



Monthly Report for January 2011

Meghan Sittler, Coordinator

Programs / Projects / Activities

- **Cumulative Impact Study:** The draft documents from the USGS work under Phase III were delivered to the USACE & LPRCA at the end of December. The draft reports, "Geomorphic Classification and Evaluation of Channel Width and Emergent Sandbar Habitat Relationships on the Lower Platte River, Nebraska" and "Sediment Samples and Channel-Geometry Data, Lower Platte River Watershed, 2010" were reviewed by USACE and the LPRCA and are currently being finalized by USGS. USACE is currently having the sediment samples analyzed and will then formulate the actual sediment budget. I also began working with the USACE further on the conceptual model for the Lower Platte River. We will hope to hold another workshop in February or March and develop a draft model and associated materials during the next month. Finally, I began discussing next steps for the CIS with USACE and hope to have ideas better formulated in early February.
- **Environmental Suitability Assessment:** I reviewed the LSA model adjustments following the ground truthing of the model done in the fall. We are working to schedule a meeting with members of the technical advisory committee for the LSA in February to continue to make the final refinements. Additionally the ESA viewer is being finalized. LPNNRD is currently undergoing a server upgrade so the ESA viewer will be migrated onto the Mapmaker site once that transition is complete.
- **USGS Sandbar Monitoring Proposal:** In early January I met with USGS, NGPC and the Tern & Plover Partnership representatives to discuss the 3-year sandbar monitoring proposal as well as an interim 1 year pilot study to document sandbar location and size given the high flows from last year. USGS and I will be discussing this opportunity with the NRDs in February.
- **Water Budget:** Dana Divine (ENWRA coordinator) and I continued formulating the study design and tasks for the development of a water budget for the Lower Platte River. We will focus our initial effort on the stretch of the Lower Platte from Fremont to Plattsmouth and then hope to replicate it further up river once we have evaluated the success of the developed water budget. At the end of January I participated in the ENWRA technical committee meeting to further discuss this. Dana and I will be meeting with some members of the technical committee and any other interested individuals in February to further discuss our plan of attack.
- **Quarterly Meeting:** The LPRCA Quarterly meeting was held on Tuesday January 18th at 9:30 a.m. at LPNNRD. The agenda included discussion of the problems with the river obstruction removal, the current CIS, an ESA update and the proposed sandbar monitoring work. The main presentation was by Kelly Helm Smith of the National Drought Mitigation Center. Kelly provided an overview of the Drought Ready Communities project that I assisted with and discussion centered on local application. I will continue to work with the NDMC on this effort and hope to present it to a national conference in May. The next Quarterly Meeting will be Wednesday, April 20th at 9:30 at NGPC.
- **UNL Environmental Studies Seminar:** I presented to the UNL Environmental Studies Senior Seminar in mid-January. The LPRCA has served as a "client" for the students in this seminar for the past several years. I will be working with them related to threatened and endangered species throughout this semester.
- **Upcoming meetings/conferences/events:**
 - **UNL Water Seminar Series:** Wednesdays, 3:30 p.m., Hardin Hall east campus. More information: watercenter.unl.edu

- **NARD Annual DC Conference:** March 12-16, 2011, Washington, DC
- **LPRCA Quarterly Meeting:** Wednesday, April 20, 2011. 9:30 a.m., NGPC, Lincoln
- **Water For Food Conference:** May 1-4, Cornhusker, Lincoln, NE
Registration open, February 1. More information available at waterforfood.nebraska.edu
- **UNL Water Tour:** July 12-14, based from Ainsworth and Valentine. Contact Steve Ress (472-9549) for the latest information!