

# LOWER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

January 22, 2015

Ord, Nebraska

The January meeting of the Board of Directors of the Lower Loup Natural Resources District was held at the Headquarters Office, 2620 Airport Drive, Ord, Nebraska, on January 22, 2015. Chairman Kruse called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

## CALL TO ORDER

### Directors in attendance

James C. Adams  
Darwin B. Anderson, Secretary  
Joseph L. Citta, Jr., Vice Chairman  
Virgil W. Gellermann  
Randy Kauk  
Matt Lukasiewicz  
Dean J. Rasmussen  
Gerald P. Smith  
Henry J. Thoene

Rollie D. Amsberry, Treasurer  
Timothy E. Bartak  
James J. Eschliman  
N. Richard Hadenfeldt  
Gary A. Kruse, Chairman  
Alan D. Petersen  
Darwin R. Sieh  
Dean G. Thede

### Directors absent

Michael P. Gutzmer  
James C. Nelson

Clifford P. Loseke

### Staff in attendance

Leon "Butch" Koehlmoos, General Manager  
Irene F. Kreifels, Financial Secretary  
Larry D. Schultz, I&E Coordinator  
Anne Freeman, Water Programs Secretary  
Dell Harris, Water Resources Specialist  
LeeAnn Smith, Water Programs Assistant

Russell G. Callan, Assistant General Manager  
Rita A. Goldfish, Administrative Assistant  
Cheryl Hornickel, Programs Assistant  
Richard L. Woollen, District Forester  
Jason Moudry, Water Programs Specialist

### Guests in attendance

Robert Bauer, Columbus  
Eugene Bredthauer, Ord

Beth Boesch, Columbus

## NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING LAW POSTING

Chairman Kruse referred those in attendance to the open meeting law information posted in the Board room.

## APPROVAL OF VERIFICATION OF MEETING NOTICE, ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND EXCUSED ABSENCES

Chairman Kruse asked for verification of the meeting notice. General Manager Leon “Butch” Koehlmoos verified that the meeting notices were properly published in all newspapers and that the meeting notice was also posted at the NRD Headquarters office in Ord, the NRD web site, and the eight field office locations. Koehlmoos said there were no modifications to the agenda.

**Eschliman motioned, seconded by Smith, to approve the verification of the meeting notice, adopt the agenda, and excuse all absent directors. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

## MINUTES

Chairman Kruse asked for corrections and/or additions to the December 18, 2014, Board meeting minutes. None being heard, Chairman Kruse ruled the December 18, 2014, minutes stand approved as submitted.

## TREASURER’S REPORT

Chairman Kruse directed the Board’s attention to the Treasurer’s Report as published in the regular and supplemental agendas.

Koehlmoos reported that the monitoring wells had been drilled by Albion and St. Edward, which is part of DEQ’s special monitoring program. He also said that the new tractor and loader had been purchased from Thoene Farm Service.

Kruse said that the payment to Thoene Farm Service would be considered in a separate motion.

**Sieh motioned, seconded by Gellermann, to approve the January 2015, Treasurer’s Report and pay all bills, excluding the tractor/loader payment to Thoene Farm Service. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Amsberry, Anderson, Bartak, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse, Lukasiewicz, Petersen, Rasmussen, Sieh, Smith, Thede, and Thoene. Director abstaining: Adams. Directors absent: Gutzmer, Loseke, and Nelson.**

**Smith motioned, seconded by Hadenfeldt, to approve the tractor/loader payment to Thoene Farm Service. Motion carried by roll call vote. Directors voting yes: Adams, Amsberry, Anderson, Bartak, Citta, Eschliman, Gellermann, Hadenfeldt, Kauk, Kruse,**

**Lukasiewicz, Petersen, Rasmussen, Sieh, Smith, and Thede. Director abstaining: Thoene. Directors absent: Gutzmer, Loseke, and Nelson.**

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

## SUBDISTRICT #9 VACANCY APPLICANTS

Kruse said that two applicants for the Subdistrict #9 vacancy were in attendance and invited Beth Boesch and Bob Bauer to introduce themselves to the Board. Each gave a brief summary of their backgrounds. Kruse said a candidate would be selected in February.

## FORESTER'S REPORT

District Forester Rich Woollen highlighted parts of the *Wildfire Control Act of 2013* that was included in the agenda. He said the Nebraska Forest Service has been involved with forest fuels reduction in the Niobrara Valley and Pine Ridge. He said SEAT plane bases were built last year in Valentine, Chadron, and Alliance and managers hired through the fire seasons. Woollen said that additional mechanics were hired and more equipment purchased at the NFS fire shop. He reported that NFS is always looking for and developing markets for biomass as thinnings are done. He said that NFS is trying to restore forests on land that was burned by the 2012 fires.

