

Swine research operation move to Mead underway

Phase III of a plan to move UNL's swine research operation to the Mead Field Laboratory is underway and expected to be completed on schedule, according to Harley Schrader, UNL physical plant director.

The NU Board of Regents approved new low bids Friday on the project, which was delayed when initial bids were too high.

Schrader said the initial bids totaled \$322,335, 79 percent higher than NU's \$180,000 estimate.

Bids were renegotiated with contractors to reduce costs by modifying the construction plans. Schrader said the

renegotiated bids for general, mechanical and electrical work now total \$189,073, compared with an approved budget of \$201,480.

The modifications include reducing the number of buildings from six to four and using more efficient materials and building methods, Schrader said.

The bids were renegotiated instead of relet because foundation and concrete work must begin before the ground freezes, Schrader said, adding that delay could postpone building until spring.

The work now is underway, Schrader said, and is expected to be completed by the July deadline.

The relocation is part of a general exodus of livestock from East Campus, according to Irvin Omtvedt, animal science department chairman.

He said Lincoln has grown around the old swine center at 75th and Adams Streets, ruling out future expansion at that site.

"People don't like to have a pig in their backyard," he said.

It will not prove as convenient to have the livestock at Mead, he said, adding that full-time employees have been hired to care for the animals. Previously, part-time student help had been hired to do routine chores and aid in research, he said.

Also, researchers will not have day-to-day contact with the livestock, he added.

However, because of the improvements, Omtvedt expects the department to do more and better research with fewer animals.

"We will be able to continue to be one of the leading swine research centers in the nation," he said.

Ski areas . . .

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Steamboat has instituted a guarantee snow policy this year, Hanna said. With this policy, if skiing conditions are not fair 72 hours in advance, skiers can call and cancel reservations and have all their money returned, he said.

Crested Butte is the only other ski area which has this policy, Hanna said.

Steamboat currently has six to eight inches of snow on top of the mountain and is expecting more snow this week, Hanna said. There is a storm front moving in from Washington which is expected to hit the Steamboat Springs area by Friday, he said.

"Steamboat Springs traditionally doesn't get a lot of early snow," Hanna said. "However, all the signs we have seen look positive for a good winter."

Hanna said summer predictions of a winter with little snow may be diminishing.

"The snow predictions depend on who you talk to," Hanna said. "I have seen reports that have said we would have normal to above normal snow falls. There is a meteorologist in Boulder that says this dry spell will last for another year."

"I also read a survey from a ski manufacturer, who is interested in how much snow there is going to be so they know how many pairs of skis to make, that said it should be a good year for skiing."

Ski trips up

Ronald Thomas, sales manager for Bock Travel in Omaha, said reservations for ski trips through his agency are up this year.

Thomas said a trip his agency has planned to Steamboat Jan. 9-15, already is filled. However, a Thanksgiving trip to the Summit area, Copper Mountain and A-Basin had only 16 reservations by Tuesday, he said.

"Last year this trip was filled by this time," Thomas said. "However, they had a rotten year for skiing. This year I think people are just sitting back, waiting to see how things develop."

So, if the books are getting to be too much for you, grab a drumstick and your skis, and take off for the slopes.

Other ski area opening dates:

- Nov. 19: A-Basin, Pikes Peak and Winter Park.
- Nov. 24: Aspen Highlands, Aspen Mountain, Buttermilk, Snowmass, Breckenridge, Ski Cooper, Copper Mountain, Hidden Valley, Ski Idlewild, Powderhorn and Pelluride.
- Nov. 25: Sunlight
- Nov. 30: Ski Broadmoor
- Sometime in November: Crested Butte, Monarch, Purgatory and Wolf Creek.
- Dec. 1: Arapahoe East and Conquistador
- Dec. 3: Keystone
- Opening in early December: Geneva Basin.

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