



**TO:** PRRIP WATER ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
**FROM:** PRRIP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S OFFICE  
**SUBJECT:** WAP LEASING AND RECHARGE PROJECT UPDATES  
**DATE:** MAY 1, 2020

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This document provides a summary of recent activities related to Program water leasing and recharge projects. Unless otherwise specified, reports are based on invoices, data files, or other information provided by the districts or letters from Nebraska DNR confirming credits to the Lake McConaughy EA.

### **CPNRD Groundwater Recharge and Surface Water Lease Projects**

Thirty Mile, Cozad, and Orchard-Alfalfa canals

- **Groundwater Recharge**
  - Thirty Mile Canal<sup>1</sup> started diverting excess flows for recharge on April 17.
  - Orchard-Alfalfa<sup>2</sup> started diverting excess flows for recharge on April 22.
  - Net recharge (measured diversions minus measured surface returns/spills) to be billed at \$32.87/AF in 2020.
  - Score analysis for the CPNRD recharge project is in progress. The Scoring Subcommittee met by conference call on April 21 to review and discuss preliminary results.
- **Surface Water Lease**
  - Anticipate implementation of the pilot exchange program again for 2020, with surface water to be leased at \$90/AF, specific volume TBD.

### **NPPD Groundwater Recharge and Surface Water Lease Projects**

Gothenburg and Dawson County canals

- **Groundwater Recharge**
  - Gothenburg did not make spring recharge diversions for PRRIP.
  - Dawson County<sup>3</sup> diverted excess flows for Program recharge from April 5 to April 23.
  - Net recharge (measured diversions minus measured surface returns/spills) to be billed at \$32.87/AF in 2020.
  - Score analysis for the NPPD recharge project is in progress. The Scoring Subcommittee met by conference call on April 21 to review and discuss preliminary results.
- **Surface Water Lease**
  - Anticipate implementation of the pilot exchange program again for 2020, with surface water to be leased at \$90/AF for 3,306 AF.

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<sup>1</sup> Thirty Mile Canal: <https://nednr.nebraska.gov/realtime/Stations/Details/00141000>

<sup>2</sup> Orchard-Alfalfa Canal: <https://nednr.nebraska.gov/realtime/Stations/Details/00117000>

<sup>3</sup> Dawson County Canal: <https://nednr.nebraska.gov/realtime/Stations/Details/00037000>

**CNPPID Groundwater Recharge and Irrigator Lease**

Phelps County Canal, Elwood Reservoir, and Cottonwood Ranch

- **Groundwater Recharge**
  - Phelps: Monitoring well levels dropped below thresholds in March. Recharge diversions of 910.4 AF between March 19 and April 14. Recharge to be billed at \$32.87/AF in 2020.
  - Cook Recapture Well: Pumped 11,949,600 gallons (36.67 AF) during target flow shortages between February 21 and March 4.
  - Elwood: No winter or early spring recharge diversions. Seepage issues that emerged at Elwood Reservoir in fall 2019 are being studied to ensure safe project operations. Future project diversions for recharge are not expected until at least fall 2020.
- **Irrigator Lease**
  - 3,018 acres enrolled for 2020 at a unit cost of \$220/acre, with expected yield of 2,263.5 AF.

**Cottonwood Ranch Broad-Scale Recharge**

- Construction of the broad-scale recharge project was completed in late 2019 and final payment was made in early 2020. Total design and construction administration costs were \$589,300 and total construction costs were \$4,907,700 (rounded to nearest \$100). Total costs were \$5,497,000.
- First fill diversions will begin during mid to late summer in 2020, after vegetation has established on the swales and the berms. Plan to fill the project incrementally beginning in the summer and continuing through the end of the year.
- Maintenance and preparation activities (minimal earthwork near outlet, instrumentation, etc.) are currently taking place.
- Deliveries to be billed at \$26.53/AF in 2020 but no cash payment is needed until delivery costs exceed capital design and construction costs of delivery pipeline (approximately \$1 million, which was paid for by PRRIP but is being “bought back” by CNPPID).

**Pathfinder Reservoir**

- On April 15, the WWDO notified that Program and USFWS that the full 9,600 AF is anticipated to be available for 2020. The Program pays \$65/AF for this water. The base release of 4,800 AF was effectively pre-paid as a result of payment made in 2019 for water that was later declined because of the high volume already in the Lake McConaughy EA.