



## News Release

(HOLDREGE, Neb.) - Groundwater levels in The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's service area were the subject of a report during Central's board meeting on Monday.

Irrigation and Water Services Manager Scott Dicke summarized data collected in May from Central's network of observation wells throughout the service area. Since last spring, groundwater levels were generally stable, except for an area around Johnson Lake and Elwood Reservoir where declines of three to six feet were prevalent.

This may be a result of some early pumping in the area to offset dry conditions this spring, Dicke said, shortly before observation wells were measured.

Over the last ten years, declines of three to six feet in the water table were measured across much of the District, which encompasses the eastern side of Gosper County, Phelps County and Kearney County to the Minden area. A few areas showed declines of more than six feet since 2012.

The trend over the last 40 years shows declines between zero and ten feet across most of the area served by the Phelps County Canal (from south of the Platte River at Overton to north of Minden), while the E-65 Canal area (north of Loomis and Bertrand) generally had gains of up to ten feet in the water table.

Also at Monday's meeting:

- The board approved budget amendments of \$26,000 for security improvements at the Holdrege office and \$35,000 for upgrades to exciter equipment in Central's three hydroplants along the Supply Canal.
- The board also approved a \$9,800 change order in a contract with Allen Blasting & Coating, Inc., of Wever, Iowa for additional work to repaint and coat the penstock at the Jeffrey Hydroplant; and a \$78,000 change order to cover mobilization/demobilization costs incurred by Infrastructure Alternatives, Inc., of Rockford, Mich., during installation of geosynthetic tubes for erosion prevention at Lake McConaughy.
- Hydraulic Projects Operations Manager Cory Steinke reported that Lake McConaughy's elevation on Monday was 3,241.4 feet (64% of capacity). Inflows were around 400 cubic feet per second (cfs) and releases were 2,700 cfs, of which 1,400 cfs to 1,700 cfs is water from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's environmental account (EA) in Lake McConaughy.

The EA is a block of water managed by the FWS to benefit habitat for threatened and endangered species along the central Platte River. The releases are intended to maintain and enhance the wide, open, unvegetated and braided channel of the central Platte River by inundating sandbars to prevent vegetation establishment.

- Central staff announced that a fundraiser will be held on Friday, June 10 to benefit the family of Tony Hansen, a Central employee, whose two children were injured in a traffic accident last month. Central will provide hamburgers, chips and soft drinks to the public. Attendees can make a free will offering to help offset the Hansen's medical expenses.

The fundraiser will be located in the east parking lot of Central's office in Holdrege (415 Lincoln St.) from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. Tri-Basin Natural Resources District is assisting by providing shelter canopies at the site.

- The board changed the start time for the July 6 board meeting to 3 p.m.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 6, 2022

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