

Projects Committee Meeting
Thursday, August 3, 2017 8:00 AM
Lower Platte North NRD Office
P.O. Box 126
Wahoo, NE 68066

1. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There is no unfinished business at this time.

2. SWCP

2.A. SWCP Application Approvals

Above Platte River:

Paul Tank	Planned Grazing/stream crossing	\$ 2,168.14
Mark Shoultz	Waterway	\$ 5,403.49
Dayle Alswager	W/S Basins w/Tile	\$ 7,467.75
Randy Brabec	Waterway	\$ 5,050.58
Scott Schmid	W/S Basins w/Tile	\$ 2,563.69

Skull Creek:

Richard Voboril	W/S Basins w/Tile	\$ 12,500.00
Laverne Kucers	Terraces/Tile & Basins	\$ 12,500.00
Jamie Yindrick	Terraces/Tile & Basins	\$ 12,500.00

Above NRD Structures:

Otte Enterprises	Terraces/Tile	\$ 12,500.00
Dan Mensik	Terraces/Tile	\$ 12,500.00
Greg Divis	Terraces/Tile	\$ 12,500.00
Marian Vermeline	Terraces/Tile	<u>\$ 12,500.00</u>

TOTAL: \$ 110,153.65

2.B. SWCP Payments

17-S-7 Hartman Family Trust W/S Basins \$ 10,000

2.C. SWCP Cancellations

2.D. Wahoo Creek Cost Share Approvals

3. WATERSHEDS

3.A. Shell Creek

3.A.1. Shell Creek Environmental Enhancement Plan Implementation

NDEQ has verbally approved \$300,000 of EPA 319 funds for completing designed Shell Creek bank stabilization projects in 2017 & 2018. Our required local match of \$200,000 will come from \$145,000 from the Nebraska Environmental Trust and the balance from the Bailey channel improvement project. We anticipate a formal funding agreement from NDEQ by Board meeting and if so will be asking for a motion to approve and authorize the Chair to sign the agreement.

Colfax County Engineer Mark Mainelli has previously completed the design on the Kramer Shell Creek Bank Stabilization Project and Mountford has instructed him to begin putting together an advertising and construction bid package which will be the first Shell Creek project pursued.

3.A.2. Shell Creek Landowner Levee Project Update

Director Bailey reported that this project is now complete.

3.B. Wahoo Creek Watershed

3.B.1. Wahoo Creek Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) MOU Approval

NRCS is ready to execute the attached RCPP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with us and to move forward with assisting financially with Wahoo Creek Dam Sites 26 and 27. After meeting with NRCS over the last few months, FYRA has updated total estimated project costs which are higher. At the time of the application, total project costs were estimated at \$3,189,800. FYRA's updated estimated costs are now at \$5,281,990 (See FYRA RCPP & WSF Agenda item attachments) due mostly to higher construction and land rights costs than anticipated. The higher construction costs and associated land rights on site 26 (which is being converted to a road dam) and moving site 27 downstream to avoid the ammonia pipeline contributed to this increase. FYRA also said that because of better hydrology technology, the structure requirements are greater than what was anticipated 20 years ago.

RCPP funding will contribute \$1.5 million leaving an estimated \$3.8 million for the local contribution. We are applying for 60% cost share from the State's Water Sustainability Fund. If successful, that would leave approximately \$1.5 million remaining locally to complete the two dams. We are also anticipating that Saunders County will contribute some to dam site 26, which involves a priority bridge replacement site.

3.B.2. FYRA RCPP/WSF Invoice & Moving Forward On Wahoo Creek RCPP/WSF Contract

Attached is the July 6, 2017, \$34,135.84 invoice from FYRA Engineering for contract work completed for updating our Wahoo Creek Watershed Plan update for dam sites 26 and 27 and for work on our Water Sustainability Fund (WSF) application. After this payment, there will be \$78,022.15 remaining on our \$135,790 contract. As per Board policy, since this payment falls under an approved contract, no Board motion for payment is required. Also attached is a draft of our WSF application (and attachments) that have been submitted to NDNR for \$2,269,194 of state assistance for the construction of Wahoo Creek dam sites

26 & 27. FYRA worked with staff to submit our application by the Monday, July 31, 2017 deadline.

As mentioned earlier, RCPP funding will contribute \$1.5 million leaving an estimated \$3.8 million for the local contribution. We are applying for 60% cost share from the State's Water Sustainability Fund. If successful, that would leave approximately \$1.5 million remaining locally to complete the two dams.

A committee recommendation to support submitting this application is requested.

3.B.3. Federal Watershed P.L. 566 Funds for Wahoo Creek Watershed

NRCS has notified us that \$150 million is available nationally for watershed projects under the old P.L. 566 Watershed Program. Fifty million of this will go to existing projects with critical needs and the remaining funds will be available for new projects. Mountford and Mike Sotak, FYRA, met with NRCS on July 20 to discuss submitting an application for federal assistance on the remaining eight unfunded Wahoo Creek Watershed dams as identified in the 1998 NRCS Watershed plan. FYRA has been working on updating the Wahoo Creek Watershed Plan for dam sites 26 and 27 as part of our approved RCPP application, and has preliminary information on all the sites so will be able to assist quickly with required application information. There will be heavy competition for these available funds, especially from Texas and Oklahoma. The committee is asked to discuss submitting a P.L. 566 application for assistance on the remaining eight unfunded Wahoo Creek Watershed dams. After the application is submitted, we should know by the end of 2017 if all or part of our request is approved. If so, there will be a formal agreement be put together outlining NRCS's and LPNNRD's proposed commitment. More deal will be presented at the August 14th LPNNRD Board Meeting.

