

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Program, Projects and Operations Subcommittee

**FROM:** Dick Sklenar, Project Manager

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Plan for Elkhorn River Public Access at West Dodge Road

**DATE:** October 30, 2006

Attached is the proposed layout plan developed by the District's consultant (BCDM) for the Elkhorn River public access site at West Dodge Road. The facilities for this site are much the same as what was developed at the West Maple site which includes restroom facilities, parking lot, boat ramp, fencing and gates, landscaping, and an entrance sign.

The current estimated construction cost for the site on West Dodge Road is estimated at \$483,640. This site is more costly when compared to the West Maple site due to the fact that an entrance road will need to be developed to the site.

Residents in the immediate area have indicated concern by the District's development of this public access site. Letters, e-mails, and a petition have been received by the District regarding their concern on the establishment of a boat ramp at the site. The major fear is that airboats will use the ramp for access to the river.

A remedy to that concern, which has been done previously, is to install a bollard in the center of the boat ramp. The bollard will only be removed should rescue and search operations be needed by local law enforcement agencies.

**It is recommended that the Subcommittee recommend to the Board of Directors that the proposed plan for the Elkhorn River public access site at West Dodge Road be implemented as presented.**

Ag/Institutional

## Agricultural field

Highway 6 ( West Dodge Road)

### Identified Wetlands

**Total Project Area:**  
6.44 acres property.  
3.5 acres developed

Proposed access road shall be hard surfaced (concrete or asphalt) across NDOR property and aggregate surfacing on P-MRNRD property

There are no outstanding rights held by others within the P-MRNRD property

No power utilities are to be relocated due to this project. Two storm sewer outlets shall be extended as a part of this project.

There will be no power utility infrastructure required for this project. All site security lighting shall be isolated LED fixtures with solar power connections and operated by photoeye..

**Elkhorn River Public  
Access/ Highway 6  
Elkhorn, Nebraska**

## Overall Site Plan

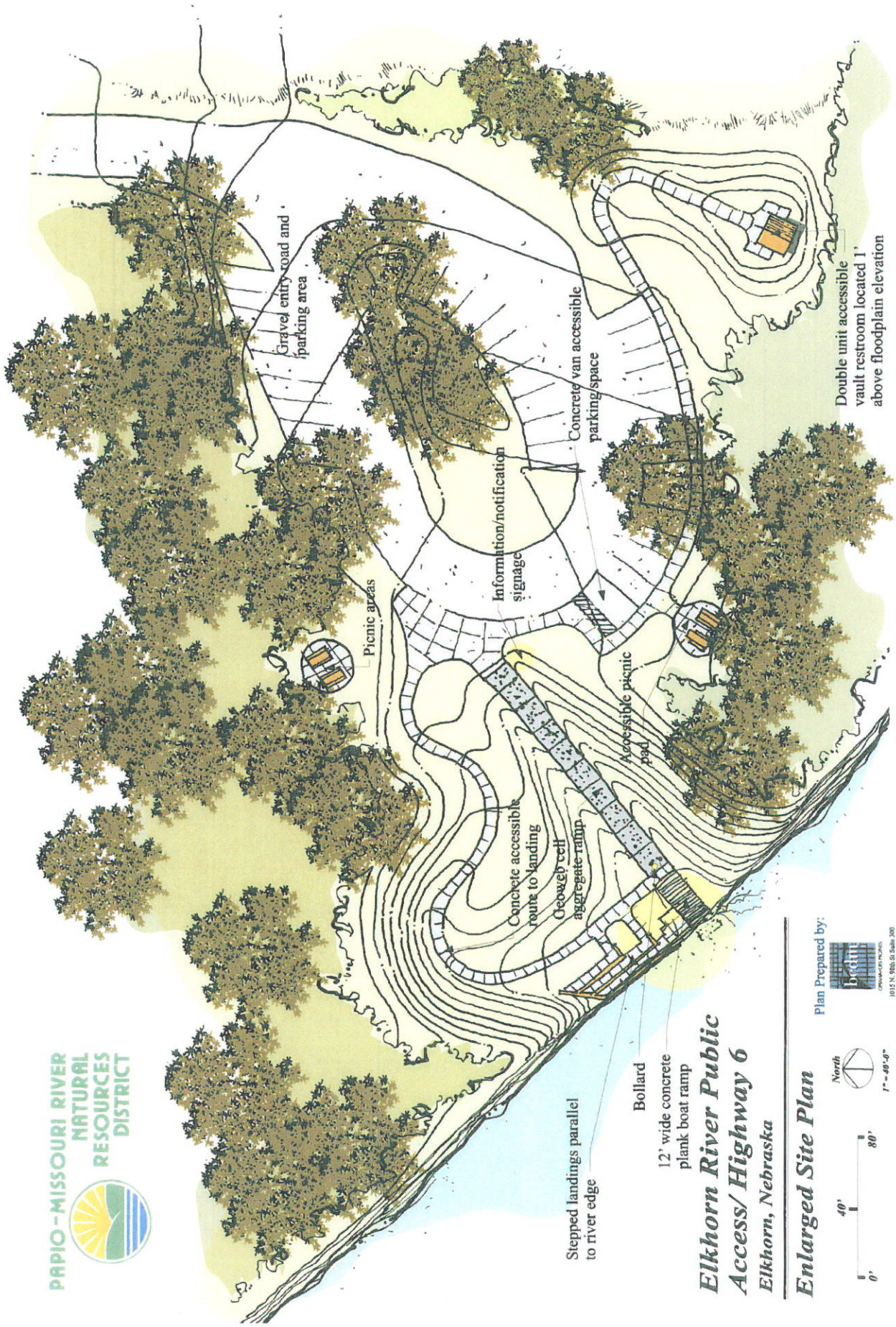
Plan Prepared by:



