



News Release

(HOLDREGE, Neb.) -- The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District Board of Directors heard from Irrigation Division Manager Dave Ford at today's monthly meeting. Ford provided an irrigation end of the year report for the end of the 2013-2014 water year. Ford said the 2014 irrigation season ranked 70th out of 73 years for the lowest amount of water delivered, which Ford attributed to an excellent amount of rainfall during the month of June.

"From April 1st until September 30th we had over 22 inches of rain in our Holdrege gauge," Ford said. "This is the 12th highest irrigation season rainfall total since we started keeping records in 1957."

Also included in Ford's report were water level readings taken from observation wells throughout Central's irrigated area. Ford referred to declining water levels, with some significant declines especially in areas east of Holdrege. Ford indicated this area would most likely continue to be an area of concern in the future.

"This report does match up with the findings we received from EA Engineering on the water table study they did last spring," Ford said. "With our customers using more efficient irrigation methods, the demand for water is down. EA Engineering told us what makes the difference in the water table is the amount of water we bring in. These numbers show their report was correct."

Ford also reported on the progress of the replacement of the Lost Creek Flume. As of last Tuesday, the flume was completely removed, and the crew was working on filling in some open canal and removing another structure before they prepare to install the 42 inch pipe that will be used to deliver water in the future.

Also at Monday's meeting:

- A bid was awarded to KEA Constructors, LLC, of Milford, Neb., in the amount of \$522,965.40 for construction of a bridge on milepost 5.6 on the Supply Canal.
 - Approval was received for Closure of Contract No. 0-655 with Diamond Plastics Corporation. All 2,740 feet of 42" pipe was delivered, inspected and found to be satisfactory, and final payment in the amount of \$1,772.99 was approved to close the contract.
 - Amendments to the 2014 budget were approved, including an amendment to approve \$150,000 to be used for Central's expenses as Southwest Power Pool prepares to submit a filing to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The board also voted to approve Central's application, which is a standard agreement provided by the Southwest Power Pool.
 - Natural Resources Manager Mike Drain reported on the J-2 Regulation Reservoir project, stating that Central staff should know by the end of the day (Monday, October 6) confirmed dates and locations for the J-2 Project public hearings. Once the dates are confirmed, notices will be made to the public via multiple media outlets. Also regarding the J-2 Reservoirs project, Drain indicated that Central would have the design engineering firm look at the feasibility of locating the regulating reservoirs on the Jeffrey Island property.
- **Following the meeting, hearing dates for the J-2 Project were confirmed and are as follows:
- November 5, 2014 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Phelps Co. Ag Center in Holdrege
 - November 6, 2014 from 1-3 p.m. at Lexington Holiday Inn Express
 - November 6, 2014 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Elwood Civic Center
- Civil Engineer Cory Steinke said that inflows to Lake McConaughy have been very high due to environmental account water releases and rainfall events upstream. Central staff is planning to request an extension from FERC of a waiver of Lake McConaughy release requirements for the upcoming non-irrigation season. The extension allows more water to be saved in the reservoir instead of released down the river while Central's irrigation customers face another year of reduced deliveries. Central's staff consulted with and received support for the initial waiver last fall from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and NPPD, and it is hoped that there will be similar support to extend the waiver for another year.
 - Steinke also reported that drawdowns will begin at Johnson Lake this Thursday, October 9, in preparation for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Angler Access project to begin. During the drawdown, Johnson Lake could see levels down nine to ten feet below normal. Johnson Lake will remain low until the completion of the project, which is expected to be mid-November. Jeffrey Lake will also see a drawdown starting October 15th and will remain at lower than normal levels until October 27th to allow for shoreline work and maintenance.

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