

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Loup River Public Power District
Project No. 1256-029-Nebraska

Loup River
Hydroelectric Project
(FERC No. 1256-029)
Study Plan Discussion: Recreational Resources

Loup Public Power District Office
Columbus, Nebraska
May 11, 2009

P A R T I C I P A N T S

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- MR. NEAL SUESS, LOUP POWER DISTRICT
- MR. RON ZIOLA, LOUP POWER DISTRICT
- MS. THERESA PETR, LOUP POWER DISTRICT
- MS. LISA RICHARDSON, HDR ENGINEERING, INC.
- MS. STEPHANIE WHITE, HDR ENGINEERING, INC.
- MR. QUINN DAMGAARD, HDR ENGINEERING, INC.
- MS. ELLEN FITZSIMMONS, HDR ENGINEERING, INC.
- MR. MARK IVY, FERC
- MR. RANDY THORESON, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
- MR. MARK WEEKLEY, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
- MR. MARV PETERSON, CART
- MR. RANDALL HASKELL, CART
- MR. DAN NITZEL, NOHVA
- MR. DAVE TUNINK, NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS
- MR. FRANK ALBRECHT, NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS
- MR. RICHARD HOLLAND, NEBRASKA GAME AND PARKS
- MS. DEB LOSEKE, PLATTE COUNTY CONVENTION
AND VISITORS BUREAU

1 (Whereupon, the following proceedings were
2 had, to-wit:)

3 NEAL SUESS: I'd like to thank
4 everybody for showing up today. We'll go through
5 introductions here in just a second, but a lot of
6 you have been to some of the meetings that we've had
7 before. This is a meeting on our proposed study
8 plan for our relicensing, dealing specifically with
9 recreational issues.

10 Again, the process -- it's been a long
11 process. We filed our preliminary application
12 document in October of last year, filed our proposed
13 study plans in March of this year, and had a meeting
14 in late April to talk about a number of the study
15 plans. But we separated aside the discussion of the
16 recreation issues for this particular meeting, and
17 that's what we're going to be focusing on in this
18 particular meeting, specifically, I believe -- and
19 Lisa, tell me if I'm wrong -- Issues 8, 9 and 10 of
20 the proposed study plans --

21 LISA RICHARDSON: Yes.

22 NEAL SUESS: -- that we had listed in
23 our March 27 package to FERC. So with that, I want
24 to thank -- again, I want to thank everybody for
25 showing up today. We've got a pretty full agenda in

1 order to get done by about 3, 3:30 today, so we're
2 going to hit things pretty hard.

3 With that, I'll introduce myself. I'm
4 Neal Suess, I'm president and CEO of Loup Power
5 District. Our interests in the process of the
6 Project are obvious. This is our relicensing
7 process. We want to make sure that we hear
8 everybody's concerns, make sure we understand where
9 we're at in the process.

10 So with that, I'll kind of start -- I'll
11 go over here, and I'll start with Stephanie, you or
12 Quinn, and you guys can take it from there.

13 STEPHANIE WHITE: My name is
14 Stephanie White. I work for HDR, and I will be
15 facilitating today's meeting.

16 QUINN DAMGAARD: Quinn Damgaard. I'm
17 an environmental scientist with HDR.

18 LISA RICHARDSON: Lisa Richardson
19 with HDR. I'm the project manager for the
20 relicensing.

21 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Ellen Fitzsimmons
22 with HDR.

23 MARK WEEKLEY: I'm Mark Weekley. I'm
24 with the National Park Service. I oversee the river
25 and trails program, including hydropower

1 relicensing.

2 RANDY THORESON: Randy Thoreson with
3 the program Mark just mentioned, National Park
4 Service.

5 DAN NITZEL: Dan Nitzel. I'm the
6 business manager for the Nebraska Off Highway
7 Vehicle Association.

8 THERESA PETR: Theresa Petr with Loup
9 Power District.

10 RANDALL HASKELL: Randy Haskell,
11 representing the Columbus Area Recreational Trails
12 Group.

13 MARV PETERSON: Marv Peterson, I'm
14 the president of the Columbus Area Recreational
15 Trails. And Randy's too modest. He was the past
16 president and was president for several years.

17 MARK IVY: I'm Mark Ivy, outdoor
18 recreation planner with FERC.

19 DAVE TUNINK: Dive Tunink, fishery
20 division, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

21 RICK HOLLAND: Rick Holland,
22 fisheries division.

23 FRANK ALBRECHT: Frank Albrecht,
24 realty and environmental services division, Game and
25 Parks Commission.

1 DEB LOSEKE: Deb Loseke, I'm the
2 director of the Columbus Platte County Convention
3 and Visitors Bureau.

4 RON ZIOLA: Ron Ziola, Loup Power
5 District.

6 NEAL SUESS: Again, I want to thank
7 everybody for showing up today. Like I said, we've
8 got a fairly full agenda in front of us. Stephanie
9 is going to basically head up and be the facilitator
10 for this meeting, and then we will go from there.

11 But I think Lisa -- is Lisa up next?

12 LISA RICHARDSON: Yes.

13 NEAL SUESS: She'll kind of explain
14 the process a little bit, and you should have an
15 agenda, an outline of the slides, and then some
16 additional key dates in front of you at each place.
17 So Lisa will go through all that as we go through.

18 In case anybody didn't hear before, we
19 have water and everything else available for you.
20 If you've got questions, just ask us, and go that
21 way with it. All right. Thank you all very much.

22 STEPHANIE WHITE: Before I pass it
23 off to Lisa, I want to give you a quick orientation
24 of the room here. And we have packed ourselves in
25 pretty tightly, but I think that will make for a

1 lively discussion.

2 We've already been introduced to our court
3 reporter today. It's her job to make sure that the
4 discussion is recorded accurately. We've posted
5 transcripts from our last meeting on the web; we
6 will do the same today. It's certainly not meant to
7 keep you from speaking, rather, to make sure we
8 catch the essence of what you have to say.

9 There are four posters around the room.
10 This one lists the study requests as they come from
11 FERC. Those are the seven standard study requests
12 that apply to all FERC relicensing projects, and we
13 will refer to these several times today.

14 Behind my left shoulder, so off to your
15 right, this is a board that we have used throughout
16 the relicensing project. It's on our website
17 currently. And when Quinn talks a little bit today
18 about the re -- the recreation facilities that are
19 here, he'll use this to give you a quick orientation
20 or help you understand what he's talking about.

21 Over your shoulder in the back is a board
22 that shows our proposed study plans. When we
23 submitted our proposed study plans -- a document
24 that is in front of a couple of you, we have copies
25 of it here as well -- we had 12 studies. We have

1 since taken the third off the table, so we now today
2 are talking -- as Neal called your attention to, we
3 are here to talk about eight, nine and ten. So
4 we'll get into a little more detail about those,
5 particularly after lunch. We'll talk a little bit
6 about them today too.

7 Off to the back corner on the other side,
8 that is our -- that's what we call our '08-'09
9 schedule for this relicensing project. There's a
10 little arrow that we've added recently to help
11 people get a quick sense of where we are in the
12 process. It's a very long and specific and
13 prescribed process, so that is our attempt to
14 explain that.

15 During a break today, if you get a chance,
16 if you're not familiar with it, I would suggest that
17 you take a step over to that.

18 RANDALL HASKELL: When you say long,
19 can you define that specifically?

20 STEPHANIE WHITE: I can. And Lisa
21 might cover that in her piece, so I might table your
22 question just for maybe three minutes or less.

23 The last thing I want to tell you, the
24 bathrooms are straight out the back door. Again, as
25 both Neal and Ron have mentioned, refreshments are

1 back and to the right. We'll take a break for lunch
2 a little bit later on today.

3 I think that's it. I'll give it to you,
4 and I'll let you answer Randall's question, Lisa.

5 LISA RICHARDSON: All right. This is
6 a -- this slide shows an overview of the relicensing
7 process, the entire relicensing process. As
8 Stephanie mentioned, it is quite a long process.
9 It's -- from the time that the preapplication
10 document was submitted, it's five and a half years
11 until the new license is anticipated, and the
12 District began working on the relicensing even
13 before the preapplication document started. So it's
14 probably, overall, a seven, seven and a half year
15 process from the District's perspective. But from
16 this point forward, we have about five more years
17 before they actually get their new license.

18 NEAL SUESS: Randy, just to give you
19 a little bit of a -- we basically did interviews
20 with consultants back in 2005 and hired HDR
21 basically in December of that year and have been
22 two plus years just getting to the point where we
23 filed our preliminary application document in
24 October of last year, and our license is not up
25 until April of 2014.

1 So you can see where we're at in the
2 process at this point in time. So that gives you a
3 little bit of a better feel for where we're at at
4 this point.

5 RANDALL HASKELL: Thank you.

6 LISA RICHARDSON: In the graphic up
7 here, right now we are in that second blue box where
8 the red arrow is, refining the issues and develop a
9 plan to address them. Right now we're -- back in
10 January and February, FERC had scoping documents --
11 or I'm sorry, scoping meetings and requested input
12 from the public and agencies on what are the key
13 issues. Then in March, the District submitted their
14 proposed study plan that identified some studies
15 that they had put together for how to address the
16 issues that had been identified to date.

17 And then in the fall, the second -- the
18 next box is that green box that shows that the
19 studies will begin in the fall. And that will be
20 about one to two years of studies, depending on how
21 those go. And then the preliminary license
22 application goes in in 2012.

23 So at the -- at our previous agency
24 meetings and the agency meetings that we had last
25 summer, we talked about the study request criteria

1 that Stephanie mentioned here. FERC does have a
2 prescribed process on how study requests should be
3 submitted and information that they like all studies
4 to identify, those being the goals and objectives of
5 the study, what are the relevant resource management
6 goals, or if it's -- perhaps it may be a public
7 interest item, what is the background and existing
8 information that exists relative to the issue to be
9 studied, how does that issue or study relate to the
10 Project, the Project nexus.

11 That's really one of the biggest ones is
12 what is the relationship directly to the Project,
13 what is the proposed methodology, how are we going
14 to study it, can it be studied, and then what is the
15 level of effort or cost that may be associated with
16 that particular study. Those seven pieces of
17 information have been identified to the greatest
18 extent possible in the District's proposed study
19 plan.

20 During the scoping process, we received
21 both formal study requests as well as informal study
22 requests. FERC submitted a study request related to
23 recreation, and then we've had some informal
24 discussions with the Recreation/Land Use/Esthetics
25 Workgroup, as well as discussions that happened last

1 summer that helped frame the other items in the
2 study plan.

3 There's one slide that's missing from your
4 handout. It's the -- it's a separate page that
5 Stephanie put on your sheet -- there we go. This is
6 something that we've presented in our April meeting
7 for the aquatic resources discussion. These are
8 some of the key dates that are coming up in the
9 process over the next three months.

10 April to July, we'll be trying to
11 refine -- working with the agencies and identifying
12 refinements to the studies as proposed. June 25 is
13 the formal comment due date for comments on the
14 proposed study plan based on the FERC prescribed
15 process.

16 Of course, as we said back in April, we
17 would certainly like to get your feedback much
18 before June 25 and in these meetings, in informal
19 meetings, phone conversations, however we need to
20 get your input, we'd like to get that input before
21 then so that we can start to work on ways to address
22 it.

23 July 27 is when the District's revised
24 study plan is due. That will incorporate the
25 information that we've gained from the discussions

1 with you and others over this last month and these
2 next forward-going two months.

3 And then August 26 is when FERC will make
4 their study plan determination. That's when FERC
5 reviews the District's plan, reviews the record and
6 the issues that they've identified and says, These
7 are the studies that we think need to be done, in
8 addition to what the District has proposed or a
9 tweak to what the District has proposed, or maybe we
10 think the study plan, as proposed, is fine.

11 And then September 15 is the dispute
12 filing deadline. There is a dispute resolution
13 process that's built into the FERC relicensing
14 process. If anybody has a -- one of the mandatory
15 conditioning agencies has a dispute based on the
16 studies that are proposed, those disputes need to be
17 filed by September 15.

18 RON ZIOLA: And I want to make a
19 definition clarification here, and correct me if I'm
20 wrong. Lisa is talking about agencies. Agency
21 includes government agencies and nongovernment
22 agencies. So just because you're here with CART or
23 here with NOHVA and you hear the word agency, you
24 are an agency, you're just defined as a
25 nongovernment agency. So when you hear that term

1 and you don't think you're FERC or you don't think
2 you're Game and Parks or you don't think -- you're
3 still an agency, as far as through the definition.

4 LISA RICHARDSON: That's a good
5 point, Ron. And a more appropriate word to use
6 would probably be stakeholders, that it's not just
7 agencies, it's anybody. It could be the general
8 public who are interested in the --

9 RON ZIOLA: I just wanted to broaden
10 that agency term --

11 LISA RICHARDSON: Absolutely.

12 RON ZIOLA: -- because this is the
13 first time we've really had a large group that
14 isn't --

15 LISA RICHARDSON: Right.

16 RON ZIOLA: -- a state, federal
17 agency of some sort.

18 LISA RICHARDSON: My slides are going
19 a little crazy. Okay. My slides, I think, are out
20 of order here.

21 First we wanted to talk a little bit about
22 what is the link between hydropower and recreation.
23 The District's obviously an electric generating
24 company, and so what is the link between recreation
25 and relicensing their power production facilities.

1 And there really are three components to
2 that link. One is the Federal Power Act recognizes
3 that hydroelectric projects provide joint use
4 opportunities and requires that equal consideration
5 be given to recreational opportunities as well as
6 other fish, wildlife and environmental measures.

7 Secondly, the existing license that the
8 District currently operates the hydro facility under
9 has two articles that deal specifically with
10 recreation, requiring the District to construct,
11 maintain and operate such reasonable recreational
12 facilities as are reasonable and to allow free
13 public access to those facilities and Project waters
14 and lands for the purpose of public recreation.

15 And then finally, the third piece where
16 recreation and hydropower kind of link together is
17 in the application requirements. The new
18 application, there will be several pieces of
19 information related to recreation, inventory of
20 existing facilities, evaluation of existing use, and
21 evaluation of Project effects on recreation.

22 So now I'd like to go through the -- the
23 study requests that we have gotten so far that kind
24 of led to the three studies that we have here. One,
25 we received three, essentially, from -- one from the

1 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, one from the
2 National Park Service, and one from Game and Parks.
3 And I guess when I say one, we received requests
4 from them. I think, Randy, yours wasn't necessarily
5 a formal request, it wasn't related to one specific
6 topic, it was thorough discussions but --

7 RANDY THORESON: Right.

8 LISA RICHARDSON: First I'd like to
9 go through what was included in the FERC recreation
10 study request. The objectives of that request
11 included quantifying and documenting existing
12 recreation by season; identifying user perceptions;
13 documenting public awareness of existing recreation
14 facilities; assessing the impact of Project
15 operations on recreation experiences; identifying
16 potential measures to alleviate any negative impacts
17 and enhance recreation opportunities; develop a
18 recreation plan for the Project; and identify
19 recreation opportunities in the bypass reach.

20 The methods that were included in the FERC
21 study request were 12-month mechanical entrance
22 counts, 12-month visitor intercept survey, and a
23 mail or phone survey.

24 The Park Service also had requested some
25 information related to relicensing. These were more

1 informal and through discussions. The objectives --
2 our understanding of the objectives of the Park
3 Service's request was identify current and future
4 recreation demand; locate existing conflicts and/or
5 opportunities for future recreation areas and public
6 access; develop barrier-free access; identify
7 existing and future shoreline protection and
8 enhancement measures; and improve Tailrace Park
9 maintenance and upgrading.

10 And then the methods identified as a way
11 to get to those objectives were the land use
12 inventory, a visitor use survey, and developing a
13 recreation plan.

14 And then finally, the Game and Parks'
15 request was primarily related to fishery,
16 determining the quality of the fishery; identifying
17 angler perception of the fishery; determining angler
18 species targets, needs, expectations, and catch
19 rates; and determining the need for additional
20 regulations or regular stocking related to Project
21 waters. And the method identified to address those
22 objectives was the open water creel survey.

23 And now I think we're ready to dig in to
24 each of those specific plans.

25 STEPHANIE WHITE: Uh-huh. So we've

1 moved quickly through the first couple agenda items.
2 We're at 11 a.m., summary of study requests, so
3 we're about ten minutes ahead of schedule, so I'd
4 like to jump into that.

5 We'll do a couple of things. I think you
6 will come present the recreation user survey, Quinn
7 will talk about the creel survey, and then land use.
8 So if you'd like to come up, please do.

9 LISA RICHARDSON: And for those of
10 you who were at the April 21 meeting, the next few
11 slides will be essentially the same as what we
12 presented in the overview portion of that meeting.

13 STEPHANIE WHITE: And I may also add
14 that these are not -- the information we'll talk
15 about is not verbatim out of the study plan
16 document -- which is this -- rather, it's been
17 condensed to put on the slides. So feel free to ask
18 questions and ask for clarification when you need
19 it. Ellen?

20 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Lisa mentioned
21 some of the requests that we got. We took those
22 requests and condensed them into one study plan, and
23 I'm just going to go over those -- the key points of
24 that.

25 The goal was to determine public

1 awareness, usage and demand, and determine if there
2 were improvements that needed to be made. The
3 objectives were to measure usage; document the types
4 of usage, whether it's camping or fishing or
5 bicycling; determine whether the facilities meet the
6 current demand; what are people's perceptions of the
7 facilities; are there any conflicts between the
8 operations and the enjoyment of the recreation
9 activities; and then develop a recreation management
10 plan.

11 The survey was composed of several
12 different components, on-site observation and
13 surveys, those would be both spot counts, just going
14 and counting the number of cars or counting the
15 number of boaters, also stopping people and asking
16 them to complete a five-minute survey; trail counts
17 using infrared counters on the bicycle trails to
18 catch pedestrians and bikes; a telephone survey to
19 get general -- general public awareness, maybe they
20 don't go to the parks regularly, but maybe they've
21 heard about it or have they heard about it;
22 analyzing the results; and then looking at the land
23 use and the creel survey to put together a
24 recreation plan.

25 QUINN DAMGAARD: I'm Quinn Damgaard,

1 and I'll talk about creel survey real quickly. And
2 I should mention just ahead of time that everything
3 with regards to the creel survey and the study plan
4 associated with it, it was coordinated with Game and
5 Parks and should be current with your standard
6 practices, so on and so forth. I worked with Jeff
7 Schuckman on that.

8 So the goal of the creel survey, to
9 determine the status of the Project fisheries, how
10 the fisheries are used by the anglers, and also to
11 assess angler perception of the Project and its
12 associated fisheries.

13 We want to identify species targeted by
14 anglers so that the Game and Parks can make
15 appropriate management decisions towards those
16 requests; determine catch rates; and then identify
17 the angler perception, expectation, level of
18 satisfaction related to Project fisheries, just get
19 their overall feeling for how the fisheries are on
20 the Project; and using those first three bullets, I
21 guess, come up with items for the recreation
22 management plan that Lisa and Ellen have both spoken
23 to and just collaborating the data collected in the
24 first three goals for input in the plan.

25 Our activities, more specifically, with

1 regards to the creel survey, would be, again, coming
2 from the Game and Parks' standards, would be to --
3 excuse me -- conduct stratified, random surveys
4 using standard methods. This would be an open --
5 one single open water season creel survey spanning
6 May through September, four weekend days and six
7 weekdays per month, so fairly intensive, two-hour
8 instantaneous counts. Basically that means that
9 angler counts will be done within a two-hour period
10 for the entire -- for all of the Project fisheries,
11 including the entire 35-mile canal and the --
12 Lake Babcock and Lake North as well.

13 And then after the two-hour instantaneous
14 counts, angler interviews would be performed to get
15 to, again, the angler perception and what they're
16 after, their catch rates, so on and so forth.

17 Following the survey, we would analyze
18 results that we came up with, and then getting back
19 to the recreation plan, synthesize what we found and
20 come up with items for the plan with regards to
21 fisheries.

22 I'll turn it back over to Ellen.

23 DAVE TUNINK: The creel survey is
24 sunrise to sunset, split, right?

25 QUINN DAMGAARD: We did coordinate

1 with Jeff. We used your specified software, which I
2 believe determines very specifically the times of
3 the surveys.

4 DAVE TUNINK: I just want everybody
5 to realize it's not all day long, it's --

6 QUINN DAMGAARD: That's right.

7 DAVE TUNINK: -- sunrise to midday,
8 to midday to sunset.

9 QUINN DAMGAARD: That's right.
10 That's right. We have random sampling of days which
11 will be sampled, along with times during the day.
12 Thanks, Dave.

13 MARK IVY: Did you want to discuss
14 details and methods this afternoon, or do you want
15 to go through that now?

16 STEPHANIE WHITE: I think methods is
17 primarily this afternoon. But if it's -- if you
18 feel like it's important, we can talk right now. Or
19 take a note, that would be better.

20 MARK IVY: Okay.

21 QUINN DAMGAARD: Thank you.

22 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: The land use
23 inventory is really to find out what's there. The
24 Project is 35 miles, and there's a lot of land out
25 there. So really, the idea was to determine the

1 specific land uses of the Project lands and adjacent
2 properties and identify potential conflicts and/or
3 opportunities relating to the Project.

4 The objective was to inventory the land
5 uses as well as public access points; identify
6 opportunities to improve and enhance recreation and
7 public safety; determine conflicts and incompatible
8 uses, if there are two uses together that don't
9 complement each other; and identify solutions for
10 those conflicts.

11 The activities, the District obviously has
12 a lot of data already about what's in their Project
13 area, so starting with that data and then looking at
14 aerial photography to cover most of the area and
15 then conducting site visits to go and actually
16 ground truth what's there, if that's needed, making
17 sure everything is documented very specifically, not
18 just general recreation area, but, This is a camping
19 area, or, This is a boating area, analyzing those
20 results, and then using that to help guide the
21 recreation.

22 STEPHANIE WHITE: And Mark asked a
23 good question about methods. This morning we
24 thought we'd spend the pre-lunch hours giving as
25 much information and detail as we could to get

1 everybody on the same page. And then this
2 afternoon, hopefully we'll be able to apply some of
3 that to a methods discussion. The last piece of
4 what we wanted to present prior to lunch is a
5 discussion about the current and management
6 approach. And Quinn, I'll let you do that.

7 QUINN DAMGAARD: Thanks, Stephanie.
8 Just a, I guess, quick overview of the existing
9 approach and managerial pieces of the District's
10 recreational facilities.

11 At this time, there is no formalized
12 recreation plan. There is also no specific line
13 item in the District budget with regards to
14 recreation. Recreational needs are addressed
15 through the general maintenance fund and budget and
16 allocated that way. It is an informal process at
17 this time, but it is a successful process. And it's
18 very contingent upon successful cooperatives with
19 local organizations.

20 And speaking to those organizations and
21 partnerships, several of which are represented
22 today. NOHVA, which is the Nebraska Off Highway
23 Vehicles Association, works closely with the
24 District on the Headworks OHV -- that's off highway
25 vehicle park -- and the two jamborees that they hold

1 here annually.

2 C.A.R.T, Columbus Area Recreational
3 Trails, also in attendance day, coordinates with the
4 District on a fairly extensive trail network that
5 spans the Project facilities.

6 The Nebraska Game and Parks, also
7 represented, works with the District to manage the
8 Loup lands wildlife management area and also works
9 to facilitate funding and construction of picnic
10 shelters around the Project boundary.

