



From the Coordinator...

Monthly Report for the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance for February 2008

Rodney L. Verhoeff, Coordinator

- **Coffee Shop Meetings:** With a tremendous amount of help from several Alliance members, we have held 2 coffee shop meetings to date: The first was held in Yutan at Jeris's Café on Friday, Feb 29th with Erv Bull serving as host and his wife providing both croissants and cinnamon rolls. We had 32 attendees including 1 additional LPNNRD director. There was a great amount of discussion and questions regarding invasive species, MUD pumping and sediment into the Elkhorn River, and flooding concerns. The second meeting was held in Morse Bluff – Bottom Road Bar on Friday, March 7th, with Don Kavan and Dave Vrana serving as hosts. We had a total of 19 attendees including 4 additional LPNNRD directors. Again, there were many good questions focusing on issues such as sand and gravel mining, T&E species, land use, water quantity and quality, and wastewater management. We also have 3 additional meetings scheduled and a fourth that is in the planning stages. They include:
 - **Linwood – City Hall:** Friday, March 14th, 2008 / 9-10 am / 2nd & Beach Streets / HOSTS – Dave Vrana & Don Kavan.
 - **Cedar Bluffs:** Monday, March 24th, 2008 / 8:30-9:30 am / Fire Hall located at 13 East Main Street / HOST – Eric Gottschalk.
 - **Columbus:** Friday, March 28th, 2008 / 9:00-10:00 am / Holiday Inn Express at 524 E. 23rd Street / HOST – Clint Johannes.
 - **Fremont/Inglewood:** TBD
- **Events - 3 Major Outreach & Educational Events:**
 - Airboat Tour – Scheduled for Friday, July 18th, 2008 * Will cover the stretch of the Platte River from Hwy 64 upstream to Schuyler. We may charge a nominal fee of \$10.
 - WQ Open Golf Tournament – Scheduled for 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. I am asking each Alliance member to arrange a demo/display and have someone available for the duration of the tourney.
 - Lower Platte River Summit – Scheduled for Thursday, November 6th, 2008 at Camp Calvin Crest near Fremont * Choice of tours in the morning: (1) Trails Walk or (2) Pahaku – Sacred Pawnee Indian site tour. The summit will start at noon with a soup/sandwich lunch and finish at 8 pm. We also plan to have a meal in the evening. Details are still being determined but we anticipate a \$40-50 registration fee and hope to get 100 people.
- **Cumulative Impact Study (CIS):** We held a partner meeting on February 21st, 2008 at the LPSNRD in Lincoln. The COE has been working on a final report and the group reviewed the latest version. It still needs a lot of work and is incomplete since the COE is still finishing up some land classification. We postponed our March 12th, 2008 due to delays on finishing data compilation.

- **Next LPRCA Quarterly Meeting:** Thursday, April 29th, 2008 starting at 9:30 am at the NE Game & Parks Commission 3rd floor meeting room in Lincoln (UNL East Campus). For this meeting, we are back to our Tuesday meeting day. Tentatively we will have two featured presentations: (1) ENWRA Coordinator, Dana Divine, will talk about the work being conducted with the Eastern Nebraska Water Resources Assessment (ENWRA) group to assess and map aquifers in the glaciated eastern portion of Nebraska, and (2) Jeff Rauh representing the TransCanada company who will make a presentation on the proposed Keystone Oil Pipeline Project that will run through Nebraska and under the Platte River. We will also have a status report on the CIS from the COE. We hope to follow-up with a full blown presentation by the COE and the USGS the following meeting sometime July/August.
- **Environmental Suitability Assessment (ESA):** Matt Pillard with HDR and I continue to meet with local jurisdictions for the needs assessment. We are also continuing to work on the PHASE II Report. We recently presented info on the ESA project at the NE Planning & Zoning Assoc / American Planning Association annual conference in Grand Island on Feb 20th. I am currently filling out paperwork for the \$100,000 NETF grant we were just awarded.
- **WRDA Projects:** The 3 NRD managers/assistant managers and I just returned from our annual pilgrimage to visit with the Nebraska delegation including Sen. Nelson, Sen. Hagel, Rep Terry, and Rep Fortenberry. We also visited with the USACE HQ office. The purpose of the trip was to update the delegation and the USACE on the 3 feasibility study projects – Antelope Valley, WS/CC/ and Sand Creek – as well as discuss FY09 appropriation requests for these projects and the new LPR Watershed Restoration authority we just received in WRDA 2007. We are requesting \$1.7 million from this new authorization, but it may be difficult to get any funding in FY09. We held a follow-up meeting recently with the Omaha District USACE office to discuss how we can engage in their Shared Vision Planning for the LPR Watershed Restoration program.
- **Other Items of Interest:**
 - LPNNRD Board of Directors Meeting – Mar 13th, 2008 * 5:30 pm * Wahoo
 - P-MRNRD Board of Directors Meeting – Mar 13th, 2008 * 8 pm * Omaha
 - LPSNRD Board of Directors Meeting – Mar 19th, 2008 * 7 pm * Lincoln
 - Earth Wellness Festival – Mar 19 & 20, 2008 * all day * SCC in Lincoln
 - USGS Water Data Workshop – Mar 20, 2008 * all day * USGS NE Water Center Office
 - 2008 EPA Wetlands and Watersheds Conference – April 9th, 2008 * KC Missouri. I will be presenting a poster and PowerPoint on the LPRCA.
 - RMS Biennial River Symposium – May 11-15, 2008 * Portland, ME. I will be making two presentations: (1) LPRCA activities, and (2) Project Management to Protect Rivers.
 - Public Meetings / Participation Presentation – Part of a Lorman Educational Program – July 24th, 2008 * Time – TBD * Grand Island.