

Memorandum

To: Programs, Projects, and Operations Subcommittee

Subject: Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance – FY 12 Budget

Date: May 9, 2011 **Updated**

By: Gerry Bowen

The Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance (LPRCA) has proposed a budget for FY 2012. The various programs and projects of the LPRCA are described in the attached memo from Meghan Sittler, LPRCA Coordinator. The amounts are summarized below:

Program/Project	FY 12 LPRCA Budget	P-MRNRD share	P-MRNRD to be invoiced
Administration	\$90,000	\$16,000	\$16,000
Environmental Suitability Assessment	\$15,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Cumulative Impacts Study – Phase 4 ¹	\$240,000	40,000	0
Sand Bar Monitoring Study ²	\$284,490	0	0
Pilot Sand Bar Study	\$66,935	0	0
Water Quality Monitoring	\$158,359	\$34,620	\$34,620
WQ Monitoring expansion ²	\$218,890	0	0
River Obstruction Removal	\$334,641	\$60,000	\$60,000
Public Opinion Survey	\$30,000	0	0
Lower Platte River Restoration ¹	\$660,000	\$53,334	0
Educational materials	\$6,800	\$450	\$450
Septic System Discharge Remote Sensing ³	\$92,000	\$2,700	0
Tours and Meetings	\$26,500	0	0
Miscellaneous	\$11,327	0	0
Total	\$2,234,942	\$212,104	\$116,070

¹ Dependent upon federal funds being available.

² Dependent upon NET grant.

³ Dependent upon “319” grant

The funding for several of these projects has been carried forward from previous years’ budgets and will not require any additional funding to accomplish.

The FY 11 Budget amount for the LPRCA was \$203,450.

- **Management recommends that the Subcommittee recommend to the Board that the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget for the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance in the amount of \$212,104.00 be approved, subject to funds being included in the District’s FY 12 Budget.**



Lower Platte River
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FY 2012 Proposed Actions & On-going Project Updates

Special Projects & Studies

Environmental Suitability Assessment (ESA) & Land use Suitability Analysis (LSA)

The ESA and LSA will be completed by the end of FY2011. We are currently internally testing both the ESA and LSA viewers. During June we plan to meet with the Nebraska Land Trust's Lower Platte Workgroup to demonstrate the tools. The workgroup is hoping to utilize the viewers in their easement assessment process. Additionally during FY2011 we completed the outreach portion of the ESA and have new templates and a refreshed "brand" for the LPRCA. Following the internal testing we plan to meet with the NRDs and representatives of the LPRCA to demonstrate the use of the tools. I also will be presenting a poster at the National Association of Recreation Resource Planners conference on the recreation components of the LSA in May.

Stakeholders that we met with during the development of the tool indicated a desire to have "predictive" or "what if" component of the LSA model. The scenarios would be developed through meetings with LPRCA members and other stakeholders and would show the impact that levels of development or other changes in current land use would have on the other factors and features (e.g. water quality, recreation, wildlife habitat, agriculture, etc). This would also continue to advance the mission of these tools—to provide timely and consistent planning information to stakeholders throughout the corridor.

Cumulative Impact Study

Phase III of the CIS is approximately half-complete. During late summer/early fall of 2010, USGS collected sediment samples from the banks, bed, and sand bars of the entire reach of the lower Platte as well as from the Loup, Elkhorn and Salt tributaries. Additionally, researchers from USGS also completed a GIS cross-section study of the lower Platte to correlate over all channel width and the sediment samples during the completion of the sediment budget analysis and other studies. The sediment budget analysis will be conducted by the Omaha District of the USACE during fall of 2011. The delay is a result of federal budget issues and a desire by the Omaha District to have continuity in operations of Platte River programs during FY2012 to assist us in gaining future federal funds. Additionally, we continued to work towards developing the conceptual model of the lower Platte which will help guide future studies and serve as a broad framework for the development of the predictive model for the CIS.

The Corps has expressed \$240,000 capability for Phase IV for FY2012. That capability assumes \$120,000 of federal money and \$120,000 of local funds. The funds would be utilized to 1) conduct a reconnaissance study of all the bank stabilization and levees (formal and informal) on the entire reach of the lower Platte; 2) further the development of the conceptual model to continue to work towards the predictive model originally expressed as the goal of the CIS; 3) extend the proposed sandbar study to correlate tern & plover habitat on the lower Platte. Funds will only be requested if federal money becomes available for Phase IV.

Sandbar Monitoring Study

During FY2011, Lower Platte South NRD (LPSNRD) agreed to a pilot study with USGS to inventory sand bar frequency, location, geometry, and abundance from the confluence of Salt Creek to approximately highway 75. This data set will be utilized as a baseline data set for a proposed expanded 3-year study that the LPRCA, USGS, Tern & Plover Partnership and Nebraska Game & Parks Commission plan to submit to the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) in September of this year. Local funds from the CIS as well as the funds from LPSNRD's pilot study should comprise the local match component of the three year study so no additional new funds from the NRDs are anticipated at this time.

