September the technical group that has been providing assistance to the Corps and LPRCA on the development of the conceptual ecological model as part of phase 3 of the Cumulative Impact Study met

to evaluate the model as it is and continue its development. It was another good meeting that resulted in several concrete outcomes for the finalization of an initial model by the end of the calendar year. This will allow for continued iterations and minor revisions by the end of Phase 3 (scheduled for March 2013) as well as next steps for future phases of the project following the completion of Phase 3 of the CIS.

### **CNN**

As we know the drought and its severity both in Nebraska and across much of the nation is daily news on a local and national level. At the end of August, I received a phone call from a reporter from CNN. I had submitted impacts of the drought that I had both witnessed and heard from individuals in the Corridor to the National Drought Mitigation Center's Drought Impact Report ([droughtreporter.unl.edu](http://droughtreporter.unl.edu)) which is a tool that collects drought information both through the media and individuals submitting reports. The reporter was utilizing the tool and picked up the impacts I had included. After several weeks the article appeared on [cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) in mid-September with a section discussing impacts on the lower Platte River as well as other regions of the country. The article can be found at: <http://www.cnn.com/2012/09/15/us/drought-impact/index.html>. The article is a good cross-section of impacts across watersheds and regions; I just wish the lower Platte may have received notoriety on a national stage for better reasons than the on-going drought.

### **Upcoming Events:**

LPRCA Summit: October 18, 2012, Fremont Opera House, Fremont, NE

LPRCA Quarterly Meeting: October 23, 2012, P-MRNRD

UNL Water Science, Policy & Law Conference: November 13 & 14, Lincoln