11 And also the Boy Scouts of America, the
12 District allows the Boy Scouts to do community
13 service projects within the Project boundary, which
14 adds to the recreational amenities here on the
15 Project and allows the scouts to get some good
16 experience that way.

17 What we'll do now is kind of jump into the
18 existing facilities within the Project boundary, and
19 we'll move, I guess, west to east. And if we -- you
20 know, I'll refer over here to the diagram over here
21 quite a bit.

22 But the first stop is the Loup Lands
23 Wildlife Management Area, and it's actually not
24 noted here, but it's right around here, just south
25 of the Loup River near the Project diversion. The

1 District partners with the Nebraska Game and Parks
2 Commission on the planning and management of this
3 area. It is a 485-acre parcel. Game and Parks
4 commission has a long-term lease with the District,
5 again, to plan and manage for the area, and the
6 management is for public access for wildlife viewing
7 and hunting.

8 MARK IVY: I had a question about the
9 partnership. I was wondering, is Nebraska Game and
10 Parks responsible to do surveys or management
11 planning? Is that something you take on on your own
12 or --

13 FRANK ALBRECHT: For our individual
14 Wildlife Management Areas?

15 MARK IVY: Related to this license.

16 FRANK ALBRECHT: Well, related to the
17 license? Well, no, internally we have -- each -- my
18 district has set up management plans for all of our
19 public areas and so on and submitted them to the
20 district manager and up the chain, but not per this
21 relicensing effort. Are you inquiring whether -- a
22 copy to see what the longer-term plan is for that?

23 RON ZIOLA: That might be an
24 attachment in -- if you brought your recreation
25 survey, I think there is a copy -- there is a copy

1 of the Loup plan map in there, as well as a copy of
2 the agreement we have with Game and Parks on that.
3 So we can point that out.

4 FRANK ALBRECHT: Yeah, that might
5 answer it.

6 QUINN DAMGAARD: I guess the long and
7 short of it is the District owns the land, and then
8 Game and Parks is basically wholly responsible for
9 managing it. Does that --

10 MARK IVY: I'm a little concerned
11 with some of the terminology because if you can get
12 partners to help you manage lands, there's nothing
13 wrong with that, but the responsibility still lies
14 with the District. So when you say they're wholly
15 responsible, there's still some responsibility on
16 the part of the District for those lands. They
17 cannot turn over all responsibility to the partner.
18 So I just want to make sure that the partner is
19 coming forth and saying, We are going to be involved
20 in the management and (inaudible) those lands.

21 FRANK ALBRECHT: Well, if there was
22 something incompatible with the District, we'd work
23 that out.

24 NEAL SUESS: Yeah, we'd work with
25 that.

1 MARK IVY: And the reason I'm
2 bringing this up is because they're excluded from
3 the recreation surveys. They're taken out of the
4 recreation surveys (inaudible) the wildlife areas.
5 I just wanted to make sure that you were comfortable
6 with that.

7 RANDY THORESON: This is Randy. If
8 you look at the -- I've got a copy of this, if you
9 want to pass it around. It does say in the review
10 of management activities that the Game and Parks
11 Commission periodically -- I'm not sure what
12 periodically means there. There's supposed to be a
13 relationship there --

14 MARK IVY: I was hoping they could
15 clarify that for us.

16 STEPHANIE WHITE: So it sounds like
17 this afternoon when we talk about methods of the
18 surveys, that's another point that we need to bring
19 up.

20 FRANK ALBRECHT: I'm not sure what
21 the time frame is on the review on that, Ron. Is it
22 as needed or three to five?

23 RON ZIOLA: I think it's as agreed
24 upon or as needed, you know. So like I say, the --
25 like I say, it's on an as-needed basis, per your

1 availability and our availability and that kind of
2 stuff.

3 MARK IVY: Okay. It's a little
4 fuzzy.

5 RON ZIOLA: It's a little fuzzy
6 because both groups are pretty intense across the
7 whole state.

8 NEAL SUESS: I was going to say, that
9 I'm aware of, we have not met since I've been -- not
10 in the last two and a half, three years.

11 RON ZIOLA: We met -- probably the
12 last time was when we -- the original agreement was
13 for 25 years. That ran out about five years ago,
14 so -- and then we met again when we re-upped the new
15 agreement.

16 QUINN DAMGAARD: If we're ready to
17 move on, the next facility is Headworks Park.
18 Headworks Park is the first of what the District
19 considers its five formal recreation areas. It is
20 located near the Project diversion -- right behind
21 you, Stephanie -- right in this area here -- oh,
22 this is hit and miss. There it is.

23 The District partners with NOHVA at this
24 area, and we'll get a little more in-depth on that
25 on the next slide. But this is a 10-acre recreation

1 area. There is camping with electric hookups,
2 picnic areas, portable water, wheelchair, ADA
3 accessible toilets, and there's swimming and fishing
4 access, swimming within the small lakes at the area,
5 fishing as well.

6 Associated with Headworks Park is the
7 Headworks OHV park, again, off highway vehicle.
8 This is, again, a partnership between the District
9 and NOHVA, and a successful one at that, a 1200-acre
10 area with 50 miles of trails. It's approximated
11 that 20,000 annual user visits occur specific to the
12 OHV park, and it hosts both a spring and fall
13 jamboree that NOHVA puts on.

14 Last year, I believe, in 2008, it was
15 estimated that approximately 1,600 participants
16 partook in the jamborees, and they came from
17 multiple states surrounding the region here.

18 The next facility we'll talk to is the
19 power canal, which spans the whole Project. It's
20 approximately 35 miles long, which equates about
21 70 miles of shoreline, which is fully accessible to
22 the public for the activities noted here, fishing,
23 primitive camping, hiking and biking along some of
24 the access roads and trails, and bird watching and
25 eagle viewing. So quite a substantial feature which

1 spans the whole Project.

2 Along the power canal is the Monroe
3 Powerhouse, located right about here. This is not a
4 formal recreation area, but it does see some traffic
5 specific to fishing. It's an excellent spot for
6 fishing. Also, bird watching and eagle viewing are
7 popular activities adjacent to that Monroe
8 Powerhouse.

9 Moving further to the east is Lake Babcock
10 Park, another formal recreation area right about
11 here, adjacent to Lake Babcock. The District
12 partners successfully with CART and the Boy Scouts
13 of America at Lake Babcock Park, CART with the trail
14 network -- the extensive trail network that runs
15 basically east to west through Lake Babcock Park.
16 Two Lakes Trail runs right through here, and we'll
17 talk a little bit more about the trails in more
18 detail a little bit later on.

19 This is a 40-acre site. It does have
20 camping with -- 50-trailer with electric hookups and
21 120 tent pads. Fishing access is available to
22 Lake Babcock during certain times of the year.
23 There are some restrictions there, but we'll get to
24 those shortly as well. Playgrounds, multiple
25 playgrounds, pedestrian bike trails, like I

1 mentioned, cooperative with CART, Two Lakes Trail is
2 the specific trail that runs through the park.

3 Picnic shelters, which were a successful cooperative
4 with Game and Parks Commission for the construction
5 of those. Potable water and wheelchair accessible
6 toilets are also available.

7 Associated with Lake Babcock is the
8 Lake Babcock waterfowl refuge, again, another
9 partnership with the Game and Parks Commission.
10 Lake Babcock is included within the refuge, as well
11 as Lake North and some adjoining land, so basically
12 the area right in through here.

13 This was established in the 1940s and is
14 regulated by the Game and Parks Commission. There
15 are some specifics with regards to approved and
16 restricted activities. Hunting is prohibited in the
17 area. With the exception of District boats, in
18 general, public boating on Lake North -- Lake North
19 has unrestricted boating. But boating is prohibited
20 on Lake Babcock during the open waterfowl season.
21 Fishing is also prohibited during the open waterfowl
22 season.

23 Right next door is Lake North Park. That
24 would be the smaller green, right there to the
25 right. This is the District's most popular

1 recreation area. It has 2 miles of beaches, two
2 boat ramps, fishing access to 200-acre Lake North,
3 which as I mentioned before, has unrestricted
4 boating on the 200-acre lake. There is camping
5 there with 25 trailer spots and 100 tent pads,
6 picnic shelters, again, cooperative with the Game
7 and Parks Commission, potable water and wheelchair
8 accessible toilets at Lake North Park.

9 Associated mainly with the lakes and the
10 parks, the associated parks, are the trails, the
11 trail network that we previously mentioned. The
12 District, again, successfully coordinates with CART,
13 as well as the Game and Parks Commission and the
14 Nebraska Department of Roads on funding and building
15 these trails.

16 Two Lakes Trail is a 2.4-mile concrete ADA
17 accessible trail which runs kind of east to west
18 through Lake North Park and Lake Babcock Park. The
19 Bob Lake Trail is along the west side of
20 Lake Babcock kind of running north to south this
21 way, a little bit southeast, I guess, a 1.3-mile
22 crushed limestone trail. And the Robert White Trail
23 kind of runs along the south -- southern edge of
24 Lake Babcock there and connects Bob Lake Trail to
25 18th Avenue. 18th Avenue is essentially the eastern

1 boundary of the lake there. The Robert White Trail
2 is a 1.5-mile crushed limestone trail, and it
3 connects 18th Avenue with the Bob Lake Trail, as
4 mentioned.

5 If we keep moving down the line, the next
6 stop is the Powerhouse Park, which is right here in
7 green. It's basically adjacent to the Columbus
8 Powerhouse. It's a 4-acre park with camping,
9 playground area, picnic areas, fishing access. It's
10 a very popular fishing spot right below the
11 powerhouse. There's easy access down there for the
12 anglers, and it does have wheelchair accessible
13 toilets again.

14 And the last stop on our tour here is
15 Tailrace Park, which is located at the confluence of
16 the Loup Power Canal and the Platte River right down
17 here. It actually spans both sides of the power
18 canal.

19 There are -- there is some area on each
20 side, both the east and the west side of the power
21 canal at that location, totaling 9 acres, another
22 very popular fishing spot. And there is a
23 playground area, picnic facilities and very nice
24 scenery of not only Project facilities, but the
25 Platte River there as well.

1 So I think that pretty much wraps up our
2 tour of the existing facilities. Do we have any
3 questions at this time?

4 MARK WEEKLEY: You describe the Loup
5 Power Canal as having 70 miles of accessible
6 shoreline.

7 QUINN DAMGAARD: That's right.

8 MARK WEEKLEY: And I assume what you
9 mean it's open to the public, it's not truly
10 accessible in terms of ADA compliance.

11 LISA RICHARDSON: That's correct.

12 MARK WEEKLEY: So that's kind of a
13 misleading term there.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: Would the public be
15 a more appropriate word?

16 MARK WEEKLEY: I would just say open
17 to the public is the point you're trying to make.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. There was
19 another question over here. Yes?

20 MARK IVY: I was wondering if you
21 have a graphic of the trails? It's kind of hard to
22 see the trails on this large-scale map.

23 RANDALL HASKELL: We have pamphlets,
24 and they're very nice pamphlets that describe and
25 show pictures, and that would probably answer a lot

1 of your questions.

2 MARV PETERSON: I printed this off
3 the website. If you'd like, I can pass this one
4 around.

5 RANDY THORESON: Yeah, I have a
6 similar question. So you have a pamphlet that
7 covers all the trails?

8 MARV PETERSON: Yes.

9 NEAL SUESS: I think Ron and Theresa
10 are going to get some pamphlets for everybody.

11 QUINN DAMGAARD: And also, Mark,
12 within the preapplication document, the trails are
13 outlined in the recreational facilities figures.

14 MARK IVY: I was just saying for our
15 discussion today.

16 QUINN DAMGAARD: Oh, sure, sure.

17 STEPHANIE WHITE: Other questions?
18 Okay. Go ahead.

19 QUINN DAMGAARD: That's what I've
20 got.

21 RANDY THORESON: Can I ask a
22 question, please?

23 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yes.

24 RANDY THORESON: I forget, but one of
25 these parks -- didn't it get federal funding --

1 didn't it get federal funding for development? It
2 seems like it did. I think it might have been
3 Lake Babcock Park. Do you recall?

4 RON ZIOLA: The only one it would
5 have been would have been -- Randy, would be the --
6 Two Lakes Trail would have had -- was that state
7 highway funds or federal highway funds or a
8 combination thereof?

9 RANDALL HASKELL: Two Lakes Trail is
10 federal highway funds. The State of Nebraska
11 administers the funding. They're the ones that
12 choose the Project to be funded, but it comes from
13 the federal highway tax dollars. Congress gives
14 Nebraska X amount of dollars, and that's -- that was
15 the funding for that. But the Bob Lake Trail was
16 Game and Parks, and Robert White was Game and Parks.
17 So the Two Lakes was federally funded, 80 percent.

18 RON ZIOLA: The bridge, is that Game
19 and Parks, or was that highway funding also?

20 RANDALL HASKELL: That was Game and
21 Parks. And we received an award at the same time
22 Cowboy Trail received their award. When the
23 governor recognized the Cowboy Trail, they also
24 recognized the Two Lakes Trail at the same time, the
25 same ceremony in Norfolk. I was able to attend

1 that.

2 MARK IVY: Randy, I thought we still
3 had a Land and Water Conservation Fund sign.

4 RANDY THORESON: That's what I'm --
5 yeah, that's what I was asking. I thought it was
6 one of the parks, not the trail. I thought it was
7 Lake Babcock Park.

8 RICK HOLLAND: I think -- Game and
9 Parks, the trail stuff, I think, comes through our
10 Land and Water program -- or funnels through that,
11 so essentially federal dollars coming through our
12 agency for the trails programs.

13 RANDY THORESON: The Land and Water
14 Conservation Fund is what we're talking about.

15 RON ZIOLA: That was probably for the
16 shelters. I know there is a specific sign on the
17 shelters --

18 RICK HOLLAND: I don't know the
19 specifics, but --

20 RANDY THORESON: You said Lake Bab --
21 did you say --

22 RON ZIOLA: -- and Lake North. Lake
23 North and Lake Babcock have a shelter that was
24 funded by these Game and Park funds --

25 RICK HOLLAND: Right.

1 RON ZIOLA: -- that would have been
2 administered. From where, I don't know.

3 RANDY THORESON: And there would have
4 been signs.

5 RON ZIOLA: Yeah, there were signs on
6 both of those shelters.

7 STEPHANIE WHITE: Any other comments
8 or questions? We're running a little bit fast this
9 morning. So what we might do is pull -- we have one
10 discussion that we had scheduled for 1 o'clock
11 today, which would have kicked off our proposed
12 methodology discussion. And we may have that now
13 and eat lunch at noon and then come back and really
14 dig into the methodology. Is that all right with
15 you, Neal and Lisa?

16 NEAL SUESS: Uh-huh.

17 LISA RICHARDSON: Yeah.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: One of the things
19 we wondered that -- a question we would pose to all
20 of you is we've certainly set forth three proposed
21 studies, Studies 8, 9 and 10 that are in our
22 proposed study plan, but we wonder if there might be
23 a more comprehensive way to get at the needs of
24 those studies faster. And that -- that's probably
25 the introduction to this next section.

1 Ellen, if you want to come up and talk a
2 little bit about the proposed methodology --

3 LISA RICHARDSON: Let's talk about
4 goals real quick --

5 STEPHANIE WHITE: Sure.

6 LISA RICHARDSON: -- make sure we're
7 on track with the goals of what is it that we're
8 trying to accomplish. And I guess from our
9 perspective, the big overarching goal is to develop
10 a recreation plan for the facilities. I guess that
11 is what we see as the major goal for everything that
12 we're doing here related to recreation, and to
13 improve those facilities as well as to provide --
14 you know, look for opportunities to do more things.

15 Part of that would be identifying the
16 needs and then strengthening -- from the District's
17 perspective, the most successful recreation that
18 they have is where they have a partner. CART is a
19 prime example of where they've got a great partner
20 there, and it's been very successful as far as
21 developing trails. NOHVA also at Headworks, not
22 just as to the OHV park, but also as the partner of
23 the overall recreation facility.

24 And so those partnerships are really what
25 make these facilities work, not just the effort that

1 the District puts into them, but the effort that the
2 community and ownership that the community takes of
3 those facilities is what makes them successful.

4 And so I guess we see the recreation plan
5 as really the primary goal. I guess is that -- are
6 we on track with that, or have we missed the boat on
7 the overall goal for the studies that we're doing?

8 DAN NITZEL: I think there needs to
9 be some type of recreation plan to have some path
10 for the future anyway. And it should be somewhat
11 fluid or -- because at least with our activity, you
12 know, it's subject to change, the economy, fuel
13 costs, environmental issues, you know, it's all
14 subject to change, but there should be kind of a
15 path, a general direction of where we want to head
16 with things. And I think it would be pretty easy to
17 put one together.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: Mark, looks like
19 you have a thought to add.

20 MARK IVY: I have two large concerns.
21 One is we brought up earlier about the Game and
22 Parks Commission lands not being part of the
23 recreation study, and whether or not that should be
24 incorporated or not, that's something we should
25 probably just discuss.

1 And the other one is not looking at the
2 bypass reach and looking at the recreation that may
3 or may not occur there. We just don't have any data
4 to know what's happening. And that's true for
5 fishing as well.

6 NEAL SUESS: Mark, though, my
7 question for you is we don't have access to the
8 bypass reach, so without us having access and
9 control over the bypass reach, how can we, as a
10 District, influence the recreation that goes on
11 there?

12 I -- I really think that's way out of the
13 purview of what our license should have to deal
14 with. I mean, we don't have -- I mean, we can't get
15 into the bypass reach because of where our
16 facilities are. I mean, we're talking about public
17 property that we don't have access to.

18 It seems a little bit out of -- out of the
19 purview of what we should be having to do, to worry
20 about what's going on in the bypass reach as far as
21 recreation and others when we can't even have access
22 to it.

23 RON ZIOLA: Ron Ziola. It's all
24 private property. The minute you put your foot on
25 the river -- and they know that because they have a

1 little piece -- Game and Parks has a piece in the
2 Genoa area also. It's all private property. There
3 is no public access other than at the Headworks, at
4 a Game and Parks wildlife -- is that a management
5 area that you call that or wildlife --

6 RICK HOLLAND: I think wild
7 management area.

8 RON ZIOLA: So there is no public use
9 of that part of the river because in Nebraska,
10 that's all private lands. Any activity would be
11 strictly what the owner does on his land.

12 STEPHANIE WHITE: I see Dan has a
13 comment, but Mark, if you want to respond, you may.

14 MARK IVY: The Project nexus that I
15 see is that the water is diverted out of the natural
16 river into the canal, and so that directly impacts
17 the activities that can occur. That's where the
18 Project nexus comes from.

19 And I don't know about the public access
20 areas. I don't know if you can access it from,
21 like, the city parks, if you can walk up onto the
22 dike and go down the side and there's trails going
23 over the dikes out to the water. You know, the
24 bridges that go across, I don't know if
25 transportation has anything to do with access under

1 the bridges.

2 I don't know, I'm just bringing up these
3 issues. And this is the time to do it. I don't
4 want to make anybody angry, but now is the time to
5 flush all this out and talk about it.

6 DAN NITZEL: Well, you have multiple
7 access points that people use quite a bit at
8 highways. And where there's a bridge, people have a
9 tendency to park there by the bridge and get in.
10 And then you also have residential subdivisions
11 along the river that people have access to it.

12 MARK IVY: Right.

13 DAN NITZEL: And it -- you know,
14 we -- you know, there's private property rights, and
15 it's -- it would be nice to know exactly how many
16 people are there, but I don't know how easy it would
17 be to do that. It would be -- I think it might be
18 subjective more than anything, so --

19 STEPHANIE WHITE: Rick?

20 RICK HOLLAND: It's not easy to do
21 it; it can be done. We've done it before in rivers.
22 What you do is you do a floating creel survey or
23 user survey. It takes a lot of time, a lot of
24 effort. It's not the type of thing you just do on
25 the spur of the moment if you want to get a good

1 estimate.

2 You would have to start at the Headworks
3 diversion structure, essentially go down 30 miles of
4 stream and observe who is using it. We'd stratify
5 it, just like we would a creel study, user study to
6 find out times of the week, times of the day, and
7 you'd have to do it multiple times a month to get a
8 truly daily estimate. So can it be done? Sure, it
9 can be done.

10 What you'll probably find is that with the
11 exception of a few times during the year where the
12 private landowner is maybe setting some set lines
13 along the river. You may have some family and
14 friends who he allows to fish occasionally during
15 the season, but most of the fishing and water use is
16 going to occur at the Headworks diversion structure
17 and at Tailrace Park and then move up the river at
18 the -- at the bridge also, at the 81 bridge. I
19 don't know if there's any other bridges. I can't
20 remember --

21 RON ZIOLA: There would be one at
22 Monroe, there would be one at Genoa --

23 RICK HOLLAND: I'm not familiar with
24 the ones at Monroe. But if it's like any other
25 bridge, they park and go under the bridge, and stuff

1 like that.

2 So I mean, there are points of access that
3 you could do a survey of if you wanted to do a
4 survey. That's -- are you going to get a lot of
5 numbers? No, you're going to get a lot of zeros,
6 but that's typical of river creels. You just -- I
7 mean, I'm just basing my -- I did a hundred miles of
8 Platte River creel for two years, and I spent a lot
9 of time reading a book in a boat during periods of
10 time when I had to stop, and then go to the next
11 time.

12 STEPHANIE WHITE: Randy?

13 RANDY THORESON: I guess what you're
14 saying, Rick, is you view the river as a public
15 waters, and that's how you're going to gain
16 access -- the river itself is public waters.

17 RICK HOLLAND: Absolutely. That's
18 the way the public does it. I mean, there's no
19 trails, there's no -- they're not going to follow a
20 dike, or anything like that. There's no roads
21 along -- there's nothing that I'm familiar with that
22 allows really good access like it will on the canal,
23 so --

24 RON ZIOLA: The water is public; the
25 land is private. As long as you're in the boat,

1 you're okay. Put your foot down, you could be cited
2 for trespassing if the individual wanted to push the
3 issue to process the trespassing citation.

4 RANDY THORESON: Let me ask you this,
5 is the -- ordinary high water level, is the river
6 private then, do you know? I'm not familiar.

7 NEAL SUESS: Wherever the water -- in
8 the middle of the river.

9 RANDY THORESON: Okay.

10 RON ZIOLA: The middle of the
11 mainstream, so that that property level can change,
12 but it changes with where the main channel is
13 defined.

14 RANDY THORESON: Okay.

15 LISA RICHARDSON: And here, there is
16 a -- as an example, there are a few public access
17 points on other rivers. For example, there's an
18 access point on the Elkhorn River off of
19 Highway 275. I drive by it every time I come to
20 Columbus for a meeting. That's something that has
21 been provided, I think, by the NRD to provide public
22 access to the Elkhorn River for purposes of
23 kayaking, et cetera. There are no such public
24 access points along the Loup River in this area, so
25 any --

1 RICK HOLLAND: Outside of the ones
2 already designated.

3 RON ZIOLA: Right. At the Headworks,
4 at the Tailrace, at the right-of-aways that would
5 define the boundaries of the bridges.

6 LISA RICHARDSON: And I'm guessing if
7 you talk to the Department of Roads, they would
8 prefer that people not access the river from bridges
9 and under bridges. So I mean, encouraging that is
10 not something that I think -- at least from the
11 Department of Roads' perspective, that they would
12 want to do.

