

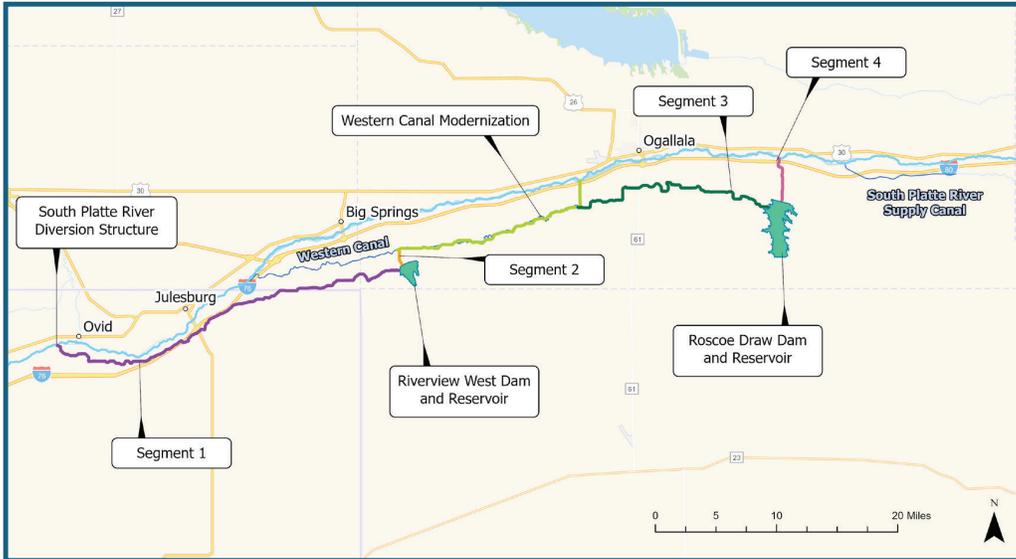
Perkins County Canal & South Platte Update

March 2026

SECURING NEBRASKA'S WATER RESOURCES

Securing Nebraska's water is essential to the state's economic prosperity and long-term welfare. Through the Perkins County Canal and enforcement of the South Platte Compact, Nebraska is actively protecting the environmental health of the Platte River Basin and advancing its full entitlement to river flows under the Compact.

PROPOSED PERKINS COUNTY CANAL & RESERVOIR ELEMENTS



RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The \$628 million investment in the Perkins County Canal and associated water storage reservoirs will generate more than three times that amount in statewide benefits.

Cost



Benefits



Source: LB1012 Report on DWEE website (Zanjero Analysis).

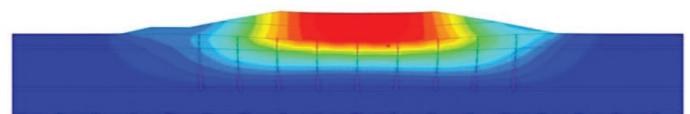
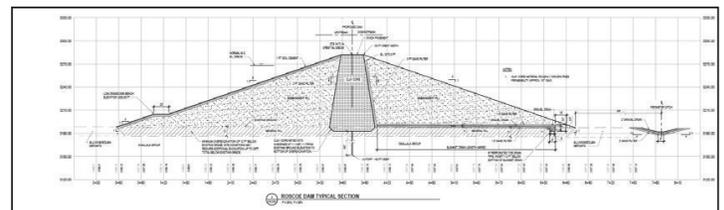


Soil samples are taken at reservoir sites in March 2025.

PROGRESS UPDATE: AHEAD OF SCHEDULE

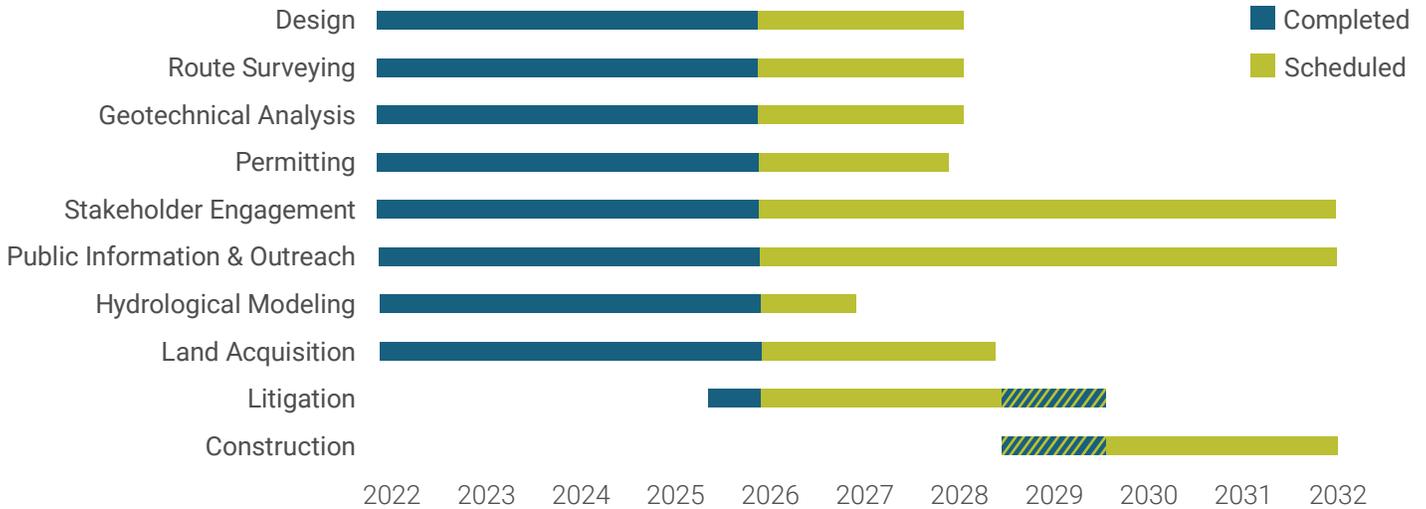
Authorized by the Unicameral in 2022, substantial work has been completed on the Perkins County Canal project. A cohesive team of some of the most well-respected engineering and water resources specialists in the country are working on the project.

