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PLATTE RIVER RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION
PROGRAM

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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Releases Water to Benefit Whooping Cranes

KEARNEY, NE: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) plans to release water from their Environmental Account (EA) to benefit the endangered whooping cranes. Whooping cranes use the Platte River in Nebraska as a stopover site during their migration in the Central Flyway south to Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, Texas for the winter.

Established in 1999, the EA is water stored in Lake McConaughy in western Nebraska and is managed by the Service to benefit four federally listed threatened or endangered target species on the Platte River – these species include the whooping crane, interior least tern, piping plover and pallid sturgeon.

The Service plans to release water beginning October 19 with a target flow of 1,800 cubic feet per second at Grand Island, Nebraska. The release may result in less than one-foot rise in stage on the North Platte River at North Platte and will not exceed flood stage. Rise in stage at Grand Island will be less than 0.5 foot.

The release will provide and maintain adequate roosting and feeding habitat for whooping cranes on the Platte River, and is expected to continue through early to mid-November when the whooping cranes leave the region.

The PRRIP has liability insurance in place in the event of any associated damages related to the flow release. The PRRIP is committed to restoration of the habitat for the endangered species in the Central Platte River, while at the same time protecting human health and safety and preventing damage to associated land along the river.

For more information on this release, please contact:

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