



## News Release

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(HOLDREGE, Neb.) - The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's board of directors authorized staff to negotiate the purchase of 15 acres of land on the northeast edge of Holdrege for the relocation of Central's equipment and materials storage yard.

The board also gave authorization for Central to sell the approximately 7.5 acres of land on which the current storage yard is located.

Land Administrator Jim Brown, in a report to the board, said Central was approached several months ago by a potential buyer for the triangle-shaped property just southeast of Central's offices in Holdrege. The offer prompted Central staff to look for a site that would be better suited to the Irrigation Division's storage and maintenance needs.

Several alternatives were examined before identifying a site that would serve those purposes, he said, although relocation of the storage yard is contingent upon successful negotiations.

Also at Monday's board meeting:

- After discussions with staff and the Central District Water Users' board of directors, Central's board approved a recommendation to extend the current irrigation season by two weeks, since the planting of some crops was delayed by wet conditions. The 12-inch/acre allocation remains in place, although staff continues to explore external issues related to the allocation.
- The directors approved the principles of a one-year pilot program that would establish a mechanism for irrigation customers to lease water to the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program.

As outlined in the concept document, up to 3,000 acres will be enrolled in the water leasing program. Acres to which the lease applies may not be irrigated in 2016. A calculation will be made to determine how much storage water is conserved and how much water will be credited to the Environmental Account in Lake McConaughy.

After additional details are finalized, the board will be presented with the final water-leasing document for approval.

- Lake McConaughy is likely to reach its peak elevation this week as inflows from the North Platte River recede and releases for irrigation deliveries pick up. Inflows have fallen to about 2,000 cubic feet per second, which is approximately equal to the rate of releases.

Civil engineer Cory Steinke reported that the storage reservoir was at elevation 3,263.5 feet on Monday morning and it appears that it will not quite reach elevation 3,265.0, which is the normal maximum pool.

Flows in the South Platte River are also gradually receding, he said, but are still above normal for this time of year.

"We'll just have to wait and see how much longer the South Platte continues to flow above normal," Steinke said, "but we'll continue to make use of those flows in our system as long as possible."

Lake McConaughy's elevation rose rapidly this spring as higher than normal inflows were impounded to reduce the impact that a flooding South Platte River was having along the central Platte River.

- Natural Resources Manager Mike Drain reported to the board on the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources' rule-making process related to determining fully-appropriated river basins. NDNR is holding a public hearing on the proposed rules on Tuesday in Kearney.

Drain said Central intends to provide input at the hearing based on a number of concerns about the proposed rules. He said the proposed rules do not appear to meet statutory requirements, are hydrologically flawed, and – in terms of their impact on surface water appropriators – are worse than the current rules.

- The board approved the 2015-16 schedule for regular monthly meetings and committee-of-the board meetings.

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