



News Release

(HOLDREGE, Neb.) - The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's board of directors unanimously approved a resolution at Monday's board meeting in support of extending the first increment of the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP) for an additional 13 years.

The PRRIP was formed in 2006, after many years of negotiations, to address concerns regarding threatened and endangered species along the Platte River. The program is a joint venture by water users, environmental groups, and state representatives from Nebraska, Wyoming and Colorado, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The first increment is scheduled to expire in 2019.

The PRRIP consists of three main elements: Increasing stream flows in the central Platte River during relevant time periods; enhancing, restoring and protecting habitat lands for the target bird species; and adopting an adaptive management approach.

Progress is being made toward achieving the program's objectives, but an extension is necessary to meet the water goals in the Platte River and adaptive management for threatened and endangered species' habitat. The State of Nebraska is asking entities involved in the program for indications of support for the extension.

Also at Monday's meeting:

- The board approved a \$123,766 bid to purchase a lowboy tractor from Sahling Kenworth, Inc., of Kearney, Neb., for use by the Gothenburg Division.
- The directors approved a revision adding \$4,000 to the 2018 budget for additional training for the electrical maintenance crew.
- The board approved an annual services agreement with Johnson Lake Development, Inc. The agreement covers services that Central agrees to provide to Johnson Lake tenants from May 1, 2018, until April 30, 2019. Services include communications, operation of a yard waste landfill, contracted sanitation disposal service, and mowing services. Central will submit a lump sum of \$51,000 to JLDI to pay for the covered services.
- Civil Engineer Cory Steinke reported that Lake McConaughy is currently at elevation 3256.3 feet or (approximately 1.49 million acre feet and 86 percent capacity) and dropping slowly. Central is releasing approximately 500 cubic feet per second from the lake to meet target flow requirements set by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, as well as an additional 900 to 1,000 cfs in releases from the lake's Environmental Account to provide flows in the central Platte River during the whooping crane migration. Inflows are currently ranging around 1,100 to 1,200 cfs.

Steinke also reported that there has been little change in Rocky Mountain snowpack conditions since last month. The snowpack in the upper North Platte River Basin is currently at 90 percent of average, 71 percent in the lower North Platte basin, and about 80 percent in the South Platte River Basin.

- Previously, at a special board meeting on March 23, the board approved a cooperative maintenance agreement with the Platte Valley Irrigation District, Keith Lincoln Counties Irrigation District and Paxton-Hershey Water Company. The agreement provides for Central to work with each individual company to assist with maintenance or construction projects throughout the year to enhance the canals' operational efficiencies.

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Contact: Jeff Buettner
Public Relations Manager
Office: (308) 995-8601
E-mail: jbuettner@cnppid.com