1015 N. 92nd St Suite 300  
Omaha, Ne 68114  
20 September 2006







Stepped landings parallel  
to river edge

Bollard

12' wide concrete  
plank boat ramp

## Elkhorn River Public Access/ Highway 6 Elkhorn, Nebraska

### Enlarged Site Plan



Plan Prepared by:



1015 N. 92nd St. Suite 200  
Omaha, NE 68114

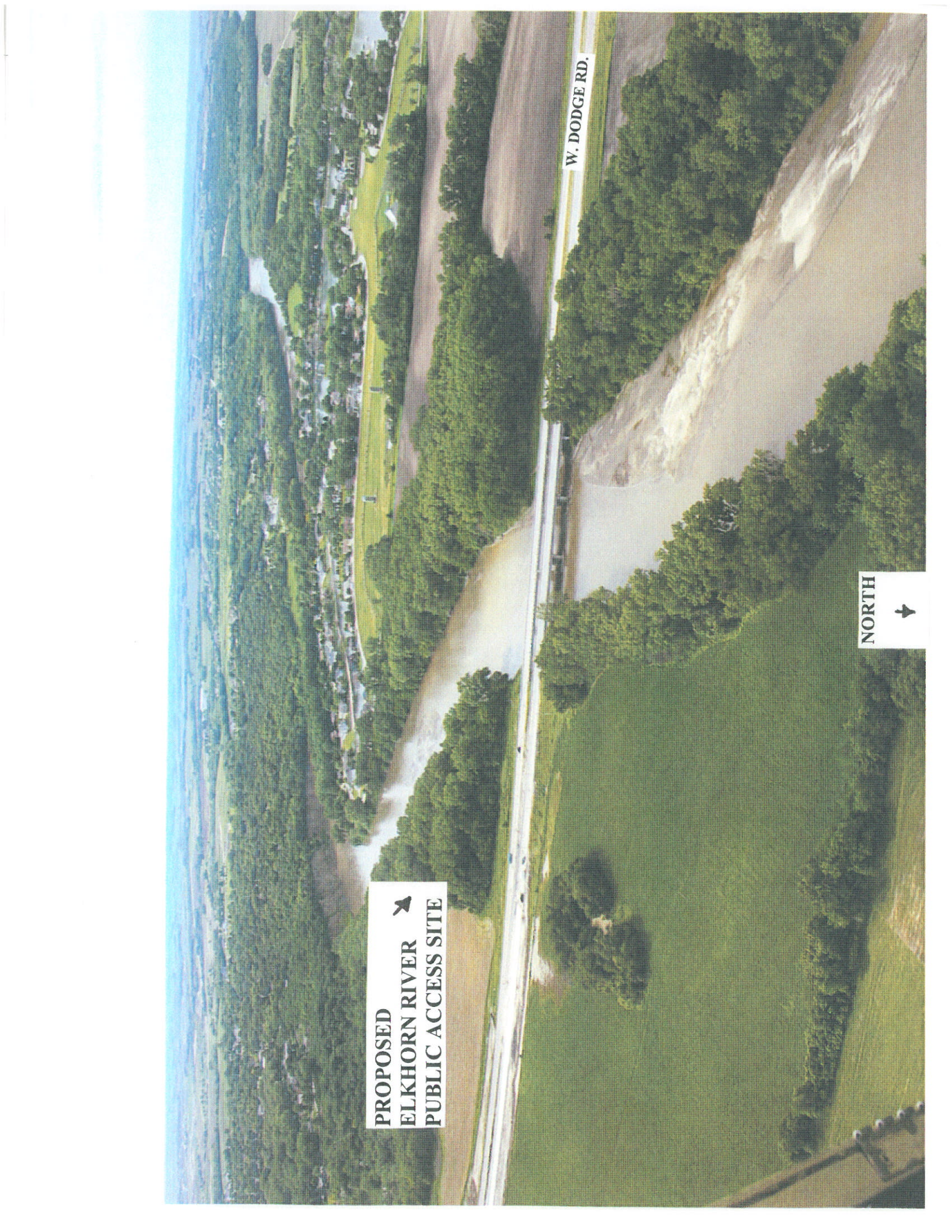


**PROPOSED  
ELKHORN RIVER  
PUBLIC ACCESS SITE**



**W. DODGE RD.**

**NORTH**  
↑





Papio-Missouri River NRD

PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COSTS

PROJECT NAME: ELKHORN RIVER ACCESS

PROJECT #: 4385 Highway 6 - West Dodge Road

ITEM	QUANTITY	UNIT	UNIT COST	TOTAL
<b>DEMOLITION:</b>				
Site Clearing	1.00	LS	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
				\$ 12,000.00
<b>EARTH WORK:</b>				
Cut and Fill	20,000.00	CY	\$ 2.00	\$ 40,000.00
Scarify and Recompact	7,500.00	SY	\$ 1.50	\$ 11,250.00
Fine Grading/Topsoil	9,600.00	SY	\$ 1.50	\$ 14,400.00
Erosion and Sediment Control	1.00	Allow	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00
				\$ 77,650.00
<b>PAVING:</b>				
6" Asphalt Paving	1,500.00	SY	\$ 14.00	\$ 21,000.00
Rock Surfacing (Roadway/Parking)	5,200.00	SY	\$ 8.00	\$ 41,600.00
6" Concrete Paving	200.00	SY	\$ 40.00	\$ 8,000.00
4" Concrete Sidewalks	2,350.00	SF	\$ 3.50	\$ 8,225.00
Aggregate/GeoWeb Ramp	950.00	SF	\$ 16.00	\$ 15,200.00
Precast Concrete Ramp Planks	40.00	EA	\$ 350.00	\$ 14,000.00
				\$ 108,025.00
<b>SITE AMENITIES:</b>				
ROMTEC Vault Restroom	1.00	EA	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00
Picnic Tables	4.00	EA	\$ 700.00	\$ 2,800.00
Entry Gate	2.00	EA	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 5,000.00
Post Mounted Signage	1.00	Allow	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Monument Highway Sign	1.00	Allow	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
Removable Bollard	2.00	EA	\$ 900.00	\$ 1,800.00
Fencing (Perimeter)	2,600.00	LF	\$ 4.00	\$ 10,400.00
Sheet Pile/Concrete Slab Landing	1.00	LS	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
				\$ 123,500.00
<b>SITE UTILITIES:</b>				
Roadway storm sewer extensions	1.00	LS	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
Exterior Lighting	1.00	LS	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00
				\$ 48,000.00
<b>LANDSCAPING:</b>				
Seeding	2.50	AC	\$ 900.00	\$ 2,250.00
Trees	9.00	EA	\$ 250.00	\$ 2,250.00
Erosion Control Matting	1.00	LS	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 18,000.00
				\$ 22,500.00
<b>SUBTOTAL- HARD COSTS:</b>				<b>\$ 391,675.00</b>
<b>GENERAL CONDITIONS (5%)</b>				<b>\$ 19,583.75</b>
<b>OVERHEAD AND PROFIT (12%)</b>				<b>\$ 49,351.05</b>
<b>CONTINGENCY (5%)</b>				<b>\$ 23,030.49</b>
<b>TOTAL- HARD COSTS:</b>				<b>\$ 483,640.29</b>

7/10/05

715 Riverside Drive  
Riverside Drive  
Waterloo, NE 68069

Papio-Missouri Natural Resources District  
8901 S. 154<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68138

Dear Papio-Missouri Board Members:

