



From the Coordinator...

Monthly Report for the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance for the Month of Dec 2006

Rodney L. Verhoeff, Coordinator

LPRCA Planning Retreat Held December 19th, 2006

The 2006 LPRCA Planning Retreat was held on Tuesday, December 19th at Camp Kitaki near South Bend from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. With approximately 20 attendees, I took the group through the history of the LPRCA including structure, funding, focus, and activities. We then covered where we are today and ended with where we want to go in the future. One of the points made at the meeting is that the LPRCA really has stayed true to its original course. We are still that "facilitator" group that brings stakeholders together; informs and educates; and helps get the best information into the right hands for informed decisions. I handed out a survey to all attendees to get input on our direction and focus. I hope to have these back and tabulated soon to assess our progress. We won't have a retreat for two more years as is our planned schedule and then it will be an in-depth effort. Thank you to all those who participated.



GREETINGS FROM THE COORDINATOR

It is now a new year - 2007 - but I am still having trouble writing '2007' on letters and other correspondence. It just hasn't sunk in yet that we are done with 2006. This brings up a point that can be confusing: What timeframe does the LPRCA use for fiscal management and for "year-end" reports? For budget and financial issues, the LPRCA follows the same formula as NRDs and state agencies - the "fiscal year" that runs from July 1 to June 30 of the following calendar year. Thus, we are currently in FY07 and will switch to FY08 on July 1, 2008. However, when we do year-end reports, we align with the "calendar year" which runs from January 1 to December 31. This can often prove even more confusing when you throw a federal agency into the mix for a program or project. The federal "fiscal year" runs from October 1 to September 30. Additionally, some of our non-government partners have a "fiscal year" that coincides with the calendar year. Imagine what our accounting people go through sorting all of this out? So, here we are just starting the new "calendar year" in 2007, but we are actually halfway through the current "fiscal year" - FY07. What's been happening in December? It was the holiday month with many people taking time off to be with family.

Featured Activity LPRCA Quarterly Meeting

The next LPRCA quarterly meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 18th, 2007 at the LPSNRD in Lincoln starting at 9:30 a.m. We've got a full agenda with project updates and activity reports. Additionally, we've got a great educational program planned with Jesse Bradley, DNR Integrated Water Management Analyst, talking on the recent determination that the LPR Basin is NOT fully appropriated and what the future outlook for the basin. Olsson Associates will also be in attendance to report on the Camp Ashland River Obstruction Removal Project. Invited is the executive director of the Nebraska Innovation Zone Commission (NIZC) to talk on the commission and future direction of the group, which focuses on economic development along I-80 between Omaha and Lincoln. We will work to finish the meeting by 11:30 am. Refreshments will be served, so plan to attend and bring a friend. We may be scheduling a Projects/Programs Committee meeting prior. Stay tuned for details.

PROGRAMS / PROJECTS / ACTIVITIES

Nebraska Land Trust (NLT). The NLT met on December 1, 2006 at the LPNNRD in Wahoo. Items of discussion included the 2007 budget, scoring/feasibility criteria on the Schramm Bluffs Preservation Project, NLT records policy, and updates on several on-going easement projects. The group decided to hold a strategic planning effort to coincide with the next scheduled board meeting. June 1, 2007 will be the board meeting and the following day will be a strategic planning exercise.

LPRCA Website. As discussed in previous reports, the LPRCA website (www.lowerplatte.org) recently underwent major cosmetic surgery. Now, we are working on developing some new components including a project/program journal, a discussion board, and a multi-media area. It will take a few months to build this new website infrastructure, but once completed, it will add tremendously to the educational and informational value.

LPRCA Intern Position. As I mentioned a few reports back, our LPRCA intern of two years, Craig Wacker, left the fold for a fulltime job with JEO out of Wahoo. We are now in the midst of hiring a replacement intern who will be shared with the LPSNRD. We hope to have someone on-board by the end of January.

NARD Tour. The NARD tour this year is scheduled to take place in the Lower Platte River Basin. I have volunteered to assist with the logistics and tour stops as have several NRDs.

UN-L Presentation. On the evening of December 4th, I presented information about the Alliance to the UNL Soil & Water Resources Club. Approximately 15 students and faculty advisors attended. I talked a great deal about the formation of the LPRCA and the pertinent issues we face including water quality, land use, and integrated management. Ironically, while at the university many years ago, I was a part of a group of students who helped revive this club after years of inactivity.

UN-L Water Class. Along with the LPSNRD, the LPRCA has been asked to present to a UNL honors class focusing on water and titled, "Water, Society, and the Future." This is a small class with ten students from various disciplines who will hear from several professionals involved with water in some way. I will be presenting on Feb 13th then may be involved later to assist with a student research project.

UN-L School of Nat Res (SNR) Director. The UNL SNR is currently looking for a permanent Director to oversee the school. Presently, Mark Kuzila is serving as interim director until a permanent replacement is found. I sit on the SNR External Advisory Committee and we've been given the opportunity to be involved in the hiring process by meeting with candidates for the position and giving our input. The group will be meeting with the final candidate this coming Friday. No word on when the position would be filled.

Upcoming/Recent Meetings & Events

LPNNRD Board of Directors Meeting – Monday, Jan 8th, 2007 * 5:30 p.m. * LPNNRD Office – 511 Commercial Road * Wahoo.

PMRNRD Board of Directors Meeting – Thursday, Jan 11th, 2007 * 8:00 p.m. * Nat. Res. Center 8901 S. 154th St. * Omaha

LPSNRD Board of Directors Meeting – Wednesday, Jan 17th, 2007 * 2:00 p.m. * 3125 Portia Street * Lincoln.

LPRCA Quarterly Meeting – January 18th, 2007 * 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. * LPSNRD at 3125 Portia Street * Lincoln