13 MARK WEEKLEY: I don't think
14 anybody's going to encourage that, but I'm a little
15 troubled how you get a comprehensive picture of
16 recreation in this area from the Headwaters to the
17 Tailrace Park if you don't look at the Loup River.
18 It is impacted by the diversion water, and you're
19 trying to understand the big picture.

20 I think there's a very strong connection
21 between the two in terms of recreation and what's
22 going on, and I think having some data would help
23 you understand that.

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: Other thoughts?

25 QUINN DAMGAARD: I guess specific to

1 the creel survey, geographic scope and the
2 definition of that survey was, again, coordinated
3 very closely with Game and Parks, and it was defined
4 as specific to the canal with the exception of a
5 small area surrounding the diversion and a small
6 area surrounding the Tailrace to get anglers on the
7 rivers at those specific locations, but nothing
8 within the Loup River between those two. And that
9 was per Game and Park recommendation.

10 MARK IVY: It's just very difficult
11 to plan with incomplete information. You can also
12 ask in your survey, are people interested in using
13 the river? I don't know if you've settled your
14 issue about downstream flows. There used to be a
15 set minimum, but I think that was thrown out.

16 NEAL SUESS: Well, it's thrown out
17 per the DNR. The DNR has said we can't do that
18 anymore, so we have different departments in the
19 state telling us different things --

20 MARK IVY: Right.

21 NEAL SUESS: -- which has all got to
22 be worked out in -- basically in Studies 1 through 5
23 and 7, which obviously will flow, then, into -- I
24 think that gets back to a lot of what we talked
25 about earlier today, all this has to be synthesized

1 with what goes on in the other studies at this point
2 in time.

3 MARK IVY: Right.

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: So as we've talked
5 today about goals, I've heard two things from you,
6 Mark. One is that the wildlife areas and recreation
7 surveys, really the exclusion or noninclusion of
8 those in the surveys, and then the bypass reach,
9 again, its noninclusion in the surveys.

10 Apart from that -- and even, I think,
11 considering this, are these goals still sound? It's
12 more of a high-level question. Is it really about
13 identifying the needs, again, from a high-level
14 perspective? Is it really about developing a
15 recreation plan, and is it really about
16 strengthening partnerships, identifying new
17 partnerships, and at the end of the day, improving
18 the facilities and the opportunities of recreation?
19 Is it anything more than this from a goal
20 perspective? Randy?

21 RANDY THORESON: You know, I go back
22 to that second bullet again for me. It's really
23 important to develop a recreation plan. It's on the
24 high end of my list. FERC is going to ask for that
25 through the licensing process anyway --

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yep.

2 RANDY THORESON: We know that is a
3 condition of the license. And it's important for me
4 to know that it's both existing and future
5 recreation we're looking at. I mean, I stress
6 future a little bit on that right now. And I think
7 the items we just talked about feed into that
8 recreation plan, but that's probably at the top of
9 my list right now. Because those other things can
10 be folded into the recreation plan itself.

11 STEPHANIE WHITE: One of the
12 consistent outcomes of all three of those plans, the
13 recreation user survey, the creel survey and the
14 land use inventory, drives towards that recreation
15 plan. It's mentioned in each one of them, so I
16 think we would agree.

17 Other thoughts or comments about the goal,
18 really? I hear almost that it can be even simpler
19 than what we've defined. It can almost be the
20 recreation plan that should accommodate everything
21 else.

22 I think we have time to talk about a
23 charrette, which is a new concept that's not
24 indicated in our study plans. So I think I would
25 simply kick off this next phase of our discussion

1 this morning and say we have three proposed study
2 plans on the table. We wonder if there is another
3 way to meet this goal, another approach that might
4 capture all of the needs that are represented at
5 this table today.

6 And so now I think, Ellen, if you'd like
7 to come up and talk about the charrette, I think
8 it's a good time to do that. And then we'll have a
9 good open discussion on the tool, how it might be
10 applied to this project, and maybe the pros and cons
11 from your perspective. So Ellen?

12 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: As Stephanie,
13 mentioned we've got three studies related
14 specifically to recreation, and then pieces of the
15 other studies that are going on that may direct --
16 may relate less directly with recreation, but they'd
17 all be put together.

18 After looking at those studies and
19 talking, we thought it might be -- another way to
20 considering that would be to have a charrette. And
21 the formal definition of a charrette is a multi-day
22 collaborative planning event that harnesses the
23 talents and energies of all affected parties to
24 create and support a feasible plan. That's the very
25 formal definition.

1 MARK IVY: I just want a quick
2 clarification. Are you saying that you are thinking
3 of doing a charrette instead of these three studies?

4 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Correct.

5 STEPHANIE WHITE: We're offering that
6 today as an alternative methodology, or I might
7 clarify, maybe in combination. So maybe there's a
8 piece of a study plan that we need to include that
9 would strengthen the charrette process. Maybe
10 there's a way that we can condense or change what
11 Ellen is about to present to you that specifically
12 meets the needs of this project.

13 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: When I talk to
14 people who aren't familiar with a charrette or what
15 it is, I usually call it a design and planning
16 workshop. Many different industries use some type
17 of process like this, strategic planning, decision
18 accelerators, it's called a lot of different things.

19 But what it comes down to is bringing
20 everyone to the table, all of the experts we need,
21 all of the partners we need, the general public to
22 the table and talking with them, collaborating,
23 finding out what everyone's needs are, finding out
24 what the technical constraints are, and working
25 together throughout the process to develop a plan

1 and implementation strategy.

2 The key -- the key component of a
3 charrette is what we call a feedback loop, and this
4 kind of illustrates it. We'll do several of these
5 through a charrette process. Sometimes we have one
6 a day; sometimes we have more than one a day. It
7 just depends on how it's set up.

8 And it starts with the experts or the --
9 in this case, the engineers, the park planners, the
10 staff at Loup, developing a concept. Then we
11 present this concept to the public, to the
12 stakeholders.

13 They comment, we make the refinements, and
14 immediately we present it again, say, Did we hear
15 you right, is this the right direction, do you have
16 a preference if we give you three choices, do you
17 prefer one, two, or three, do you like three but
18 also a piece of two?

19 So it's a detailed interaction process.
20 It's not just, I like, I dislike. It's very
21 specific in terms of what they're looking for, and
22 then refine again, and then present the final plan.

23 The charrette generally -- we talked with
24 Mark earlier -- about five days for a project like
25 this that would allow us to both look at all of the

1 sites, but also to develop that overall plan that
2 you all have mentioned is very important.

3 The charrette benefits, we use charrettes
4 on all types of processes. One of the major is cost
5 savings. Because we bring everyone there, we have
6 all of the fish experts, we have all of the
7 recreation experts, we don't get down the line and
8 then talk to someone and say, Oh, wait, we can't do
9 that because of the road, or we can't do that
10 because of the bridge, we have those all at once.
11 So we don't go down a wrong path for too long
12 because we're constantly getting the input.

13 The time savings, again, immediate
14 feedback with the public. You don't have to have a
15 draft, schedule a public meeting, go to the public
16 meeting, get the comments, take your comments back,
17 redo it, present again, because it's all right
18 there.

19 Participation, really key in the
20 charrettes is the active participation of the
21 general public. Charrettes are open to the public,
22 at least in the evening. Sometimes there's a lunch
23 hour as well where they're welcome to come in and
24 talk to the people that are working on the Project
25 and then share their ideas. There's usually some

1 kind of formal presentation for people to comment
2 on.

3 Stephanie thought she was going to fall,
4 it might be me instead.

5 So getting people involved, not just how
6 many people use an area, but talking to them and
7 finding out -- I use this recreation area, I take my
8 kids there, they play on the swings and then we go
9 fishing and then we come back and we have a picnic,
10 so really getting more detailed involvement and
11 talking with them about how they can see the
12 improvement happening. And again, related to that
13 participation is the public acceptance because
14 people are involved from the very beginning, the
15 general public, people like CART and NOHVA.

16 As you're working through the process, you
17 can see maybe someone very much wanted to extend a
18 trail, really wanted to extend a trail, that was
19 their main goal in coming to the meeting. And
20 through talking to the experts, we see that there's
21 a wetland -- and this is not related to Loup, this
22 is just a general thing -- and you would explain to
23 them why you can't build a trail through the
24 wetland. They come to understand it's not just the
25 experts saying, No, you can't do that, we're not

1 going to listen to you. It's explaining the process
2 and having them really understand how you arrive at
3 a decision.

4 So the end process, if it isn't exactly
5 what I or one particular person wanted, they can at
6 least see how they got there and see how maybe
7 everybody else wanted something different, so they
8 were outvoted, so seeing people and getting buy-in
9 as they go.

10 The pros of each method, the study plans,
11 as we talked, involve extensive data collection,
12 provides a lot of information for the District to
13 have in terms of what's going on on the lands. It
14 identifies the awareness of nonusers, people who
15 don't use recreation areas who wouldn't be inclined
16 to participate in a public meeting about Lake North
17 Park, or something like that. It uses a standard
18 methodology, nothing there is out of the ordinary,
19 it's used on lots of studies, and the District has a
20 good control over the plan development.

21 The charrette method is comprehensive
22 involvement of all parties -- we talked about that
23 already -- but of the partners, existing
24 partnerships, and also maybe new partners that might
25 come to the table. The process allows for a lot of

1 feedback. It's on a condensed schedule. You do the
2 bulk of your work in that one-week time frame. You
3 take it back to the office, and it's a very short
4 refinement process because you've got the plan, it's
5 really tightening it up, redrawing it in the
6 computer or, you know, making a formal document.

7 It encourages and promotes ideas through
8 collaboration. Because it is so open, there are
9 people talking to each other who may not normally
10 talk to each other, and that's, as you know, a good
11 way of generating new ideas, and it builds consensus
12 towards an outcome.

13 The cons of each method, what are some
14 challenges with those. Of the studies, it is the
15 cost -- we've got three studies -- and it's also the
16 time, the length of time it takes to complete the
17 studies. It's a large investment of people power.
18 We've got a lot of people there, either on the river
19 or going and visiting the locations, talking to
20 people, and there's limited public input. The only
21 public input they would have is just at interims of
22 the study.

23 The charrette is a less controlled
24 process. Because you have everyone involved from
25 start to finish, there's a lot more ideas that come

1 up. It doesn't use a standard data collection
2 methodology, and there's more emphasis on
3 qualitative data than quantitative data. Not that
4 there isn't any quantitative data involved, but the
5 emphasis is more on the experience of the users
6 versus having -- analyzing the data, I guess.

7 That is my outline of pros and cons. Are
8 there questions or --

9 MARV PETERSON: My question is, is
10 how do you get the public involved? Rather than
11 having 3 people show up, how do you get 300 people,
12 or 30 people?

13 LISA RICHARDSON: Uh-huh. The big
14 focus of the charrette is the partners and the
15 representative groups, representation from Game and
16 Parks, representation from CART and NOHVA and other
17 groups, the Chamber, perhaps. But then it could be
18 noticed that it is a -- this meeting and process is
19 going on, and the public is invited to come and have
20 input and see the results at certain times during
21 the day, as Ellen mentioned, kind of those small
22 windows of feedback groups.

23 STEPHANIE WHITE: It's also a
24 relatively small area -- Project area, so you can do
25 a lot of direct, one-on-one -- depending on the

1 planning of the charrette and the timing of the
2 charrette, we can do a lot of one-on-one outreach, a
3 lot of specific outreach that would help drive that
4 public participation.

5 RON ZIOLA: And I think the plan
6 would also be to work in the different areas. This
7 isn't just going to be a two-day event in Columbus.
8 I would envision -- or we would have envisioned that
9 there's going to be some time at the west end, as
10 well as time at the east end to deal with the
11 uniqueness of each of these different areas.

12 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Exactly. That's
13 something we talked about in terms of there might be
14 someone who only goes to the Headworks diversion
15 structure, and they might not be interested at all
16 in talking about what's at Tailrace Park. They
17 don't care. So really trying to focus those so
18 it's -- you don't have to commit all week.

19 FRANK ALBRECHT: Let me back up for a
20 second and ask a fundamental question. This is an
21 alternative to the proposed study plans, or to --
22 still with the study plans? I think you started to
23 say it can supplement it or complement it, I guess.
24 But I guess I'm not sure how -- a couple questions,
25 I guess.

1 If the study plans are, you know, over a
2 period of time, how can you accomplish the -- you
3 know, how can you say it's a complete alternative?
4 And then my second question is, is that part of
5 the -- what's this overall relicensing process --
6 isn't it called an integrated process of some sort
7 now? Does this meet FERC requirements, I guess?
8 That would be my second one.

9 STEPHANIE WHITE: Do you want to
10 answer the second question?

11 MARK IVY: I really couldn't tell you
12 if it would meet the FERC requirements at this
13 point. I would have to go back to the office and
14 talk to people about it.

15 STEPHANIE WHITE: And will you
16 restate your first question?

17 FRANK ALBRECHT: How can it
18 completely -- I think there's some merit to it,
19 but -- I don't know, I'm just thinking out loud --
20 how can it completely take the place of the proposed
21 study plans?

22 STEPHANIE WHITE: And maybe it can't,
23 Frank. Maybe it is in partnership with some piece
24 of a proposed study plan. Maybe you might look at
25 us at the end of the day and say, The study plans

1 are fine as is, and then we don't need a charrette.

2 We wonder -- the benefits -- Ellen has
3 talked through this -- the benefits are that it will
4 happen faster, and it gets broader public
5 involvement and public acceptance.

6 It is -- the downside, as I think you're
7 getting to, is that there is -- it does not -- it
8 won't collect the same level of data. It will be
9 more qualitative and more inclusive from a public
10 perspective than it will really be about collecting
11 data points and taking surveys and crunching
12 numbers. That's really the difference.

13 FRANK ALBRECHT: Yeah, especially the
14 creel survey is the one that comes to mind.

15 DAVE TUNINK: And user survey.

16 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yep, yep. Randy?

17 RANDY THORESON: I've been thinking
18 this over. And without saying one way or another,
19 I've got a series of comments about the charrette.
20 Do you want me to go over those now?

21 STEPHANIE WHITE: Sure.

22 RANDY THORESON: I've been involved
23 in a lot of charrettes, and I'm sure some of the
24 people in the room have been involved with them. A
25 lot of times I see them design driven --

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yep.

2 RANDY THORESON: -- dealing with
3 design. When you're not dealing with design at this
4 point, I'm curious about the charrette. I also feel
5 like you need a good, unbiased facilitator for a
6 charrette. You need good recordkeeping to pass on
7 and to document the process. You need to clearly ID
8 the issues and methods to resolve, and how do you
9 get all the people there.

10 And I'd like to know how the user survey
11 and these other studies would feed into the
12 charrette and vice versa, and then the follow-up.
13 So those are the main items that I have to say about
14 the charrette.

15 STEPHANIE WHITE: It could be that
16 you might take those surveys -- maybe as a group we
17 determine there is a high usage and maybe a low
18 usage time. Maybe we shorten the period of the
19 surveys and use it to ramp up right in front of that
20 charrette so when we walk into the charrette, we
21 have all that information. Maybe it's an
22 abbreviated piece of it; maybe it's not.

23 RANDY THORESON: And then the last
24 thing, I'd like to know how it fits in with FERC's
25 criteria.

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Do you have a
2 thought too?

3 MARK WEEKLEY: I have a number of
4 thoughts. I mean, I've spent 20 years doing public
5 involvement on recreation planning, and I have seen
6 a lot of ways of doing it. And whether you want to
7 call it a charrette process or public involvement, I
8 think you'll get a better product and you'll be more
9 successful bringing the public in. And I'd, you
10 know, really like to see that part of it, but I
11 don't think you can do a charrette process alone for
12 some of the concerns expressed here as far as
13 getting the data you need to do it. But I would
14 like to see it incorporated somehow.

15 One of my real fundamental concerns is
16 when you have your -- kind of your little chart here
17 showing how it starts, your very first bullet point
18 is concepts brought forward by the professionals.
19 That, truthfully, is kind of heresy in public
20 involvement planning. You let the public develop
21 the concepts. I know it saves time and it
22 jump-starts things, and it's okay to have some of
23 those brought out during the meeting. But if you're
24 simply giving people, This is what we want you to
25 respond to, that generally hasn't been very

1 successful, in my experience.

2 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: That may have
3 been the fault of my presentation.

4 MARK WEEKLEY: It just looks like the
5 starting point there.

6 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Sure. What we
7 would start with in terms of this study would be
8 really looking at, for instance, Headworks. We've
9 got what's at Headworks there, show the people, This
10 is what we have at Headworks. Is this correct, you
11 know, have we included everything, and this is how
12 it's used. This is, in fact -- frankly, people do
13 use it as a picnic area, for instance, and then go
14 from there, start talking about making sure that we
15 have the basis of information correct, start talking
16 with them about what they would like to see in the
17 future at Headworks Park.

18 So the concepts -- there maybe should be
19 another one here -- is what we start with would --
20 in this process would be a vision. We've got a base
21 of understanding here, we have a base of
22 understanding from the partners here about how
23 things are used, but this is what we know. Tell us,
24 is this correct? Do we really know this? And then
25 go from there.

1 MARK WEEKLEY: Okay. Because
2 initially, the way it was described is, you know,
3 the agency people or HDR comes forward with the
4 concepts and presents them and then the public
5 responds to them. And that concerns me.

6 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Sure.

7 MARK WEEKLEY: I mean, I really like
8 the idea of bringing the public in -- I think that's
9 something that's probably lacking in a lot of FERC
10 processes across the country -- and where it has a
11 better public involvement, you have a lot more
12 public support, and frankly, you'll get a better
13 product out of it.

14 So I applaud you for thinking outside kind
15 of a traditional box, but I'm not sure this is the
16 complete solution. But I think it has tremendous
17 merit and would result in a better process for
18 everybody.

19 Also, when you bring public involvement
20 into it, it's an opportunity for the public to
21 understand some of the limitations and some of the
22 restrictions that you're operating in. It's
23 sometimes easy for the public to sit back and say,
24 Well, that's really a dumb thing to do, because they
25 aren't part of the process and they aren't part of

1 the development of that. Whereas if they are, they
2 understand what limitations you're working in and
3 they understand the restrictions and they understand
4 the decisions that come out of it a lot better and
5 you just have more support.

6 So if you can incorporate a public
7 involvement process and somehow also have more of
8 the traditional study elements in there, I think you
9 could have a real, you know, excellent approach.
10 I'm not quite sure how that would look, but --

11 STEPHANIE WHITE: And it may be that
12 we'll get there after we really dig into the
13 methodologies this afternoon of some of our other
14 study plans. It might become clear to us that we
15 can maybe do less of one thing or more of another or
16 find a way to incorporate a public outreach
17 component of this.

18 I think maybe, Randy, to your point, one
19 of the questions that we've not yet answered is I
20 think you mentioned that charrettes that you've seen
21 have typically been very design based, design
22 intensive, and this would be more of a management
23 plan. This would be more like what does a
24 recreation plan look like. To hit your earlier
25 question, what's the existing and the future

1 recreation plan for this area.

2 RANDY THORESON: I'm not saying you
3 can't use the process to get some of your PM&Es.
4 That would be a great process to look at that,
5 capturing those thoughts, some of those design
6 thoughts --

7 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yep.

8 RANDY THORESON: -- on future stages
9 of relicensing.

10 RON ZIOLA: Because, you know, we're
11 not really talking about a specific thing, like a
12 park in the city.

13 STEPHANIE WHITE: Right.

14 RON ZIOLA: I mean, we're -- I would
15 envision this too as to help develop this overall
16 recreation plan, and that plan would include some
17 facilities, some management, some access issues, and
18 those kind of things.

19 So maybe we're familiar -- more like what
20 do we want this park in -- Omaha southwest park to
21 look like, and then you'd -- but it would be
22 redesigned to include these other portions, as
23 compared to just collecting a lot of data that may
24 or may not tell us something, if we're trying to
25 develop an area that the public wants and accepts

1 and fits their needs.

2 STEPHANIE WHITE: And I've also seen
3 very successful charrettes where rooms like this
4 become the group of experts. So it might be that
5 everybody in this room takes a large role in the
6 charrette itself, and we're there for the opening
7 night of the public meeting, listening to comments,
8 thoughts, considerations. And the next day, it's
9 this group that sits down at the table and says, All
10 right, what does the future facility look like, what
11 are the needs, what does that become?

12 So I think we can change the charrette
13 process to specifically meet the needs, whether it's
14 all or in part, as you've mentioned, Mark.

15 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: If I can follow
16 up, on that type of -- the plan that would come out
17 of it, I can envision sitting down with people from
18 Game and Parks, people from the National Park
19 Service and saying, All right, in order to assess
20 our usage, in order to assess our future needs, how
21 often do you think we should -- should do these
22 surveys?

23 Maybe we can do a -- you know, if we did
24 a -- an abbreviated version every, you know, X
25 amount of months, every X amount of years, maybe

1 that becomes part of the plan, so we know five years
2 out or two years out, whatever is appropriate, and
3 that's in the plan. So we know looking down the
4 road long term, we have this coming up, we'll be
5 able to find that out.

6 And rather than looking at a site, like
7 Ron mentioned, we might look at a particular park
8 and say, We're not going to design the park in
9 particular. Listening to the users of the park,
10 we'll say, Okay, for Headworks Park the priorities
11 are picnic shelters, play areas, fishing. Those are
12 the priorities. So we know this when we're looking
13 at Loup and working out improvements; they know that
14 the improvement needed there is an additional picnic
15 shelter.

16 And then that's where they would take it
17 down the line and say, Okay, we need an additional
18 picnic shelter. We have the space here, how are we
19 going to pay for that, who are we going to partner
20 with? It wouldn't be a redesign of the Headworks
21 Park, it would really be identifying needs and
22 priorities, and then from those needs and
23 priorities, developing the recreation.

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: Other thoughts or
25 comments? Mark?

1 MARK IVY: One of the challenges
2 you're going to face is that the people that come to
3 those meetings are going to be your users --

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yes.

5 MARK IVY: -- which is great. But
6 there's also people out there that aren't users that
7 would like to. So how do you get their input on
8 what should this look like?

9 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Right. And that
10 was one of the cons, I believe -- or one of the
11 strengths of the study plans, it identifies the
12 nonusers.

13 STEPHANIE WHITE: I think that there
14 might be some tools, though, that we could use to
15 flush some of those nonusers out of the woodwork, so
16 to speak. So if it is the bypass reach we're
17 interested in, get owners along that route so we can
18 begin to have one-on-one conversation, we can target
19 other users in the area, we can lever some other
20 partnerships to really start to get at that and
21 maybe do some education in advance of the charrette.

22 Other thoughts? The District has just had
23 a celebration with a number of different events that
24 were planned at some of your facilities, and I'm
25 interested in the attendance that you had at any

1 given time, or maybe the sum total of your
2 celebrations you held last year. Theresa, can you
3 tell us a little bit about that?

4 THERESA PETR: The big event was on
5 June 1, which was kind of the kickoff event at the
6 powerhouse. We estimated around 800, 900 people
7 came to that event.

8 And then the other -- there was other
9 major events in Fullerton, and then also in Albion,
10 that tied in with the respective counties --
11 Fullerton, Nance County; Albion, Boone County. And
12 those numbers, I'd have to double-check, but I think
13 they were talking about 700, or something like that,
14 6- or 700.

15 And then there was events at the
16 individual offices, and had like a coffee type of
17 thing. Those events ranged -- were more of a local
18 type of flavor to them, and so there was anywhere
19 from 30 to 50 people at those events.