My wife and I applaud you for your decision to authorize construction of a new boat access ramp just south of the bridge crossing the Elkhorn River at West Dodge Road. However we strongly encourage you to ensure that the size of the new ramp limits access to small boats and specifically prohibits the launching of large boats such as airboats.

We live on the River and are pleased to see people floating by on inner tubes or boating in kayaks, canoes, and shallow draft small boats. Fortunately, since we purchased our home on the Elkhorn a little over a year ago, the tranquility of the River has only occasionally been overwhelmed by the deafening sound of an airboat. Not only are these airboats excessively noisy, they are a potential menace to the tubers, kayakers, and small, un-powered boats. In our view airboats are inappropriate for a river with the characteristics of the Elkhorn, at least in the Riverside Lakes area. Given their un-muffled sound level, they intrude on both other users and landowners such as us. In fact, the sound level likely violates regulations established to protect the rights and health of those unwillfully exposed.. Given their design, they also are far too speedy and, thereby, a threat to small, un-powered boaters, kayakers, and ,others.

Again, we applaud your decision to facilitate access for tubers, small boaters, kayakers, and canoers to enjoy the scenically beautiful, tranquil ambiance of the Elkhorn. However, we believe very strongly that the ramp you have approved should prohibit access by the airboats and other large, noisy water craft.

Sincerely,

Irvin L. White, Ph.D.

cc: Riverside Lakes Homeowners Association

**Sklenar, Dick**

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**From:** Madonna Braun [madonnajb@cox.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 18, 2006 10:55 AM  
**To:** Sklenar, Dick  
**Subject:** Elkhorn River public access

Dear Mr. Sklenar,

As residents of Riverside Lakes, with our home on the banks of the Elkhorn River, we are writing to strongly object to the proposal to build a ramp for air boat access to the Elkhorn River at Dodge Street. The noise pollution is reason enough to not promote air boat traffic on the river. With many homes along Skyline Drive that will also be affected, there are a fairly large number of citizens who will be subjected to this noise. The bluff or cliff to the immediate south of the proposed ramp magnifies the noise.

The Platte River, a wider and more open body of water, provides access and many miles for air boaters to enjoy. Please consider keeping the Elkhorn River for canoers and kayakers.

We moved out here because of the peaceful tranquility of our Omaha-area "Niobrara". The wildlife along this river is priceless and abundant, but most of it will disappear with the disruption their habitat that air boats will produce. We also think this river should be preserved as it is for the many canoers and kayakers who use it because of its safety due to the small amount of air boaters.