- **DESIGN:** Plans have been developed for four new canal segments, two new dams and reservoirs, 33 drop structures, 19 private crossings, 36 public road crossings, utility crossings, and other features.
- **SURVEYING:** Multiple canal routes have been surveyed – including potential use of the Western Canal – along with more than half a dozen potential reservoir sites, crossings, staging sites, and other infrastructure.
- **GEOTECHNICAL ANALYSIS:** Soil investigations have been conducted, along with site drillings for the Roscoe Draw and Riverview West Reservoir sites.
- **PERMITTING:** A 404 permit application was submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, wetland delineations were completed, an official public meeting was held, and initial work has been conducted for state permitting.
- **HYDROLOGICAL MODELING:** Modeling was conducted using historical hydrology, streamflow gains/losses, and canal and reservoir operations for the project.
- **STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT:** Three Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) for operational and management guidelines were signed with Central Platte NRD, Nebraska Public Power District, and Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District. Additional NRDs, public power and irrigation districts, municipalities, and others have been consulted.
- **LAND ACQUISITION:** Colorado property has been purchased near the state line, landowner meetings were held in Big Springs, and land option and purchase offers were extended to Colorado landowners. Discussions with Nebraska landowners are continuing.



MOMENTUM MATTERS: TRACKING CANAL SUCCESS

The Perkins County Canal project is moving forward and currently ahead of schedule, with major milestones completed or underway including design, permitting, land acquisition and public engagement.

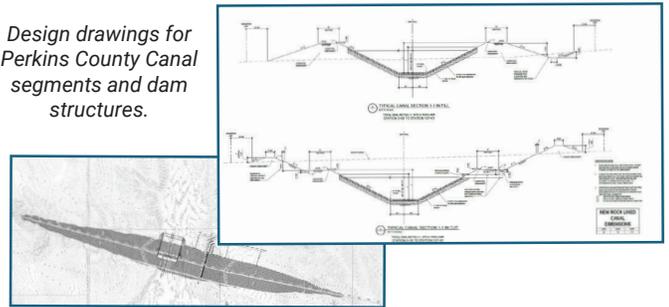


PERKINS COUNTY CANAL: THE BENEFITS OF ACTION

Nebraska is currently missing out on 500 cfs of non-irrigation season water that the Compact entitles to the state once the canal is built. Maintaining momentum is critical and will protect Nebraska against future Colorado development. Benefits and protections provided by timely completion of the canal include:

- **Irrigation Supplies:** Increased reliability of irrigation water.
- **Minimized Dry River Periods:** The project will help ensure higher South Platte River flows in Nebraska year-round.
- **Agricultural Profitability:** Protecting water supplies for irrigation will directly benefit Nebraska's No. 1 industry.
- **Enhancing Municipal Water Supplies:** Greater reliability of drinking water in Lincoln, Omaha, and other communities.
- **Energy Reliability:** Cooling water for Nebraska's largest power plant, NPPD's Gerald Gentleman Station, will be maintained. Water flow for hydroelectric power generation will be protected.
- **Economic & Community Benefits:** Over-allocated regions in Nebraska will avoid stricter water regulations, fostering production and development. Water supplies in the North Platte River Basin will also benefit, enhancing recreational opportunities at Lake McConaughy.
- **Wildlife & Ecosystems:** Protection of water flows helps wildlife habitats.

Design drawings for Perkins County Canal segments and dam structures.



Standing Up for our Water

Nebraska filed suit against the State of Colorado on July 16, 2025, arguing that Colorado has overused South Platte waters in the irrigation season and is obstructing Nebraska's efforts to build the Perkins County Canal. A decision is expected from the U.S. Supreme Court this spring, which will determine the next steps in litigation.

Nebraska's legal actions underscore the state's commitment to enforcing the South Platte Compact and advancing the Perkins County Canal. Nebraska is serious about securing its water future!

STAY INFORMED

As the Perkins County Canal project continues, additional informational meetings will be held, and you can access information at any time on the project website. You can also access the most current information at any time on the project website.



MORE INFORMATION

<https://dnr.nebraska.gov/perkins-county-canal>

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