20 The Clarkson event was tied to their Czech
21 Festival, and so it probably drew a little wider
22 area than just Loup, thinking about Loup, but that
23 we handed out close to a thousand ice cream treats
24 and stuff. Some of them were probably duplicates,
25 but --

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Or triplets.

2 RON ZIOLA: But as far as on the
3 canal system, it was the event as close as we could
4 to June 6, June 1 at powerhouse. And we had games,
5 we had tours of the powerhouse, we had a
6 District-sponsored -- there were candlelight parades
7 back in '32 when the Project was approved, so we had
8 a torch -- we had a torch run, but we used a flag
9 instead of a torch. Various employees ran the whole
10 length of the canal, had radio spots along the way
11 interviewing some of the runners and those kinds of
12 things.

13 And in the past we've held at Lake
14 North -- during Public Power Week, we hold a --
15 we've held a picnic up there in the late afternoon
16 and early evenings with hayrack rides around
17 Lake North, we bring in several bucket trucks. It's
18 a joint partnership, again, with Nebraska Public
19 Power District, Cornhusker Public Power District.
20 They bring in their various bucket trucks, and as a
21 carnival ride, we give bucket truck rides for a
22 couple hours and, again, have drinks and hamburgers
23 or hot dogs or something like that, so --

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: How many people at
25 those?

1 RON ZIOLA: Again those are in the
2 thousands, 1,500, 2,000 people will come to Public
3 Power Week up at the lake. In the past, we've
4 sponsored a -- well, it started out as a triathlon.
5 You would swim Lake North, you would run around the
6 lake, and then you would bike, and then it turned
7 into -- because you can't find very many people that
8 want to swim a little over a half mile open water,
9 it turned into a biathlon, which is a run around the
10 lake and then a bike around the section --

11 STEPHANIE WHITE: So when is Public
12 Power Week?

13 THERESA PETR: First week in October.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: Now, I ask this
15 question for a couple of reasons. One, this is a
16 small utility that is widely known locally. There
17 are not very many utilities that can draw that kind
18 of a crowd in a small town like Columbus, Nebraska.
19 So I think that they have a large reputation in the
20 area and also a history of drawing crowds.

21 We're also coming on the tail end of a big
22 festival and a big celebration, so we've trained the
23 public to come to these facilities at these
24 locations. Public Power Week might be a great time
25 to have a charrette that is a piece of other

1 activities and ceremonies that are planned that
2 already draw in large amounts of people. So I think
3 that illustrates a strength that --

4 RON ZIOLA: Yeah, during that week,
5 we could identify and make sure that those 1,500 to
6 2,000 people know about it, a jamboree. There's
7 also a jamboree in the fall, which probably falls in
8 that same time frame, if I'm not mistaken, in that
9 first week of October. So there's places where
10 information could be disseminated to the users to
11 get them to think. And then shortly thereafter, we
12 might find a time frame to start.

13 And in this part of the country, November
14 is a wonderful time because the fall activity season
15 for high schools are shut down, they don't start up
16 until the first of December. And that's really a
17 prime driver in this area of not being able to get
18 people to come to things. Because when the high
19 school activity seasons are in their full swing,
20 there is not a time or a date during the week that
21 there isn't something going on between volleyball
22 and football and cross country and golf and tennis,
23 so --

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: Randy, did you have
25 a thought?

1 RANDY THORESON: No, I was just
2 shaking my head in the affirmative. November seems
3 to be a good time frame.

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: And it could be
5 that we do some series of surveys or studies in
6 advance, so that's where we walk in with a data set
7 that everybody is comfortable with.

8 So it's almost 12 o'clock --

9 RON ZIOLA: Lunch is here. There is
10 a club sandwich, a turkey sandwich. There is one
11 specific sandwich. Mr. Ivy has some dietary
12 requirements, so -- but along with, some chips and a
13 fruit salad, and there should be some pop and water
14 out there.

15 Unfortunately, we've got to eat where
16 we're sitting, unless we could -- a few of you know
17 where the board room is at, or an upstairs meeting
18 room, if you would want to wander. But it might be
19 nice to stay here because there just might be some
20 general, Hi, I'm this guy or this gal, and this is
21 what I do.

22 STEPHANIE WHITE: We'll give you an
23 hour. So if you need to respond to some voicemail
24 or take care of some business, that's fine. We'll
25 reconvene at 1 o'clock.

1 (Lunch break - 12:01 p.m.)

2

3 (Meeting resumed - 12:55 p.m.)

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: There's a new set
5 of handouts on the table. Those correspond with the
6 slides we're going to look at this afternoon. I'm
7 going to let Lisa kick off the discussion a little
8 bit. I will leave the door open. I think it helps
9 moderate the temperature a little bit. I noticed
10 Ron was turning up and turning down the heat.

11 RON ZIOLA: The only problem was we
12 had a lot of activity going in and out that back
13 door, and if it gets noisy again, we'll kind of go
14 that way.

15 STEPHANIE WHITE: Sounds good.

16 RON ZIOLA: But it may be a little
17 quieter this afternoon.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: Lisa, if you'd like
19 to come kick off the discussion, that would be
20 great, and then I'll walk through the slides with
21 the group.

22 LISA RICHARDSON: Okay. Well, we
23 covered everything that we had intended originally
24 this morning. We were very efficient. And our --
25 one of our big goals was to bring up the idea of a

1 charrette and could that be the method used to
2 develop the recreation plan.

3 Now, I think we've heard some thoughts
4 that a charrette in and of itself wouldn't provide
5 all of the information that's needed. So this
6 afternoon we do have slides, and we -- these were
7 not on the website, but we will get them up there.
8 We've got handouts to you all now that go into some
9 more of the detail of each of the studies as they're
10 proposed in the study plan.

11 And we'd like to talk about those and see
12 if there's a way to cut those back to allow an
13 opportunity to do some more interactive charrette
14 type of planning for the recreation plan, or is it
15 just a matter that this is the data that's needed,
16 and that should be used exclusively to develop a
17 plan in a more traditional way.

18 Those are the two the bookends: A
19 traditional plan with all the intensive data, a
20 charrette without all the intensive data, or
21 somewhere in between, knowing we need to balance the
22 expense to the District for this portion of the
23 licensing requirements.

24 And anything -- obviously, anything that
25 gets spent on studies and developing plans isn't

1 available, then, to actually implement them.
2 There's a limited budget that's available to the
3 District for any of their operations, whether it be
4 recreation or other things that they may want to do,
5 so that's where we want to start off this afternoon,
6 I guess.

7 STEPHANIE WHITE: Any comments before
8 we get started?

9 Okay. I'm going to pass around some
10 colored paper, yellow, green and red. We use these
11 as -- I wouldn't say -- we didn't take votes last
12 time, but we used these at metrics of agree,
13 disagree or, I'm kind of on the fence. So I'd like
14 you all to take one of each color and pass it around
15 the room.

16 I'd like to go through some of the detail
17 on the first study plan that we'll discuss today,
18 which will be Recreation User Survey. You're going
19 to pass, Frank? You don't like the cards?

20 FRANK ALBRECHT: They're interesting.

21 STEPHANIE WHITE: The red is, I
22 absolutely do not agree with what we're discussing
23 today, this is an urgent discussion topic. Green
24 is, I'm fine with it as it stands. And yellow is, I
25 have a little bit of discomfort on this, but I would

1 be fine either way. Yellow, green and red. Only
2 you're not voting on me. That's the best part.

3 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: I thought you
4 were going to sing.

5 STEPHANIE WHITE: No, I'm not a very
6 good singer. I'm no Susan Boyle.

7 LISA RICHARDSON: Now, Stephanie, the
8 first two slides are the exact same as what was in
9 the morning, and then there are follow-on slides
10 that go into more detail.

11 STEPHANIE WHITE: Frank, you can even
12 take those home as a souvenir. I might start to
13 laminate them so we get more wear out of them.

14 Okay. What I'd like to do is start to
15 work through the Recreation User Survey. As Lisa
16 pointed out, the first two slides of each piece are
17 identical to what we covered this morning. The next
18 series of slides will -- Mark, to your early
19 question, will be more about methods, more about
20 activities and detail and how we would accomplish
21 that study.

22 So to start with the Recreation User
23 Survey, again, the goal of this is to determine
24 public awareness, usage, and demand of the project's
25 existing recreation facilities to determine if

1 potential improvements are needed. Those objectives
2 are multiple.

3 The first is to measure usage; document
4 the types of recreation used to determine whether
5 the existing facilities meet the current demand;
6 determine the public's perception and awareness of
7 facilities; and to determine if Project operations
8 affect recreation. Lastly, again, this is a piece
9 that shows up in all three of our study plans, to
10 develop recreation management plans.

11 Now, there were some comments this morning
12 that are pertinent this afternoon, and they came
13 from Mark and Randy. Wildlife areas and recreation
14 surveys that are -- I'm sorry, the wildlife areas
15 that are not included right now in the recreation
16 surveys, and I bring that up to let you know that I
17 heard you this morning. Also, the bypass reach,
18 it's not in any of the existing study plans. And
19 then, Randy, as you mentioned, you're interested in
20 the existing and future recreation plans. So that's
21 an important note that you made this morning.

22 Activities, again, this is the same as the
23 material we covered this morning. So for
24 Study Plan 8, activities include on-site observation
25 and a Recreation User Survey; trail counts;

1 telephone survey; a NOHVA -- a specific survey to
2 the NOHVA group; the analysis of results; and the
3 synthesis of those from the other studies that are
4 pertinent to the recreation plan.

5 So this is a refresher on this morning's
6 activities. This information certainly should not
7 be new to you. It's in the study plan, but it's new
8 material today. This begins -- actually, this is a
9 new slide, but this isn't pertinent to the activity.

10 As a response to the FERC study request,
11 there are three things that are not included in the
12 study plan set before you. Those include the
13 year-round survey, mechanical counters, and a mail
14 survey. So those are variants from the study plan
15 or the study request that FERC submitted.

16 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Stephanie --

17 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yep.

18 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: -- to clarify,
19 it's mechanical counters at entrances? There are
20 mechanical counters on the trails.

21 STEPHANIE WHITE: So did everyone
22 hear Ellen? There wouldn't be mechanical counters
23 on the entrances, but there are on the trails.

24 LISA RICHARDSON: And I guess, Mark,
25 this is FERC's request. Do you want to speak to

1 those? I mean, we provided rationale in the study
2 plan as to why we wouldn't propose counting
3 year round, that the recreation use in the winter
4 period is very minimal, at best, and so we would not
5 propose that, although we do ask to propose
6 questions in the survey for -- to get some
7 information about outside of the warm weather season
8 usage.

9 STEPHANIE WHITE: Ron has a comment.

10 RON ZIOLA: Yeah. And the other
11 reason for the not all season, there are a couple
12 areas, due to lack of use and overabundance of --
13 where they come in and destroy some -- vandalism.
14 We do limit the ability to drive around Lake North
15 just because we don't want to plow those roads and
16 have that expense and get people stuck back in
17 there, and those kinds of things.

18 They have access to the basic park area,
19 and then Lake Babcock Park is closed off in the
20 winter, basically due to vandalism and those kind of
21 issues. Because with fewer good people there, the
22 more bad people that show up. And so that was --
23 that is also justification because two of the major
24 areas have limited access to the public.

25 We have trail heads available so they can

1 walk into the park, they can use the bike trails and
2 those kind of things, but vehicular access is
3 limited because of vandalism.

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: Mark?

5 MARK IVY: So the key is just being
6 able to estimate use. If you feel you can do it
7 without it year round, that's fine. Will the trail
8 counters be year round, or are those also just warm
9 weather? I imagine you have some winter use of the
10 trails.

11 RON ZIOLA: There's some.

12 MARK IVY: Cross-country skiers
13 and --

14 RON ZIOLA: Usually not cross-country
15 skiing, just walkers -- walkers and bikers.

16 NEAL SUESS: It just really all
17 depends on the weather conditions.

18 RON ZIOLA: Right. And we do have a
19 couple of the housing areas out there. We have
20 the --

21 LISA RICHARDSON: And those are --

22 RON ZIOLA: -- the Lakeview addition,
23 so walking access is real easy for those people. So
24 I assume it's a lot of those people that come out
25 there.

1 LISA RICHARDSON: -- those are
2 mechanical counters, so they could be in year round.
3 Whether they end up with some problems with snow and
4 being obscured could be an issue, but --

5 MARK IVY: If they're installed
6 properly, it wouldn't be an issue. It's just having
7 to check them once a month, or --

8 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. We'll walk
9 through this slide. And then maybe before we really
10 dig into the activities, I might go back to the goal
11 and maybe make sure we have consensus in the room
12 that the goal is appropriate for this study. So
13 we'll start at a very high level, and then we'll
14 begin to dig into the activities and the methods and
15 the objectives as well.

16 Just -- I also want to mention that there
17 are four locations that are not included: The
18 powerhouse at Monroe; the Loup Power Canal; the
19 Loup Lands Wildlife Management Area, so to your
20 point earlier today; and then the Loup River Bypass
21 Reach, also right in line with your earlier
22 question.

23 So before we dig into that, I want to take
24 you back to this goal, and I'm going to ask for a
25 show of cards. Is this the appropriate goal for

1 Study No. 8, the recreation user survey: Determine
2 public awareness, usage and demand of the Project's
3 existing recreation facilities to determine if
4 potential improvements are needed.

5 Green is, This is fine as is; red is,
6 There's something missing, we need to discuss it;
7 yellow is, There's something I might be on the fence
8 about, but I would be fine either way.

9 Okay. I see a red from FERC and some
10 yellows over here. Let's talk about red first, and
11 then we'll come over to Mark and Randy, we'd like to
12 hear from you.

13 MARK IVY: Just minor is it's not the
14 only reason to do the study is to determine if
15 there's improvements needed. We're trying to
16 determine what the use levels are. So it doesn't
17 have anything to do with improvements, it's
18 documentation.

19 STEPHANIE WHITE: So to determine use
20 levels and if potential improvements are needed?

21 MARK IVY: Right.

22 LISA RICHARDSON: Is that fixed if we
23 put an and in there? Determine public awareness,
24 usage, and demand of the Project's existing
25 recreation facilities and to determine if potential

1 improvements are needed.

2 MARK IVY: That would help. It would
3 also be used for the management plan, the long-term
4 plan.

5 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So if we
6 make those adjustments, does it turn your red to a
7 green?

8 MARK IVY: That's fine, yeah.

9 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. Good. All
10 right.

11 RANDY THORESON: I go back to the
12 existing and future, if you just put a few words in
13 there, And the existing as well as future demand of
14 the Project facilities.

15 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. Along with
16 Mark's changes?

17 RANDY THORESON: Right.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: Mark Weekley?

19 MARK WEEKLEY: I'm good now.

20 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. Now we have
21 unanimous greens on the goal: To develop public
22 awareness, usage, and demand of the Project's
23 existing recreation facilities and to determine if
24 potential improvements are needed. Existing and
25 future will go in that sentence somewhere. Do you

1 have a preference where?

2 RANDY THORESON: Well, right before
3 demand. Figure out where yours goes in -- yours
4 goes in right before demand too -- would it help if
5 you just wrote them out?

6 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yep.

7 RANDY THORESON: I'd like to know how
8 Mark's fits in there.

9 NEAL SUESS: I mean, isn't that what
10 you're doing? I mean, isn't -- by looking at this,
11 you're determining what your future use is going to
12 be? I guess I'm -- you're trying to -- how do you
13 come up with future demand? I mean, I understand
14 that you want to look and see where we're at today
15 to see if we're meeting all the needs. How do you
16 determine what a future demand is?

17 RANDY THORESON: I think this is one
18 of the tools, is the user survey.

19 MARK IVY: By assessing the latent
20 demand that's out there, what do people want to do
21 in the future, that helps with planning for the
22 future.

23 NEAL SUESS: Okay. I guess when I
24 think about improvements and plans, I guess that's
25 what I'm thinking -- I guess I'm a little bit

1 disturbed by what the future -- why we have to put
2 the word future in there? That's what a plan is, is
3 to help you get to the future of where you're going
4 to be at. Trying to develop a future demand seems a
5 little bit unknown to me.

6 I don't quite understand why that word is
7 that big of a deal. I don't see that. That's what
8 the plan does, is develop what you're doing in the
9 future to meet that need at that point in time.

10 STEPHANIE WHITE: Would it be solved
11 with an activity or a mechanism in the recreation
12 plan that calls for some frequency of updates that
13 meets a demand that's existing at that time?

14 RANDY THORESON: I think that could
15 get towards curing that, but I also think in the
16 survey, you need to -- I guess a lot of the question
17 is what are your future recreational needs? I don't
18 know if that's adequately covered in the survey.
19 You're assessing how they're using the facilities
20 now --

21 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yep.

22 RANDY THORESON: -- which I have no
23 problem with.

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

25 RANDY THORESON: It's kind of are

1 there any future -- or any needs that you'll want to
2 see at that facility that will satisfy you in your
3 activities?

4 LISA RICHARDSON: And Randy, I think
5 that is included in the survey instrument. That
6 type of question, I guess, is -- I don't -- I can
7 look for it, but there is --

8 RON ZIOLA: Can I try an additional
9 wordsmith? Is it future or additional? When we're
10 doing a survey, we may find some latent requirements
11 that might be out there. So are they really future
12 needs, or are they additional needs? Would
13 additional be what we're looking for as compared to
14 future? I'm just throwing that out as wordsmith.

15 RANDY THORESON: I'm thinking. Go
16 ahead.

17 MARK WEEKLEY: Well, I guess
18 additional is part of it, based upon the survey now.
19 I mean, you suggest the idea of trying to look at
20 this down the road, and I think, at least from my
21 perspective, when you talk about future, that does
22 matter, and is there some way to kind of reassess --
23 a simple reassessment down the road, you know, how
24 are things changing, how are recreational demands
25 changing down the road, and do you need to do

1 anything?

2 You know, if recreation trends
3 dramatically change for some reason, one reason or
4 another, it would be nice to have some mechanism to
5 be able to address those down the road, or at least
6 understand that.

7 RANDY THORESON: I guess I'm going to
8 go back to Neal, because I know that it bothers you,
9 that word future. I guess you could use the
10 recreation survey to get to that, but your overall
11 goal for existing and future, you should state that
12 and not just assume the recreational survey is the
13 only way to get to that. So I guess I still stick
14 by future demand. I don't know if additional --

15 RON ZIOLA: Well, I guess what I look
16 at is we went through a different process in 1984,
17 but let's roll back to 1982 and say we tried to do a
18 future demand. I don't think bike trails would have
19 ever come into anybody's mind. An ATV park would
20 have never come into anybody's mind, no matter how
21 hard you looked into the future. But there became
22 additional needs for the area. Bike trails became
23 an issue of public health. ATVs became a viable
24 activity, given the right deal.

25 So again, we adjusted to meet those

1 additional needs. But the idea that 30 -- or 29
2 years ago or 30 years ago, in going through a
3 process, we couldn't have foreseen bike trails and
4 ATVs, because there wasn't even such a thing as an
5 ATV, and no one wanted to ride a bike anyway. Get
6 in your car and go.

7 So that's where, I guess, I would look to
8 additional. And I don't know -- what are we going
9 to see 30 years from now that is recreational or
10 that Game and Parks needs? I don't know --

11 RANDY THORESON: We don't know what
12 that is. I guess that's my point, you won't know
13 what that is, but the survey --

14 RON ZIOLA: But could we adjust that
15 through the years --

16 STEPHANIE WHITE: Let me offer -- let
17 me ask a question and then maybe offer an activity
18 that might help us -- might help put your mind at
19 ease and help us flush out some things that we may
20 have missed.

21 Is a definition of a recreation plan in
22 any of our study plans? Do we define what that
23 piece is?

24 LISA RICHARDSON: No.

25 STEPHANIE WHITE: Are there some

1 standard components to a recreation plan? When you
2 think about that as a request for a study plan, what
3 is that? Are there five standard chapters and it's
4 a long-range plan and existing need? What are those
5 components?

6 MARK IVY: That's why you have those
7 seven criteria. You have to address all those
8 criteria. One issue that hasn't come up is what's
9 the time frame for this recreation plan? Is this a
10 5-year, 10-year, 20-year?

11 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So I'm going
12 to write time frame, and it's kind of a question
13 right now, but it should be a part of that
14 recreation plan. What else should be a part of it?

15 FRANK ALBRECHT: The types of
16 activities available.

17 STEPHANIE WHITE: Types of activities
18 and facilities, would you say?

19 FRANK ALBRECHT: Yeah, that works.

20 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

21 RANDY THORESON: I think a recreation
22 plan also includes the PM&Es, protection, mitigation
23 and enhancement measures, what you're also going to
24 do with certain areas or facilities.

25 STEPHANIE WHITE: PM&E, did you catch

1 that? Protection, mitigation and enhancement.

2 COURT REPORTER: Yes, thanks.

3 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

4 MARK IVY: Documenting the baseline
5 use, so what's occurring now.

6 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. What else?
7 Does it account for some management activity or
8 staff allocation or budget? How do you fund these
9 things? Does it call for partnerships? What are
10 other pieces?

11 RANDY THORESON: You just said a few
12 of them. I've seen them in other recreation plans.

13 MARK IVY: It's really up to the
14 District to decide what goes into it.

15 STEPHANIE WHITE: So if there was
16 a -- this time frame, would we address that with,
17 like, a long-range plan or a capital improvements
18 plan, or how have you seen that done? And I'm
19 specifically asking the question to see if we can
20 get at your future -- allowing to be responsive to
21 future needs.

22 FRANK ALBRECHT: On that future needs
23 question that you brought up, is there a -- does the
24 area of Columbus and the surrounding area have a
25 population estimate on what it's supposed to do in

1 the next 20, 50 years? Does anybody have an idea on
2 that?

3 NEAL SUESS: Deb, anything from the
4 Chamber, that you're aware of?

5 DEB LOSEKE: Not that I know of,
6 except that it's going up, it's increasing. I
7 haven't seen the future --

8 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: I can tell you
9 Norfolk is .2 percent a year population growth. But
10 I don't know -- that's just in -- that's up the
11 road, so take that for what it is.

12 FRANK ALBRECHT: Is there any big
13 planned industry coming into town that's going to
14 stimulate growth that anybody is aware of?

15 NEAL SUESS: There's always plans. I
16 mean, nothing that we know of, but I mean, we're
17 always trying to attract new industry, trying to
18 bring something new into town. That's all part of
19 our economic development activities.

20 FRANK ALBRECHT: So a slow to
21 moderate growth rate is expected, then, I guess?

22 RANDALL HASKELL: Yeah, I think
23 that's true. And I also think that what's
24 interesting to look at is the -- the makeup of our
25 population has become more heavily Hispanic. And

1 what I've noticed with Hispanic people is they love
2 parks. They're a very family-oriented people. And
3 they -- on a Sunday afternoon, they are in the park
4 with the families.

5 And I know that Loup Public Power's parks
6 at Lake North and Lake Babcock -- well, mainly Lake
7 North -- the usage has increased tremendously
8 because of the Hispanic with their picnicking and
9 some camping, with the use of the lake itself for
10 swimming and fishing, and it's been a big increase
11 over the last three, four years with the Hispanic
12 population. So that's something that you can be
13 thinking about in future usage is the makeup of the
14 population.

