

**J-2 Regulating Reservoir Public Hearing
Public Comments Transcribed from Audio Recordings**

November 5, 2014 – Holdrege, NE – 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Shawn Young, Bertrand, NE:

I'm Shawn Young from Bertrand, we are on the west side of the footprint, and David Young is here. We have some concerns about floodplain um, will it raise our floodplain insurance? Mosquitos, um dead fish that type of thing, and um what's it going to look like? Is it going to be a dirt wall, is it going to be maintained? That kind of thing. And during construction, and dust and those type of things I guess is what we are concerned about I think. That's all I got, that's all I can think of. Another question is what's going to happen to the homes? Um we would be interested in trying to buy one, or are you going to auction the homes off that are there to move off? We have a piece of ground we could put it on, just a curiosity thing. Are they going to sell them or what their plans are? Thank you.

Jeff Carlson, Overton, NE:

I am Jeff Carlson from Overton. I'm here with my wife, Bertina. And we are landowners within the project footprint and we have several concerns. First of all, starting off, um we come here tonight thinking this was going to be a public hearing and people would get to hear what we say. Well the public isn't hearing this right now what I'm going to be saying, and that's a concern of mine. But moving on, first of all uh you know I was one of the lucky ones, I was one of the first landowners that was talked to by the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program about this project years ago. I have seen this coming. Originally this project was just an endangered species project for the terns, plovers and whooping cranes. Since then the project has grown to include re-regulation of the reservoirs, uh water credits and a lot of other things that I probably don't even know about. It has also grown just from the Platte River Recovery Program to include Central, uh some NRDs, Fish and Wildlife and others. And that's ok. But in with, with the additional agencies it seems like the focus has changed and it's really confusing the subject and what, what is going on. I mean they have even, you know, named this the J-2 Regulating Reservoir Project. Well you know, what happened to the wildlife, the terns and plovers? That's what this is about. You know, what the core of this is to regulate the flows in the river for a few weeks in the spring and a few weeks in the fall. You know, I have a question is all of this money you are going to spend, 70, 80, 100 million dollars, is that worth it for such a short timeframe of target flows? I, you know, I don't know I think there's some reason why some of the other agencies are involved and you know, one of them for me being a landowner is that the Platte River Recovery does not have the power to take land or condemn land. Central does. You know they say they want to negotiate, maybe they need to step up. But they should not be allowed to do this. Uh you know, looking at the big picture you know, why are they doing this? Well because, you know back when they did relicensing of Kingsley Dam they had to provide so many environmental issues and regulations and needs and they are getting close to deadlines and so they are trying to push this through. And I think that's a problem because they are trying to rush it and things aren't being done right. But also my concern is, you know, where is this money coming from? You know, they like to cloud the picture. You know, we just asked them where it's coming from? Well it's coming from the, the state or something, well where are they getting their money from? The Platte River Recovery. And you know, and in their, if I read it right in their statutes they cannot condemn land, they have to be a willing sellers. And they are trying to get around that. I mean they are saying that Central is, you know, having to pay some of this, yes, 2.5 million dollars, but they get that back because they are getting paid a management fee if this thing gets up and running. So, basically, they're getting a project for nothing. But they have to take all those

difficult tasks. Uh you know some other thoughts, you know, kind of going a different direction. You know, why doesn't Central use the land that they already own right adjacent to the property that they're proposing? You know, that's a good question. They own land out in the river, commonly known as Jeffrey Island. If they would use that it would address several issues. Uh a big one for us, because we do own land adjacent to the proposed project, and downstream a little bit, when they fill this up with water it is going to seep. How is it going to affect our land? Because right now we have seepage issues. What is that going to be? How are they going, how are they going to control that, how are they going to handle that? You know if they put it on the island, you know, that would help minimize that. I'm not saying that's the perfect thing either. Uh another concern of mine is when they take all this farm ground the county loses tax base. More importantly the school loses tax base. You know, is Central going to pay the difference for that? And then, then there's a lot of little things that you could say is a concern too. You know, uh relocation of wildlife, there's a lot of deer that use this farm ground. Yeah it would concentrate it on either side of the reservoir. Or have they considered how they are going to deal with that? Uh also the relocation of roads is an issue, I know there are some people that don't like it, um, if you put it out on the island you wouldn't have to move any roads. Uh also the historical sites. There are uh several historical sites that will be lost because of this. And then being a reservoir that isn't full year round, it's going to be empty so there's going to be blowing dust and sand. How are they going to do that? How is it, is it going to blow so hard that they're going to have to close the road because of the blowing dust that's right adjacent to it? I mean these are some things that need to be addressed that are, that are concerns. And me being a landowner, I guess, one of the big things on my thing is the proposed compensation for my land is not enough. You know if they take the land, you know, I need enough money to buy comparable ground within three miles of home. Our family has worked generations to acquire land close to home. This is the furthest piece from our base of operations that we have. I mean, we, to buy a comparable chunk of ground we are not getting compensated enough. Um, you know, it's kind of like we are getting the short end of the stick. Well it's we can stick it to the landowners but the engineers, the guys that do the dirt work, all the other contractors, you know they put in a bid, or set a price and that's what they get. You know they, so I'm feeling we're being treated unfairly. And I guess that's all I have to say right now. Ok. Thank you.

November 6, 2014 – Lexington, NE – 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Dede Peterson, Bertrand, NE

I'm Dede Peterson from Bertrand, live in the house that is overlooking the reservoir and my big concern is beautification. Um we picked this spot 21 years ago which my husband had picked when he was little because of the view and that is why we built there and now from the pictures I see what our view is going to be. I am very concerned about the beautification and don't want to be looking at just a chain link fence with um the cement dirt, packed white walls that are going to be dividing the reservoirs. Um and as I've looked at the pictures, I see that you have shot pictures of the view exactly out of my huge window that is going to change the looks forever and I want to know if beautification has been considered? We have traffic down there during eagle season and cranes. It's a highly traveled road for people to come down to see the beauty of the river and all the wildlife that comes with it. And now there is going to be a chain link fence and a reservoir and I feel that you are taking that away from a big, big part of Nebraska. Uh we have been told that they are looking into Jeffrey Island as an alternative spot but the dates seem to be um, they say they are trying to run them parallel with the acquisition dates of our ground and I feel that somebody should probably make a point to figure out the Jeffrey Island situation before putting us through more sleepless nights, um deciding on whether they're taking our ground or not.

Dave Wolfe, Overton, NE

The first 26 years of my life I spent with the Jeffrey boys. We used that Robb Ranch and as far as putting water on this good farm ground's a waste of time. It's all gravel bits and it ain't gonna hold. They want to do it put it out on the island, they've already messed it up. I used to calf 500 cows out there on that island, bring them home at 600 pounds. You take 600 pound calves at 500 head at \$2.40 a pound that's a lot of dollars they are losing. These people need to get hungry. They'll understand what this crop ground and farming does for them. Thank you.