



From the Coordinator...

Monthly Report for the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance for the Month of Jan 2007

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LPRCA Quarterly Meeting Held January 18th, 2007

The LPRCA held a quarterly meeting on January 18th at the LPSNRD in Lincoln. We had nearly 30 attendees and packed a tremendous amount of info into 2 ½ hours. The featured educational program was Jesse Bradley of the NE Dept of Natural resources (DNR) talking about LB 962 and this year's Lower Platte River Basin determination that the basin is NOT "fully appropriated." This means we still have water resources that are available to use. We have received this designation for the past two years, but we continue to inch closer to a "fully appropriated" designation each year. There is a very complicated model used to make this determination and Jesse went through some of the parameters at the meeting. Other topics discussed at the LPRCA quarterly meeting included: FY08 LPRCA Budget; summary of the LPRCA River Summit; 2006 LPRCA Planning Retreat;



GREETINGS FROM THE COORDINATOR

Its been a busy year already even though we are just one month into 2007. At the tail end of 2006, we held a planning retreat that will help guide the LPRCA for the next couple of years. Most recently, we completed the first phase of the Camp Ashland River Obstruction Removal Project and began planning the second phase. Our new intern just started this week and he had a very short adjustment period before he was inundated with various activities and projects. This time of the year is the planning time for our summer and fall projects. We will begin the airboat tour and golf planning efforts shortly. Additionally, we will be conducting some coffee shop meetings in the fall and will begin planning where we will be holding the meetings and what the topics will be. The CIS project is back on track with the receipt of the 1950's and 1970's aerial photos. I just had a meeting with USGS on the Water Quality Monitoring Network to plan sampling efforts for this year. All in all, our projects are really heating up. READ ON...

Featured Issue

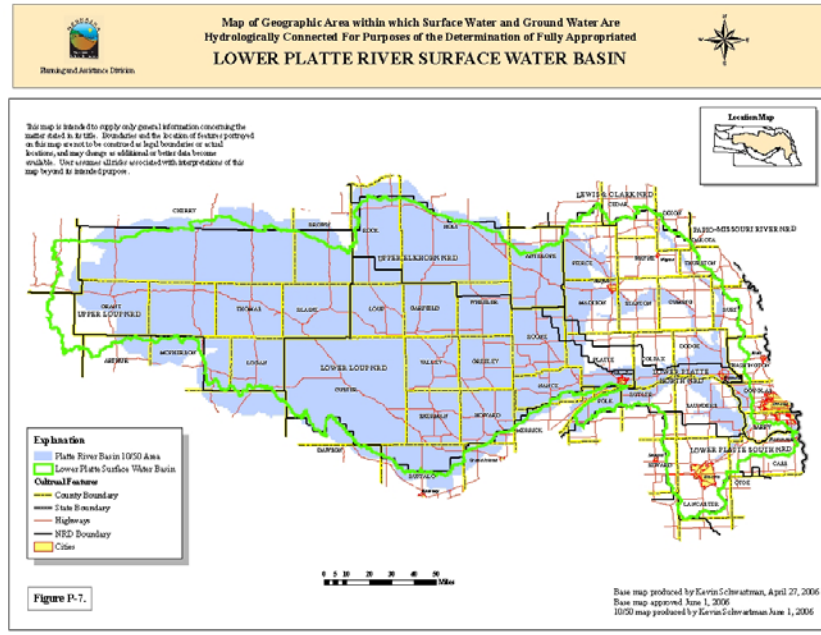
LB962 Determination

I mentioned this issue above in the discussion on the January quarterly meeting, but felt it deserved additional discussion. LB962, passed in 2004, requires a review of all river basins in NE regarding available water resources for the hydrologically-connected areas (ground and surface water connected). If an area is found to be "fully-appropriated" then restrictions on water use for irrigation and other high volume uses may occur. Additionally, this designation triggers a process where DNR and the NRDs in that basin must collaboratively develop an Integrated Management Plan and determine what management options to employ. This is a radical change to traditional Nebraska water management where the DNR manages surface water and the NRDs manage ground water. Now that Nebraska legally and scientifically recognizes that there are areas where the two are hydrologically-connected, a methodology was necessary to manage both simultaneously. LB 962 was passed to do just address this exact issue and guide the process. -continued-

LB962 Determination –continued-

Hydrologically-Connected Areas

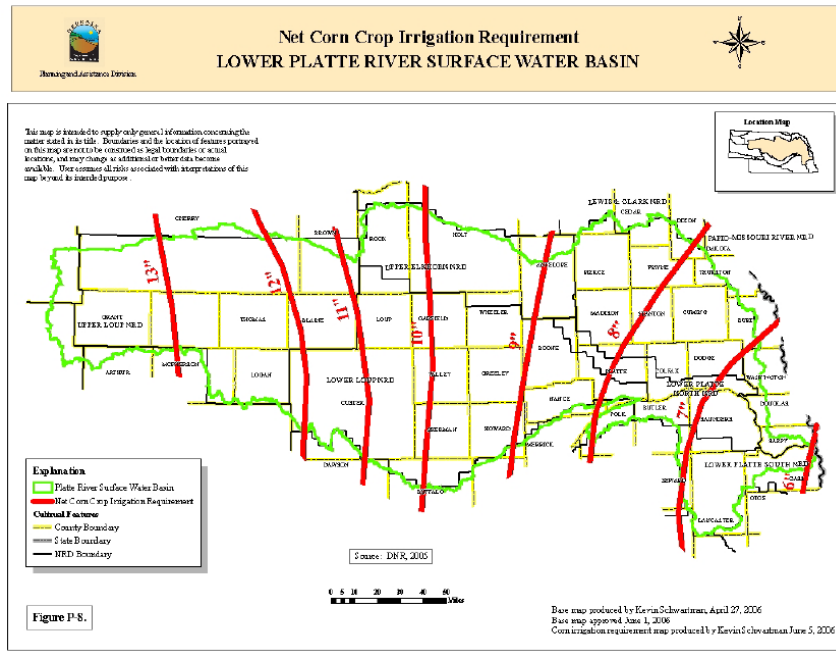
In these areas, DNR uses the “10 % Depletion / 50 Years” as criteria to see if the current use is sustainable or is depletive. The Jenkins SDF Methodology is used to calculate these values, which are represented by the light blue shaded area on the map at the left.



