



News Release

(HOLDREGE, Neb.) – The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District’s board of directors heard reports during Monday’s monthly meeting about two projects related to Elwood Reservoir.

Hydraulic Project Operations Manager Cory Steinke updated the board on a seepage management project at the reservoir to address minor seepage problems. Staff has been working with RJH Engineering to analyze results of models and surveys and have concluded to what extent measures will be required to ensure adequate safety factors for the manner in which the reservoir is operated now and in the future.

For the first several decades of its existence, Elwood Reservoir was filled in the spring prior to irrigation season, then drawn down throughout the summer. More recent operations have resulted in more water in the reservoir for longer periods of time, which affects seepage levels.

“There’s no imminent issues related to dam safety,” Steinke said, “but as we make improvements, we’re going to make sure they’re done right.”

The engineering consultant will prepare designs for installation of weighted filter blankets and drains that will cover virtually the entire length of the dam.

Also related to Elwood Reservoir, Irrigation and Water Services Manager Scott Dicke and civil engineer Tyler Thulin briefed the board on a potential project to change the manner in which water enters the reservoir.

The new design would divert water from the E65 Canal into short sections of open canal and a siphon for delivery to the reservoir by gravity flow. The plan would address the issues of aging infrastructure (the existing concrete-and-steel siphon is 80 years old); removing the need to pump water into the reservoir; and ensuring sufficient quantities of water for irrigation deliveries to the 42,000 acres along the E65 Canal system.

Several alternatives will be evaluated and design details are still in the works, but the initial data for the two-mile stretch of canal and siphon are very promising, Thulin said.

Also at Monday’s meeting:

- The board approved a \$186,867 bid from Allen Blasting & Coating of Wever, Iowa to paint the penstocks leading to the Jeffrey Hydroplant. The board also approved a change order to the contract to add painting of the penstocks above the Johnson No. 1 Hydroplant for \$198,512.
- The directors approved a \$67,323 work order for purchase and installation of a hydrogen sulfide removal system inside the Kingsley Hydroplant.
- Steinke reported that the District closed last week on purchase of 304 acres of land south of the Platte River and just below the J-2 River Return.
- Lake McConaughy’s elevation as of May 3 was 3,249.6 feet above mean sea level (1.3 million acre-feet or 75 percent of capacity). Inflows were averaging about 825 cubic feet per second (cfs), while releases were around 375 cfs.

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Contact: Jeff Buettner
Gov’t. & Public Relations
Manager
Office: (308) 995-8601
E-mail: jbuettner@cnpid.com