Koehlmoos asked if there was a schedule for funding fuels management needs in the central loess hills. Woollen responded that he would have more information after the NFS staff meeting in February.

## NRCS REPORT

There was no report.

## INFORMATION AND EDUCATION REPORT

### Adventure Camp about the Environment (ACE)

Information & Education Coordinator Larry Schultz reported that ACE Camp will be June 14-17, 2015, at Halsey. He said the NRD offers a \$100 scholarship to students in the District.

### Contests

Schultz reported that both the Area IV Range Judging Contest and North Central Land Judging Contest would be held in the Lower Loup NRD this year. He said the LLNRD would be co-hosting the Central Region Envirothon in Columbus this spring.

Schultz also reported that he would be a presenter at the Children's Groundwater Festival in Grand Island. He said the Environmental Festival would be held in October.

## ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT

### Water Resources Committee

Assistant General Manager Russell Callan directed the Board's attention to the maps showing the locations of flowmeters in which the NRD has provided cost-share through the ET program. He said the average meter reading of the 196 sites was 6.5 inches of water pumped per acre. He said the ET program provides some funds for maintenance of the flowmeters.

### Columbus Area/Christopher's Cove Request for Proposal

Callan said an area around Columbus has shown some groundwater declines which he said could be due to drought, irrigation, industry, city use, and a flood control project. He said he was contacted by Christopher's Cove residents several months ago regarding declines in the lake around the houses. Callan directed the Board's attention to the draft RFP for a Columbus Area Water Resources Assessment in the supplemental agenda. Callan gave a powerpoint presentation and said the RFP contained a 3-step approach – 1) hydrogeologic study; 2) city storm water inventory; and 3) Christopher's Cove recharge project.

Callan said the hydrogeologic study, which would produce an aquifer model for the area, is needed for the recharge project. He said staff had visited with Joe Mangiamelli, city administrator for Columbus, who said the city is looking at the area around Christopher's Cove for industrial development. Mangiamelli said ways to dispose of storm water would be a concern. Callan said Mangiamelli has a copy of the draft RFP. Callan said the proposal for Christopher's Cove was to divert discharge water from Becton Dickinson to Christopher's Cove. He said if BD didn't work out, then other options would be considered.

Callan said that third-party impacts would be evaluated in the assessment, including surface water flow. He said water quality would also be addressed in the RFP. Callan said that if a groundwater decline area is found in the District, that area would become a priority for the NRD to look at.

**Thoene motioned, seconded by Citta, that requests for proposal be sent out for the study of water issues for the Columbus Area/Christopher's Cove Project. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

### Sargent Irrigation District Recharge Project

Callan gave a presentation on the Semler Dam Recharge Project north of Sargent. He said water is put into the dam which helps regulate the flow of the canal. He provided numbers of how much water was recharged and/or evaporated. He said the valley near the dam gets recharged 6,000 acre-feet every year simply because there is water in the canal. Callan said that in 2014, under

normal operating procedures, Semler Dam had 2,300 acre-feet of recharge and 11,000 acre-feet of recharge in the canal. He said that estimated numbers for another month of operation (September 15<sup>th</sup> through October 15<sup>th</sup>) of the dam and canal system would provide an additional 5,000 acre-feet of recharge.

Callan said the NRD is interested in this project. He said there would be some costs involved, but they could be negotiated. Callan said that DNR is willing to consider temporary water rights for the NRD to operate the project and might be able to provide some financial assistance.

Callan said he would be meeting with Sargent Irrigation District officials to go over the numbers.

#### Voluntary IMP Stakeholders Update

Callan reported that the first stakeholders meeting is scheduled for February 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. He said staff would like members of the Water Resources Committee present at the stakeholders meeting, so the Committee will meet prior in the day at 1:00 p.m.

Koehlmoos said that, due to a conflict on February 17<sup>th</sup>, the Programs/Projects Committee will meet on February 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.

Koehlmoos said that the meeting with the irrigation districts would be held January 30<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m. at NRD headquarters office.

#### Area 28 Water Meter Update

Callan reported that 266 flowmeters were in place and \$441,011 had been expended in cost-share. He said that just a few producers had not signed up.

#### District Water Quality Report 2014

Callan said that although the median numbers were low in Area 3 (portions of Wheeler and Boone Counties), the average is 7.0 which indicates high nitrate readings in the area. He said staff would be collecting information from a couple places in Area 3 to try to determine what is causing the high readings.

Callan also mentioned Area 19 (north of Columbus) which is consistently near the trigger number of 6.5 ppm. He said the median was 5.0 ppm for 2014. He said staff has worked with cooperators in the area to try to reduce the nitrate readings.

Callan said that nitrates in Area 28 continue to go up. He said there is still a lot of work to do.

Callan mentioned that staff was going to take a look at the effects of the NRD's water quality rules and regulations and see what the trends have been since 2001.