We have hosted weekend retreats for our prayer group because of the tranquil, serene beauty of this area. We must preserve these areas as they become more scarce. Let's not let one more haven for our wildlife be taken away, never to be replaced, in the name of progress. This wildlife population is one of our most precious natural resources. Please care for it as we do.

Thank you for taking our concerns into consideration.

Madonna and Dick Braun  
609 Riverside Drive  
Waterloo, NE 68069  
402-779-3294

Waterloo, NE  
January 24, 2006

Steve Oltmans  
Papio-Missouri NRD  
Omaha, NE 68138

Dear Steve:

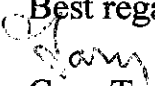
I am writing in my opposition to the Public Access Site for the Elkhorn River at West Dodge Road. Even though we don't live on the river, the noise from the airboats has disrupted conversations on our deck. Our guests have commented to this effect and I can only imagine what it sounds like when your backyard abuts the River.

Of course, selfishly, I am concerned about property values and realize the Maple Street site is a done deal and certainly will increase traffic on the Elkhorn. Considering this and the possibilities of uninvited visitors to our unique area and all that goes along with this, our residents are very concerned. Colleen and I are volunteers for our own Citizen's Patrol and we have enough trouble with our own residents without influx of more. (thank God our kids are raised and gone, however I don't think they compare to kids nowadays.)

I am definitely not against airboats; in fact we have checked on them to charter one for a ride with my grandsons'. However, I think the Platte is suitable enough and we don't need more enticements to put more airboats on the Elkhorn. Please consider not doing an access on West Dodge Road. Steve, let me put it this way, disregarding your position with the NRD, and if you were in my shoes with a home you dearly love and that the noise pollution and people problems stands to get worse, I'm betting you would be writing a similar letter.

Thanks for taking the time to consider our position. I realize you are being pulled from lots of sides. At least I am not an environmentalist wacko as Rush Limbaugh would term it.

Best regards to you and your family,

  
Gary Tuttle

413 LAKEHURST DR.  
WATERLOO, NE, 68069



Steve Oltmans, General Manager  
Papio-Missouri River NRD  
8901 South 154<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68138

Dear Mr. Oltmans

I am writing in regards to the proposed air boat launch site on the Elkhorn River and Dodge Street. I am a resident of Riverside Lakes, a community of 205 homes directly across the river from this proposed site. I have no problem with the access for canoes and tubes but the noise level of the air boats is unbelievable. We have always had some air boats cursing the river and the amount of noise they put out in our community is totally unacceptable. The cliff across the river from our community directs all the noise back at riverside lakes. We really don't need to encourage more of them to congregate right across from us. The river can so be enjoyed by many more people in keeping air boats to a minimum so canoers, swimmers and fisherman can enjoy the river too.

Air boats on this narrow river are not in sync with the vast majority of the population that recreates along it. Please keep us in mind. We have invested in our homes and community and must live with this. This is a terribly wrong use of this beautiful site.

Thank you

William Reppert  
461 Lakehurst dr  
Riverside Lakes  
Waterloo Ne  
68069

January 18, 2006

Steve Oltmans, General Manager  
Papio-Missouri River NRD  
8901 S. 154<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68138

Dear Mr. Oltmans,

As a resident of Riverside Lakes, with our home on the banks of the Elkhorn River, we are writing to strongly object to the proposal to build a ramp for air boat access to the Elkhorn River at Dodge Street. The noise pollution is reason enough to not promote air boat traffic on the river. With many homes along Skyline Drive that will also be affected, there are a fairly large number of citizens who will be subjected to this noise. The bluff or cliff to the immediate south of the proposed ramp magnifies the noise. Please look at the number of homes and citizens on both sides of the Elkhorn who would have to endure the noise pollution.

The Platte River, a wider and more open body of water, provides access and many miles for air boaters to enjoy. Please consider keeping the Elkhorn River for canoers and kayakers.

We all have moved out here because of the peaceful tranquility of our Omaha area "Niobrara". The wildlife along this river is priceless and abundant, but most of it will disappear with the disruption to their habitat that air boats will produce.

We also think this river should be preserved as it is for the many canoers and kayakers and tubers who use it because of its safety due to the small amount of current air boaters.

We have hosted week-end retreats for our prayer group because of the tranquil, serene beauty of this area. We must preserve these areas as they become more scarce. Let's not let one more haven for our wildlife be taken away, never to be replaced, in the name of progress.

This wildlife population is one of our most precious natural resources. Please care for it as we do.

Thank you for taking our concerns into consideration.

Sincerely,

*Madonna & Dick Braun*

Madonna & Dick Braun  
609 Riverside Drive  
Waterloo, NE 68069 (402-779-3294)

1.1.1. 5/20



466 Lakehust Dr.  
Waterloo, NE 68069  
January 18, 2006

Mr. Steve Oltmans  
General Manager  
Papio-Missouri River NRD  
8901 South 154<sup>th</sup> St.  
Omaha, NE 68138

Mr. Oltmans,

As a resident and property owner in Riverside Lakes, I would like to strongly protest the plans for the addition of an airboat ramp on the Elkhorn River for the following reasons:

\*Much of the area along the Elkhorn is pristine natural habitat for all sorts of wildlife. The noise and disturbance from airboats will do much to disrupt the natural setting in the area.