15 RON ZIOLA: And I guess I'd ask Game
16 and Parks, when you have a facility like we have,
17 what do you normally see -- like say you have
18 Muscatine -- I guess Muscatine isn't yours, but
19 Willow Lake is a Game and Parks -- what do you
20 figure is the impact to the area? How far away is
21 it that the normal usage comes from? You know, it's
22 close to Norfolk. You know, how big of a radius do
23 you think the facilities draw from?

24 RICK HOLLAND: Sixty miles.

25 FRANK ALBRECHT: To be honest, I was

1 wondering that. I don't think we have a formal
2 estimate. I don't know, within about 60 miles to an
3 hour, is that a general rule? Does that sound
4 right?

5 RICK HOLLAND: Depends on how many
6 other systems you've got.

7 RON ZIOLA: You're saying normally
8 about 60 miles. (Inaudible - more than one person
9 speaking.)

10 FRANK ALBRECHT: That type of detail,
11 you know, Project components, like an NRD or
12 something like that, they apply for the Nebraska
13 Resource Development Fund through the Department of
14 Natural Resources, they have an economist down there
15 that crunches the benefit-cost ratio and so on.
16 They're a lot more -- they're throwing that out,
17 just a general rule, an hour for good fishing. And
18 in some cases, it's going to vary, I guess. But to
19 get more detailed, I would talk to Chris Reed
20 because they've got to really pin that down on how
21 much population they're going to draw in from a
22 certain radius. So that's the best -- they should
23 have a better answer on that.

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: So there's some
25 demographic -- and it probably gets into this -- I

1 suppose it's not documenting the baseline. There's
2 also a demographic projection, which gets a little
3 bit, Randy, to your future analysis. So it's maybe
4 some demographic trending.

5 RANDY THORESON: And I'm not
6 expecting you to reinvent the wheel here. I think
7 if there's information out there that --

8 RON ZIOLA: That's what I was getting
9 at. I thought maybe Game and Parks might have a --
10 you know, a thing. But you're saying this group
11 that works with the NRD's would be probably an area
12 that could provide, you know, how big of an impact
13 should we have or do we have, kind of thing.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: I also wonder -- so
15 we have time frame, the types of activities,
16 facilities, PM&E, demographic trending, documenting
17 the baseline use, partnerships, funding, management.
18 I bet we probably could keep that list going. But I
19 think -- I would imagine that the most important
20 part of that is to describe the goal and the purpose
21 of recreation as it pertains to Loup.

22 It's not a city park, it's not a state
23 park. This is a different entity, and I am
24 interested in the responsibility of the District to
25 meet its requirements but not behave like a city

1 park or not behave like a state park.

2 DAVE TUNINK: One thing Game and
3 Parks does in our creel surveys, we do ask people
4 where they come from. So we do get an estimate on
5 percentage, on what county they're from or state
6 they're from.

7 RANDY THORESON: Can you put Mark's
8 words in that goal?

9 STEPHANIE WHITE: This was his right
10 here.

11 RANDY THORESON: Oh, okay.

12 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Yeah. It's red
13 on my screen, but the color is not great, so --

14 RANDY THORESON: Okay. Thank you.

15 LISA RICHARDSON: I guess, Randy,
16 you -- I'm not sure that the goal -- I guess I had
17 one suggestion on how to rewrite that goal a little
18 bit to say, Determine public awareness, usage and
19 demand of the Project's existing recreation
20 facilities, determine if potential improvements are
21 needed, and develop a recreation plan to meet the
22 existing and future recreational needs.

23 Is that -- the goal doesn't even have a
24 plan in it, as somebody noted, so --

25 RANDY THORESON: Right.

1 RANDALL HASKELL: If the recreational
2 plan is kind of like a five-year and then it's
3 reviewed every five years, that would probably take
4 you into the future aspect. If you had it and it's
5 five years long and then you have a set time you're
6 going to readdress it and then look at the needs
7 then, that might help address future.

8 STEPHANIE WHITE: Uh-huh, like a
9 review cycle.

10 RANDALL HASKELL: Yeah, a review
11 cycle.

12 MARK IVY: That will provide you with
13 trend data.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yeah. So I think
15 we're back to the alpha of this discussion, and that
16 is does it need to be stated in the goal, or is that
17 something we can take care of in the activities?
18 And so I think we're doing a little bit of
19 wordsmithing here. I'll let you take a look at
20 that.

21 RANDY THORESON: I like the way it's
22 worded there, myself.

23 STEPHANIE WHITE: Turns your yellow
24 to a green?

25 RANDY THORESON: It would for me.

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Does anybody have
2 any heartburn with this? Neal, Lisa? Ron, did you
3 take voting cards?

4 RON ZIOLA: No. I don't take voting
5 cards. I always agree with Neal.

6 DEB LOSEKE: Wow, you've got him
7 trained.

8 STEPHANIE WHITE: Go ahead, Mark.

9 MARK IVY: The one thing I would
10 throw out there is I don't know if you want to
11 constrain future needs to a population. Is there
12 some limits you want to put on future needs? Future
13 needs of people living within a couple counties,
14 or --

15 NEAL SUESS: Well, you know, probably
16 until we define what that is, I mean, or how we
17 figure out what that is -- because we do realize we
18 get people from outside of the four-county area that
19 come in, especially like with Lake North, I mean, if
20 you look at the lakes around, there's not many
21 recreation facilities like that in the -- in the --
22 you know, definitely not in the four-county area,
23 but even outside of that.

24 So I think although you might be able to
25 pin it down, I'm not sure how we would do that yet.

1 So maybe that's something that we get to as we go on
2 down the line, maybe modify that goal at that point
3 in time.

4 RON ZIOLA: At the other end, we get
5 regional activity with the Headworks ATV Park.

6 NEAL SUESS: That's right. With the
7 jamborees, we know they come from multi-state. So
8 to limit it there, I don't -- we're probably not
9 getting multi-state at Lake North because it's not
10 that big. It's nice sized, but it's not that big of
11 a lake compared to some of the others out there. So
12 I don't know that we want to limit ourselves there
13 just because of the varying needs that we have at
14 the various locations where we're at.

15 STEPHANIE WHITE: I've added to your
16 point. I've called it service area definition. It
17 might not be area, it might be service definition.
18 So maybe you're supporting the jamboree that NOHVA
19 puts on. Whatever that is, I think that's probably
20 a piece that goes in the recreation plan, as well as
21 the operating goals. Why do we have this? What is
22 our goal? Who are we partnering with? What is the
23 goal, and how does it line up with our business
24 philosophy?

25 I'm going to have Ron put this back here

1 on the wall. We'll keep adding to this and maybe
2 referring to it throughout the day.

3 Oh, we've got a yellow. Yes?

4 RICK HOLLAND: You're getting beyond
5 what a management plan is all about. You're
6 starting to talk about strategic planning. That's
7 not what this is. A management plan is how you're
8 using it. The goals are already set. Don't start
9 making this into a strategic plan. This is a
10 management plan for the facilities in the area, what
11 you're doing with them, how you're doing with them,
12 and how you're taking care of them, very basic
13 stuff.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: So it's only a
15 fraction of this.

16 RICK HOLLAND: No. Some of that
17 stuff goes in it. But when you start about having
18 operating goals and stuff like that as part of your
19 management plan, you're getting -- I'm not sure what
20 you mean by that. When you start talking about
21 developing goals, you -- you're more at the
22 objective level, the strategies level, than you are
23 at major goal setting for a management plan. I
24 mean, that's -- I want to see this going into a
25 strategic planning mode, not for a management plan.

1 That's a waste of time and effort.

2 STEPHANIE WHITE: Haven't the goals
3 already been set?

4 RICK HOLLAND: You've got them right
5 there. A management plan is just one objective of
6 your goal, it's not the goal itself.

7 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

8 RICK HOLLAND: A management plan is
9 actually almost a strategy to meet an objective, if
10 you want to talk strategic planning verbiage.

11 RANDY THORESON: Can I bring up --
12 thanks, Rick. Did I interrupt you?

13 RICK HOLLAND: No, that's okay. I'm
14 used to it. Go ahead. I'm done.

15 RANDY THORESON: When we had that
16 meeting on the 21st, I was in a conference call. We
17 talked about should we call it a recreational
18 survey, or -- do remember when I said, Do we need
19 the word survey at the end? I thought I heard
20 affirmative, but what was the result of that? What
21 did we do with that?

22 LISA RICHARDSON: We did say that we
23 would change the title of the study. We haven't
24 done that yet because we wanted to bring forward
25 what was in the study plan.

1 RANDY THORESON: Okay.

2 LISA RICHARDSON: So I do have that
3 noted, that we take that survey off. It's a
4 recreational use -- a study of recreational use.

5 RANDY THORESON: Correct.

6 STEPHANIE WHITE: So let's take a
7 quick pulse check. If we call it recreation use
8 with the accompanying goal, do I have -- greens from
9 the back, okay. We've accepted a name change, and
10 we've accepted a goal change.

11 Okay. I'd like to get into -- Lisa, if
12 you want me to go through the objectives in the same
13 fashion, I can. It may be that those will flush out
14 when we get into the activities.

15 LISA RICHARDSON: I think we probably
16 need to get into the activities, focus on those.

17 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. Ellen, if
18 you could take me to the next slide, it's actually
19 two slides up. One more.

20 So each of these slides is really broken
21 into an activity. This one is about on-site
22 observation and the Recreation User Survey itself.
23 The study sites include the Headworks Park and the
24 OHV Park, Lake Babcock Park, Lake North Park,
25 Columbus Powerhouse Park, and the Tailrace Park.

1 Do you need more description and
2 definition before we -- we start to discuss, or are
3 you ready to talk now?

4 MARK IVY: Are you going to talk
5 about the areas that are being excluded?

6 STEPHANIE WHITE: You may do that
7 now, if you would like to.

8 MARK IVY: I was going to say, the
9 Monroe Powerhouse and the Loup Power Canal, I think
10 you can get that information if you expand your
11 creel study a little bit, and as you're going
12 through the creel study, you document the other uses
13 that are occurring. That way you can get all --
14 just keep your eyes open, document whatever else you
15 see while you're out there, so that would take care
16 of those two.

17 LISA RICHARDSON: And that was -- you
18 said the Monroe and --

19 MARK IVY: The Monroe Powerhouse and
20 just along the length of the canal.

21 LISA RICHARDSON: And that was the
22 intent, through the canal, and that would be part of
23 the creel survey. Really the primary activity is
24 fishing there.

25 MARK IVY: Right. But to document

1 the other use you encountered while you were out
2 there.

3 STEPHANIE WHITE: I'm going to
4 capture that, and then we need to bring it back up
5 during the creel survey study plan discussion.

6 LISA RICHARDSON: And I think this is
7 a good time, though, just to -- to reiterate one of
8 the District's concerns related to Monroe Powerhouse
9 and any expansion of facilities there or anything
10 like that, the -- they do not consider that to be a
11 park, and they have concern -- they have an operator
12 that lives there full time, their house is there,
13 and they have a concern about encouraging a lot of
14 recreation activities and how that might affect the
15 security of that house and that operator's family.

16 And so they -- you know, there's some
17 informal recreation that occurs in fishing at the
18 powerhouse, but they're really not wanting to do --
19 to encourage anything other than that, really. So I
20 guess, Neal and Ron, is that accurate?

21 NEAL SUESS: Yes.

22 RON ZIOLA: Uh-huh.

23 STEPHANIE WHITE: Mark, did you have
24 more?

25 MARK IVY: The other one we talked

1 about earlier was the Wildlife Management Areas and
2 trying to document recreation use that occurs in
3 those, and I don't know if you have plans to do
4 that.

5 FRANK ALBRECHT: Well, I have a
6 couple comments on that. At this point, I'm not
7 inclined to push for that. I mean, we appreciate
8 the relationship we have with the Loup. There's the
9 agreement set up, and within the agreement, it has
10 the responsibilities outlined and so on, ours and
11 theirs as well.

12 And I don't -- you know, unless FERC or
13 Loup really wants that included, I don't really feel
14 it's absolutely necessary at this time. I mean, if
15 you want, I can follow up with Wessel from our
16 Norfolk office, but I'm not inclined to push for it.
17 We worked out that management plan and it's
18 compatible with your District, and so that's my
19 take.

20 NEAL SUESS: That seems reasonable to
21 us.

22 STEPHANIE WHITE: Ron?

23 RON ZIOLA: You do have other
24 management areas, so how you manage this is the same
25 as you manage the other ones. So far we've heard no

1 negatives, you know, as far as how it's being
2 handled and how it's being done, so --

3 STEPHANIE WHITE: So what I'm hearing
4 is there's not a need to include the wildlife areas
5 in the recreation user survey.

6 FRANK ALBRECHT: I'm okay with that,
7 unless it needs to be in there, then we can -- we
8 can do that, if it's --

9 MARK IVY: Well, over the last
10 license, how many times did you go out and document
11 what's occurring in those areas?

12 FRANK ALBRECHT: The usage?

13 MARK IVY: Yeah.

14 FRANK ALBRECHT: Like I said, I'd
15 have to follow up on that. We have our wildlife
16 division, Wessel -- or Welstead, excuse me.
17 Welstead and Wessel sound similar, similar last
18 names. Within our wildlife division, we have
19 private the lands section, which is called the
20 partner section, and then the public, which is
21 called the management section.

22 And they developed their plans, like I
23 mentioned earlier, and so on. I don't know all the
24 details on it. I'd have to talk to Tom and get
25 back -- I could get the information back to Lisa.

1 Is that where it should go to, then, and find out --
2 maybe I should ask him, does he feel there's a need
3 to do a survey to find out -- to get a better handle
4 on the numbers that are going there. I was just
5 saying at this point, I wasn't going to push for it.
6 But I can certainly follow up.

7 LISA RICHARDSON: Yeah, I guess
8 probably get an idea of when is the last -- what is
9 the last time something like that has been done.

10 FRANK ALBRECHT: Okay.

11 MARK IVY: For the license, we really
12 need to understand what is the existing use of all
13 the facilities within the license. So if you can
14 come up with something that's been done in the last
15 couple years, that can give us an idea of what's
16 going on, great. But if there hasn't been anything,
17 we need to know what's going on.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. Other
19 discussion?

20 RANDY THORESON: Where did we leave
21 this morning the bypass reach on the Loup River?

22 STEPHANIE WHITE: We tabled it.

23 RANDY THORESON: Would this be a time
24 to re-up it?

25 MARK IVY: I guess I still feel like

1 we need to understand what's going on in the bypass
2 part of the Loup.

3 LISA RICHARDSON: From a recreational
4 standpoint?

5 MARK IVY: And fishing standpoint. I
6 guess what we need to do is figure out practically
7 what's it going to take to do that and locate that
8 and see if it's something --

9 STEPHANIE WHITE: Well, we heard a
10 couple of things this morning. Rick gave us a good
11 description of what it might take to skin that cat.
12 And then we have another question on the table from
13 Neal about what is the -- what can the Loup do to
14 change that, I think would be that question on the
15 table from this morning.

16 I think that might be where we stand.
17 It's a good time to have an open discussion if
18 anybody wants to jump in. Mark?

19 MARK WEEKLEY: Well, I guess for me,
20 it's important to understand the context. And
21 there's a very strong connection in the nexus
22 between the bypass canal and the Loup River. But I
23 don't think that is the same conversation as saying
24 that Loup Power has responsibility to manage
25 recreation and what can they do about recreation

1 down there. That's not my point. I think they're
2 very different things between, you know, actively
3 managing and influencing that recreation.

4 For me, it's understanding the context in
5 which you're operating and knowing what's going on
6 down there. I just want to make that point. But
7 it's a big difference between trying to manage it
8 and just understanding it as part of the context for
9 the study.

10 STEPHANIE WHITE: Rick?

11 RICK HOLLAND: I think the -- based
12 on my experience, and that's all I can base my
13 opinion here on, is that you could index the amount
14 of recreational use of the bypass reach based on the
15 fact that probably the far majority of use is going
16 to be at certain access points. You have the bridge
17 locations, the Headworks location, Tailrace Park --

18 RON ZIOLA: And your Wildlife
19 Management Area would allow for public access.

20 RICK HOLLAND: I'm not sure exactly
21 where that is.

22 RON ZIOLA: It's in there someplace.
23 I know it's -- you kind of go down by Krakow Church
24 and then turn north, in that area.

25 RICK HOLLAND: Whatever it is, I

1 mean, the rest of the river reach there, you can --
2 you're not going to manage the recreation, like you
3 said. You may improve the opportunity for
4 recreation, according to the amount of water that's
5 in the river. That's an operational question, not a
6 use question.

7 I think the amount of recreational use
8 will still be relative to the same amount of use at
9 those access points because 80 to -- probably 80 to
10 90 percent of the recreational use, the fishing, the
11 swimming, whatever they're doing on the river
12 itself, is going to happen based on those main
13 access points.

14 If you feel it's really necessary to
15 document to establish a baseline of what percentage
16 that is, whether it's 87.5 percent versus, you know,
17 5 percent at each particular sub area, that's fine.
18 I don't think it's going to be a big number because
19 I just --

20 RANDALL HASKELL: Who's got a
21 four-wheeler in here? Is that you?

22 RON ZIOLA: Uh-huh.

23 RANDALL HASKELL: Four-wheelers use
24 that particular stretch of the Loup River because
25 the water is diverted so it leaves a lot of sand.

1 There's a lot of --

2 RON ZIOLA: But that's being
3 discouraged anymore.

4 NEAL SUESS: Because they're
5 trespassing.

6 RANDALL HASKELL: Because of the
7 water --

8 NEAL SUESS: Because of the water,
9 right.

10 DAN NITZEL: Our organization's
11 actual interest is limited with the boundaries
12 within the Headworks Power -- within the Headworks
13 Park. As far as people going down the river is
14 concerned, what else can we say, you know, they're
15 trespassing. I mean, and we're not -- we're not
16 going to go out and encourage it, but it's not for
17 us to enforce.

18 And if somebody wants to come along,
19 whether it be wildlife or landowners or whatever,
20 and -- and you know, put -- you know, do something
21 about it, then they should. I mean, that's their --
22 but we're just concerned about the Headworks area
23 property because it's -- you know, if somebody's
24 riding on the dikes or something, then they
25 shouldn't -- you know, whoever is in charge of that,

1 that's their deal.

2 RANDALL HASKELL: So Neal, they're
3 trying to manage that -- or not manage it, but
4 they're trying to discourage it?

5 NEAL SUESS: Well, again, it's a
6 property -- I mean, the property rights are not
7 owned by -- you know, the river itself, being on the
8 water is -- that's a public right-of-way, I guess.
9 But once you get off the river, you're out of the
10 river, you're on private property.

11 RANDALL HASKELL: If the canal wasn't
12 there, there would be a lot more water.

13 RICK HOLLAND: If you touch the
14 bottom of the river, you're on private property.
15 That's the way the law reads.

16 NEAL SUESS: I mean, the state has
17 come up with that. There's nothing we can do about
18 that.

19 RICK HOLLAND: The private landowner
20 cannot impede you to float navigable waters of the
21 state. But if you just get out and walk the river,
22 you're technically trespassing. There is a -- I
23 think there's certain leeway for portage. You get
24 stuck, you're allowed to port off that until you can
25 float again.

1 But most landowners are not going to worry
2 about someone out canoeing, they have to get out and
3 walk a little ways on the river. Put an ATV out
4 there and have them zooming around sandbars and
5 making a lot of noise, stuff like that, they get a
6 little antsy about that.

7 Plus, there's also the conservation
8 components of the potential damage that an ATV could
9 do in terms of erosion and things like that. And
10 sandbar habitat is habitat for certain species. I
11 mean, so there are reasons to discourage unfettered
12 use of that habitat. Even though we're out to
13 improve outdoor recreation, we also have stewardship
14 responsibilities, so --

15 STEPHANIE WHITE: So the question
16 really on the table is are we including the bypass
17 reach in this particular study, or are we not? And
18 Frank, were you about to make a comment?

19 FRANK ALBRECHT: It's a side note on
20 it. There was one state in the northwest that the
21 judge overturned a trespassing charge for stepping
22 out, but that's the way it is in Nebraska right now,
23 the way Rick described it. But as far as -- until
24 that changes, it's a tough one. But as soon as you
25 get out --

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Randy, do you have
2 thoughts on this one?

3 RANDY THORESON: I still think we
4 should include it, but I don't think it has to be
5 that difficult. I think it still shows, like Mark
6 says, that you've studied and looked at recreation
7 in that area. I guess one question I have is are
8 there any private property owners that use those
9 sand islands on their property?

10 RICK HOLLAND: They use them for
11 picnicking and things, I'm sure there are. I have
12 no doubt that there are.

13 RANDY THORESON: So that's
14 recreational use, then --

15 RICK HOLLAND: I understand.

16 RANDY THORESON: -- whether private
17 or public.

18 NEAL SUESS: Well, Randy, let me
19 get -- I guess let me get to the vex of what my
20 problem with all of this is. Let's say we study it
21 all, which is fine, what are we supposed to do with
22 it? Let's say we got a bunch of information on it,
23 and -- which is great. Don't get me wrong, I'm sure
24 it's great. But what are we going to do with that
25 at that point in time?

1 We've already decided we just can't manage
2 that. We've already decided that we can't do
3 anything about it. So we've got a bunch of data on
4 what the use is. What do we do with it at that
5 point in time? I mean, what -- from our standpoint,
6 I understand doing everything on the canal because
7 we can do something about that. But once we get in
8 the bypass reach, what are we supposed to do about
9 it once we have this information?

10 If we're gathering information just to
11 gather it, I guess I don't see that that's our
12 responsibility to do that. If we're going on the
13 canal, I can understand that. That's our Project
14 area, and that we've got some control over. And if
15 we see some needs, we can beef up this, that and the
16 other thing.

17 But once we get to the bypass reach -- and
18 the biggest issue I've had with all this is, is what
19 are we supposed to do with it once we get the
20 information? And I haven't heard a real good -- a
21 real good thought about what do we do with it.

22 Now, I understand on the fishing side if
23 we let more water go down the bypass reach and what
24 all that does at that point in time, that's a whole
25 other issue, and I don't think this group wants to

1 get into that issue because we don't have enough
2 time in the next year to get that taken care of,
3 which we'll deal with in the other study plans.

4 But I guess that's the whole crux of where
5 I'm coming out at, is if we're just doing it to
6 gather information, that's fine. I just don't know
7 that that needs to be part of what we're doing here
8 on the license side of things. And maybe we're
9 taking this -- maybe I'm taking it out of context,
10 but that's just my whole thought process.

11 MARK IVY: Well, if I could respond,
12 you take the information you gather from that use
13 study, you put it with the latent demand information
14 you're going to get, and then you have an awareness
15 of what's going on. So that's one thing you've
16 accomplished.

17 The second thing is, you can take that
18 data and you can share it with other groups, like
19 Department of Transportation, and say, Do we need to
20 formalize access under those bridges or expand use
21 somehow? It's not your problem to deal with it --

22 NEAL SUESS: Yeah.

23 MARK IVY: -- but you can hand that
24 information over to another agency, and they can use
25 it to justify the decisions they're making.

1 RON ZIOLA: But that's an expense to
2 us for their benefit. And it's not a benefit to the
3 operation of the facility. It's not going to
4 improve our facilities. Again, it becomes an
5 expense of gathering information, but it's not going
6 to improve the Project and its -- and its operation,
7 whether it be recreation or whatever.

8 On the other side of things, too, when it
9 comes to water, that's handled by the state and
10 there's things that if we do, we can damage our --
11 affect our waterway. Correct, Neal?

