

**By Jan Rahn**

*Managing Editor*

It has been a hot, dry summer, without the promise of much relief in sight.

Lake McConaughy has provided recreational thrills for campers, boaters, jet skiers and water skiers, however, this Labor Day weekend, there will be fewer ways to access the water.

In mid August, another concrete boat ramp was taken out of commission, leaving only three access ramps open to the public.

When the lake is high, there are eight that are usable, now it's down to the ones at Martin Bay, Lemoyne and Divers Bay.

The lake has been drawn down all summer because of the drought and required irrigation releases. As of just under two weeks ago, the lake's elevation was at approximately 58.4 percent of its capacity.

A fishery biologist for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission said once irrigation releases slow down, the lake will slowly gain during the winter months.

Launching of boats is available at the beach at Lakeview beach and at North Shore (accessible only by four-wheel drive vehicles).

The lake hit a record low in 2004.