



News Release

(HOLDREGE, Neb.) - The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's board of directors heard reports on water conservation efforts and education from an irrigation water management specialist at Monday's board meeting.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Curtis Scheele, irrigation water management specialist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, presented his annual conservation report, summarizing activity related to the federal Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). There were 46 contracts awarded cost-share funds in 2022 for a total of \$1,535,294 spent on installing center pivots, sub-surface drip systems and assistance resulting from the local wildfires.

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Scheele also reported that 25 contracts were awarded under the Conservation Stewardship Program (CStWP), providing a total of \$3,254,486 for improvement in pest, nutrient, range and irrigation water management. Overall since the farm bill in 2022, the two programs have handed out \$93,076,088 in the Tri-Basin NRD area.

He then gave the board an overview of the local UNL Testing Ag Performance Solution (UNL TAPS) team's yield over the past four years. This year's team of Tri-Basin Water Watchers won the Highest Input Use Efficiency Award. In addition, he highlighted the weekly irrigation newsletter that is emailed out throughout the summer. Central provides a weekly update in the email that reaches 727 customers.

Also at Monday's meeting:

- A bid was approved for \$279,886 to Van Diest Supply Co., of McCook for purchase of aquatic herbicides for the 2023 irrigation season.
- The board of directors approved a new Johnson Lake subleasing policy. The current fee for a Johnson Lake vacation rental permit to operate is now \$500 and requires neighbor consent.
- The board approved the hiring of Midwest Right of Way Services, Inc., to provide services in Gosper County during Central's E65 Siphon project. The company will coordinate with land owners and utilities to work with them during the entire project by getting correct paperwork and handle the contracts properly.
- Irrigation and Water Services Manager Scott Dicke reported that bids for the Elwood Reservoir seepage project were received last week. Three bids ranging from \$3.76 million to \$6.18 million were received. Staff will work with RJH Consulting to have a recommendation for the board to vote on at the next meeting.
- Natural Resources and Compliance Manager Mike Drain gave an overview on the maintenance work that will be taking place on the riprap at Kingsley Dam. Drain reported that staff has located some areas requiring maintenance along the dam that were identified by using aerial drone imagery. RJH Consulting will conduct a site visit to determine the extent of maintenance that will be required. RJH also will assist in developing and evaluating the type of repair concept to use.
- Civil Engineer Tyler Thulin reported that Lake McConaughy's elevation was at 3227.2 feet on Monday (47.1% of capacity). Inflows are around 800 cubic feet per second (cfs) and releases are about 250 cfs, down around 300 cfs from week ago. Snowpack in the North Platte basin is currently at 134% of median average and 101% of median average in the South Platte basin.

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