



News Release

(LAKE McCONAUGHY, Neb.) - The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's board of directors held its regular monthly meeting today at the Lake McConaughy Visitors Center near Ogallala. The board moved through a relatively short agenda before adjourning for a tour of facilities at Lake McConaughy with guests from the North Platte Natural Resources District in Scottsbluff.

After approving several items on the consent agenda, including three applications for variances for construction projects by cabin-owners at Johnson Lake and a \$222,827 work order for purchase of a motor grader for the Bertrand Irrigation Office, the board approved purchase of a "Tuff Boom" barrier to be placed in the forebay above the Jeffrey Hydroplant. The barrier is designed to prevent ice and debris in the water from interfering with the hydroplant's operation. The cost of the floating barrier is \$29,100. Installation is scheduled to take place this fall.

Civil engineer Cory Steinke reported that Lake McConaughy's elevation was at 3,257.1 feet as of Monday morning, with inflows of 2,760 cubic feet per second. The inflows were about 160 percent of normal, but Steinke reported that most of the inflows consist of water for the Environmental Account being moved downstream from Wyoming's Pathfinder Reservoir.

The Environment Account is a block of water set aside in Lake McConaughy for wildlife habitat purposes along the central Platte River. The account was established as part of Central's Federal Energy Regulatory Commission license to operate its hydroelectric facilities and is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Steinke said Lake McConaughy will be managed in the near term with an eye on how spring inflows will be affected by a potentially strong El Nino weather pattern. Past strong El Nino conditions have produced some of the highest inflows to Lake McConaughy on record.

For the water year that ended on Sept. 30, inflows to Lake McConaughy ranked as the 11th highest since Kingsley Dam was closed in 1941.

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