3.B.4. Wahoo Creek Watershed Water Quality Plan Phase II

With our new EPA/NDEQ 319 Wahoo Phase II grant being approved, we are working with Saunders County who is taking the lead to send out RFP's to engineering firms for the permitting and design of a set of road dams which will replace old county road bridges and provide water quality and flood control benefits.

4. LOWER PLATTE RIVER CORRIDOR ALLIANCE

No new information about how we will formally dissolve from our LPRCA interlocal agreement with LPSNRD and PMRNRD. Attached is John Miyoshi's letter informing LPSNRD that LPNNRD Board voted to no longer continue as an Alliance member.

4.A. LPRCA Watershed Water Quality Plan Draft

While LPNNRD was still part of the LPRCA, the Board approved partnering with LPSNRD and PMRNRD for completing the Lower Platte River Corridor Water Quality Plan with NDEQ. The Board approved up to \$5,742 to assist with completing the plan. While much more information will be included in the final draft, attached is the first plan draft narrative for review. Completion of the plan will mean that the remaining one third of our district will be covered with a EPA 319 Watershed Water Quality Plan and be eligible for future 319 grant funding. Our completed Wahoo Creek and Shell Creek Plans cover the other two thirds of our district.

5. OTHER

5.A. Village of Prague's Water Issue - 9:00 a.m.

The Prague Village Board of Trustees contacted us regarding a possible drainage problem in the Village of Prague. Prague representatives Dan Havlovic and Tom Johnson were present to discuss this issue.

They said that ever since the terraces were installed in the field Northeast of the Village, groundwater infiltration to their sewer main has increased. They realize that the terraces are doing their job by holding back the rain runoff and slowing down the drainage process. However, their concern is that the area outlined in red does not have a defined channel for the runoff to follow. As a result this area is basically a swamp for extended periods of time and we are concerned that this water is "soaking in" instead of draining off and causing higher groundwater levels around our main.

They are wondering if there was a better channel for the water to follow, would that land drain off instead of soaking in. They have been looking into relining or replacing the main, but would rather start with addressing the problem at the source if possible.

The committee offered that they work with LPNNRD/NRCS staff in evaluating the drainage concern to come up with possible solutions and report back to the committee.

5.B. Platte Center Payment Assistance Request - Elm Creek Bank Stabilization Project

Earlier this year, the Board approved 50% up to a maximum assistance of \$11,913 on the next phase of Platte Center's Elm Creek Bank Stabilization Project. The work has been completed at a lower cost than the initial estimate. Attached is their project bill of \$15,456.42 so our 50% assistance is \$7,728.21.

5.C. NRCS Soil Health Sponsorship Request

On Sept 6, 2017, NRCS and Boone County Extension will be hosting a Soil Health Conference in Albion, NE, featuring soil health expert, Ray Archuleta.

They are hoping for 500 attendees, including local ag students from within a 70 mile radius of Albion, NE. The cost of the conference will be around \$9000. Funding for the conference has come from a grant by UNL, vendor booth reservations and sponsorship from local businesses. The Lower Loup and Lower Elkhorn NRD's have pledged \$500 and \$300 respectively. The committee is asked to discuss a possible contribution to this event.

5.D. Lower Platte River Restoration Study

As has been discussed with the Board over the past months, the USACE is asking our local partnership interest in being part of the Lower Platte River Restoration opportunity. This was one of the priority projects that the LPRCA was focused on. The initial goal of the restoration study will be to develop an integrated water resource development plan to restore riverine and floodplain habitats by improving natural channel forming processes, restoring connectivity between the river and its floodplain along the corridor, and restoring side channel and

wetland/riparian habitats to support native species. However, this authority opens the door for future assistance for "project feasibility planning, design, and construction assistance for water resource and watershed management in the natural resources districts, including projects for environmental restoration and flood damage reduction".

In an effort to encourage Congressional funding, the Lower Platte South NRD (on behalf of the LPRCA) submitted a Letter of Intent to USACE last year to sponsor a "new start" comprehensive watershed study. The Watershed Study on the Lower Platte and its tributaries would accomplish the following (see attached fact sheet):

1. Characterize needs of the basin for flood risk, ecosystem restoration, recreation, resiliency, etc;
2. Develop a shared vision to potentially serve as a framework for future land use decision making;
3. Identify projects that contribute towards realizing that vision; and
4. Prepare an implementation strategy, which would prioritize how to achieve that vision.

The study presents an opportunity to develop a comprehensive plan that could also be used by state, regional and local governments to guide ongoing and future development that supports critical social and economic values in a sustainable manner. Of particular interest to the LPNNRD is a comprehensive study and future potential funding of construction projects in the Shell Creek, Wahoo Creek, Skull Creek, Bone Creek, and Otoe Creek to name just a few opportunity areas.

Enclosed is a proposed Letter of Intent to USACE from the three Lower Platte NRDs requesting the comprehensive study be done at a maximum total \$3 million estimated cost. As local sponsors, the NRDs would fund 25% of the study (up to \$250,000 each) over a three year period (\$83,333 per year).

The committee is asked to discuss and decide if we will partner with LPSNRD and PMRNRD in the Lower Platte River Restoration effort by recommending that we jointly sign a letter of intent to the USACE as attached.

5.E. Review of Draft FY 2018 Projects Budget

The committee reviewed and gave input to the draft Projects budget for FY 2018.

6. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business, the Projects Committee adjourned at 9:50 a.m.