\*The Elkhorn is a very narrow stream, especially when the water is low. This causes traffic on the river to hug the shoreline, exacerbating the problems of noise pollution and wake damage to the shoreline.

\*The high banks along the Eastern edge of the river reflect the high level sounds from airboats into our residential area. Many times, airboat noise makes it impossible to carry on a conversation in our back yard, and we don't even live on the river.

\*Airboaters have an abundance of areas to use on the Platte where the river is wide and shorelines relatively unpopulated.

\*Persons who like to canoe and kayak need areas where they are free from the hazards of powerboats that dominate the channel, especially in times of low water.

\*Airboat owners who feel they must face the challenge of the Elkhorn River already have access to it without spending the taxpayers dollars to support the activities of a very small portion of the taxpayer base at the expense of those who enjoy the company of wildlife and the peace and quiet of rural living.

\*If I were to drive a vehicle anywhere else in the country that was as noisy as an airboat, I would be arrested. Those of us who choose to live near a small river deserve the same protection from noise pollution as those living near highways and byways everywhere else in the land.

I would like to be informed of your future activities in regard to this matter. My email address is below.



Robert Heliker  
rfheliker@cox.net



**Sklenar, Dick**

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**From:** AdStamp [elkhornriver@cox.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 07, 2006 9:27 PM  
**To:** Sklenar, Dick  
**Cc:** edwards@radiks.net  
**Subject:** Dodge Street / Elkhorn River Access Site

Dear Dick Sklenar and Steve Oltmans,

Please consider limiting the new public access site to the Elkhorn River (at the West Dodge Street bridge) to canoes, kayaks, and tubes. Please do not build a ramp to accomodate the launching of air boats.

The noise pollution the air boats emit are deafening and counter to the natural beauty and peace we enjoy on the river. Air boat engines are heard all throughout the Riverside Lakes community, not by just the folks on the river.

I personally welcome the sight of canoers, kayakers, and tubers. I see them often in the summer and am happy to see others enjoying the beauty and tranquility of the Elkhorn River, and just plain having a great relaxing time in the sun. I must, however, say that the potential littering problem is a concern to me. I hope we won't see a bunch of cans and other garbage floating in the water and washing up on the banks and sandbars.

I urge you to reconsider the plan of constructing air boat ramp access to the Elkhorn River at West Dodge Road. There are over 200 homes here at Riverside Lakes that I'm sure feel the same way.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Mary K. (Molly) Scott  
521 Riverside Drive  
Waterloo, NE 68069

402-779-2554

[molly@adstamp.com](mailto:molly@adstamp.com)



February 11, 2006

Dr. Fred Richart  
447 Lakehurst Drive  
Waterloo, NE 68069  
402-659-5795

Steve Oltmans, General manager  
Papio-Missouri River NRD  
8901 South 154<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68138

Dear Sir:

It has come to my attention that there is the possibility that the Elkhorn River near Waterloo will have a place for airboat entry and exit.

I object to this in the strongest terms.

First, having owned property on the Platte River, I can attest to the noise level and it is objectionable.

Second, traffic of this nature on the Elkhorn River will lead to bank degradation and habitat destruction.

The Elkhorn River is not large enough to accommodate air boat traffic. It is more suited for canoes and the like.

Thank you for your work on the behalf of the people of this area, and I look forward to a quick resolution to this situation.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Peace,

  
Fred Richart

**Sklenar, Dick**

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**From:** SGChristensen [sgchristensen@cox.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 20, 2006 2:02 PM  
**To:** Sklenar, Dick  
**Subject:** Public Access Site to the Elkhorn River at West Dodge Road

Dear Mr. Dick Sklenar

My wife and I would like to express our personal concerns about the proposed public access to the Elkhorn River at West Dodge Road.

We live in Riverside Lakes, a very beautiful and peaceful part of western Douglas County, and believe airboats should not be allowed access to the Elkhorn River at the proposed site on West Dodge Road.

There is already too much airboat traffic on the Elkhorn River and it is very annoying and disruptive in our neighborhood.

The river bank on the east side of the river reverberates their sound throughout our area disturbing not only the wildlife but our lives.

Here are some additional concerns we have:

- Safety for canoeists, kayakers and tubers
- Law enforcement at the site and on the river, day and night
- Littering & cleanup at the site

I'm sure you wouldn't want something as disruptive as this put in your backyard.

Thank you for your time in listening to those of us that would be directly impacted by the decision to allow airboat access to the Elkhorn River at West Dodge Road.

Steve and Georgia Christensen  
506 Lakehurst Drive  
Waterloo NE 68-69  
779-2931



Steve Oltmans, General Manager  
Papio-Missouri River NRD  
8901 South 154<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68138

January 25, 2006

Dear Mr. Oltmans,

Regarding the proposed air boat launch on the Elkhorn River at Dodge Street, we the Homeowners Association of Riverside Lakes are strongly opposed to the air boat launch. There is a cliff directly across the river from Riverside Lakes and our 205 homes. This directs all the noise back at our homes. This site should be used only for canoes, tubes and fisherman so as to not disturb those who live along the river and all the others who would use it. These air boats most certainly exceed all noise limits for a residential neighborhood.

