



LPRCA Monthly Report for July 2008

Rodney Verhoeff, Coordinator

Programs / Projects / Activities

- **Airboat Tour** – Friday, July 18th, 2008 * 9 am – 4 pm. As most of you know, the airboat tour was cancelled this year due to the threat of severe weather and concerns with lightening, high water, and comfort issues for the participants (being pelted with raindrops on an airboat is not fun). Everything was in order and ready to go when we received news of severe thunderstorms and potential high river levels. After careful discussion and consultation with the 3 NRDs and a representative of the Nat'l Weather Service, we made a very tough call on the Thursday before (day before) to cancel the tour this year. We had to make this decision fairly early in the afternoon on Thurs so we could contact everyone and cancel the catering services without forfeiting payments. We had 18 airboat operators to notify and several were going to drop off boats the night before (Thursday). It did rain in the vicinity of the tour on Thursday night, but stopped by Friday morning. Water levels were up due to the rains and there was some debris in the river. It was a tough call, but in the best interest of our participants and to ensure we did not have any problems with airboats, debris, high water, lightening, and general comfort of the attendees, we had to make this call. We hope to cover the same area next year from Fremont to just west of North Bend.
- **Bon Voyage to Coordinator** – Most of you may have already heard, but I will be leaving the organization to pursue other interests in Boise, ID. My last scheduled day is October 17th, 2008. I have really enjoyed serving the Alliance as coordinator for the past 5+ years! It has been challenging yet very rewarding. I have gotten to know many of you over this time and together we have forged an effective, collaborative effort to manage the very important Lower Platte River. We have accomplished so much, but there is more to still do. I will certainly be watching from afar as the LPRCA continues to build upon the many successes to meet current and future challenges. Thank you for the opportunity and more importantly – thank you for caring enough about the Lower Platte River to put so much time, effort, and resources towards protecting such an important resource. We have clean water, good soils, excellent habitat, diverse fish and wildlife, numerous recreational options, and thriving industries in the Corridor because of your efforts. Keep up the good work.
- **LPRCA Quarterly Meeting** – Tuesday, July 8th, 2008 at the P-MRNRD in Omaha. The quarterly meeting of the LPRCA was held at the P-MRNRD on July 8th starting at 9:30 am. With a good turnout of approximately 25 people, the meeting offered a chance to hear from Jeff Rauh with TransCanada on the Keystone and Keystone II pipelines that will snake their way through Nebraska and carry petroleum from the Canada to Oklahoma and Illinois. Originally, we had scheduled the COE to give a demo on the CIS project, but that presentation was postponed until the next meeting. We also discussed budget cuts by several state agency partners who cannot contribute their cash contributions this year, but plan to continue to support the LPRCA with in-kind and technical assistance. Finally, we discussed the various LPRCA projects and programs. The next quarterly LPRCA meeting will be held on October 7th, 2008 starting at 9 am (earlier time) at the NE Dept of Natural Resources office in downtown Lincoln.
- **LPRCA WQ Open Golf Tournament** – Thursday, September 4th, 2008 at Quarry Oaks Golf Course near South Bend * Presentation/Demo at 10 am & Tee-off at 12:30 pm. This year we will feature the LPRCA members on the demos and the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP) for the presentation. Registration materials have been sent out and are available on our website at www.lowerplatte.org. Deadline for registration is August 25th, 2008. Hope to see you there.
- **Lower Platte River Summit** – Thursday, November 6th, 2008 at Camp Calvin Crest near Fremont. Details are still being worked out but we now have scheduled two tours in the morning prior to the summit program: (1) Tour of Pahaku – the sacred Pawnee site, (2) a science walking tour of the Calvin Crest property to include forestry issues, water quality sampling, recreational trails, and geology. We are still working on the featured presenters, concurrent sessions, and panel discussions. The summit will be held from noon to 8 pm. We plan to have two meals similar to

last time – one at noon and one in the evening. Cost is \$40/person including all materials and meals. We hope to get 100-125 attendees. Even if you have some other meeting conflicts that day, we encourage you to attend even a portion of the event if you can. Again, contact the LPRCA by calling (402) 476-2729.

- **Environmental Suitability Assessment (ESA)**: Additional task orders for Phase II and new ones for Phase III have been developed and signed. We will complete Phase II tasks this fall including research on a suitability model and finalization of the needs assessment (Downstream of Fremont). Beginning later this fall, we will begin Phase II tasks including the needs assessment for this phase (covering the Fremont to Columbus area) and selection of a suitability model.
- **WQ Monitoring Network**: I will be meeting with the USGS the week of Aug 25th to go over progress on this program and future needs. There are several project website issues that I am looking to have upgraded and updated. To view this website, go to: <http://ne.water.usgs.gov/lowerplatte/>.
- **Presentation on Public Records and Open Meetings**: As part of a Lorman Education Services seminar series, I served as a panelist and presenter on public records and open meetings in Nebraska on July 29, 2008 in Grand Island. Being the only non-lawyer, I was a little intimidated, but found the audience to be interested in my practical experiences and background.
- **Other Activities**: *For the month of July 2008:*
 - ❖ LPNNRD Projects Committee Meeting – July 3rd, 2008 - Wahoo
 - ❖ LPR Summit Tour of Calvin Crest – July 7th, 2008 – near Fremont
 - ❖ LPSNRD Platte River Subcommittee – July 7th, 2008 - Lincoln
 - ❖ Bramble WMA Tour for Airboat Tour – July 9th, 2008 – Lower Platte River
 - ❖ P-MRNRD Board Meeting – July 10th, 2008 – Omaha
 - ❖ LPR CIS GIS Meeting – July 14th, 2008 – Omaha COE office
 - ❖ LPNNRD Board Meeting – July 14th, 2008 - Wahoo
 - ❖ ESA Meeting with HDR – July 16th, 2008 – Lincoln
 - ❖ 2008 LPRCA Airboat Tour – July 18th, 2008 – Fremont to North Bend CANCELLED
 - ❖ LPSNRD Board Meeting – July 16th, 2008 - Lincoln
 - ❖ Presentation on Public Records Open Meetings – July 29th, 2008 – Grand Island
 - ❖ Meeting with UNL on rural initiatives & environmental protection – July 31st, 2008 - Lincoln