



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 current drawdowns that are occurring at several of Central's lakes during their monthly board meeting on Monday.

Civil Engineer Tyler Thulin briefed the board on the numerous projects taking place across the District. Lake Ogallala is currently drained for fall renovation of the fishery that is being done by the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission. Game & Parks officials will apply a fish toxicant to eliminate the existing fish population. Central will retain that water in Lake Ogallala for three weeks following this process. The Nebraska Public Power District is also performing inspections and maintenance on their downstream canals during this dewatering.

At Jeffrey Lake south of Brady, Neb., a drawdown began on September 30 to allow cabin owners to perform shoreline maintenance. Lake elevation is approximately six feet below normal operation levels today and it should return to normal elevations around October 10.

This week Central is lowering the water level at Midway Lake by 3 ½ feet to allow for the new bridge construction. The drawdown should be completed this week and return to normal operating levels.

Thulin reminded the board of the upcoming drawdown at Johnson Lake that will bring the lake elevation approximately 13 feet below normal operation levels. 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.

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

Also at Monday's board meeting:

- The board approved sending a letter of support for the Tri-Basin Natural Resource District's WaterSMART grant application for a Net Recharge Management Tool. Irrigation and Water Services Manager Scott Dicke reported to the board that Central would plan to assist in providing additional township level water delivery information for the project.

Tri-Basin General Manager John Thorburn told the board this tool would use information on how much water is coming in to the area and how much groundwater that is being removed in an attempt to model future trends in groundwater levels and assist the NRD in identifying areas of potential work to sustain those artificially high levels. Directors questioned how the groundwater pumping would be measured with a majority of the basin not having meters in place.

- Directors approved a work order for \$180,800 to Hawk Company of Council Bluffs, Iowa for the purchase of a lowboy trailer.

- The board of directors voted for an amendment with Mead & Hunt for work on a Design Flood Determination report at Kingsley Dam. Central will pay Mead & Hunt \$60,700 for the work performed under this Amendment. The revised contract for the total project is now \$835,620.
- Natural Resources and Compliance Manager Mike Drain reported to the board about a bipartisan bill that was introduced on the U.S. Senate floor on Sept. 28. The Maintaining and Enhancing Hydroelectricity and River Restoration Act would establish a 30% investment tax credit for hydropower owners to make dam safety upgrades and environmental improvements at their facilities. Drain told the board this would assist Central greatly with their upcoming Kingsley Dam facing project. He said the Central District Water Users will be reaching out to Nebraska Congressmen Adrian Smith asking for his support of the bill.
- Tyler Thulin reported that Lake McConaughy's elevation currently is 3,231.5 feet, or 52% of maximum volume. He reported the lake elevation has risen 1.7 feet since the committee meeting on Sept. 22. Current inflows are around 1,400 cubic feet per second (cfs) and outflows are 0 due to the outage at Kingsley Hydroplant and Lake Ogallala being revovated by this Nebraska Game & Parks. The big lake will continue to fill with no outflows taking place during the outage.

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