



News Release

(HOLDREGE, Neb.) – The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District’s board of directors approved a bid to repaint the control structures at Lake McConaughy during Monday’s monthly board meeting.

The board awarded the bid to Allen Blasting & Coating of Wever, Iowa for just over \$1.9 million. The bid includes preparation of all concrete and steel surfaces and painting of the Outlet Tower and the “Morning Glory” spillway. Acceptance of the bid was conditioned upon Central obtaining a necessary regulatory permitting.

The project would begin with mobilization by the contractor on Mon., June 21 and, depending upon the weather and the number of days suitable for work, could last until the end of year.

To facilitate staging, storing and accessing equipment and materials for the project, one lane of Nebraska Highway 61 across Kingsley Dam will be closed for a short stretch near the work site. It is planned that traffic lights will be installed to regulate traffic through the work zone.

The highway will be restricted to one lane for the project’s duration. Central required the contractor to restore full two lane access over the Fourth of July and Labor Day holiday weekends to help with the typical anticipated higher recreational use of the lake.

Also at Monday’s meeting:

- Irrigation and Water Services Manager Scott Dicke reported on recent data obtained from observation wells in Central’s irrigated area. The data evaluation looked at trends over three time periods. The 2021 water level observations were compared with readings from last spring, the spring of 2011, and average groundwater levels for the period 1981-85.

In general, the data shows groundwater declines over all three periods. Since last spring, 81 percent of measured wells have shown declines, with 50 percent of those wells dropping by up to three feet. Over the past ten years, 61 percent of the wells have declined with about 22 percent showing a drop of more than six feet. The comparison of 2021 spring groundwater levels with the 1981-85 period average indicates that 59 percent of the wells observed have dropped, with 36 percent declining by up to five feet.

The observed declines appear to be evenly distributed across Kearney, Phelps and Gosper counties, except for the area around Elwood Reservoir where increases of three feet or more over the past ten years have occurred.

- The board approved a purchase requisition for engineering work on replacement of a county road bridge south of Cozad for \$47,264. The bridge replacement is a cooperative effort among the State of Nebraska, Dawson County and Central, with the state providing 80 percent and Central providing 20 percent of the funds for the project.
- The directors approved the transfer of water rights from 14 irrigation customer requests consisting of a total of 528.3 acres along the Phelps and E-65 canals.
- Lake McConaughy’s elevation as of June 7 was 3,250.8 feet above mean sea level (1.34 million acre-feet or 77 percent of capacity). Inflows were averaging about 750 cubic feet per second (cfs), while releases were around 800 cfs. Water levels are expected to begin falling as releases for irrigation deliveries increase over the next few weeks with the onset of hot, dry weather. In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service intends to release water from the Environmental Account in Lake McConaughy through the month of June.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 7, 2021

Contact: Jeff Buettner
Gov’t. & Public Relations
Manager
Office: (308) 995-8601
E-mail: jbuettner@cnppid.com

###