

Dwellers along Platte brace for flooding

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
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KOA Campground, other property likely to be affected.

Barry McDiarmid has hope and a prayer that the KOA Campground he owns with wife Gwen will not flood too badly.

But with up to 2,500 cubic feet of water per second (cfs) expected to roar down the Platte this week, McDiarmid knows it might be wishful thinking.

“And there’s nothing I can do about it,” he said.

Nestled along the Platte River south of Gothenburg, the campground has been swamped by water six times since the McDiarmids bought the business in 1983.

Perhaps even more frightening is that more water is expected in June and July.

That’s when above-average snowmelt from the eastern Colorado Rockies is expected to peak in the South Platte, according to Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District’s Gothenburg division manager Kevin Boyd.

Both the North Platte and South Platte rivers come together and form the Platte River east of the City of North Platte.

Central delivers irrigation water on the south side of the Platte, between North Platte and Minden, and supplemental water from Lake McConaughy which is the district’s main storage reservoir.

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Although additional water has been released down the Platte since March to preserve space for high flows from reservoirs on the North Platte River system, Boyd said higher volumes are planned for this week—700 cfs Wednesday (today), Friday, Sunday and between 200 to 500 cfs next Tuesday.

Boyd said the extra water will most likely cause flooding in the KOA Campground and along the Interstate 80 interchange south of Gothenburg.

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