

PLATTE RIVER COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT UPDATE

As you know, on October 30, 2006 Governor Heineman signed off on the three state endangered species/critical habitat restoration program known simply as the Cooperative Agreement (CA). Without rehashing all that involved our strong opposition to this massive and extremely costly re-engineering of nature program (covered in detail in many of our past newsletters), consider these comments about the CA from a US Army Corps of Engineers expert on the issue:

"Data does not support that the Central Platte River is in any way limiting the recovery of the four 'target' species (Whooping Crane, Least Tern, Piping Plover and Pallid Sturgeon)."

"The wetlands proposed to restore the habitat are flawed as noted by the National Academy of Sciences and various other scientific reports."

"Potential adverse impacts to agriculture of \$140 - \$300 million, and the spending of an additional \$200 million to build habitat that may not be needed or result in a measured increase in the species."

"There is no documented use or existence in the Central Platte River by the Pallid Sturgeon."

"The Interior Least Tern has already reached their

national recovery goal of 7,000 birds in 1995 (over 12,000 currently exist)."

"There was no documented need for additional nesting by the Piping Plover on the Platte River. The plovers' preferred nesting site is sand and gravel pits adjacent to the Platte River."

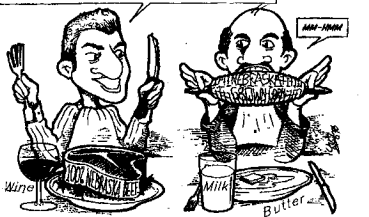
"Only a small number of Whooping Cranes typically stop on the Platte River every year (estimated to be 7% of a population of approximately 200 birds). Adequate habitat currently exists on the Platte River for the number of Whooping Cranes expected to use the river for decades to come."

"The Platte River currently provides habitat for over 400,000 Sand Hill Cranes with similar needs as the Whooping Cranes. It appears more than just a little disingenuous to try and claim there is not currently adequate habitat on the Platte River for the annual needs of 14 Whooping Cranes that just may or may not annually stop there, and often completely bypass the Central Platte River without stopping at all."

NEBRASKA'S FIRST WAS THE ONLY AG GROUP THAT FOUGHT AGAINST THE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

I JUST CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY FARMERS HAVE TO USE SO MUCH WATER



GROWING ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED ONE ADULT FOR ONE DAY REQUIRES 1,700 GALLONS OF WATER.

In recent years the natural effects of this seven year drought have created some water shortage issues and conflicts between various competing water users. The rhetoric used by anti-irrigation policy makers and some newspaper editorial writers has increased to the

point of becoming misleading and inflammatory.

The worst of this misinformation centers around the myth that irrigators consume the lion's share of our water supply and therefore irrigators must bear the lion's share of any costs/taxes/fees necessary to solve water shortage problems.

In fact, irrigation does not consume water. Agricultural producers apply water onto their land in order to grow food. The actual consumers of water are all of us who eat cornflakes, potatoes, steaks and pork chops, as well as those of us who use ethanol enhanced gasoline in our cars, SUVs and trucks. Thanks to irrigation, consumers are able to enjoy top-quality, inexpensive food. When people stop consuming fruit, vegetables, cereal grains and meat, and stop driving motor vehicles, then irrigators will stop irrigating.

The real consumption of our state's water is done by consumers, not producers.