12 NEAL SUESS: Yeah. And I guess where
13 Ron is coming in, I guess where our biggest crux is,
14 is maybe this is something that's needed. I
15 understand it. But is it necessarily the Loup's
16 responsibility on the bypass reach to be collecting
17 and gathering all that data, or is it -- you know,
18 or is it just, Hey, it's convenient, Loup's license
19 is up, let's get them to pay for it, versus somebody
20 else who is supposed to be doing it, collecting that
21 kind of data.

22 And that's -- I guess that's what I'm
23 getting at at this point in time, and I want to make
24 sure that we're all in the right spot at this point
25 in time with regard to that.

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Mark, and then
2 we'll come to you.

3 MARK IVY: The last piece I didn't
4 get to finish was that it may also influence the
5 amount of water you let down.

6 RON ZIOLA: Well, we want to stay
7 within our state water --

8 NEAL SUESS: I mean, that -- again,
9 and Mark, just as we talked about, that gets into
10 all the other issues that we've got with water and
11 what happens there. I do understand how that all
12 interacts with each other, and obviously the one --
13 one leads to the other, you know. I mean, basically
14 every study ties into each other once you get down
15 to that basic fundamental question about how much do
16 we take into the canal versus how much we let down
17 to the bypass reach.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: Rick, do you have a
19 thought?

20 RICK HOLLAND: As much as this may
21 shock Neal and Ron, I have to agree with what
22 they're saying. And I don't -- and this is just my
23 opinion from my perspective, as an agency person
24 dealing with research and data and stuff like that.
25 Getting the information that you're

1 talking about here with use would be -- would be
2 useful information for the commission to see if we
3 could improve the opportunity for recreational
4 research in the stretch, given the functioning of
5 the District.

6 I have the feeling that the reason that we
7 are not pushing this harder, simply the fact is we
8 do not have the resources to study every reach of
9 river in the state of Nebraska that's affected by
10 irrigation canals.

11 And we understand they're being impacted.
12 We're not going to get into those issues. They know
13 it, we know it. That's not an issue here, it's the
14 way things are. It happened before I was born, and
15 I can't change anything to that.

16 But we don't have the wherewithals to go
17 out and do a quality user survey of the river and
18 put a creel clerk out there to do it the way we
19 would do it if we wanted to get that index -- that
20 appropriate index to know that it's 95 percent at
21 the access points, and the rest is the user, public
22 or private, set lining and a couple of airboaters
23 come up every now and then if the water is up.

24 You know, there's a whole different way
25 people are using that river. We don't have the

1 time, money or -- I won't say interest, because we
2 do have the interest, we just don't have facilities
3 right now to do that.

4 So I think our recommendation is let's
5 focus where we're going to get the biggest bang out
6 of the buck, and that's going to be at the
7 Headworks, Tailrace Park, the bridge at -- wherever
8 it is in that rec area. You know, those -- that's
9 where we're going to find out what the real use is
10 of the river and it's going to be an index of what's
11 going on in between. It's not perfect. It's not --
12 it's just real life logistics, just determining what
13 our involvement here is.

14 I mean, that -- you're talking -- a creel
15 like that could take 20, \$25,000 to do a quality
16 creel, for a person to get out there and do it the
17 way I would design it.

18 RON ZIOLA: And again, I think to
19 cover that much -- I hate to say it -- to me, it
20 would be additional to that. Because you're talking
21 one guy trying to get up and down the river, how
22 many times can he get up and down there, you know,
23 in this time frame when you have access problems,
24 you're going to have to go through farm gates,
25 you're going to have to take lanes.

1 RICK HOLLAND: I'd do it on the
2 river. I wouldn't even worry about those access
3 points.

4 RON ZIOLA: Yeah. But to hike that
5 much river, it would take a lot of manpower.

6 RICK HOLLAND: You could airboat
7 it --

8 RON ZIOLA: It's still a long ways.

9 RICK HOLLAND: I understand. I'm not
10 belittling it.

11 RON ZIOLA: Right.

12 RICK HOLLAND: And that's what I'm
13 saying, is --

14 RON ZIOLA: Just like you're saying,
15 if you're going to do it randomly --

16 RICK HOLLAND: I wouldn't do it
17 randomly, I'd structure it. I'd have a stratified
18 approach to how you'd go about doing it that
19 minimizes --

20 STEPHANIE WHITE: And so now we're
21 getting into the methods --

22 RON ZIOLA: Right.

23 STEPHANIE WHITE: -- and we're still
24 debating.

25 RON ZIOLA: Yeah.

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: So I might --

2 RICK HOLLAND: No, I don't see a
3 reason to debate it, Ron.

4 RON ZIOLA: No, I agree with you.
5 I'm just saying, I think you're underestimating the
6 cost to do it right, you know, at 25,000.

7 RICK HOLLAND: Let's not go there --

8 STEPHANIE WHITE: So I think we've
9 had some --

10 RICK HOLLAND: -- unless FERC wants
11 to kick in some money.

12 DAVE TUNINK: Then it's a hundred
13 thousand.

14 RICK HOLLAND: Yeah, it would be at
15 least a hundred thousand.

16 STEPHANIE WHITE: All right. So the
17 question on the table is the bypass reach, is it in
18 or is it out of the Recreation User Survey. I think
19 we have a pretty clear sense of that. I'm going to
20 take a show of cards. I'm going to record it, and
21 then I'm going to move on, if that's okay with
22 everybody. Show of cards for leaving the survey as
23 is, which means bypass is out.

24 Okay. We have reds from FERC and the
25 National Park Service. I'm going to move off of

1 this slide, and I'm going to -- we're going to keep
2 talking. Ellen, that means I need you to push a
3 button.

4 Again, we're talking about on-site
5 observation and recreation. The study period, May 1
6 through November 1, the peak activity periods; a
7 goal of 300 responses with a designed survey
8 instrument, which I believe is part of the PAD --

9 LISA RICHARDSON: Yeah, part of the
10 study plan.

11 STEPHANIE WHITE: -- part of the
12 study plan, and a field observation form.

13 Discussion about this one before I call a
14 vote of cards?

15 DAVE TUNINK: How many times -- how
16 many times are we going to count?

17 RICK HOLLAND: Four times a month?

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: The question is how
19 many times are we going to do a count.

20 DAVE TUNINK: Per month?

21 STEPHANIE WHITE: Per month?

22 LISA RICHARDSON: Two weekdays and
23 two weekend days per month.

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: So four.

25 DAVE TUNINK: That's enough?

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: And then one major
2 holiday.

3 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Those dates are
4 based on FERC's study request. That was their
5 suggestion.

6 RICK HOLLAND: It depends on what
7 you're doing. If you're looking for an estimate of
8 total use, then that's -- you get very limited
9 estimators in terms of a daily estimator to expand
10 to a month. Because by stating that period of time
11 per month, you're looking at estimating for a
12 month-by-month period, so you use a daily estimator.
13 You're stratifying by weekend, weekday. That's what
14 you said.

15 So you have two weekdays that you're using
16 as an estimator, and then you're expanding along the
17 other 18 days that you're not surveying, or whatever
18 it is. That's kind of minimal.

19 But if you're looking at just collecting
20 kind of a general sense of use and you're more
21 interested in using the survey -- using the survey
22 tools that ask questions on why you're using it,
23 what you're using, where you're using, then the
24 actual numbers -- the total estimate of total use
25 becomes a little less important.

1 So I guess is the goal to characterize the
2 use and the preferences of the facilities or to
3 actually document the absolute number? I mean, what
4 would FERC say for that, I guess?

5 MARK IVY: Preferably it would be
6 both.

7 STEPHANIE WHITE: Is it referenced in
8 our goals? Did we -- can we answer that question?

9 DAVE TUNINK: Well, at one time --
10 Randy, weren't we talking at one time that the creel
11 clerk and the user survey would be the same people,
12 kind of combine efforts?

13 RANDY THORESON: We talked about
14 combining.

15 RICK HOLLAND: They're going
16 different places, though.

17 DAVE TUNINK: Not too much. They're
18 running the whole canal system and the lakes. You
19 know, it won't be efficient with personnel time and
20 driving that canal a long ways -- if you're doing a
21 creel, you could check the fishermen from the
22 recreation list. You could check everybody at the
23 same time. If you had two people in the same
24 vehicle in case it's very busy, they could be doing
25 all the surveys and just do the recreational survey

1 and the creel survey at the same time.

2 RANDY THORESON: I think we talked
3 about that.

4 DAVE TUNINK: Uh-huh.

5 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: I think we talked
6 about that. But the way the study plan is written
7 now, the people who are doing the recreation user
8 survey -- the kind of more in-depth, what are you
9 doing at the parks -- are also doing spot counts.
10 So they may also be doing -- counting cars in the
11 parking lot, counting the number of people
12 picnicking, counting the number of people on the
13 water.

14 So while they are doing the actual user
15 surveys, they are also doing spot counts. And I'm
16 just wondering if that's too much to put on them in
17 the same --

18 LISA RICHARDSON: I think it's a
19 logistical issue between the two and having one set
20 of people do everything because of the length of the
21 day. I mean, you're obviously going to have to have
22 two crews if you're going to --

23 RICK HOLLAND: Well, not necessarily.
24 You don't have to be -- it depends on how you design
25 your survey and you structure your survey.

1 For example, the creel survey -- and I'm
2 going to talk about the creel survey because what
3 Dave's talking about is modifying the rec survey to
4 fit in within the kind of design you do for a creel
5 survey. You stratify your time periods, you
6 stratify your days so that you're representative of
7 the total period, that month period. And then you
8 simply hit those areas with a certain probability of
9 length of time that you're going to be at that
10 particular area, do your counts, do your
11 measurements, and move on.

12 It doesn't have to necessarily be an
13 instantaneous count. It could be as you hit that
14 area, you count all the users, all the fishermen,
15 you do your interviewing, do your park counts, move
16 on to the next area.

17 I mean, it's -- you expand this data from
18 a subset of probabilities that you are assuming are
19 correct until you find out they're different, and
20 then you can modify it. It's more of an adaptive
21 approach. But usually you go through a year or so
22 of finding out what the data tells you in terms of
23 your probabilities of use for a particular area.

24 I mean, we didn't invent this. There's a
25 heck of a lot of literature out there based on how

1 to do these kind of probability approaches for
2 surveying, whether it's user surveys or creel
3 surveys. So I mean, this isn't new. But you could
4 integrate them both.

5 Can they get all the counts done? I don't
6 know until they go out there and see. I mean, how
7 many people are going to be in a parking lot? In
8 some cases, you're going to have five cars. It
9 doesn't take long to count five cars. Some days you
10 might have 150 cars, and it will take a little bit
11 longer.

12 DAVE TUNINK: And you're not expected
13 to, I mean, talk to everybody.

14 RICK HOLLAND: You get as many as you
15 can per your time period.

16 STEPHANIE WHITE: Mark, did you have
17 a comment?

18 MARK IVY: The one thing I neglected
19 to point out was the original study request asked
20 for the mechanical counters at the parking lots, so
21 that would have taken care of who's using it and how
22 much use.

23 RICK HOLLAND: And I understand the
24 use of mechanical counters, and I also understand
25 that one vehicle can be counted multiple times and

1 really mislead you into the number of -- the use
2 levels you'd have. We've experienced this with our
3 parks people. They love to use mechanical counters
4 and --

5 MARK IVY: Calibrate them.

6 RICK HOLLAND: Well, you have to
7 calibrate them in some way.

8 MARK IVY: Right.

9 RICK HOLLAND: The trouble is,
10 sometimes the park users are the ones who represent
11 a high percentage of the counts because they're
12 going back and forth over the counter.

13 RON ZIOLA: Oh, that would be our
14 case at the Headworks.

15 RICK HOLLAND: I mean, there are
16 problems. You can solve those problems, but they
17 create their own -- there's a series of problems
18 that go with that, so --

19 MARK IVY: I just want to point out,
20 the study design was changed, so --

21 RICK HOLLAND: I understand.

22 MARK IVY: -- that piece was taken
23 out.

24 LISA RICHARDSON: So I guess the
25 Game and Parks folks -- Rick, you're kind of

1 suggesting that if we combine the two, we might be
2 able to get some good efficiencies by just using
3 this -- this setup for the creel survey, and as
4 you're going along, do the same -- do the spot
5 counts for the rec survey and --

6 RICK HOLLAND: Well, the setup of the
7 creel might have to change a little bit to fit in so
8 that they're both being done to the locations. But
9 I think they both can be done in the same kind of --
10 there's the potential. I don't know until you get
11 an idea of how much use and nonuse -- or nonfishing
12 use there would be if you're going to get enough
13 time to sample all those.

14 LISA RICHARDSON: Well, part of the
15 problem is the size of the Project, the 35 -- you
16 know, 35 miles from Headworks to Tailrace. And it's
17 not in a straight line, so it takes a while to get
18 from here to there. Ron, it usually takes an hour
19 if you were just driving from the --

20 RON ZIOLA: Well, if you're driving
21 the canal -- because you know, certain areas are
22 open -- usually one side or the other is open to
23 public access, if you're going to try to get ones
24 that are going to be -- some of the areas that are
25 gated off -- well you need to get on your bicycle.

1 RANDALL HASKELL: You need to get on
2 your bicycle. That's how you need to do it because
3 then you don't have a big deal.

4 RICK HOLLAND: I guess you have to
5 volunteer.

6 RANDALL HASKELL: Yeah, I would
7 volunteer.

8 RON ZIOLA: A lot of times that would
9 be a quicker way than what it would be vehicular.

10 LISA RICHARDSON: But I guess can we
11 all agree that we should combine the rec user survey
12 and the creel survey so that they're done at the
13 same time by the same folks and try to get some
14 economies there?

15 RANDALL HASKELL: And I have very
16 little experience, but I would agree because your
17 heaviest use of your bicycles are on a
18 2-and-a-half-mile stretch. From one end of the
19 Two Lakes Trail to the other is 2-and-a-half miles,
20 and that's the primary use.

21 But you do need to study the Bob Lake.
22 The people that work at the college, they use that a
23 tremendous amount. If you use the Bob Lake Trail,
24 the amount of walking tracks is phenomenal, so it's
25 very high usage there.

1 The Robert White Trail on the south is not
2 as heavy at this point in time. We hope to change
3 that in the near future. But -- so as far as your
4 biking trails, you've got 6 miles, and it's fairly
5 right there.

6 RICK HOLLAND: One of the things you
7 have to understand is you can -- it may take you an
8 hour to go the entire route, just ride the entire
9 route, but if you divide the day up, like we would,
10 for example, for a creel, and to -- to sunup to
11 midday, midday to sundown, you have two periods
12 there. I'm assuming there's not -- night use, night
13 creeling is a whole different ballgame. We won't
14 address it right now.

15 LISA RICHARDSON: We're not proposing
16 that.

17 RICK HOLLAND: I understand that.
18 But you don't have -- the concept of an
19 instantaneous count was traditionally in creel
20 counts where have -- over an hour period, you had to
21 count everyone. Research has shown that the
22 amount -- the estimates you get from an
23 instantaneous count are very, very close or are
24 statistically the same as what you'd get as if you
25 just went through at a very steady pace and counted

1 from one point to the end of your system and count
2 as you go and interview as you go.

3 Ultimately, the counts you get and the use
4 levels you get would be the same. At least
5 statistically, they are not that different, and --
6 if at all. That changed our look at how to do
7 certain types of surveys, especially along something
8 like a river where you -- it's hard to do an
9 instantaneous count and then stop and interview
10 people and get it all done within an hour when
11 you're dealing with 50 miles of river or 150 miles
12 of river.

13 So I think your system is set up for what
14 we call a bus route kind of thing where you start at
15 one point and you just work your way through it, and
16 however long it takes you, as long as you're done in
17 that seven-hour period, you randomly change your
18 starting point and your finishing point so you're
19 not always hitting Point A at 7:30 in the morning
20 and Point D at 12:30, noon. Sometimes it may be the
21 opposite, with certain logistical changes. That
22 stuff can be worked out.

23 That -- that stratification and
24 randomization process gets rid of some of your
25 biases, and so that you're -- I think that's more

1 efficient use of your time and effort.

2 DAVE TUNINK: Especially if you use
3 two people in one vehicle. The expense is going to
4 be your vehicle going back and forth --

5 RICK HOLLAND: You could use two or
6 three people and get it done very, very quickly
7 instead of having two complete uses with two or
8 three vehicles going at the same time. So I mean,
9 there's ways of minimizing the cost there, still
10 getting pretty much the same data you'd get by
11 having two totally separate surveys.

12 STEPHANIE WHITE: So it sounds like
13 the question on the table is really Lisa's, and it
14 is do we agree we can combine these two?

15 RICK HOLLAND: I think so.

16 LISA RICHARDSON: Understanding that
17 there's a little bit of a limitation in doing -- you
18 know, when you combine the recreation survey into
19 the creel, that maybe gives you a little bit of a
20 limitation. But are we willing to accept that
21 limitation and be more efficient?

22 RICK HOLLAND: I'm not sure what your
23 limitation -- what you mean by limitations?

24 DAVE TUNINK: If you have two people
25 working at the same time, they can cover a lot of

1 people.

2 LISA RICHARDSON: So you don't think
3 there would be any downside?

4 RICK HOLLAND: Well, the recreation
5 survey is a lot longer than the creel survey.

6 DAVE TUNINK: I know. But you have
7 two people doing the survey at the same time. They
8 can cover a lot of people.

9 RICK HOLLAND: There are going to be
10 days where you can't cover everybody who is at a
11 particular site.

12 DAVE TUNINK: Fourth of July.

13 RICK HOLLAND: I'll guarantee you
14 that, especially if you go out on the Fourth of July
15 or something like that. You're going to have a set
16 time period from which you get as many interviews as
17 you can. You set a goal for your interviews of
18 300 responses. I mean, that's -- is that for the
19 entire interview period? I mean, for the -- the
20 entire survey period?

21 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: That's based on
22 getting a statistically significant sample.

23 DAVE TUNINK: I think 300 is going to
24 be hard to get.

25 RICK HOLLAND: Okay. But are you

1 basing your statistically significant estimate on
2 the entire survey period or on the monthly estimate?

3 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: The estimate.

4 RICK HOLLAND: The monthly estimate?
5 So you want 300 per month?

6 LISA RICHARDSON: No. The average
7 use estimate of 150,000 visitors for the year.

8 RICK HOLLAND: So you're talking
9 about an annual --

10 LISA RICHARDSON: Annual.

11 RICK HOLLAND: Okay. That's a little
12 bit different than -- I mean, that's -- you're
13 talking about 40 a month. I hope you'd get that in
14 the user survey.

15 STEPHANIE WHITE: Go ahead, Quinn.

16 QUINN DAMGAARD: Just so we
17 understand, the survey that Jeff, you know, set up
18 for us was a two-hour instantaneous count --

19 RICK HOLLAND: I understand.

20 QUINN DAMGAARD: -- set up with two
21 segments, basically divided at the inlet to
22 Lake Babcock, everything east, Segment 1; everything
23 west, Segment 2. Had to cover the whole thing in
24 two hours; each segment, one hour a piece. So are
25 we saying that whole approach is kind of maybe out

1 the window more for this --

2 RICK HOLLAND: I'm not going to speak
3 for Jeff. I'm just saying, this is -- he speaks for
4 Jeff, he's his boss.

5 I'm just saying that if you want to
6 integrate the two approaches, you can do it, and you
7 probably can cover a lot of the same things that you
8 would cover anyway, if not all. I'm just saying, it
9 can happen.

10 I'm sure when Jeff put that together, Jeff
11 was told, I need a creel survey for this situation.
12 That's different than saying, I want to also do a
13 recreational use survey.

14 MARK IVY: And we can't solve all the
15 methodological issues here.

16 RICK HOLLAND: Yeah.

17 MARK IVY: It's a good idea to think
18 about consolidating the two --

19 RICK HOLLAND: Right.

20 MARK IVY: -- but you have a lot of
21 methodological issues you're going to have to
22 consider.

23 STEPHANIE WHITE: It's also
24 2 o'clock -- 5 minutes after 2. So we have
25 55 minutes to cover two more studies.

1 What I'd like to do is table this and
2 think about it again when we talk about the creel
3 surveys, because we really haven't even talked about
4 that yet.

5 Again, does anybody have any heartburn
6 with the things in the study plan as proposed
7 according to at least what's on this slide? Those
8 are the May 1 through November 1 study periods, the
9 peak activity periods, the goal of 300 total
10 responses -- is that right -- 300 total responses,
11 using the survey instrument as proposed, and the
12 field observation form that was also included.

13 Green, yellow and red cards. Let's see a
14 show of cards, and we may move on.

15 All right. We have red in the corner and
16 one comment, then we're going to move on. Go ahead.

17 MARK IVY: I'm concerned about the
18 300 total responses. I think that's too low.

19 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

20 MARK IVY: I don't know what your
21 confidence interval is, but you've got so many sites
22 that have large number of uses, you're probably
23 going to need more than that. I could see 300 at
24 Lake North, just at that one site. What about the
25 rest of the canal?

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So there's a
2 question about the number of responses and if it's
3 adequate. Rick, what's your comment?

4 RICK HOLLAND: My comment was I
5 didn't want to see the survey stopped once you got
6 to your 300 goal, because you'll get that the first
7 major holiday.

8 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So two
9 concerns about limiting the number of surveys.

10 LISA RICHARDSON: So that's really
11 the only concern, is limiting the number of surveys?
12 Is that -- of everything that's up there, it's just
13 the 300 that is causing some heartburn?

14 RICK HOLLAND: Yeah.

15 LISA RICHARDSON: Okay.

16 STEPHANIE WHITE: All right. Let's
17 move to the next slide, Ellen, please.

18 The study sites include Two Lakes Trail,
19 Bob Lake Trail, Robert White Trail. These are the
20 trail counts, by the way. Again, study period --
21 this is a little different -- May 1 through
22 October 31 --

23 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: We had
24 November 1.

25 STEPHANIE WHITE: It's the same study

1 period. Any issues with the trails? I'll give you
2 a second to read, and then I'll ask for a show of
3 cards.

4 LISA RICHARDSON: And the trail
5 counts are intended to be done mechanically, not by
6 going out and counting people.

7 STEPHANIE WHITE: Go ahead, Marv.

8 MARV PETERSON: The way I read some
9 of this information, the survey -- there are some
10 survey questions that include bicycling and trail
11 usage, though, is that not correct?

12 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yes, yes, yes.

13 MARV PETERSON: Okay. So that survey
14 information will be part of what Rick is talking
15 about if you combine them, okay? And this may get
16 more into the methodology, but that's the only
17 concern I have. And I love saving money, but the
18 concern I have is if you ask 300 people at the
19 Headworks Park about trails, they don't have a clue
20 because there are not trails up there. That's the
21 only concern I have. So that would be more of the
22 methodology than the actual survey.

23 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So it's
24 another comment about the number of surveys. Randy,
25 did you have a comment?

1 RANDALL HASKELL: No.

2 MARV PETERSON: Now, that's not to
3 say that there couldn't be some ideas for surveys in
4 that area, but they're not existing there at the
5 present time.

6 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

7 MARK IVY: I just want to reiterate
8 what Rick was saying about the need to calibrate
9 those counters.

10 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

11 MARK IVY: Make sure you do that.

12 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay, counter
13 calibration. With those three things in mind --
14 well, two things, calibrating the counters and
15 the -- if I understood your point, it was that trail
16 usage get counted in the -- with the counters as
17 well as the survey instrument?