### South Loup/Middle Loup Rivers Thermal Imaging

Callan said that Lower Loup NRD is a co-sponsor with Upper Loup NRD and USGS on the thermal imaging project of the South Loup and Middle Loup Rivers. He said the project would start in the spring.

### Area 28 Activities

Callan said that Mike Lorenz had sent out letters to 90 cooperators reminding them that annual report forms need to be submitted by January 31<sup>st</sup>.

### Pibel Lake Update

Koehlmoos said that a seepage issue had been found and Olsson Associates is wanting to do a geotech study and bore hole drilling to investigate the seepage. He said the Nebraska Dept. of Roads is sending the NRD a special permit to start the boring process. He said the NDOR owns it, so they should pay for it. The estimated cost of the geotech work is \$20,000. NDOR wants to get the paperwork done and turn it over to the NRD.

When asked about the access road leading to the headwater sediment drop structure, Koehlmoos explained that the bank was too steep on the east side of the lake for an access road, so it has been moved to the north side. Callan said that wetland determination issues were hindering the "404" process by putting the road on NRD property.

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS COMMITTEE REPORT

General Manager Leon Koehlmoos said the Committee met on the January 13<sup>th</sup>.

### Bowman Lake Presentation

Petersen said that the recommendation by the Programs/Projects Committee for Bowman Lake was for funds for maintenance of invasive species to keep the lake clean.

**Petersen motioned, seconded by Rasmussen, to approve an annual donation, beginning in September FY 2016, of \$3,000 per year for 5 years for maintenance and management, to the Bowman Lake Association, contingent on Sherman County's maintaining their present funding level to the lake association. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

### Fullerton Powerhouse Park

Koehlmoos said this was an ongoing project with Fullerton. The City of Fullerton had acquired some land a few years ago, and they contacted the NRD with the idea to develop the island north of town into a recreation area. Fullerton has broken the project down into phases and they are asking for assistance for a boat ramp for canoe access in and out of the river. Petersen said the request falls under the recreation and public safety portions of the NRD's Project Participation Policy.

**Petersen motioned, seconded by Anderson, to approve a contribution of 15% of the project costs, not to exceed \$3,040, for the Fullerton Powerhouse Project. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

#### City of Albion Request on Well Decommissioning

Koehlmoos reported that the City of Albion had decommissioned public water wells under the new state law. The new decommissioning procedure had increased costs significantly. Callan said the City tried to save the wells, but wells with cement casings can no longer be rehabilitated.

**Petersen motioned, seconded by Adams, to approve a contribution of 15% of the \$90,000 in costs to decommission two Albion city wells, not to exceed \$13,500, in addition to the \$500 per well awarded under current NRD policy. Motion carried by roll call vote, all present voting yes.**

#### Pibel Lake

Koehlmoos said it has been suggested that the NRD contact Wheeler County to see if they would switch the agreement with the Department of Roads to maintain the section of road by Pibel Lake. Koehlmoos said the NRD wants access to the dam to take care of the structure, but wants to keep the road maintenance agreement viable.

Koehlmoos said future plans for Pibel Lake include a trail around the lake.

Koehlmoos said the NRD might be participating with Boone County on a project on the Cedar River which involves stabilizing the river bank due to erosion into a county road right-of-way.

### MANAGER'S REPORT

#### New Hires

There were no new hires.

### NARD REPORT

#### Director's Report

Rasmussen said he had been to Davis Creek recently and saw many people ice fishing. He reported that the next NARD meeting would be next week in Lincoln.

### NRC REPORT

#### Commissioner's Report

Hadenfeldt said the NRC would meet in Lincoln next week. He said that he is still on the Rules Committee and they recently had a phone conference.

## RC&D REPORTS

### Loup Basin RC&D

Rasmussen reported that the RC&D had met in Ord and also had an interesting tour of the popcorn plant in North Loup. He said Zangers have sold nearly 1,200,000 pounds of popcorn seed overseas.

Rasmussen said the RC&D was working on getting another tire collection organized, possibly in Loup City or Boone County.

### PrairieLand RC&D

Gellermann said the RC&D is finishing up some projects.

## COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Kruse handed out a sheet showing the members of the different committees for 2015. He said there were a few changes.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Koehlmoos said that if directors need to change their Legislative Conference reservations in any way, let Schultz know.

## ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Kruse declared the meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Roster for attendance of this meeting and tally of votes cast on motions at this meeting are being filed with the official minutes of this meeting at the Lower Loup Natural Resources District's Headquarters Office, 2620 Airport Drive, Ord, Nebraska. Publication notification of this meeting was made via a newspaper in each county within the District. The next Board of Directors meeting will be held Thursday, February 26, 2015, at 5:00 p.m., at the Headquarters Office in Ord, Nebraska.

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Darwin B. Anderson  
Secretary