Water Quality Monitoring Network

The LPRCA is entering year 2 of the 3 year agreement with USGS for operation of gages near Ashland on Salt Creek, near Waterloo on the Elkhorn River, Louisville on the main stem and Shell Creek near Schuyler. The funds associated with the agreement operate the gages, provide the data in real time over the web and fund a yearend report from USGS.

Last September, Dave Rus (USGS) and I submitted a grant to expand the types of constituents that are monitored as well as to display that data on the real time web site. Additionally USGS will be using the data to develop predictive equations to better inform the public and managers on when large loads or high concentrations of certain contaminants could be expected following a large scale rain event or other occurrence.

River Obstruction Removal

The design & permitting for the removal effort near Two Rivers State Recreation area began last summer. We are still working to negotiate some of the permitting requirements. If we are successful in negotiating the permitting issues we will hope to begin Phase 1 of the removal effort this fall. Funds will only be requested if we are successful in gaining a permit for the removal.

River Kiosks

Ten kiosks were constructed by LPSNRD maintenance personnel. The kiosks are currently in process of being placed throughout the corridor. Remaining funds will be used to construct and place additional kiosks in the upcoming year(s) and/or to update the content on the kiosks.

Public Opinion Survey

A RFP is currently being finalized and will be sent out hopefully in the next month. The survey will poll residents and stakeholders within the corridor on a variety of issues related to the mission of the LPRCA, NRDs and other agencies. The goal will be to have results of the survey by the end of this calendar year. No additional funds are requested at this time.

Lower Platte River Watershed Restoration

Similar to last year, the Corps has requested that we budget for the local share of their expressed capability of \$500,000 for the Lower Platte River Watershed Restoration authority in anticipation of a possible federal appropriation under this authority. Funds will only be requested if there is a federal appropriation.

ENWRA/LPRCA Grant for Water Budget Study

Throughout the past year, ENWRA and LPRCA representatives have met periodically to discuss the possibility of submitting a grant to develop a water budget for the Lower Platte River. The water budget would be utilized to aid the development of the voluntary Integrated Water Management Plans, the development of the FMP model, and conveying critical water management information to stakeholders

throughout the lower Platte. Again, no funds are requested at this time as any potential grant will most likely not be submitted until into the next fiscal year.

Proposed 319 grant for Septic discharge using remote sensing

As part of the LPRCA's efforts to assist NDEQ, NRDs, local jurisdictions and others, we are exploring the possibility of utilizing remotely sensed thermal imagery to identify septic tanks and septic discharge within the floodplain. A pilot flight would be flown by UNL's CALMIT over 2 areas in the lower Platte this year to determine if we are able to accurately detect the septic locations. The cost for the pilot flight is \$2200. A portion of the \$6100 in existing banked funds for assisting NDEQ with outreach for septic systems would be used to fund the pilot. If the pilot is successful, the LPRCA in conjunction with NDEQ and CALMIT would submit a 319 grant this fall to fly the entire corridor and fund education and outreach following the data collection.

Tours & Meetings/Events

Kayak Tour

The Kayak Tour is planned for Tuesday July 19th. We are currently still identifying the route and plans for the day. However, funds left from previous years' planned airboat tours will be utilized to cover the costs of this year's tour.

Water Quality Open

The Water Quality Open is planned for Thursday, September 1st at Quarry Oaks. Again all funds used for this event come from registration fees and donations.

Coffee Shop Meetings

Coffee shop meetings were held in Louisville and Fremont during the past fiscal year. Additional coffee shops will be held in additional locations throughout the corridor during FY2012. Carryover funds will be utilized.

Conceptual Modeling Workshops

I continue to work with the Corps on the initial steps of developing a conceptual model to better direct future studies and projects. We held two small workshops with various technical stakeholders during the past fiscal year and plan to hold more during the upcoming year. Carryover funds will be utilized to fund these workshops.

Corps Planning Workshops

Funds have been held since gaining the Lower Platte River Watershed authorization in 2007. These funds would be used when/if a federal appropriation under that authority is granted. The workshop would serve as the planning "kick off" for the new watershed program.

Education & Outreach

Brochures/Factsheets/Education Materials

As part of the ESA, new templates and layouts for all brochures and other materials have been made and during the next fiscal year I will be converting old brochures as well as new information into these layouts. We will be using the carryover funds to print large numbers of these various materials.

PR Items

I have utilized basically all of the existing PR items and funds from previous years so this year I will be purchasing a variety of items to be used at various events.

Newsletters

The "Corridor Connections" newsletter will be making a comeback shortly! I plan to prepare 2-3 newsletters during the next fiscal year and will need additional printing costs covered.