

LOWER PLATTE NORTH NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

NEBRASKA WATER SUSTAINABILITY FUND GRANT AWARD ANNUAL REPORT – APRIL 1, 2021 APPLICATION NO. 5201

LPNNRD continues to work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and our hired engineering firm, FYRA, on completing the Wahoo Creek Watershed Plan. The Plan includes the completion of eleven floodwater reduction dams located within a 100 square mile area, located mostly south and west of Wahoo, Nebraska. The NNRC has allocated WSF assistance toward the first three dam sites, 26a, 26b and 27. Geotechnical (soil analysis) work for these dams is complete. NRCS has approved Regional Conservation Partnership funds (\$1.35 million) for a portion of the eventual construction of the three dams. LPNNRD's hired firm for project engineering design and construction, Olsson, has been placed on hold on completing further activities on the three dams pending NRCS officially approving the watershed plan.

The Wahoo Creek Watershed Plan is delayed due to unforeseen requests from NRCS. NRCS has requested a different method to calculate project economics than was originally agreed upon, necessitating the hiring of an outside economist to fulfill their additional requirements. NRCS requested additional archaeological/cultural resource investigations at Dam Site 83, after discovery of a possible ancient earth lodge near the construction area. The economics will be finalized and submitted for NRCS review as soon as a determination is made concerning the archaeological/cultural resource investigation at Site 83, which is scheduled for spring 2021. Depending on the outcome of the determination, the final plan submitted for NRCS review will be for the original eleven dam sites, or for ten sites if the archeological significance of Site 83 prevents its construction. LPNNRD hopes the Watershed Plan will be approved this summer and additional design and permit activities for Dam Sites 26a, 26b and 27 can commence. After project design and permits are obtained, the District would then move into obtaining project land rights and construction activities in 2022 – 2023.

While not presently part of the NNRC's approved assistance, LPNNRD's long range plan to request additional future WSF assistance for construction of the additional eight dams, after Sites 26a, 26b and 27 are complete, are well underway toward completion.