

# **NEWS RELEASE**

**Nebraska Department of Natural Resources**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Water Diverted from River for Flood Mitigation and Aquifer Recharge**

Lincoln, Nebraska – The Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, local natural resources districts, and irrigation districts in the Platte River Basin have taken steps to divert floodwaters out of the river as they moved into Nebraska from Colorado. These efforts consisted of developing agreements and coordinating the timing of the diversions of this flow in an attempt to attenuate the peak flood flows. The diversion of these floodwaters will have the added benefit of recharging the aquifer as these waters seep into the ground beneath the canals and lakes along the South Platte, North Platte, and Platte Rivers.

The flows on the South Platte River measured at the Colorado stateline peaked at 21,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) on September 18. While flows are slowly receding, they are expected to remain elevated for several weeks. The diversions will continue as long as these excess flows are available in order to maximize the aquifer recharge benefits. These groundwater recharge benefits will be realized in both the Platte and Republican River Basins as this groundwater slowly percolates through the ground into these rivers and their tributaries over time.

These diversion projects were set up in a very short time frame as Nebraska braced for the large flows expected after the devastating floods in Colorado. The Director of the Department of Natural Resources, Brian Dunnigan, said “the expeditious work by all parties in developing and implementing these agreements is a wonderful demonstration of what can be achieved when all parties are able to work in close collaboration toward the same goal.” This effort is similar to the diversion of flood waters carried out along the Platte River in 2011 by the Department and the local natural resources districts and irrigation districts, which also provided significant flood mitigation and aquifer recharge benefits.

For additional information related to these agreements please contact Jesse Bradley at the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources at (402) 326-8384.

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