



## Monthly Report for February 2010

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### Programs / Projects / Activities

- **Cumulative Impact Study (CIS):** I continued to work closely with the Corps of Engineers and other agencies representatives and scientists on defining the scope for the remainder of Phase III as well as related efforts. The priorities identified at the January 28<sup>th</sup> workshop included: the development of a sediment budget for the river system; collection of LiDAR imagery for the study area; full habitat availability and characteristics study; a comprehensive inventory of bank stabilization throughout the lower Platte; and the development of a 1-Dimensional flow model. The Corps of Engineers is currently preparing a scope of work to conduct the sediment budget analysis as well as to identify how that can be implemented within an assessment tool. We will be meeting with the CIS project partners on March 4<sup>th</sup> to review the proposed scope of work and finalize the study going forward.

Several other priorities identified at the workshop are also being initiated. The NRDs entered into an agreement with the Metro Area Planning Association and USGS to collect LiDAR imagery of the study area as part of the on-going collection through the Nebraska Iowa Regional Orthophotography Consortium (NIROC). The imagery will be collected beginning late March with targeted completion date by the end of April (weather dependent). The data should be available for use during fall of 2010. The imagery will be a strong asset in not only furthering the CIS work but also assessing changes to the floodplain, surrounding area as well as other current and future project needs and concerns.

I also began discussing developing a funding proposal with Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, the Tern & Plover Partnership, and the USGS to address both the habitat concerns and the development of the 1-Dimensional Hydrologic model. The discussions are very preliminary at this point but at least provided a great opportunity to further engage partners as well as advance the CIS and related efforts.

Finally, there was a strong feeling from the group at the workshop that continuing the process to develop a conceptual model of the lower Platte to guide further studies and project is a very worthwhile effort. I will be continuing to engage a smaller group of individuals for a development of the conceptual model over the upcoming months. Sara McClure has begun working as an intern for the LPRCA to help facilitate this process. I feel strongly that it can help the LPRCA and its members and partners to assess emerging issues and gaps in our knowledge to foster the creation of sustainable projects that protect the river and its resources.

- **Environmental Suitability Assessment:** During February representatives of HDR and I began meeting with LPRCA members and partners on the expanded outreach effort for the LPRCA. Several very good meetings occurred in late February that will help us identify the target audience, format, survey, and issues to be discussed at the upcoming workshops later this spring. More are planned for March.

Significant progress on the ArcGIS and Land Suitability Analysis components of the ESA was made as well. HDR hopes to have a beta version of the ArcGIS to review during mid to late March so that any adjustments can be made prior to the workshops. HDR is also working to input the data into the LSA model and develop a scope of work for fully running and deploying the model. We hope to have portions of the model ready to go during April. We will be presenting the model to the Nebraska Land Trust in early May as well as at the River Management Society/National Association of Recreation Resource Planners.

- **Coffee Shop Meetings:** We also began planning for more coffee shop meetings. We will be holding one in Louisville on March 31 from 12-1 p.m. at the Main Street Café. Dave Sands from the Nebraska Land Trust will also be attending to discuss their efforts to acquire easements throughout the Lower Platte River Corridor. We hope to set another meeting in Gretna in early April and potentially one or two more prior to the busy summer season.

- **Kiosks:** We also began updating the text, design, and plans for the kiosks to be placed at NGPC properties throughout the Corridor. We will be meeting with the NGPC personnel on updates to the design of the kiosks on February 24.
- **Water Quality Monitoring Efforts:** I met with Dave Rus (USGS) to discuss potential changes to the scope of work for the 2010 data collection at gage sites throughout the corridor. Dave is currently developing the scope of work and it will be available for review and approval during late March.

Additionally I met with personnel from NDEQ to discuss incorporating their impaired stream and other water quality data into the LPRCA website. We are currently working to revise the navigation and structure of the website so that we can more directly display member's efforts, available data, as well as LPRCA projects and events.

Finally, we set the date for the 2010 Water Quality Open. The event will be Thursday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> at Quarry Oaks Golf Course. I will be working to line up a keynote presentation over the upcoming weeks. While I have some ideas, any suggestions are welcome and appreciated.

- **Natural Resources 423/823:** I presented an overview of the LPRCA and our current projects to the UNL Natural Resources 423/823 class. They are currently interviewing stakeholders and will be developing suggestions, projects, and ideas to address the issues of the lower Platte. They are a very engaged group of students so I look forward to seeing their outcome. Thanks to those of you who have given your time to discuss issues with them.
- **Tern & Plover Partnership:** I attended the annual Tern & Plover Partnership Meeting at UNL on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. It was a great opportunity for me to learn more about Terns, Plovers, and the efforts being done to better understand their habitat needs both on the lower Platte and on other portions of their range.

**Upcoming meetings/conferences/events:**

- March 6-10: NARD Washington Conference, Washington, DC
- March 31: Coffee Shop Meeting, Main Street Café, Louisville
- April 22: LPRCA Quarterly Meeting, 9:30 a.m., LPSNRD, Lincoln
- May 5-7: UNL Water for Food Conference, Hardin Hall, Lincoln
- May 15-21: RMS/NARRP Conference, Portland, OR
- September 2: Water Quality Open, Quarry Oaks Golf Course