

June 18, 2019

The Honorable Jared Huffman
Chairman
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife
Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom McClintock
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Water, Oceans, and Wildlife
Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Martha McSally
Chair
Subcommittee on Water and Power
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Water and Power
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs Huffman and McSally and Ranking Members McClintock and Cortez Masto:

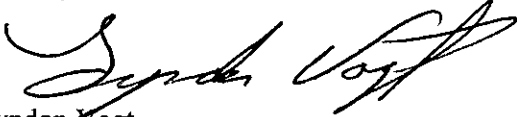
On behalf of the Central Platte Natural Resources District (Central Platte NRD), I write in support of the reauthorization of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (Program) and the companion Platte River Recovery Implementation Authorization bills (H.R. 3237 and S. 990).

The Central Platte NRD has worked with many partners for more than a decade to successfully implement the Program, a partnership that provides benefits for four threatened and endangered species in the central and lower Platte River basin while allowing existing water use to continue and new upstream water development to proceed. The Program is an outstanding example of a proactive, collaborative approach to providing benefits for endangered species and their habitats while allowing for the beneficial use of water.

This good work needs to continue, both for the benefit of the species and our economy. That is why the Central Platte NRD endorses the reauthorization of the Program. This legislation will extend the current work for another 13 years, continuing the restoration and protection of habitat for the whooping crane, least tern, piping plover, and pallid sturgeon. During the first 13 years of the Program, 196 water use projects were approved with streamlined Endangered Species Act (ESA) compliance consultations, reducing the regulatory burden on our water users.

The Program functions as the reasonable and prudent alternative for ESA compliance regarding the four target species. The Program provides far-reaching benefits for the three basin states and their water users, including major irrigation water supplies in Nebraska, compliance for operation of federal reservoirs in Wyoming, and providing drinking water for all major water supply projects in Colorado's growing Front Range. The Program is a national model for collaborative solutions to complex problems and provides ESA compliance for the three Platte River basin states. We hope you will support the reauthorization of this important Program.

Thank you,



Lyndon Vogt
General Manager

CC: Chairman Raúl M. Grijalva, Committee on Natural Resources
Ranking Member Rob Bishop, Committee on Natural Resources
Chair Lisa Murkowski, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Ranking Member Manchin, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
Rep. Jeff Fortenberry, Nebraska 1st District
Rep. Don Bacon, Nebraska 2nd District
Rep. Adrian Smith, Nebraska 3rd District
Sen. Deb Fischer, Nebraska
Sen. Ben Sasse, Nebraska