

The Communicator

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Central and Dawson Boards Vote to Consolidate

New Entity will be called Platte River Public Power and Irrigation District

The boards of directors of the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District and Dawson Public Power District voted during a joint meeting of the boards on Oct. 24 to consolidate the two districts into a single public power and irrigation district. The consolidated entity will be called Platte River Public Power and Irrigation District (PRPPID). Central's board voted 9-2 in favor of the consolidation and Dawson's vote was 7-4 in favor.



General managers and board presidents from Central and Dawson signed consolidation documents at the conclusion of the meeting. (From left to right): Devin Brundage, Central GM; Dave Rowe, Central board president; Pat Hecox, Dawson board president; and Gwen Kautz, Dawson GM.

The formation of PRPPID brings together complimentary operational focuses of retail electrical distribution, renewable power generation and irrigation water distribution. Bringing them together in a single entity under a shared governance and administrative structure will further maximize this fit. This ensures that hydropower -- and other potential future electrical generation technologies -- can directly benefit the area's irrigation delivery service customers and its retail electrical customers, the owners of this public entity.

"The directors should be applauded for their vision and ability to work in the best interests of all stakeholders," said Pat Hecox, Dawson PPD's board president.

Dave Rowe, president of Central's board of directors, said, "The unique operational portfolio that results from the consolidation ensures that we are involved in initiatives that enhance economic development built on the foundation of two of Nebraska's most vital resources: water and power. This will strengthen our area and offer advantages that will increase in the future, just as those who built these districts

envisioned."

The new district will align hydropower generation during the irrigation season with peak demands for power, maximizing the value of the water used by its irrigation customers while providing reliable energy for groundwater irrigators with electric pumps, agricultural industries and homes. As a single entity, PRPPID will be uniquely positioned to conjunctively manage these resources to benefit surface and ground water irrigators, energy customers, recreationalists and other stakeholders ultimately improving the sustainability of surface water supplies.

Gwen Kautz, Dawson PPD's general manager, said, "Two years of detailed research have gone into this endeavor. The data, the synergies and the commitment to making central Nebraska stronger are all there."

"Equally important was the dedication of our department managers to make sure we dotted our i's and crossed our t's throughout this process. *(continued on page 2)*

Lake Ogallala Water Level Lowered for NPPD Maintenance Project



In coordination with the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD), Central began draining Lake Ogallala in late September to allow NPPD to complete maintenance on the Keystone Diversion Dam as well as other canal maintenance projects.

Beginning on Sept. 22, no water has been released from Lake McConaughy through Kingsley Dam into Lake Ogallala. The project is expected to last until late November, resulting in nearly two months of no water being released out of Lake McConaughy. While the lake is drained, crews will be reapplying a protective coating to the gates on the south side of the Keystone Diversion Dam, which helps regulate the amount of water released from Lake Ogallala into the North Platte River.



To prepare for the construction, Central built a dike near the Kingsley Dam to protect the infrastructure of the Kingsley Hydroplant.

(Photo at left of dike being constructed by Central crews)

Painting of Structures Completed



A \$1.9 million project to paint the outlet tower and Morning Glory structure near Kingsley Dam at Lake McConaughy was finished late this summer. Both structures were painted gray, replacing the former aqua green color that adorned the structures since 1995.



Penstocks at the J-1 Hydroplant were painted this summer while the Jeffrey Hydroplant penstocks will be completed this fall.

Central-Dawson Consolidation ... Continued

“They work in this industry daily, can see the challenges ahead and knew we would handle them better together. We know there is much more work ahead and pledge to pursue it with the same commitment that led up to this historic decision.”

Devin Brundage, Central’s general manager, said, “How these resources and assets are leveraged to benefit us, and future generations, will be decided here in south-central Nebraska by those who have a real stake in them. Through providing benefits of low cost, sustainable irrigation deliveries in conjunction with low-cost, reliable

electrical power and groundwater recharge, the Platte River Public Power and Irrigation District will positively influence virtually every part of daily life in this part of the state.”

As the final step in the process, the board-ratified consolidation plan was submitted to the Nebraska Power Review Board. The NPRB will review the plan and hold a hearing at its meeting in Lincoln on Dec. 16. Pending approval from the Power Review Board, it is estimated the new public power and irrigation district will officially come into being in July 2023.

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On the Lakefront



Courteous Boating is Encouraged When Enjoying the Lake

Courteous boating, including wake courtesy, will remain a focus on Central's lakes as the popularity of the lakes continue to grow. Regulation or laws will not solve every problem on a lake, so doing your part as a courteous boater will help with the overall safety and enjoyment of the lake.

- **Be aware of your wake:** Operating a boat involves not only keeping a proper look out ahead, but also being aware of every aspect of your boat's performance, including the wake you create.
- **Know your surroundings:** Creating a large wake which a smaller watercraft may have difficulty navigating should be an important consideration for a boat operator. Likewise, when operating near docks, your wake should be minimized.
- **Be a patient boater.** Maintain a safe distance from other boats. This will give you more reaction time to avoid unexpected maneuvers by other boat operators. Don't travel too fast for the conditions! As we all know, lakes can become very rough at times. Navigate large wakes in a matter which will prevent injuries to your passengers on your own vessel. Making your passengers aware of upcoming large wakes, combined with cautious navigation across those wakes will reduce many of the injuries we see on the lake.
- **Obey traditional navigational rules:** When approaching another boat, stay to the right. Give less maneuverable vessels the right of way.

Bring back the great tradition in boating: Boat courteously!

Sign Up for Text Alerts

Central recently launched a new service to provide text updates regarding district operations. It allows users to choose from many options specific to your area of interest.

Central will not be sending out continual messages, only when we feel the information is timely and necessary for our customers and stakeholders.

Scan the QR Code below to sign up or go to the Central website (cnppid.com) and click on the icon located on the home page.



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Irrigation Season Completed, Projects Planned for Offseason

Much like the entire state of Nebraska, Central irrigation customers battled drought conditions throughout the growing season.

Rainfall at the Holdrege gauge measured 12.81 inches from April-September with 10.51 in. measured during the delivery season. By comparison 19.22 in. was received from April-Sept. in 2021. The 65-year average precipitation between April and September is 18.77 in.

Central customers applied approximately 8.67 acres-inches in 2022 on the Phelps, E65 and E67 systems.

The irrigation division now focuses on canal maintenance and repair projects until the system fills back up this spring. A few major projects include reshaping small canal laterals on the Phelps Canal and building new concrete walls along E65 system.



*Central employees pouring concrete along
the E65 system*

Employee Position Changes Occur within Irrigation Department

Recent retirements have led to position changes within the irrigation department. Steve Ostebuhr has been promoted to irrigation superintendent taking over after Van Fastenau retired in September.

Mark Rupe was promoted to move into Ostebuhr's former position of irrigation area work coordinator/equipment operator.

One new irrigation service specialist has been hired for the Bertrand office with one more spot to be filled. Gage Gregg is the newest employee to join the District as an irrigation service specialist replacing the retired Kevin Jauken.