Thank you,

Riverside Lakes Homeowners Assoc.  
636 Riverside Drive  
Waterloo NE 68069

Robert Lynn, President

Cathy Bockelman, Vice President

Georgia Christiansen, Secretary

Steve Lairmore

Linda Mayer

Sandy McKinney

Jennifer Miller

Kim Miller

Bill Reppert

Jennifer Oliver

*Robert Lynn*  
*Cathy Bockelman*  
*Georgia Christiansen*  
*Steve Lairmore*  
*Linda A. Mayer*  
*Sandy McKinney*  
*Jennifer Miller*  
*Kim Miller*  
*Bill Reppert*  
*Jennifer Oliver*

## **Sklenar, Dick**

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**From:** Robert Miller [bobandjeni1@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, March 06, 2006 7:30 PM  
**To:** Sklenar, Dick  
**Subject:** Boat ramp at Dodge street.

Dick,

I wanted to drop you a note concerning the new boat ramp at 220th and Dodge. I live very near the area where the ramp is to be placed. I think it is a good idea for the NRD to place a ramp in this area, although I do have concerns regarding air boats access for the area. I live in Riverside Lakes, as you are aware there are large cliffs just down from Dodge street, when air boats use the river the noise is very very loud. I am asking the NRD to restrict the boat ramps to air boats. Thank you for your time.

Robert Miller  
430 Riverside Drive.

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Don't just search. Find. Check out the new MSN Search!  
<http://search.msn.click-url.com/go/onm00200636ave/direct/01/>

To Whom it may concern  
As a resident of river side  
lakes I would like to say that  
air boats on the Elkhorn river  
would be a very big mistake. Not  
only for the noise but as a hazard  
to canoe's & tubers that use the  
river. Having used both the Platte  
river & the Elkhorn river the  
Platte river is much more suited  
for air boats, as it is wider & not  
surrounded by bluffs like the Elkhorn.  
The launch site would be great for  
everything but airboats.

Sincerely  
Daniel & Zitek

DAN & LINDA ZITEK  
463 LAKEHURST DRIVE  
WATERLOO NE 68069-9711

**Sklenar, Dick**

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**From:** Larry Swartzbaugh [l\_swartzbaugh@yahoo.com]

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 08, 2006 5:07 PM

**To:** Sklenar, Dick

**Subject:** Airboat launce pad

Gentlemen: Obviously none of you live on the river or any where close to Riverside Lakes, or you would not have gotten this far with your proposal. The noise from these craft is deafening. Why do you suppose the drivers and passengers must wear ear plugs? You must have way too much of our tax dollars to spend on this type of project. How about lowering the tax levy and sell the excess land? Please do not proceed with this plan. Yours truly Larry Swartzbaugh

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Yahoo! Mail

Bring photos to life! [New PhotoMail](#) makes sharing a breeze.



March 7, 2006

Steve Oltmans, General Manager  
Papio-Missouri River NRD  
8901 So 154<sup>th</sup> St.  
Omaha, Ne. 68138

Dear Steve:


I am writing this letter about the proposed NRD public access site on the Elkhorn River @ West Dodge Rd.

My wife and I live in the Riverside Lakes addition and we are concerned about this project since I heard that Airboats will be allowed to use this ramp. I am wondering how safe it will be mixing canoeists, tubers, and kayakers together on that small river. I used to have an Airboat myself. We kept it on the Platte River 80 miles west of Omaha in a rural area. Driving an Airboat can be a tricky thing especially when the wind is strong. This section of the Elkhorn has a lot of sand bars, and old bridge pilings south of the bridge on West Dodge. In my judgment I don't think canoes, float tubes, and kayakers would mix very well on that river. And as you already know Airboats are extremely noisy.

This brings me to another point. The HOMES on each side of that part of the river are permanent residences of both Skyline Ranches and Riverside Lakes. Airboats racing up and down the river right in their backyards would be very unpleasant. The noise level might not meet standards set for noise pollution. We also have a variety of wildlife that nests and lives in the area. I have seen Turkey Vultures, Bald Eagles, Ducks, Canada Geese, Wild Turkeys, and many song birds that live in that part of the river.

I hope that you would reconsider your plans on building a ramp large enough for Airboats. I am not against people having some fun on a hot summer day on the river. But Airboats and young children riding in inner tubes do not mix. I also noticed that there are people out on the sandbars fishing and having picnics. To me that would be a very dangerous situation with powerful Airboats going by.

Respectfully yours,

  
Don Pearson  
335 Waterloo Dr.  
Waterloo, Ne. 68069

**Sklenar, Dick**

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**From:** Linda Zitek [lzitek1@cox.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 12, 2006 7:59 PM  
**To:** Sklenar, Dick  
**Subject:** Airboat launch site on Dodge street

I find it strange that your office is considering airboats to travel down the Elkhorn river. The Platte River is a more suitable river for that type of boat.

On the Elkhorn River, it is narrower, and you will find that people with use for more leisurely activities, such as: canoes, tubes, kiakes (sp?).

The Platte River is wider and can handle the traffic of the air boats. The Elkhorn is narrow and the echo from the bluffs will make them twice as noisy.

Please - DO NOT allow the Airboats to launch from the Dodge Street ramp.

