

**Riparian Vegetation Management Task Force  
Meeting Minutes  
March 17, 2022  
10:00 a.m. CST  
University of Nebraska Lincoln  
East Campus  
Dinsdale Learning Commons  
In Person/Virtual**

1. Call to order – Mike Reed called the meeting to order at 10:11 a.m. Reed welcomed all members and guests and asked for introductions.

Task Force members present:

Ryan Chapman  
Mike Reed  
Dr. Tala Awada

Brent Meyer  
TJ Walker  
Rich Tesar

Virtual Attendees:  
Dr. Shuhai Zheng

Dave Zorn

Task Force members absent:

John Orr  
James Skavdahl  
Tammy Zimmerman  
Larry Heyen  
Dennis VanWey

David Carr  
John Erixson  
Nate Munter  
Kevin Adams  
Mike Sarchet

NDA Staff:

Mitch Coffin

2. Review and Approval of December 16, 2021, Minutes:

Chapman moved to approve the minutes, Awada second, motion carried.

3. Old Business:

None

#### 4. New Business:

- a. LB 805 has been introduced to increase riparian funding from one million dollars to three million dollars for riparian projects to include the flood plain. This could potentially involve drainages that drain into the main river or stream. This bill is a “Priority Bill” of the Agriculture Committee. There was discussion on how these funds would be used in the flood plain. The Task Force may play a major role of where and how the funds would be used. Much discussion was held if there is a need for a statewide project coordinator. Could this person work with all projects? Would there be just one grant application then funding would be split out amongst the participating projects? This position could possibly base out of UNL and/or Game and Parks. It’s a complicated situation since funding is only granted for a 12-month period (Fiscal Year).
- b. Proposed Rules and Regulations Change – The director of agriculture is proposing a change to the Noxious Weed Rules and Regulations to allow a city to use non-native phragmites in their reed beds for the city’s wastewater treatment facility. The city in question is Falls City. They were using non-native phragmites prior to the designation of phragmites as a statewide noxious weed. The Department of Agriculture at the time allowed Falls City to continue until the reed beds needed to be cleaned out which they thought would be about 20 years. The city sent a request to allow them to continue this practice. The department verbally gave them permission and plan to change the Rules and Regulations to allow them to continue this practice.
- c. Mitch reported that if LB 805 passes then there would be \$2,706,000.00 available for FYI 22/23. If LB 805 does not pass or is not funded, then there would be \$706,000.00 available for FY 22/23.
- d. Mitch provided an update and handout of the FYI 20/21 grant summary. Currently \$272,420.82 has been reimbursed to projects with \$378,758.18 remaining.

#### 5. Public Comment

None

6. Yeyin Shi with the Department of Biosystems Engineering, UNL provided and overview of her work. Her group at UNL creates and applies information technology to record, transmit, manage, and use digital information related to the health, productivity, and sustainability of agricultural production systems. There

may be an opportunity for her group to apply their work and research to riparian projects across the state.

## 7. Schedule Next Meeting

The next meeting will be June 15-16, in the Valentine area. The proposed schedule for the next two meetings is as follows.

Thursday, June 15 &16, 2022

September 8, 2022

Meeting adjourned.