



Monthly Report for January 2010

Meghan Sittler, Coordinator

Programs / Projects / Activities

- **Cumulative Impact Study (CIS):** A conceptual modeling workshop was held on January 28th at LPSNRD. Approximately 42 scientists and technicians from a broad range of local, state, and federal agencies, UNL, and others spent a day beginning to develop a conceptual model of the Lower Platte and also assisting us in completing the gap analysis for Phase III of the CIS project. The workshop provided an opportunity to maximize the gap analysis portion of the scoping work and also to identify priorities for the project scope to be completed as part of Phase III of the CIS effort. Priorities for study ranged from a full habitat availability and characteristics study, the development of a sediment budget, to LiDAR collection and analysis. A more formal summary of the workshop and potential project scope will be available in the upcoming weeks and then I will be scheduling a meeting with the CIS project partners to finalize the scope of work for Phase III. We will also be re-engaging at least a portion of those who attended the workshop to continue to develop the conceptual model. We feel that the development of the conceptual model will help guide research and project development within this phase and also could potentially work as an additional assessment tool. The planning for this workshop took up a very large portion of my time during January but I feel it was a very successful and positive day.
- **Environmental Suitability Assessment:** I met with HDR in early January to discuss the initial steps of the expanded outreach effort agreed to during November. We laid out a plan to contact members, partners, and stakeholders of the LPRCA to gain further insight into related programs and efforts that can be included within to the large workshops planned this spring. We are also very close to finalizing the LSA tables and geodatabase so that the ArcGIS site can be fully developed and deployed. Look for that to happen in the next 4-6 weeks.
- **LPRCA Quarterly Meeting:** The LPRCA Quarterly Meeting was held January 21 at LPSNRD. Approximately 32 people attended the meeting. The special presentation by Scott Bonertz of the NGPC focused on opportunities to use social networking sites as an outreach medium. Updates on the NDEQ work at Fremont Lake # 20, the Water Quality Monitoring Network, Lower Platte Weed Management Area, and other projects were also given. Minutes, presentations, and related materials can be found on the LPRCA website.
- **Environmental Studies Seminar:** I agreed to help with the Environmental Studies Senior Seminar for a second year. Last year, students in the seminar looked at recreation and access issues and opportunities within the Lower Platte River Corridor and provided us some great ideas which I have continued to discuss with NGPC and others. This year, the project idea will be to have them assess the implementation of the "greenway" idea within the Lower Platte River Corridor. I participated in a "reception" like class meeting and was able to meet all students within the class and get an idea of their interests and vice versa. It was very enjoyable and I was very impressed with the diversity of the students' backgrounds and interests and how generally engaged they were. I look forward to working with the students that select the greenway project through the upcoming semester. Look for them to present their ideas at the next Quarterly meeting.
- **NARD Legislative:** I attended the NARD legislative conference in Lincoln, January 26-27th. It was an opportunity to interact with NRD personnel from across the state as well as individuals from other agencies and organizations. It also provided time to discuss potential collaboration between UNL programs and other efforts which I hope to pursue over the upcoming months.

Upcoming meetings/conferences/events:

- February 23: Tern & Plover Conservation Partnership meeting, UNL
- March 6-10: NARD Washington Conference, Washington, DC
- April 22: LPRCA Quarterly Meeting, 9:30 a.m., LPSNRD, Lincoln

- May 5-7: UNL Water for Food Conference
- May 15-21: RMS/NARRP Conference, Portland, OR