Sincerely,  
Linda Zitek  
resident of Riverside Lakes  
463 Lakehurst Drive  
Waterloo, NE 68069

3/13/2006

**Sklenar, Dick**

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**From:** Jerry Hraban [jhpremierinspart@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 11, 2006 11:04 AM  
**To:** Sklenar, Dick  
**Subject:** Elkhorn River access

To Whom It May Concern,

As a resident of Riverside Lakes, Waterloo, NE, I am definitely opposed to the planned airboat access at Dodge Street.

The noise level of the boaters starting and revving their engines will be excessive. Also as a boater myself, we all feel the "need" to start boating by going as fast and as louding as possible - I guess its the excitement of being back on the water and wanting to "show off" to all spectators (whether real or imagined).

The noise level will be compounded by the steep cliff walls, which are directly behind the houses.

I fully understand airboaters currently use the river. However, to have a starting point o close to a neighborhood is not wise and not a responsible decision. The noise and possible confrontation with unruly and possibly intoxicated boaters and neighbors (each likely to be drinking on the weekend) is unnecessary. Why put the access spot on Dodge when there are numerous other options?

It would seem to make better sense and save money to expand the access point on Maple Street, or move the airboat location to Center or Q Streets.

Please put my household down as being adamantly against the Dodge Street access.

Sincerely,

Gerald and Janet Hraban  
510 Shorewood Lane  
Waterloo, NE 68069  
402-779-3270

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Yahoo! Mail

Use Photomail to share photos without annoying attachments.

3/13/2006

**Sklenar, Dick**

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**From:** Bob and Jan Heliker [rfheliker@cox.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 21, 2006 7:08 PM  
**To:** Sklenar, Dick; Oltmans, Steve; mpeterman@paionrd.org  
**Subject:** NRD and the Elkhorn/Dodge River Corner

Hello Gentlemen

I am writing to tell you I think the Boat Landing currently being build on the Elkhorn River and Maple Street is a very good idea and will be used by many people in our area.

I would also like to express my concern about the possibility of another landing about a mile down the river at Elkhorn River and Dodge Street. It seems a waste of taxpayer dollars to build another landing so close.

I am also very concerned that you are planning to put an air boat ramp at this Dodge Street site. Air Boats are very noisy and destructive to the wild life on our river--especially with a major housing development very close to the proposed landing site.

Please let me know what the current status is on this proposal and the best way to voice our concerns (petitions-emails-letters??)

Thank you for the time and effort you put into your work--we know you want the best for our community.

Janet M Heliker



466 Lakehurst Drive  
Waterloo NE 68069

Mr Steve Oltmans, General Manager  
Papio-Missouri River NRD  
8901 South 154<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha NE 68138

Dear Mr Oltmans

I am writing to you to express my concern over the proposed air boat landing being consider for the Dodge Street/Elkhorn River location.

Because there is already a wonderful landing strip on the Elkhorn River and Maple Street currently being built, it seems a waste of money to build another expensive landing pad within a mile.

The housing development at Riverside Lakes is also a factor in considering an air boat landing pad. These boats are noisy and destructive to the natural environment.

Please leave our river as it is—a quiet, peaceful habitat for nature and the people who live on the river—or near it.

2/1/81  
Janet M Heliker

WMA 4-7-2006

715 Riverside Drive  
Riverside Lakes  
Waterloo, NE 68069  
May 27, 2006

Mr. Rick Sklenar  
NRD Board of Directors  
Papio-Missouri River District  
8901 S. 154<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68138-3621

Dear Mr. Sklenar:

We live on the banks of the Elkhorn River in the Riverside Lakes community in Waterloo. Our purpose in writing is to oppose the Papio-Missouri Natural Resources District Board's proposal to construct a power boat and airboat access ramp in the vicinity of the West Dodge Road Bridge over the Elkhorn River. The bases of our opposition are fourfold: (1) the Elkhorn River and power boats are incompatible; (2) operating power boats on the Elkhorn will create a safety problem; (3) power boats and airboats will create a public nuisance; and (4) the use of the River by power boats and airboats will significantly degrade the existing environment and reverse the progress being made in rebuilding bird populations such as bald eagles and blue birds.

### **Incompatibility**

Though it is beautiful, the Elkhorn is generally narrow, shallow, and populated by numerous sandbars, all features that limit how the River can reasonably be used. Current uses are predominately either persons floating downriver on inner tubes or canoeists, rafters, or kayakers. Episodically we hear and eventually see an airboat come by.

The depth of the River varies considerably. But we are always amused when the floaters jump off or out of their conveyance into water that is less than knee deep. It is difficult to imagine that power boats can operate successfully given the narrowness, shallowness, and numerous sandbars.

### **Safety**

Current users have limited maneuverability. Moreover most of the people passing by our yard are socially engaged, talking, splashing, tossing beach balls, etc. They would be very much at a disadvantage in sharing the River with either power boats or airboats. Power boat and airboat operators would necessarily be preoccupied in trying to find a passage around the sand bars and through the narrow, shallow water, which would also limit their maneuverability. The risk of accidents would be high. The canoeists, rafters, and tubers would be sitting ducks, especially at risk of being overrun by an airboat.

### **Public Nuisance**

Power boats can be noisy, but airboats are incredibly more so. The decibel level must far exceed what would be required for a stationary noisemaker. In our area, the sound is magnified when it bounces off the bluffs that line the river. The elevated noise level precedes the airboat and continues well after it has passed.. Absent a launching ramp, we now occasionally have airboats come by. Occasional is barely tolerable. Frequent would constitute an intolerable public nuisance.