65% / 85% Rule

Crop water usage is used to determine if there is adequate surface water available and the basin is “fully appropriate” or not.

According to the 65%/85% Rule: “The surface water supply shall be deemed insufficient, after considering the lag effect from existing ground water pumping (25 years), if the appropriation cannot divert 85% of the annual crop irrigation requirement between May 1 and September 30 or 65% of the annual crop irrigation requirement between July 1 and August 31.”



For more information, visit DNR's website at:
http://www.dnr.ne.gov/LB962/AnnualReport_2007/AnnualReport2007.pdf for the annual report OR <http://www.dnr.ne.gov/LB962/LB962Implementation.html> for more detailed integrated water management program information.

PROGRAMS / PROJECTS / ACTIVITIES

LPRCA Intern Position. We had 20 very good applicants for the LPRCA/LPSNRD intern position this time around and brought five candidates in for interviews. It was very difficult to choose just one applicant for the position as all were well-qualified. However, we did select Doug Vrana as the new LPRCA/LPSNRD intern. Doug is a senior Agronomy major with a soil science option at UNL. In 2005, he received his A.A. Degree from Southeast Community College in Beatrice majoring in Natural Resources. Originally from Prague, Nebraska, Doug has a familiarity with the NRDs and many of the programs and people we work with. He most recently served as a student worker for the USDA collecting and analyzing lagoon and soil samples. He has also helped out on his family's farm and participates in a variety of activities including the Horticulture Club, SCC Ag Club, and intramural sports at UNL. Doug will be making the rounds to meet many of you in the near future. Welcome Doug!



UN-L Sociology Classes. Recently, I presented info on the LPRCA to two UNL Sociology classes - Environmental Sociology 446/846 & Sociology 415/815. Each class had approximately 30 students and the Professor, Dr. Al Williams, wanted the students to see what the real natural resources issues were in Nebraska today. Additionally, the students must complete a project and Dr. Williams hoped that some of our projects could be used as topics for the student projects. Dr Williams attended our River Summit 2006 and thought the LPRCA would be a good organization to include in the classes.

NE Innovation Zone Commission. The NE Innovation Zone Commission (NIZC) continues to meet monthly on the first Thursday of each month usually at Mahoney State Park or Quarry Oaks Golf Course starting at 7:00 p.m. The February meeting was actually held at the State Capitol Building and took the form of a reception with state senators. For the past several meetings, the NIZC group has been discussing legislation that would help fund the development of an I-80 Comprehensive Economic Development Plan. The LPRCA has been working hard to have the NIZC include an environmental impact analysis in this document. Most recently, several members of the NIZC flew out to Colorado to meet with the federal Department of Commerce and discussed grant opportunities. There may be up to \$500,000 in grant funding to assist with creation of the comprehensive plan. The next NIZC meeting will be March 1, 2007 at Mahoney Park starting at 7 p.m. Check out the NIZC website at www.nizc.org for more info.

NARD Conference / PS/SC Task Force / CIS Project Meeting. The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) held its annual Legislative Conference at the Embassy Suites Conference Center in Lincoln on January 23 & 24, 2007. AS usual, it was a great conference with Governor Dave Heineman kicking off the event and Ann Bleed, DNR Director, discussing pertinent water issues in Nebraska. Much of the talk and discussion focused on water issues including LB962, the three-state Platte River Cooperative Agreement, and legal issues related to interstate water compacts. The PS/SC Task Force also held a meeting following the conference on the 24th. The group is finishing up the 5-year study and won't meet again until September 2007. The CIS Project group met following the PS/SC Task Force meeting to go over QA/QC issues and view example maps generated from the CIS GIS. The COE was still awaiting arrival of the 1950's and 1970's aerial photos.

Kiosk Program. Along with members of the NG&PC staff, I made final selections of photos for the kiosks panels. We are now completing the text and will have a final draft design by the end of February. Installation is targeted for June 2007.

Airboat Tour / WQ Open Golf Tourney. At the last quarterly meeting, the group tentatively chose dates for theses two events. They are as follows: **Airboat Tour** - Friday, July 20th, 2007 touring the lower stretch from Louisville to Plattsmouth; **Water Quality Open** - Thursday, Sept 6th, 2007 at Quarry Oaks. We will confirm these dates.

Upcoming/Recent Meetings & Events

PMRNRD Board of Directors Meeting - Thursday, February 08, 2007 * 8:00 p.m. * Nat. Res. Center 8901 S. 154th St. * Omaha

LPNNRD Board of Directors Meeting - Monday, February 11th, 2007 * 5:30 p.m. * LPNNRD Office - 511 Commercial Road * Wahoo.

LPSNRD Board of Directors Meeting - Wednesday, February 21st, 2007 * 2:00 p.m. * 3125 Portia Street * Lincoln.

LPRCA Quarterly Meeting - April 24th, 2007 * 9:30 a.m. - noon * P-MRNRD office at 8901 S. 154th Street * Omaha

UNL Water Law, Policy, and Science Conference - March 26 & 27, 2007 * Embassy Suites in Lincoln * Go to <http://snr.unl.edu/waterconference>