



News Release

(HOLDREGE, Neb.) – The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District has resumed pumping operations into Elwood Reservoir as part of efforts to utilize excess flows in the Platte River for groundwater recharge in and adjacent to Central’s irrigation service area.

Central reminds people who use the lake for wintertime recreational activities that ice conditions at the lake can be affected by rising water levels as more water is pumped into the lake. Extreme caution should be exercised under such circumstances, particularly by ice fishermen venturing onto the ice.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission recommends that people should not attempt to walk onto frozen lakes or ponds unless at least four inches of clear, solid ice is present.

The NGPC also recommends that people fishing through the ice wear life jackets, carry ice picks, use a spud bar to check ice thickness, and keep a long rope with them to aid in rescue if they fall through the ice.

Central has agreements with Tri-Basin Natural Resources District, the State of Nebraska and the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program to divert excess flows into its canal system during the non-irrigation season for recharge to benefit groundwater levels and return flows to the river. Diversions for recharge are subject to weather conditions and can start or stop at any time throughout the winter.

Recharge operations were delayed this fall by a bridge/culvert construction project near the head gate of the E65 Canal that prevented diversion of water into the canal.

Also, Johnson Lake’s water level – which was lowered to facilitate the collection of shoreline survey data – will begin rising over the next several days to normal wintertime operating levels.

The water level was lowered about three feet over the past couple weeks to allow access for the surveying project. After the project is completed, the lake will rise about two feet to its normal winter levels.

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