



News Release

(HOLDREGE, Neb.) -- The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's board of directors approved a resolution to accept an offer from the Eilers family of Lexington, Neb., to donate a bridge across the outlet canal at Johnson Lake in an effort to help connect the hike/bike trail that is under construction at Johnson Lake.

Chase Eilers, President of Eilers Machine and Welding, Inc., addressed the board and expressed, on behalf of his family and business, the appreciation the Eilers' have of the Johnson Lake community and their desire to help provide a service to the development of the hike/bike trail.

"The Eilers family has been a main staple of the Lexington community for a long time, and this project is very fitting for them," said Central Director Dave Rowe. "A big thank you goes out to them for donating this bridge."

Eilers noted in his presentation that Eilers Machine and Welding, Inc., is a highly qualified company with numerous certifications. Eilers is currently building stop gates for the District's diversion dam at North Platte and have completed other projects in the past.

Central District Water Users President Dave Dahlgren addressed the board for a "wrap-up" following the annual water users meeting in March. "We mainly want to say thank you for what you do, and encourage you to continue to protect the mound and our water rights and keep the lines of communication open with the water users," Dahlgren said, as he expressed his concerns regarding water supply to the board.

Central's Civil Engineer Cory Steinke provided water supply projections as preparation for irrigation season continues. Steinke said that at 63 percent capacity, Lake McConaughy is no longer rising and will stay steady due to lower than normal inflows.

Snowpack data is deceiving, according to Steinke, as the higher snowpack numbers will not result in a great runoff. "Even though snowpack above Seminoe is at 92 percent and snowpack above Glendo is at 96 percent, those numbers translate down to only 55 percent of normal runoff for us," Steinke said. "We are still expecting water districts in western Nebraska to have allocations, which means less water crossing the state line from Wyoming into Nebraska, and eventually less return flows into our system."

"We are expecting virtually no water being spilled from upstream reservoirs on the North Platte River this season," Steinke said. "Our only hope at this point is the South Platte River, but that is still an unknown."

Also at Monday's meeting:

--The board approved one year transfers of 148 acres for the 2013 irrigation season.

--The board gave approval to award a bid of \$99,955.60 to Jim Ostgren Construction Co. of Holdrege, Neb., for earthwork to be completed on the E-65 canal.

-- The board voted to approve an agreement for professional services with Miller & Associates' to work with Eilers Machine and Welding, Inc., on providing a stamped drawing and recommendations on the bridge design for the pedestrian bridge at Johnson Lake.

-- Irrigation Division Manager Dave Ford reported on Spring 2013 groundwater well data, noting that trends show levels are down. Ford also mentioned that Central's record of rainfall data, kept since 1957, showed 2012 to be the driest year on record. Ford said he looks forward to meeting with Tri-Basin NRD to incorporate their well data, which will provide a better insight on the District's area groundwater levels.

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