

Nebraska Innovation Zone Commission
Tourism, Environmental and Recreation Committee Minutes
Oct. 5, 2006
Mahoney State Park – River View Lodge
6:00pm

Members in Attendance: Sally McGuire, Dave Sands, Marlin Petermann, Virginia Miller, Inez Boyd, Sue Brauckmuller

Item 1: Conservation Easements – discussion by Dave Sands, (NLT) about donation of easements and the Water Policy Task Force supported a bill for transferable tax credits for these types of conservation easements. They would like NIZC to team up with support. It was mentioned that this committee has already recommended support of that nature (type) of legislation. The Committee could recommend that it apply to these areas:

1. Use it to retire irrigated land
2. Platte River Corridor – up to Fremont
3. Focus for environmentally sensitive areas

Example: Say \$100,000 value – for how much you gave away

Landowner is getting 80/100 (\$80,000 for a \$100,000 tax credit)

Landowner gets \$80,000 cash – Taxpayer uses the \$100,000 tax credit on state income taxes.

1.The Committee recommends that NIZC join with the Water Policy Task Force and others to introduce legislation for Transferable Tax Credits for donated Conservation Easements for public benefit.

2.The Committee recommends that a Greenway Corridor of trees, including wildflowers, and native grasses on both sides of I-80 from Omaha to Lincoln be established. It would be a gateway to Nebraska – and would involve all types of trees adapted to eastern Nebraska to beautify the drive between Lincoln and Omaha and provide a pleasing view for those entering the State. Nebraska is the Arbor Day state – the foundation should be willing to support and a public/private partnership would be formed to implement the plan including; NRD's, state agencies, Arbor Day Foundation, and other foundations, cities, counties, etc.

The Platte River could be the anchor/crossroads for the Greenway.

3.Recommend development of a comprehensive trails plan for the corridor region that would connect communities, parks, and recreation facilities, increasing tourism attractions, etc. Sue Brauckmuller provided a CD of the Nebraska State Trails plan.

4.Request \$200,000 in appropriations from the Legislature to help fund the LPRCA Environmental Carrying Capacity Study (Phase II) of the Platte River/Corridor from “Fremont to Platte mouth”.

5.Copies of the Nebraska Travel Guide was provided and distributed to each committee member as a resource.

The next Committee meeting will be held Nov. 2, at 6:00pm prior to the NIZC Full Commission meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy McKillip – for Chair Marlin Petermann