



News Release

(HOLDREGE, Neb.) - Several members of the public attended The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's monthly board meeting on Monday to express their concerns about access to a small lake on Central's Supply Canal that is popular among fishermen and boaters.

The county road into East Phillips Lake, located south of Lexington and east of Johnson Lake, has deteriorated to the point that access to the boat ramp is difficult. In addition, the area around the lake's only public boat ramp has silted in and the ramp itself is in need of repair or reconstruction.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission maintains a state recreation area along the south side of the lake.

Central is aware of the situation, said Natural Resources and Compliance Manager Mike Drain, and has already retained an engineering consultant to conduct a feasibility study to address the lake access issues.

The consultant, JEO Consulting Group of Lincoln, will examine options of relocating the boat ramp to another location on the lake or repairing road access and the existing boat ramp.

Central has recently improved lake access with upgrades to boat ramps at Jeffrey Reservoir and Plum Creek Reservoir and the study, which is expected to be completed in February 2020, will yield information about the best way to proceed with the facility at East Phillips Lake.

In other action on Monday:

- Irrigation Operations Manager Dave Ford said the weather significantly affected irrigation operations this year. The amount and timing of rainfall events in Central's service area resulted in the second lowest total of water delivered to customers since irrigation operations began in 1942. Only the 1993 irrigation season which was plagued by late freezes, hail storms and rainy weather, had lower deliveries than this summer's 32,450 acre-feet.

Deliveries to irrigation customers averaged 3.8 inches/acre, Ford said, while rainfall measured at the Holdrege gauge was 25.44 inches during the April-to-September growing season. Average growing season rainfall over the past 20 years has averaged 18.65 inches.

"Like a lot of other parts of Nebraska, it just rained often and a lot this summer," Ford said. "It seems like every time deliveries would start to pick up we'd get another shower and customers would stop taking water."

- The board approved a purchase requisition for \$64,269 for PVC pipe and associated work orders for \$40,500 to close and replace an open lateral north of Holdrege to facilitate operation of a pivot.
- The directors approved temporary easements on Central property to allow the Nebraska Dept. of Transportation to implement an improvement project along Highway 21 south of Cozad.
- The board approved a disbursement from the Lake Improvement Fund in the amount of \$20,000 to assist the Lakeside Golf Club at Johnson Lake with connection to the Sanitary Improvement District at the lake.
- The board approved updates to three job descriptions to better reflect the future responsibilities for those positions.

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