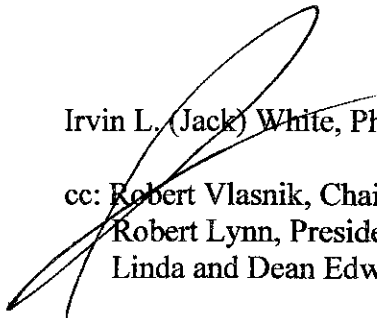
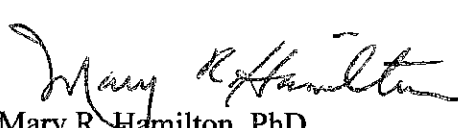
### **Degrading the Environment**

Riverside Lakes is noted for its scenic beauty, abundant wildlife, and sense of community. Residents work hard to protect and nurture the natural environment. Once an endangered species, eagles are now often seen roosting and feeding throughout the community, especially on and along the Elkhorn and on the islands in our two man-made lakes. Our community is also on the blue bird migratory flyway. Once a dwindling population, our residents are successfully helping the blue bird population rebound. We also frequently have herons and egrets wading and fishing in the River. Making it possible for large numbers of power boats and airboats to use the River will significantly degrade the esthetics of the community and adversely impact the wildlife and fragile bird populations we now not only have but support.

In summary, we urge you and your fellow Board Members not to go forward with this ill-advised project. We doubt that power boat operators will find the River to be compatible with their boating recreational interests and needs. And we view increasing opportunities for airboat operators to use the River as being both poor natural resources policy and an unacceptable intrusion on our Riverside Lakes community.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

   
Irvin L. (Jack) White, PhD and Mary R. Hamilton, PhD

cc: Robert Vlasnik, Chairman of Sanitary Improvement District Number 177  
Robert Lynn, President of the Riverside Lakes Homeowners Association  
Linda and Dean Edwards

**ROBERT L. VLASNIK**

1 June 2006

Mr. Dick Sklenar  
Special Projects Coordinator  
Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District  
8901 South 154<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68138-3621

JUN - 1 2006

Re: Boat Access Ramp at West Dodge Road

Mr. Sklenar:

Consider this correspondence an expression of my concerns and objections related to the planned construction of a power boat access ramp to the Elkhorn River at a location adjacent to, and just south of, the West Dodge Road bridge across the Elkhorn...**which by any stretch of the imagination is not a 'power boat river'**. My concerns and objections, and those of many of my Riverside Lakes neighbors, are certainly elevated by the news that the ramp currently planned by the NRD at this location will not only encourage power boat access to the Elkhorn but also accommodate, and thereby encourage, airboat access.

The generally narrow width of the Elkhorn River, coupled with the further limitations of channel restricting sandbars, is not conducive to any concentration of two-way power boat traffic, and certainly not to that of fast moving, wide-ranging airboats. As a matter of fact, there are often many very narrow stretches of free-moving water : creating a major safety hazard considering the high relative speeds resulting from any two-way power boat traffic. Couple this obvious power boat traffic hazard with that of the slower, current controlled canoe and 'tubing' traffic on the Elkhorn, and you will have created the **potential for 'accidents just waiting to happen'**.

Further, the terrain adjacent to the Elkhorn River is relatively high east of the river along and in the vicinity of 'Skyline' and the Riverside Lakes community. Airboat (aircraft) engine noise along this reach of the Elkhorn can surly be expected to reverberate off of the higher terrain : intensifying to **environmentally unacceptable noise levels** in the surrounding area.

You all must know, or at least should know, that the Elkhorn River is a recognizable and much used canoeing and 'tubing' water resource. The canoe access ramp arrangement that is being constructed by the NRD just south of the Maple Street bridge across the Elkhorn is testament to that fact. To try to reshape the Elkhorn into a power boating and airboat resource...something it isn't...is skewed thinking : **truly a gross distortion of the nature of this valuable resource.**

In my opinion, and that of many of my neighbors, the noisy, bothersome and dangerous power boat and airboat traffic that can be anticipated as a result of your currently planned boat access ramp at the West Dodge Road bridge over the Elkhorn will have long-lasting detrimental effects on the Elkhorn River in general, and on Riverside Lakes and the surrounding community in the specific.

**22715 WILSON AVENUE  
WATERLOO, NEBRASKA 68069**



Mr. Dick Sklenar  
Special Projects Coordinator  
1 June 2006  
Page 2

In the interest of the safety of those using the Elkhorn River, and in the interest of preserving a valuable resource...**the existing nature of the Elkhorn**...I ask that the NRD reconsider the current plan to construct a boat access ramp to accommodate power boats in the vicinity of the West Dodge Road bridge. Barring that, and arbitrarily ignoring the real safety issues of encouraging power boating on the Elkhorn River, at the very least modify the design of the planned ramp construction to preclude the more onerous airboat access.

As a practical matter, any access that will accommodate airboats at the location in question can certainly be expected to be considered a convenient 'gathering point' and access-way to the Platte River by the 'airboaters'. It would be naïve to think otherwise. A plan to construct additional airboat access ramps to the Platte River, **on the Platte River, would certainly make more sense.**

Your acknowledgement will be appreciated.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Vlasnik', written in a cursive style.

Robert L. Vlasnik