



Lower Platte River  
CORRIDOR ALLIANCE

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## Monthly Report for May 2014

Meghan Sittler, Coordinator

### **Watershed Management Plan**

The Watershed Management Plan continues to move forward. Chapter 2, which covers the data analysis and modeling was completed during May and submitted to both the LPRCA and NDEQ for review. In May we also met with NDEQ to discuss the revised management practices and prioritization process as well as the data and modeling results. Prioritization of watersheds for BMP implementation is proposed on three levels with the highest priority watersheds being two watersheds in each NRD with the greatest combined loading; second priority is given the next 10 watersheds in rank order regardless of NRD boundary and third priority are the remaining watersheds. The implementation of practices in priority areas will still be up for discussion from the LPRCA members and will be dependent upon funding but I feel that the data and prioritization information gives us an outstanding framework to guide future projects. HDR continues to incorporate completed chapters into the interactive pdf format for the final report. A full draft plan should be submitted for review by NDEQ in late June. That draft will also be circulated to LPRCA members for their review and comment. EPA will have final approval of the plan. We will be well positioned to submit a request for funding to implement the identified management practices later this year and begin to put projects on the ground that will benefit the water quality and supply of the lower Platte River.

### **Recreation Planning Study**

The Recreation Planning Study for the Lower Platte River being done in partnership with the NGPC and US Army Corps of Engineers is still anticipated to be complete by the end of September of this year. We plan to hold meetings with cities, counties and other recreation interests later this summer. Analysis of the public opinion survey should hopefully be completed and summarized by the end of June or beginning of July. Additionally, we have a “mock up” of what a mobile application would look like and will begin exploring funding options for the implementation of the plan and development of an application.

### **EPA Listening Session**

I attended a listening session with representatives of EPA Region 7 on the proposed “Waters of the United States” (WOTUS) rule. The session was the second hosted by UNL and included representatives of NDEQ, Nebraska Wildlife Federation, Nebraska Sierra Club, Wachiska Audubon, Nebraska Water Environment Federation, Nebraska Cattlemen and representatives of Representatives Fortenberry and Terry and Senator Johanns. The session was primarily an opportunity for participants to ask questions. Most of the questions and discussion centered on “other waters” which could include “subsurface waters”, playas and ephemeral streams in some situations. The EPA asks that comments on how best to define or classify “other waters” in specific regions be submitted as part of their open comment period which runs until July 21<sup>st</sup> and will most likely be extended an additional 90 days. The rule and comments can be found at:

<http://www2.epa.gov/uswaters>

## **LPRCA Events**

The **LPRCA Kayak Tour** was scheduled for June 3<sup>rd</sup>. A group of 38 participants met at Louisville but unfortunately a cell of light to moderate rain and some lightning sat over the area until shortly after 10 a.m. At that time with the forecast (which ended up being quite accurate) of severe weather beginning at midafternoon, we made the decision to postpone the tour and not put people on the water in potentially dangerous weather later in the day. A tentative reschedule date has been set for June 25<sup>th</sup>.

The **Water Quality Open** is planned for Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup> at Quarry Oaks. The keynote presentation is planned for 10:00 a.m. with golf beginning at noon. If you have ideas for the keynote presentation, please let me know! Registration should be available in June.

The **LPRCA Summit** is set for November 6 at Camp Carol Joy Holling near Ashland. Dave Sands of the Nebraska Land Trust, Matt Pillard of HDR and Rachael Herpel of the Rural Futures Institute and Water For Food Institute at UNL have graciously agreed to serve on the steering committee for the event this year. Chuck Schroeder, the Director of the Rural Futures Institute will be the opening speaker for the day. We plan to focus the Summit on challenges and opportunities at the rural-urban interface with particular attention to rural innovation as well as how the work of the LPRCA and our partners can assist communities, counties and individuals in meeting those challenges and seeking opportunities. More information on the event will be available very soon and will be discussed at the LPRCA Quarterly meeting. We would love to hear your ideas.

### **Upcoming Events:**

LPRCA Kayak Tour: June 3, TBD (Registration full)

LPRCA Water Quality Open: August 28, Quarry Oaks

Lower Platte River Summit: November 6, Camp Carol Joy Holling, Ashland