18 MARV PETERSON: That's right. I
19 think opinions about the trails ought to be, you
20 know, from people that have the trail access. The
21 people in Genoa, unless they drive to Columbus to
22 use the trails, they don't have access to them. So
23 it needs to be people within a reasonable radius of
24 these trails that are going to use them that should
25 be surveyed.

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

2 MARK IVY: One final thing is if
3 you're willing to leave them up all year, it's not
4 going to add much as far as cost. You're already
5 buying the counters and putting them up, so I don't
6 think it's going to add cost to leave them up all
7 year, if you're willing to do that.

8 MARV PETERSON: One other comment
9 about the trails. I'm not suggesting that the
10 survey at the Headworks Park or anyplace else
11 further west, in the west regions, shouldn't include
12 questions about trails because that may indicate
13 there's a strong need there. I'm just suggesting on
14 those three trails, you need to ask people in this
15 area, not people up there about these three trails.

16 STEPHANIE WHITE: Can you answer
17 that?

18 LISA RICHARDSON: Trails are
19 included on -- the intent is to use one survey
20 instrument for all areas, and so there are trails
21 questions that would be asked of the Headworks, but
22 we would know where those surveys came from. And
23 there are trail surveys -- trail questions asked at
24 the lakes where the trails exist, and so we would
25 know where those responses came from as well. So I

1 think we'd be getting the information that you're
2 interested in.

3 MARV PETERSON: Okay.

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So with that
5 need met, we have one suggestion on the table, which
6 is to leave the counters in year round. With those
7 things, let's see a show of cards.

8 All right. We've got greens. With FERC
9 absent, we'll get his opinion when he walks back in
10 the room.

11 Let's move to the telephone survey.

12 Since your reprieve, you just missed the
13 boat.

14 MARK WEEKLEY: Green.

15 RICK HOLLAND: You have to
16 understand, Dave is colorblind.

17 STEPHANIE WHITE: I haven't thought
18 of that.

19 The telephone survey, the same survey
20 period -- yes?

21 LISA RICHARDSON: Can we get Mark's
22 buy-in on the last one before we -- since he's back
23 right away and --

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yes.

25 LISA RICHARDSON: -- on the trail?

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: So if you want to
2 go back one more slide -- okay. Perfect. It was a
3 green card from FERC.

4 Next we're going to talk about telephone
5 surveys. The study period is the same, with a goal
6 this time of 400 responses, using the survey
7 instrument that was provided in the study plan
8 document.

9 Discussion? Four hundred?

10 RICK HOLLAND: No. I guess why is
11 there a May through November 1 for telephone survey?
12 Why don't you just do it in July or June, or
13 something, whenever you can? I mean, you're calling
14 people in the region who are using our -- I can't
15 remember the exact details -- but I mean, usually a
16 telephone survey is something you --

17 MARK IVY: Right after the season is
18 over.

19 RICK HOLLAND: Right. Yeah, at the
20 end of your season.

21 LISA RICHARDSON: Rick, that's
22 actually not specified here. That may be a
23 carryover mistake on my part from one slide to the
24 next.

25 RICK HOLLAND: Okay.

1 LISA RICHARDSON: It's not specified
2 in our study plan.

3 RICK HOLLAND: I just had a terrible
4 image of every month you're calling for the
5 telephone survey. I get irritated enough with
6 telephone surveys.

7 LISA RICHARDSON: One survey, one
8 survey. And you know, we would be open to when you
9 think is the most effective time to do that survey,
10 we'll do it that month. The goal is 400 responses
11 of a one-time telephone survey.

12 MARK IVY: Early fall.

13 LISA RICHARDSON: Early fall?

14 MARK IVY: Yeah.

15 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. Any
16 heartburn --

17 RANDY THORESON: Just a random --

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: Random? I heard a
19 comment from Randy --

20 RANDY THORESON: Just a random
21 selection for the telephone survey, right?

22 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yes.

23 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: For the service
24 area.

25 LISA RICHARDSON: Yes, for the

1 two-county service area, Platte and Nance Counties
2 was the intent. And that's where the 400 came from,
3 based on a statistically valid sample of the
4 population in those two counties, is where we got it
5 from.

6 I don't know the confidence interval that
7 was used. We could add that to our text and comment
8 on that later. But that was the intent, was that
9 Platte and Nance Counties is where the Project
10 exists, and that we would be sampling people from
11 those counties. And the intent was to hire a
12 professional phone surveyor to do those random
13 surveys.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: And it sounds like
15 we will do them in one month -- in one time in one
16 month in the fall.

17 Okay. Red, yellow and green. Let's take
18 a quick vote on this one, and then we'll move off.

19 Okay. Let's move to the next slide. We
20 have a specific survey for the NOHVA group. The
21 survey was included -- we will -- the instrument
22 itself was included in our study plan. We would
23 publish it in the newsletter. That's how we'd get
24 the survey out.

25 Questions before we take a vote on this

1 one? Yep, Mark?

2 MARK IVY: I'm wondering if this is
3 going to be an internet based survey where you can
4 go on the website and fill it out?

5 STEPHANIE WHITE: The question is
6 will it be an internet based survey. What are we
7 going to do, Dan?

8 DAN NITZEL: Well, I'll tell you
9 how -- we could put it in the newsletter, but I
10 think it would be more effective if it was just a
11 bulk mailing to all of our members. And we could
12 work with Loup and determine how far you guys want
13 to go back. I mean, we go back to 1988 in our
14 database, but we don't know how many of the
15 addresses are correct.

16 You know, I -- you know, we'll work out
17 the details of how it's done. But the newsletter
18 thing is printed on newsprint, and somebody had to
19 tear it out and send it in. I don't know if the
20 printer can actually stick it in. But we can also
21 do an internet based survey. I do those quite a
22 bit.

23 MARK IVY: I was just thinking, that
24 would be a way to save money because then you
25 wouldn't have to enter the data.

1 DAN NITZEL: Well, yeah, and you
2 don't have to enter it that way. If you do a -- I
3 would estimate that if we sent out 2,000 surveys,
4 that we would get back probably 200, 300, at the
5 very most. Probably, realistically, 150 to 250,
6 but -- and it would cost a thousand dollars printing
7 and mailing it.

8 STEPHANIE WHITE: Dan, I was under
9 the impression that you send your newsletters out or
10 send a lot of information out via e-mail. Is your
11 e-mail list better than your hard copy, than your
12 mailing address list?

13 DAN NITZEL: I don't send the
14 newsletter out e-mail, but we have a bulk e-mail
15 system and it covers about 50 percent of our current
16 members. And -- but I have -- I can -- you know, I
17 can send out quite a bit. And you can also put a
18 link on the website.

19 The big problem is with an internet
20 survey -- depending on the length of the survey --
21 is you have to have a good enough -- usually what
22 you do is you contract with the server to have it
23 done, and you have to make -- you want to make sure
24 you have a server that -- you have to pay more for
25 it -- that doesn't allow duplicate surveys. It

1 records the IP of the computer.

2 But the company we use doesn't do it
3 because it's only \$15 a month. But if your survey
4 is long enough, somebody's not going to take it all.
5 You're going to have probably -- if it's a long
6 survey, you might only have a 60 percent, 75 percent
7 completion rate.

8 STEPHANIE WHITE: So it sounds like
9 there's some question about distribution methods, or
10 maybe even the medium of the survey itself.

11 DAN NITZEL: We can do it whichever
12 way Loup wants us to do it. I mean, if -- I'm sure
13 we could combine with a separate mailing that we do
14 or combine it in our newsletter or we can do it
15 internet, either way.

16 So the problem is you either need to do
17 one or the other because you're going to have
18 duplicate surveys from the same people if you offer
19 both services. If you do it on the internet, then
20 anybody can do it, which is -- which is probably
21 more desirable because not everybody that uses the
22 Headworks Park is a member, you know.

23 MARK IVY: That was going to be my
24 next question, how are you going to reach out to
25 nonmembers?

1 DAN NITZEL: 20 percent of the people
2 that ride at Headworks to 30, 40 percent are
3 members.

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: Lisa, and then
5 we'll come back to your question.

6 LISA RICHARDSON: The intent of this
7 piece -- and it wasn't a request by FERC, but it was
8 something that we included based on the information
9 that we got in the studies during the scoping
10 process.

11 There was a lot of comment by the NOHVA
12 folks, and so we wanted to make sure that -- because
13 we know that that -- you have people that come at --
14 they might only come over -- they might only come to
15 the Headworks once a summer or twice a summer, the
16 chances of us actually catching those people during
17 our random survey we thought was maybe a little bit
18 slim.

19 So we wanted to make sure that we got the
20 input of the NOHVA folks, whatever is -- you think
21 is the most effective method, if it's a mailed
22 survey to the addresses that you have, which you say
23 some of them are kind of questionable, but you have
24 a list, or it's an internet survey where you have a
25 link in your -- send it out your e-mail, whatever

1 you think would be the most effective method of
2 getting input on the OHV Park.

3 DAN NITZEL: Internet would certainly
4 be the easiest, because -- okay, I can tell you
5 right now, okay, you know, we like to know exactly
6 where -- what some of the riders do, where they come
7 from, and what their desires are just as part of our
8 marketing and -- you know, because we've got to sell
9 ourselves too.

10 But I think the way I envision this is we
11 would probably provide mailing, and if somebody
12 wanted to -- if it was a mail thing, we would
13 probably provide the mailing, but we'd have to
14 determine who was going to tally it, you know,
15 because you would need a neutral party, you know,
16 whatever. The internet thing, you just pull up a
17 report and it's right there.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: So can we agree
19 that it's a targeted survey to this particular
20 partner, to NOHVA, and that the details can be
21 worked out between the District and the group?
22 Mark?

23 MARK IVY: The question I have is are
24 you going to have a biased response, then, because
25 you're not reaching out to everybody that's using

1 the area, you're only reaching out to that one
2 group. And so then why wouldn't you do a special
3 one just for CART or some other group?

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

5 MARK IVY: I mean, I know it's an
6 area that needs some different kinds of management,
7 but there probably should be an effort to reach out
8 to everybody rather than just the members.

9 STEPHANIE WHITE: And so would the
10 recreation survey include that? I believe I did
11 glance at the recreation survey, and it has --

12 LISA RICHARDSON: It does include all
13 uses, so there -- you're getting that with just the
14 recreation survey.

15 MARK IVY: Right. Right. So do you
16 need them to do it? I mean, it's something you can
17 take on on your own as an organization, but it's
18 going to give you biased results for your recreation
19 plan.

20 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: I don't think we
21 were going to aggregate the responses, so it would
22 be a survey specifically for the OHV area and how to
23 meet that particular group's needs. The regular
24 user survey would be for all users for --
25 generalized. We wouldn't -- they wouldn't be the

1 same survey.

2 LISA RICHARDSON: I guess what I
3 think I hear you saying, Mark, is that you're not
4 interested in the specifics. I mean --

5 MARK IVY: I'm just saying, you don't
6 need it.

7 LISA RICHARDSON: That you don't need
8 it. And if we don't need it, then --

9 DAN NITZEL: Well, I was wondering
10 the same.

11 MARK IVY: It's nice if you want to
12 do it for them. It would be great for that group.
13 And it is an area that needs a different kind of
14 management. But if you're going to do a separate
15 survey, you should reach out to everybody in that
16 group.

17 DAN NITZEL: My concern is -- I know
18 this doesn't sound fair at all -- but I -- I didn't
19 understand -- when I saw the survey thing, I mean, I
20 saw it, Oh, this is cool, okay. If Loup or FERC
21 needs a survey, that's fine. We'll help implement
22 it if you need it.

23 I don't really see a need for it because
24 I'm concerned that a lot of people don't understand
25 all the different factors that are involved in the

1 riding area between, you know, agreements with FERC
2 and wildlife and the past history, security, parking
3 management. You can go on and on.

4 You know, so I guess with that said, you
5 know, if we wanted to save some time and some
6 confusion or whatever, a survey is certainly not,
7 you know, needed by our group. But you know, we
8 could certainly do a survey if you want. That's not
9 a problem.

10 STEPHANIE WHITE: So I hear that we
11 can take this out, potentially?

12 LISA RICHARDSON: That's what I'm
13 hearing. And I guess maybe we misinterpreted --

14 RON ZIOLA: We'll continue to work as
15 we always do.

16 DAVE TUNINK: Right.

17 RON ZIOLA: But to make it part of
18 this recreation user activity or study, it sounds
19 like we don't need it.

20 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So just for
21 the record, show of cards, we're going to take this
22 out. We're going to take the survey specific to
23 NOHVA out of the recreation user survey.

24 COURT REPORTER: Can I have two
25 minutes to change my paper?

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yep. We need a
2 two-minute break as requested by our reporter.

3 (Short break taken - 2:23 p.m.)

4 (Meeting resumed - 2:29 p.m.)

5 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. I understand
6 we're going to lose a good portion of our group
7 today at 3 o'clock. So I'm going to see how quickly
8 we can get -- I think the creel survey is going to
9 be easy for us. Let's move.

10 All right. So now we're on -- still on
11 the recreational user survey, data analysis. It's
12 on annual usage; average weekday usage; average
13 weekend usage, again, there are two days in the
14 weekend and then the two during the week; peak
15 weekend usage; percent of capacity; analysis of user
16 experience responses; and then a piece about the
17 recreation management plan, to develop the plan
18 using data from Studies 8, 9 and 10, which, for your
19 reference, are this one that we're talking about,
20 the creel survey and the land use inventory.

21 Questions about this one? Yep, from the
22 corner?

23 MARK IVY: How do you identify
24 capacity?

25 STEPHANIE WHITE: The question is how

1 do you identify capacity.

2 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: There are -- the
3 lake for instance, based on the size of the lake,
4 there's a formula that you figure. Based on size of
5 the lake, how many acres you can figure a
6 capacity -- an ideal capacity for that lake and then
7 you go from there. The others are a little clearer,
8 you know, are all the camping spots full, are half
9 of them full.

10 LISA RICHARDSON: Yeah, it's not
11 something that you're going to be able to get on
12 every item. So the ones where you can quantify,
13 like we know how many trailers spots there are --

14 MARK IVY: So if there's one person
15 at a campsite, that campsite is full; if there's
16 eight people, it's full? It's not so many people
17 per campsite or per picnic table, or --

18 LISA RICHARDSON: Yeah, it was per
19 campsite.

20 MARK IVY: Okay. I just wanted to be
21 clear on what you're doing.

22 STEPHANIE WHITE: So a question of
23 method. Anything else? Yep, Randy?

24 RANDY THORESON: I'm not sure if it's
25 an item or within it, but I brought up an issue of

1 accessibility, ADA. Where would that be folded in
2 there, the analysis of that for the user survey? I
3 know we talked about that, but did you include --
4 without going through it all, did you include that
5 --

6 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: That would be
7 included in the development. That would be included
8 in the development of the recreation plan.

9 RANDY THORESON: I just wanted to
10 make a point that that was important to us.

11 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yep. I do not
12 believe it is in the survey, is it?

13 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: I think there was
14 something on that --

15 RANDY THORESON: Could you check
16 that, please? Because I think that would be an easy
17 question.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So if it's
19 not, do we need to add it, from your perspective?

20 RANDY THORESON: I'd like to see it
21 added.

22 RICK HOLLAND: What are you adding?

23 RANDY THORESON: Well,
24 accessibility -- I don't know how you would word
25 that -- all right, we need to talk a minute here.

1 MARK IVY: Do you want to do an
2 assessment of the facilities?

3 RANDY THORESON: For ADA compliance.

4 MARK IVY: Right, is that what you're
5 thinking?

6 STEPHANIE WHITE: So we have a lot of
7 side conversations going on. Do you want to take a
8 minute to confer?

9 RANDY THORESON: Yes.

10 STEPHANIE WHITE: Go ahead. I'll
11 start the clock. It looks like, Lisa, you were
12 looking for answers. Actually, maybe you want to
13 give the answer first, and then, Randy, we'll come
14 back to you.

15 LISA RICHARDSON: Oh, no, I always
16 listen to the question first.

17 RANDY THORESON: I'll defer to the
18 answer.

19 Well, I mean, we were just talking here,
20 Mark and I, and it's more of an inventory, if those
21 facilities have ADA -- I'm not sure how far we go
22 into the assessment. And Mark, maybe you've seen
23 more, how far you go into the assessment of the
24 facilities.

25 MARK IVY: I'm not sure with this

1 process.

2 RANDY THORESON: Yeah.

3 MARK WEEKLEY: I think you need some
4 kind of inventory to get a sense of what is
5 successful out there, I think that's one part of it.
6 I also think it's useful to try to understand from
7 the user perspective what sort of demand there is.

8 Obviously, when you're dealing with the
9 outdoors, not everything can be made accessible.
10 There's a lot of limits in the natural environment,
11 and you need to somewhat understand what is the
12 demand.

13 So I think the demand question you can
14 possibly address through a question, but also it's
15 helpful to have just a basic idea of what is
16 accessible. Some of that you already have. You
17 list at one of the powerhouses you have accessible
18 restrooms.

19 I don't think that's a huge thing, but I
20 think it's useful data when you're looking at a
21 recreation plan of any kind, is to understand where
22 are you in terms of accessibility.

23 RANDY THORESON: And I had framed a
24 question earlier when we were talking before. I'm
25 not sure what that question was -- something on the

1 survey -- I can't speak to that.

2 LISA RICHARDSON: Yes. The intent is
3 to identify any of the -- any of the accessible
4 areas. Now, it's not to -- we're not going to try
5 to say what's not accessible, but say, Here's where
6 things are accessible, accessible toilets,
7 accessible trails. Is it Two Lake Trail, Ron,
8 that's ADA accessible?

9 RON ZIOLA: All of the trails are ADA
10 accessible because --

11 LISA RICHARDSON: All the trails are
12 ADA compliant.

13 RON ZIOLA: -- even the trail here
14 that we have by the (inaudible), it's several feet
15 above grade. We've got a 20 to 1 concrete ramp that
16 comes out of the park.

17 LISA RICHARDSON: So that would be
18 covered in the inventory --

19 RANDY THORESON: Okay.

20 LISA RICHARDSON: -- what do we know
21 that is accessible, yes. And then you guys take a
22 look at the survey and see if there's a specific
23 question you'd like to see related to the need for
24 future accessibility.

25 RANDY THORESON: It seems like I

1 might still have it on my computer -- I'm not
2 sure -- I framed a question of what we're talking
3 about. I won't guarantee it, but I'll look.

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

5 LISA RICHARDSON: Because the
6 question that we have right now that really would be
7 only one that might get to that is were there any
8 activities that conflicted with your recreational
9 activities. And it a, Yes, there were other
10 recreational activities that conflicted; Yes, there
11 were other nonrecreational activities that
12 conflicted; and a, No. Or there would be another
13 one, it's, Yes, there were -- it was not barrier
14 free access, or something like that.

15 MARK WEEKLEY: We can work on the
16 language.

17 RANDY THORESON: From the National
18 Park Service perspective, we bring that up in all
19 our projects, ADA.

20 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So there is
21 some discussion about the survey tool itself and
22 whether or not the words are appropriate for ADA
23 compliance. I think that might have been it on
24 this.

25 Do you have a question, comment?

1 MARK IVY: I have a lot of comment on
2 the actual tool. So at some point we should have a
3 chance to provide comments on the tool.

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yes, yes. And
5 let's talk about that before the Game and Parks
6 folks leave, comments on that tool, whether it may
7 come to us in comment or it's a smaller group that
8 works on that.

9 Okay. Green cards, yellow cards, red
10 cards with tweaking as appropriate for ADA language.
11 It's unanimously green, let's move on, Ellen.

12 Okay. We are now at the creel study. The
13 goal of this -- again, this slide and the next slide
14 you've seen before -- the goal is to determine the
15 status of Project fisheries and how the fisheries
16 are used by anglers, also to assess angler
17 perception of fisheries.

18 I'd like to take a vote on this goal
19 before we move forward. This is the goal of the
20 creel study as it stands: To determine the status
21 of Project fisheries and how the fisheries are used
22 by anglers to assess angler perception of fisheries.

23 Are you showing your red card, or are you
24 going to ask a question?

25 MARK IVY: I was going to say, it

1 depends on how you define Project fisheries.

2 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

3 QUINN DAMGAARD: Project fisheries
4 are defined in the study plan as basically the power
5 canal from the Headworks to the Tailrace Park, and
6 including -- including the lakes and the water in
7 the river immediately surrounding both the diversion
8 and the Tailrace. If there were anglers fishing in
9 the Loup River at the diversion or the Platte River
10 at the Tailrace.

11 MARK IVY: Not the bypass?

12 QUINN DAMGAARD: Right, not the
13 bypass.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: Shall I vote for
15 you? Show of cards --

16 RANDY THORESON: Just one quick
17 question. What is the angler perception? What are
18 you getting at there? Can you just explain what
19 that means?

20 QUINN DAMGAARD: Basically what it
21 gets to is are the anglers using the facilities
22 happy with the accessibility? Is there --

23 RANDY THORESON: Satisfaction?

24 QUINN DAMGAARD: Yes, absolutely.

25 RANDY THORESON: Okay.

1 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. Let's have a
2 vote.

3 Okay. Yellow from National Park Service,
4 a red from FERC. I'm going to switch the order this
5 time and let you gentlemen go first.

6 MARK WEEKLEY: Well, I think my
7 concern is simply we still haven't resolved the
8 definition of the Project fisheries. So I mean, the
9 basic goal I don't have a concern about. I have a
10 concern about how the Project area has been defined.

11 STEPHANIE WHITE: And so it's really
12 a comment about the inclusion of the bypass reach?

13 MARK WEEKLEY: Yes.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: And is that yours
15 as well, Mark?

16 MARK IVY: Right. And the
17 terminology I got from Nick, who is our fisheries
18 guy, is we need to assess the affected reach of the
19 river for impacts on the fisheries, and that there's
20 no data out there now.

21 STEPHANIE WHITE: We probably could
22 spend the rest of the day talking about that, and we
23 can, if that's the appropriate use of our time. The
24 other alternative is that we can note the dissension
25 in this group and move through the rest of the study

1 plan and the last one.

2 RANDY THORESON: What time do we --

3 STEPHANIE WHITE: We're going to lose
4 the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission at 3.

5 NEAL SUESS: There's probably no
6 point in hashing it out here. We know what the
7 differences are. It goes to every study that we've
8 got up there, the proposal on the bypass reach. So
9 I mean, there's no point in talking about it a whole
10 lot more. We've talked about it.

11 So I would suggest we just move on, and
12 basically we know that there's a difference of
13 opinion there.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: Rick, I will take
15 you, then I'm going to move on.

16 RICK HOLLAND: I will correct Mark a
17 little bit there. There is some data on the Loup
18 River. There was some sampling done. We gave those
19 reports to --

20 LISA RICHARDSON: We got them last
21 week.

22 RICK HOLLAND: -- last week, so that
23 includes some creel and some fisheries or fish
24 community analysis. So there is some previous data
25 on that.

1 Our entire intent with the creel study is
2 simply to get an index of what the present use of
3 the fishery is.

4 STEPHANIE WHITE: So might I say that
5 after we have a chance to take a look at that, it
6 could meet your need?

7 MARK IVY: Maybe.

8 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. We're going
9 to move off this one.

