

Dam Repair / Reconstruction / Removal

2008 STATE APPROPRIATION REQUEST: \$3,000,000

AGENCY PROJECT PRIORITY: 1 of 28

PROJECT LOCATION:

Project At A Glance

- ◆ Repair or reconstruct deteriorating dams.
- ◆ Remove or modify unsafe or obsolete river dams.
- ◆ Respond to emergencies at public dams.

Project Description

This request is for \$3 million to prepare design plans and specifications for rehabilitation of the high hazard Lake Bronson Dam in Kittson County, construct several dam safety projects at the top of the statewide priority list, and respond to dam safety emergencies.

Minnesota’s public dams infrastructure includes over 800 dams owned by the state, counties, cities, and watershed districts. Most of these public dams are over 50 years old and require ongoing repairs to maintain their structural integrity and prevent public safety hazards. Emergency repairs must be made when an imminent dam failure threatens public safety or an actual dam failure damages property. About ten percent of Dam Safety Program capital budget appropriations are generally reserved for emergencies. Any emergency funds remaining at the end of the two-year bonding cycle are used on high priority projects.

M.S. 103G.511 provides for matching grants to local governments for dam repair or reconstruction, and M.S. 103G.515, subd. 5, allows the state to pay the entire cost of removing hazardous dams under certain circumstances. Funding would be used to address emergencies and implement the highest priority projects on the current statewide dam project priority list prepared pursuant to M.S. 103G.511, subd. 12. Project priorities are subject to change based on results of dam safety inspections, readiness of local project sponsors, and other factors.

The top 14 projects on the statewide dam safety projects priority list as of June 1, 2007, are shown in the following table. The requested \$3 million would provide \$2.7 million for these priority dam safety projects and \$300,000 for emergencies.

Cost Project	Owner /County	Project Type	Primary Needs	Estimated State Cost (1000's)
1. Lake Bronson	DNR /Kittson	Engineering	safety/maintain lake	\$400
2. King’s Mill	County /Rice	Engineering	safety/maintain flood control	\$100
3. Clayton Lake	DNR /Pine	Repair	safety/historic preservation	\$350
4. Windom	City /Cottonwood	Remove	safety/river restoration	\$150
5. Cross Lake	DNR /Pine	Modify	safety/river restoration	\$300
6. Hartley	City /St. Louis	Modify	safety/maintain lake levels	\$250
7. Luverne	City /Rock	Remove	safety/river restoration	\$150
8. Balsam Lake	DNR /Itasca	Repair	safety/maintain lake levels	\$250
9. Pike River	DNR /St. Louis	Engineering	safety/maintain lake levels	\$200
10. Drayton	City /Kittson	Remove	safety/river restoration	\$200

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11. Sunrise (P1)	DNR /Chisago	Modify	safety	\$75
12. Sunrise (P2)	DNR /Chisago	Modify	safety	\$75
13. Sunrise(Kost)	City /Chisago	Modify	safety	\$50
14. Clearwater R.	County /Stearns	Repair	safety	\$150

rehabilitation would not be cost effective or good for the environment. Low-head river dams, like the Cross Lake Dam in Pine County where a kayaker drowned in April 2005, need to be modified to eliminate their dangerous "drowning machine" currents. Removal and modification of river dams is a specific goal in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR's) *Strategic Conservation Agenda*.

Consistent, long-term funding of at least \$3 million per biennium is necessary to maintain public dams and to remove dams that are obsolete or become safety hazards. DNR Waters' general operating budget does not include funding for dam safety projects.

Impact on Agency Operating Budgets (Facilities Notes)

None.

Previous Appropriations for this Project

L2006, Ch. 258	Bond	\$2,250,000
L2005, Ch. 20	Bond	2,000,000
L2003, Ch. 128	Bond	1,050,000
L2002, Ch. 393	Bond	1,800,000
L2000, Ch. 492	Bond	1,200,000

Other Considerations

This request is part of an ongoing Dam Safety Program to manage Minnesota's public dam infrastructure. Dams maintain water levels on most of our recreational lakes, providing significant recreation, tourism, and economic benefits. For example, Mille Lacs, Minnetonka, and Ottertail Lakes all depend on dams to maintain water levels and surrounding property values.

Making needed repairs limits the potential liability of the DNR and local government units that own dams; protects the public safety; and saves money by maintaining existing infrastructure assets.

This program also includes the removal or modification of hazardous or obsolete dams that no longer provide significant public benefits and whose

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Governor's Recommendations