



## From the Coordinator...

**\*Monthly Report for the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance for the Month of February 2006\***

Rodney L. Verhoeff, Coordinator

### LPRCA Quarterly Meeting Highlights

Special Presentation - DNR on the Science Behind LB 962 Designations

The LPRCA held a quarterly meeting on Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006 at the LPSNRD - - the first time it has been held there since the renovation and expansion of the offices. As we do each meeting, there was a special presentation, this time, by representatives from DNR on the science behind LB 962 designations of basins as fully and over-appropriated. The Alliance also discussed the upcoming FY07 budget and future programs. There was unanimous support for continuing the river obstruction removal program only this time working on the Camp Ashland site. In addition, there was discussion on the Sept 19<sup>th</sup> LPRCA River Summit, the WQ Open, and this year's airboat tour which will run from Hwy 50 upstream to Hwy 64. The next LPRCA quarterly meeting will be Tuesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2006 at the LPSNRD starting at 9:30 a.m.

#### GREETINGS FROM THE COORDINATOR

While the winter months constitute a lot of meetings, conferences, training, and strategic planning activities, the warmer spring months signal the beginning of project execution and completion, site inspections, project/site tours, and preparation for the FY07 budget process. It may seem a little premature to work on the NEXT budget year when we still have a third of this one left, but the LPRCA's budget process is complicated. Half of the funding for Alliance administration comes from the 3 NRDs serving as members of the LPRCA. The other half comes from the six state agencies serving as members. Program and project money comes primarily from the 3 NRDs with Alliance members contributing grant funding, in-kind, and direct funding when the projects align with their specific missions. The overall budget of the LPRCA is not a big one, but that is by design. We are a coordinating organization providing facilitation, management, coordination, and oversight for the variety of projects happening in and around the Lower Platte River Corridor. Our budget is currently being discussed and refined by the newly-formed Budget & Fundraising Committee.

#### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

**OUTREACH & EDUCATION - March 22, 2006** - 2 to 4 p.m. at the LPSNRD. Discussion of PSAs, kiosks, other projects.

**BUDGET & FUNDRAISING AND PROGRAMS & PROJECTS Combined Meeting - March 20, 2006** - 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the LPSNRD. Discussion of FY07 budget and future projects.

**EXTERNAL ADVISORY - April 2006.** Date, Time, and Place TBA. Discussion of current and future projects.



#### FEATURED PROJECT



##### Public Service Announcements (PSA's)

How do you get the word out about the importance of an area like the Lower Platte River Corridor? Take it to the radio in the form of public service announcements or PSA's. These snippets of information can garner a great deal of attention in a short amount of time if done correctly. The Alliance has been working for the past 6 months on developing 4 PSA's to be aired in the Lincoln/Omaha and Columbus radio markets this spring. After working with our consultant, Snitily-Carr, on scripts, background music, and a voice talent, we are close to completion. We chose to focus on four of the "8 Reasons to Protect the Lower Platte River" rather than cram all eight into the four 30 second PSA's. The topics for this round include: Fishing, Land Use, Recreation, and Water Supply. Keep your ears tuned to KFOR and KJSK for these PSA's. We will also be looking to place them in the smaller markets soon throughout the Corridor.



## PROJECT & PROGRAM UPDATES

### Environmental Carrying Capacity Project

We recently met on this project to finalize details and discuss a timeline for future phases. We are considering fast-tracking the completion of this project to coincide with other complimentary studies soon to be underway including those by NE Innovation Zone Commission and the Joslyn Castle Institute. Currently, we are scheduled to complete the study over the next several years.

**Kiosks** Along with Frank Albrecht of the NG&PC, I reviewed the first draft of the kiosk panels. The draft is very consistent with our brochure and will have the "8 Reasons to Protect the Lower Platte River" featured along with photos of each category and graphics. The Outreach & Education Committee will be meeting in late March to discuss further.