10 Let's hit the next slide. Creel survey,
11 the activities include conduct stratified random
12 survey using Game and Parks' standard methodologies,
13 so May through September, four weekend days,
14 six weekdays per month, two-hour instantaneous
15 counts, angler interviews. Again, we will analyze
16 the results and synthesize with those from other
17 studies.

18 Comments, thoughts about this?

19 MARK IVY: You're talking about
20 combining this with the recreation user survey,
21 so --

22 STEPHANIE WHITE: Yes.

23 RON ZIOLA: And the two-hour
24 instantaneous may not be as critical because of Rick
25 saying that -- would we do it instantaneous, or as

1 long as you change the location of your start, there
2 isn't much difference, is that what you mentioned
3 earlier?

4 RICK HOLLAND: Something like that.

5 RON ZIOLA: Yeah, something on that
6 order. But the two-hour instantaneous isn't
7 necessarily a thing that we need to meet anymore if
8 we --

9 RICK HOLLAND: It's one way of doing
10 it. It's not the only way --

11 RON ZIOLA: It's not the only way.

12 RICK HOLLAND: If we want to
13 integrate the two, then we can consider a
14 different -- I was just trying to get --

15 RON ZIOLA: Right. Yeah, if you
16 integrate, you do something a little different.

17 RICK HOLLAND: I'm not sure about the
18 time period.

19 STEPHANIE WHITE: Does the
20 integration of the recreation user survey and the
21 creel survey mandate the group to go back to the
22 table and maybe rewrite that survey tool and that
23 plan as a combined unit? So in other words, is this
24 discussion maybe not as useful today as it might be
25 after you've had a chance to think about that?

1 RANDY THORESON: State that again.
2 Think about what?

3 RICK HOLLAND: Can you write one
4 project to cover the two if you integrate the
5 survey.

6 STEPHANIE WHITE: Because we talked
7 earlier today about integrating the recreation and
8 the creel survey. The agreement of that may change
9 the activities as set forth in the original study
10 plan. So it may be not the best use of our time to
11 really hash out the activities in the creel survey.

12 What I might recommend is that we jump to
13 land use. If we finish that before 3 o'clock, we
14 can come back to the creel survey, but I will wait
15 to hear from you.

16 LISA RICHARDSON: Yeah, I guess if
17 we're going to try to incorporate them, then I think
18 we would propose something a little bit different
19 than what we have here, to do them both at the same
20 time and try to be as efficient as possible. So
21 this two-hour instantaneous may not be relevant
22 anymore.

23 RICK HOLLAND: Right.

24 DAVE TUNINK: And May through
25 September can change to May through November to

1 coincide with the other user survey, recreational
2 survey.

3 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So let's
4 maybe take a stab at what that looks like. Okay.
5 You'll see it -- you'll see a change in a study
6 plan -- what is it that you would call it?

7 LISA RICHARDSON: I would call it a
8 combined -- we probably won't have a separate creel
9 survey and a separate recreation survey, we'll have
10 one recreation survey that covers fishing, a creel
11 survey as well --

12 RICK HOLLAND: We call them user
13 surveys. You ask different questions. If you know
14 they're fishing, then you bring out your fishing
15 surveys.

16 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. Can you move
17 me to land use, please, land use inventory? Keep
18 going. Okay. There we go.

19 Land use inventory, this is the same goal
20 you saw this morning, to determine specific land
21 uses of Project lands and adjacent properties to
22 identify potential conflicts and/or opportunities
23 related to Project operations, public access,
24 recreation and environmental resource protection.
25 This is the goal of Study Plan 10, Land Use

1 Inventory.

2 Let's see a show of cards red, yellow and
3 green for this goal.

4 MARK IVY: Should esthetics be up
5 there?

6 STEPHANIE WHITE: Esthetics. The
7 question is should esthetics be included in the
8 goal. Randy?

9 RANDY THORESON: That wouldn't be a
10 bad idea. I didn't think of that. I think now that
11 he mentions it, it's probably a good idea because we
12 don't have esthetics as a separate study.

13 STEPHANIE WHITE: So you would add it
14 in this last piece relating to Project operations,
15 public access, recreation, esthetics and
16 environmental resource protection?

17 MARK IVY: Yes.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: Let's see a show of
19 cards for the goal, as changed, to include
20 esthetics.

21 Okay. This goal stands.

22 Ellen, can you take us to the next --

23 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Uh-huh.

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: Objectives of this
25 study, these are the same from this morning. I'll

1 read through them. And we won't dig into them,
2 really, we'll dig into the activities. Inventory
3 land uses and access points; to identify
4 opportunities to improve access and enhance public
5 safety; to determine conflicts and incompatible
6 uses; to identify solutions for conflicts; and to
7 contribute to the recreation management plan.

8 Let's go to the next slide here. So here
9 are the activities: Use existing data and aerial
10 photography to classify land uses; conduct site
11 visits to confirm land use classification; document
12 land uses on maps; analyze results, identify
13 conflicts; and synthesize with results from other
14 studies.

15 Yes, Frank?

16 FRANK ALBRECHT: Is that going to be
17 a series of GIS layers? Is that how this is going
18 to be complied?

19 LISA RICHARDSON: In the development
20 of the maps, yeah, the information will be digitized
21 per GIS. That's how we're doing -- all of our
22 figures in our PAD and everything are GIS.

23 FRANK ALBRECHT: Thank you.

24 RON ZIOLA: Again, in activities,
25 where does the esthetic jump in there?

1 RANDY THORESON: Right.

2 RON ZIOLA: Now, we're -- you know,
3 some of the esthetics will be covered with the SHPO,
4 I would assume, because they're concerned with the
5 buildings and those kind of things.

6 STEPHANIE WHITE: Frank?

7 FRANK ALBRECHT: I had a different
8 question. I'll wait --

9 RON ZIOLA: Well, I just wonder
10 whether they would -- this was originally land use.
11 Now, are we talking about is the yard mowed, are the
12 trees trimmed? Because again, it's land use, not
13 land facilities.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: Mark or Randy, I'd
15 like for one of the two of you to answer that.

16 RANDY THORESON: I'll take a stab at
17 it. I think if you look at the first -- on the
18 slide with the first objectives, so it would be one
19 back of that --

20 STEPHANIE WHITE: Back a slide -- one
21 up -- it's this.

22 RANDY THORESON: How about the second
23 bullet, improve access, esthetics and enhance public
24 safety. Does that make sense?

25 RON ZIOLA: Yeah, yeah. You'd have

1 to throw it in there someplace.

2 RANDY THORESON: I guess that's where
3 I'd suggest it goes.

4 MARK IVY: The problem with esthetics
5 is it's subjective, so --

6 STEPHANIE WHITE: Right. So is there
7 a risk of including it or a risk of excluding it?

8 MARK IVY: Well, it's something that
9 has to be addressed in the plan anyway, so it's good
10 to have it.

11 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay.

12 RANDY THORESON: Let me just give you
13 a real quick -- I wrestled with whether this should
14 be a special study. We went through the whole
15 thoughts of that. I didn't suggest a special study,
16 but it needs to be included somewhere, like Mark
17 says.

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. Any
19 objections to adding it into the objectives,
20 objections on the objectives?

21 Okay. Let's move back to the activities
22 slide. I think Ron's question still stands, is
23 there something in here that gets to the esthetic
24 study?

25 RICK HOLLAND: Isn't that what

1 identifying conflicts is going to do? I mean, I'm
2 not sure how you're going to do that. But a land
3 use inventory doesn't necessarily say anything about
4 esthetics and conflicts. I don't know what you're
5 going to do to identify -- how are you going to
6 identify conflict? What's the tool to identify
7 conflict?

8 LISA RICHARDSON: What are we looking
9 at from a -- what are we inventorying from an
10 esthetic perspective, to be able to determine if
11 there's a conflict with what?

12 FRANK ALBRECHT: A big water
13 treatment plant right next to your highest use area,
14 something like that, you know. I mean, it's going
15 to be interpretation.

16 LISA RICHARDSON: Something like
17 that, that would be easy to identify, yeah.

18 MARK IVY: Are there eyesores out
19 there, and if so, what can you do about them.

20 STEPHANIE WHITE: So that's going to
21 be kind of subjective to the inventoryer as they go
22 through.

23 MARK IVY: Thinking about Tailrace
24 Park, there's some esthetic issues out there.

25 RANDY THORESON: The fourth bullet

1 down, then, it would make sense to include
2 esthetics, wouldn't it?

3 STEPHANIE WHITE: Well, I think if
4 you have included it in your goal, I think conflict
5 speaks to all of those, that litany of things, I
6 would say.

7 If you'd like to go back we can take a
8 look at that goal. Would you shoot back two slides?
9 So it's conflicts relating to Project operations,
10 public access, recreation, esthetics and
11 environmental resource protection.

12 Okay. Let's take a show of cards on this.
13 Green, We accept these activities as is; red,
14 there's some missing; yellow -- okay. We have
15 unanimous greens.

16 Let's move forward a slide, Study Sites:
17 Recreation areas; Lake Babcock Waterfowl Refuge; the
18 Loup Lands Management Wildlife Areas; North and
19 South Sand Management Areas; the siphons; urban
20 areas of Genoa, Monroe and Columbus; and areas with
21 evidence of heavy informal use.

22 Yes, Frank?

23 FRANK ALBRECHT: Just for
24 clarification, it kind of jumps ahead, I guess, a
25 little bit to the next slide. But Mark, my question

1 is on the geographic boundary of this and how far --
2 in next we have, Inside and outside of Project
3 boundary. And then this one, has -- this one --
4 yeah, see that middle one, Inside and outside? So
5 I'm wondering what you mean by outside.

6 Now, if you go back to one you were just
7 on, Areas with evidence of heavy informal use,
8 that's what I have a question on as well.

9 So you know, if you're going to go way
10 outside, you know, that's a good question. We
11 battled with that one on the lower Platte when we
12 were doing a cumulative impact study, how far from
13 the center.

14 STEPHANIE WHITE: Okay. So the study
15 boundary is really the question.

16 FRANK ALBRECHT: Yeah.

17 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: The immediate --
18 the use immediately adjacent to the boundary.

19 FRANK ALBRECHT: Immediately adjacent
20 to the boundary?

21 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: That is the
22 intent, yes.

23 FRANK ALBRECHT: Okay.

24 RANDY THORESON: It seems like we had
25 that discussion at a previous meeting when we looked

1 at the map, I think, didn't we?

2 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: We did. That's
3 kind of -- when we were talking about --

4 RANDY THORESON: Adjacent to?

5 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Yeah, in terms of
6 defining the uses and being more specifically
7 defined than recreation. Is it just open space? I
8 guess I don't know if you'd say unused -- unused
9 open space, or is it active recreation use?

10 MARK IVY: The last one that Frank
11 was saying, is there a better way to word that, and
12 what is heavy informal use? How do you define it?

13 STEPHANIE WHITE: The question is
14 about areas of evidence of heavy informal use.

15 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: For instance,
16 if -- you know, at the siphons, that's kind of how
17 we picked the siphons. We know that people fish
18 right by the siphons. This is kind of a more
19 general way of saying, you know, somebody has worn a
20 path down to the water's edge, let's look at that
21 and see if there's a better way to provide access
22 instead of them making their own path. That's kind
23 of what I mean by informal access, you know, the
24 path that gets worn through the grass.

25 MARK IVY: Can you say areas with

1 evidence of environmental impacts due to informal
2 use? Is that --

3 RON ZIOLA: I don't know that there
4 would be -- to me, the best way to say this is just
5 the way it was said, is that there are areas, you
6 know, such as the siphon, or there might be an area
7 that for some reason is relatively popular to be
8 there. So why are they there, what are they doing,
9 is there anything we could do to either enhance it,
10 or if there -- if there's a safety issue, how do we
11 resolve that safety issue. I'd say if they're
12 scurrying down a steep bank, why do they really want
13 to be there? Is it a positive activity that we need
14 to look at?

15 MARK IVY: So it's not environmental
16 damage?

17 RON ZIOLA: No, it's not necessarily
18 environmental damage. Because if somebody's on our
19 property doing something that is environmentally
20 wrong, we will take the steps to stop it, you know,
21 obviously continue to battle and clean it up, to
22 gating it off, to requesting additional patrolling
23 either by the sheriff or the local police force.

24 So that we will attack in some other
25 format to take care of the environmentally unsafe

1 stuff. And we can't have it happen. It's got to
2 stop.

3 STEPHANIE WHITE: Other comments or
4 questions about this slide in particular? Let's see
5 green, yellow and red.

6 Okay. We'll keep this one as is.

7 Next slide, Classify land uses and to
8 document land uses on maps. So this gets, Frank, a
9 little bit to your question earlier.

10 In terms of classifying land use, that
11 would include using existing data and aerial
12 photography inside and outside the Project boundary,
13 and we would do site visits to confirm.

14 I would assume that that -- the inside and
15 outside Project boundary is -- back to your earlier
16 question -- it's adjacent to the Project boundary.
17 Document land uses on maps, that would include an
18 aerial photo base on a scale of 1 inch equals
19 1,000 feet.

20 Questions, comments, concerns about this
21 particular set of activities?

22 MARK IVY: Do you want to change
23 outside to, And adjacent to, just make that more
24 clear, or is there a problem with that?

25 RON ZIOLA: I think that would

1 clarify it.

2 STEPHANIE WHITE: That further
3 clarifies, and yeah, I think that's fine.

4 Other suggestions, questions? We're ready
5 to vote. Let's do it. Green, yellow and red for
6 these activities for Study 10, Land Use Inventories.
7 It's a unanimous green. Let's move to the next
8 slide.

9 Data analysis for land use inventory: To
10 identify conflicting land uses; identify potential
11 mitigation; identify opportunities for the
12 following: Improve Project operations; public
13 access; recreation; environmental protection; and
14 maybe now we would add esthetics, since we have
15 added it to our goal?

16 RANDY THORESON: Yes. Where would
17 you add that?

18 STEPHANIE WHITE: In that list of
19 bullets.

20 RANDY THORESON: Okay.

21 STEPHANIE WHITE: Would that be
22 right?

23 RANDY THORESON: Uh-huh.

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: Also, the
25 recreation management plan, the plan would be

1 developed using data from Studies 8, 9 and 10, which
2 is language we've seen before. Based on the fact
3 that we will now combine Studies 8 and 9, I would
4 imagine this terminology will change accordingly.

5 Comments, questions? Mark?

6 MARK IVY: Is it identify
7 opportunities to improve all of those? Could we
8 just move, Improve, up on the next line?

9 STEPHANIE WHITE: And is this
10 paraphrased from the study plan?

11 ELLEN FITZSIMMONS: Uh-huh.

12 STEPHANIE WHITE: Is the use of these
13 slides only for discussion and agency meetings?

14 LISA RICHARDSON: Well, yeah, this is
15 paraphrased from the study plan, but we will look at
16 where it came from and address it as appropriate.

17 STEPHANIE WHITE: Other thoughts?

18 Okay. Let's see a show of cards, red,
19 yellow and green for data analysis in the recreation
20 management plan. I see unanimous greens.

21 This may be the last slide. It is. So we
22 have two and a half minutes left.

23 I think there's one -- one important
24 point -- Mark, and maybe you brought it up -- about
25 the survey instrument itself. And Lisa, I wonder

1 how you'd like to get comments. Do you want hard
2 copy comments? Do you want to have a small group
3 convene to think about that? Do you want to rethink
4 it based on the recreation user survey and the creel
5 survey?

6 LISA RICHARDSON: I'd like to get
7 your comments as soon as possible. And if you want
8 to send them to us via e-mail, that would be great.
9 The surveys are there in the study plans, and then
10 we can look at -- because I think -- I'd rather not
11 try to take eight and nine and combine them into one
12 and then have you give us comments after we've
13 already tried to do that. I think we need to see
14 your comments as we're doing that for that
15 combination.

16 MARK IVY: So why don't you give us a
17 date.

18 LISA RICHARDSON: Well, I guess, let
19 me ask one -- let me ask this question. This was my
20 last slide, future meetings and next steps. The
21 May 27 and 28 meetings are -- we identified those
22 April 21, that we were going to be meeting again.
23 And there are a lot of things that we're going to be
24 talking about with respect to aquatic resources at
25 those meetings.

1 Based on today's discussion, is there a
2 need to discuss additional items relative to these
3 study plans at those meetings? We've kind of gotten
4 through the tasks and everything. Do you feel like
5 there's a need to discuss those at that meeting?

6 RANDY THORESON: I guess from my
7 perspective, I would like to see what Mark's
8 comments are. I'm not sure how you'd get that to
9 the group. It's important for me, anyway, or for us
10 to know what his comments are that are coming in
11 past this meeting. And then we can assess whether
12 we need to give additional input from there. I
13 would like to know what Mark's comments are, and
14 anyone else, but Mark's additional comments we
15 didn't have time for today. So I'm not sure how you
16 do that.

17 LISA RICHARDSON: Do we need to
18 discuss these further on the 27th and 28th?

19 MARK IVY: Do you think you'll have
20 eight and nine combined by that time?

21 STEPHANIE WHITE: I doubt it. How
22 about if we can get -- and I don't know how closely
23 prepared your comments are. If you can give us your
24 comments -- can you give us your comments by that
25 time --

1 MARK IVY: Oh, yeah.

2 LISA RICHARDSON: -- or can you give
3 us your comments by next week? If you can give us
4 your comments by next week, we'll take them next
5 week.

6 MARK IVY: Yeah, I'll give them to
7 you next week.

8 FRANK ALBRECHT: On eight, nine and
9 ten, you're talking about, or --

10 LISA RICHARDSON: Well, on eight,
11 nine and ten. If you've got any other comments that
12 we didn't hear --

13 RANDY THORESON: I guess hearing
14 that, then you just fold them in within the record
15 of this meeting, right?

16 LISA RICHARDSON: The record of this
17 meeting?

18 RANDY THORESON: Right.

19 LISA RICHARDSON: Yes.

20 RANDY THORESON: And that's how we'd
21 see it, is discussion today --

22 STEPHANIE WHITE: The record of this
23 meeting is going to be a transcript.

24 RANDALL HASKELL: Okay. So that
25 wouldn't work.

1 LISA RICHARDSON: So I guess what I'm
2 thinking is if Mark sends me his comments by the end
3 of -- you know, by like Tuesday of next week, we'll
4 say, just as a random date --

5 MARK IVY: Wednesday.

6 LISA RICHARDSON: -- whenever he
7 sends them to me, I can send them out to everybody
8 that was at this meeting. I can send them out to
9 everybody that's on our full mailing list, actually,
10 that we're notifying of all meetings. And that
11 would include you, Randy, and everybody -- I think
12 that Dave and Rick, you're not specifically on our
13 e-mail list, but Frank is and can forward that
14 information to you. So would you rather send it to
15 the smaller group or the larger group?

16 RANDY THORESON: My feeling is this
17 group that's here today, just the group involved in
18 the conversation.

19 MARK IVY: We can just go to this
20 group, that's fine.

21 STEPHANIE WHITE: And if anybody --
22 can anybody who has additional comments on the plans
23 or specific comments on survey instrument via e-mail
24 instruments with the questions that we're proposing,
25 if you can get us your comments by the end of next

1 week, that is the 22nd, if you can get us your
2 comments by the 22nd of May, then we'll be working
3 to incorporate those and we'll send out -- once we
4 get those comments, we'll send them out to everybody
5 so everybody will know what others have said and
6 then --

7 FRANK ALBRECHT: Otherwise June 25
8 for the comments on the proposed study plan; is that
9 right?

10 LISA RICHARDSON: June 25 is for
11 comments on the proposed study plan as it was
12 proposed in the plan that was issued March 27. And
13 obviously you can submit comments related to the
14 discussions that have occurred between March 27 and
15 June 25, but we would really appreciate to get your
16 comments as soon as possible because we only have
17 one month from June 25 or 26th to July 27 when the
18 final revised study plan has to be submitted to
19 FERC.

20 STEPHANIE WHITE: Do you have a
21 question?

22 RANDY THORESON: I'm just wondering,
23 do we need to now formalize our comments in a letter
24 or something, or is what we said to be part of the
25 study plan input? I guess I go with what Frank is

1 saying about the 25th of June date.

2 STEPHANIE WHITE: Whatever comments
3 we receive from you on the survey instrument, we
4 will include those comments in the revised study
5 plan. There will be an appendix in the back, so
6 they will be part of the record that way.

7 RANDY THORESON: So what we did today
8 will be part of the record in the back, is that what
9 you said?

10 LISA RICHARDSON: I don't know --

11 NEAL SUESS: What he, Randy, is
12 trying to ask is does he need to file formal
13 comments on the 25th of June, or are these comments
14 good enough for that?

15 STEPHANIE WHITE: These comments are
16 good enough for us for that.

17 RICK HOLLAND: FERC will have the
18 transcripts of this meeting --

19 NEAL SUESS: Yeah, and they'll be on
20 our website.

21 RICK HOLLAND: -- so that is
22 essentially de facto, you're saying that we agreed
23 on certain things today. So if that's acceptable to
24 FERC, I suppose that's acceptable. You know, if we
25 feel strongly, we'll put another e-mail together if

1 there's something we don't believe is being counted.

2 STEPHANIE WHITE: So what I've heard
3 today is we will not be discussing recreation at the
4 May 27 and 28 meeting. Rather, we're going to get
5 some information from you and back out to you, and
6 then I suppose we will go from there, if need be.

7 RICK HOLLAND: Well, there's going to
8 have to be some discussion of the combined survey, I
9 assume.

10 LISA RICHARDSON: We'll have to --

11 RICK HOLLAND: When is that going to
12 happen, or are you just going to do it?

13 LISA RICHARDSON: Well, we would
14 propose probably doing that as a conference call, or
15 we could get the group together again. It doesn't
16 need to be all 18 of us, it could be 4 of us to talk
17 about how those -- about that combined study.

18 RICK HOLLAND: But you will give us
19 something to respond to, right?

20 LISA RICHARDSON: Yes.

21 RANDY THORESON: I would say a
22 conference call will work.

23 LISA RICHARDSON: Okay.

24 STEPHANIE WHITE: Gentlemen, thanks
25 for coming today. I may adjourn, but I -- I would

1 let you do that, Neal.

2 NEAL SUESS: I guess before the
3 Game and Parks guys take off, I just want to thank
4 everybody for showing up today. I think it's been
5 good conversation for all of us. Again, I think we
6 all know where we stand on everything at this point
7 in time.

8 You know, our next set of meetings is the
9 27th and 28th, but we'll be talking about things
10 other than recreation, it sounds like, and then
11 we'll go from there. The transcript will be put on
12 the website as soon as it gets completed, and we'll
13 work on getting everybody's comments put together
14 and back out to everybody at that point in time. So
15 again, thanks for showing up today, and I appreciate
16 it, guys. Thanks.

17 (Meeting adjourned - 3:07 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEBRASKA)
) ss.
COUNTY OF DOUGLAS)

I, Kristin Teel, Registered Professional Reporter, General Notary Public within and for the State of Nebraska, do hereby certify that the foregoing study plan meeting was taken by me in shorthand and thereafter reduced to typewriting by use of Computer-Aided Transcription, and the foregoing one hundred ninety-two (192) pages contain a full, true and correct transcription of all the testimony of said witness, to the best of my ability;

That I am not a kin or in any way associated with any of the parties to said cause of action, or their counsel, and that I am not interested in the event thereof.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto affix my signature and seal this day of , 2009.

Kristin DeRoche Teel

KRISTIN TEEL, RPR, CSR
GENERAL NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires:

