



CENTRAL
*Nebraska Public Power
and Irrigation District*

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(HOLDREGE, Neb.) - The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's board of directors received an update on the upcoming drawdown that will lower the water level this fall at Johnson Lake.

Hydraulic Project Operations Manager Cory Steinke briefed the board on the project that is scheduled to bring the lake elevation approximately 13 feet below normal operations levels. During this planned outage at Johnson No. 1 Hydro plant, which is tentatively scheduled from Nov. 6-16, Central will be able to fully inspect the structures at Johnson Lake.

Central is planning to place a temporary dike in the outlet canal of Johnson Lake. This dike would allow dewatering of the outlet canal to conduct a full inspection above the J-1 Hydro plant. With lake levels low, it also provides Central the opportunity to check for and remove any remaining debris in the lake from the tornado event that occurred this past spring.

Lake residents wanting to perform shoreline maintenance are reminded to contact Central to obtain any necessary permits prior to initiating such projects.

The drawdown is scheduled to begin around Oct. 26 but that date could be adjusted based on flows in the North and South Platte rivers. It will slowly fill during the hydro plant outage and should return to normal water operations by the end of November.

Also at Tuesday's board meeting:

- Irrigation and Water Services Manager Scott Dicke reported to the board that the irrigation season is coming to an end. The headgates are scheduled to be closed on Sept. 8 with typical drain down water likely being available to irrigators after that date.

Dicke added that the water level at Elwood Reservoir is now stable with no more releases planned and boaters can still have access. Construction on the Elwood Dam seepage repair project is getting set to begin and the construction trailer will be brought in and mobilized this week. Half of the boat ramp parking lot will now be fenced off during time of construction.

- Directors approved a pricing addendum to a water leasing agreement with the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program for \$100/acre with a cap of 3,000 acres, the same terms as the 2023 agreement
- The board approved a purchase requisition for \$75,768 to Central Nebraska Bobcat for an E35 Bobcat mini excavator.
- The board of directors signed a resolution to adopt and enter into the declaration of trust and participate in the Nebraska Cooperative Liquid Assets Securities System Trust (Nebraska CLASS Trust) and the Nebraska Public Agency Investment Trust (NPAIT). These potential investment options offer favorable return rates to the district.

- Cory Steinke gave the directors an update on the progression of the bridge work near Midway Lake. Steinke shared with directors that an additional bridge near Maxwell in Lincoln County suffered significant damage when an overweight vehicle passed over it. He reminded the board the importance of overweight vehicles exceeding posted weight limits and the immediate danger that could occur. "I was very surprised the vehicle that caused the damage didn't end up in the canal," he stated. The bridge has been shut down and Central's crews are repairing it.
- Steinke reported that Lake McConaughy's elevation currently is 3,229.1 feet (858,100 acre-feet, or 49.2% of maximum volume). He reported the peak elevation of the summer was 3235.7 feet on July 18. Inflows are around 600 cubic feet per second (cfs) and outflows are about 2400 cfs.

Steinke also reported that Central is assisting with the lowering of water levels as the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission plans for the fall renovation of the Lake Ogallala fishery. Nebraska Public Power District also plans to perform inspections and maintenance on their canals during this time.

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