**Website** We've talked about it long enough and now it's time to make the updates and changes to the website. Within the next couple of months we will incrementally launch our new website design with help from the LPNNRD's Troy Thompson and the LPSNRD's Mike Mascoe, both very talented at website development. In the meantime, please check our site for meeting updates and upcoming events.

### Annual Events- -

**Airboat Tour** We are still working out a specific date, but the week of July 24<sup>th</sup> or July 14<sup>th</sup> are good candidates for this year's tour. Our selected tour location will be from Hwy 50 near Louisville upstream to Hwy 64. Ideas for stops are encouraged.

**WQ Open Golf Tourney** At the last quarterly meeting, the LPRCA agreed to go to Quarry Oaks again this year for the golf tourney which is really a cleverly-disguised educational event. We are considering the dates of August 22 and 23. We need display ideas for this event and organizations wishing to show displays or have a demo on the greens.

**LPRCA RIVER SUMMIT WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE AT THE RIVER SUMMIT?** We would like to hear from you. This is no ordinary event as we want your ideas and participation. If you are with a group or organization that has a particular interest in the Lower Platte River, please contact us so we can include you as a part of the program or save a spot for a demo or display.  
**SAVE THE DATE - Sept 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

### River Obstruction Removal Program

What's next? Looks like Camp Ashland will be the next targeted site for a project. This location has 12 pairs of former bridge supports consisting of a large metal outer tube filled with concrete surrounding a wooden piling. How far the concrete filled tube goes down will determine how difficult and expensive the project will be. We are looking at doing a test using sonar to determine what exactly what we are dealing with. We hope to work again in conjunction with the NG&PC using their boating safety grant program and the Nebraska Military Department since the obstructions are located in the river directly east of Camp Ashland.

### Other Activities

In addition to our programs and projects, the LPRCA continues to be involved in a number of other important activities:

- ④ **I-80 NE Innovation Zone Commission (NIZC)** - The NIZC met on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2006 at the Ashland Country Club east of Ashland. Several presentations were made by communities/counties in the area including Greenwood, Plattsmouth, Ashland and Cass County on their current and planned economic development activities. The commission is still hoping to get state funding to work on development of a growth strategy for the I-80 corridor between Omaha and Lincoln. A special planning/visioning session will be held on Saturday, March 11, 2006 from 9-3 at Mahoney State Park to get input on development of a vision for the I-80 corridor. The next monthly NIZC meeting is April 6, 2006 at P-MRNRD in Omaha - 7:00 p.m.
- ④ **NE/IA Metroplex Indicators Conference** - I was scheduled to present to the group in February on water-related and other environmental issues, but the one bad weather day we had delayed this presentation until May. The next meeting of this group will be held on March 23<sup>rd</sup> from 2-4 at Quarry Oaks near South Bend.
- ④ **Lower Platte Weed Management Area (LPWMA)** - The LPWMA is planning a "Threats to Nebraska's Rivers" conference this fall and it looks as though the dates will be August 22-23<sup>rd</sup> in Kearney. This two day event will focus on not only noxious weeds directly but also impacts on habitat, water supplies, and management practices. More details will be available soon. Go to [www.lowerplattewma.org](http://www.lowerplattewma.org) for updated information.

### Upcoming/Recent Meetings & Events

PMRNRD Board of Directors Meeting - Thursday, Mar 9th 2006 \* 8:00 p.m. \* Nat. Res. Center 8901 S. 154<sup>th</sup> St. \* Omaha.

LPNNRD Board of Directors Meeting - Monday, Mar 13th, 2006 \* 5:30 p.m. \* 511 Commercial Park Rd in Wahoo

LPSNRD Board of Directors Meeting - Wednesday, Mar 15th, 2006 \* 2:00 p.m. \* **Permanent Office** located at 3125 Portia Street in Lincoln

LPRCA Quarterly Meeting - Tuesday, May 23rd, 2006 \* 9:30 a.m. \* LPSNRD at 3125 Portia in Lincoln.