

Latest Dam Safety News – ASDSO Resource Center, 9/1/2009

Blast at Siberian hydro dam prompts closer look at U.S. dam safety; Corps implements new levee policy related to global sea rise; Wisconsin legislature puts \$4 million for dam repairs into state budget; Panel begins plotting strategy to address Utah canal safety; Petitions stall LOW dam work; Planned dam in Washington State would flood Canadian valley; Kentucky Utilities responds to concerns over Dix Dam; Massachusetts DCR, owner at odds over responsibility for dam repairs; MI Dam safety orders draining of Holiday Lake; NC to more closely monitor coal-ash dams; New study doubles estimated cost of raising dam at Hagg Lake, OR; Proposed drainage fee hike to aid Texas levees; Repairs begin on Howard Hanson Dam; Consol gets OK to expand coal slurry dam in West Virginia; Kaloko Dam suits may be settled soon; more...

National News

FEMA Clarifies Levee Policy. [FEMA Press Release], 08/06/2009

FEMA has amended its policy on "Rehabilitation Assistance for Levees and Other Flood Control Works" to allow FEMA to provide financial assistance to state and local governments for eligible work associated with debris removal and flood fighting activities. This action is retroactive to 2/25/09, when the revised policy went into effect. The intent of the policy revision was to provide guidance on what types of facilities and activities related to levees and flood control works are eligible for FEMA assistance in emergencies and disasters. FEMA will continue to work with the USACE to address these issues, and will issue a further revised version of the policy once this process is finalized. The final policy will be coordinated with the USACE, the NRCS and other stakeholders.
<http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=49245>

Old American Dams Quietly Become a Multibillion-Dollar Threat. Wired News, 08/25/2009

Incident at Siberian hydro dam prompts closer look at U.S. dam safety.
<http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2009/08/agingdams/>

USA: Over Two Thousand Dams Near Population Centers Need Repair. USA Today, 08/26/2009

An overview of national dam safety needs, based on 2008 state dam safety program statistics released by ASDSO.
<http://nextbigfuture.com/2009/08/usa-over-two-thousand-dams-near.html>

Aging Dams Prompt Call for Federal Bailout. New American, 08/27/2009

Writer skeptical of the need for federal assistance for dam and levee upgrades and repairs; questions article published in Wired.
<http://www.thenewamerican.com/index.php/tech-mainmenu-30/environment/1752>

US hydroelectric plants OK but thousands of dams in disrepair; Taim Sauk rebuild delayed. SNL Interactive, 08/19/2009

<http://www.snl.com/InteractiveX/article.aspx?CDID=A-9939410-12125&KPLT=2>

Delta levee projects must now prepare for rising sea level. Sacramento Bee, 09/01/2009

New USACE stand-alone policy authored by scientists from NOAA and USGS requires that projects under Corps jurisdiction be designed with higher sea levels in mind; the policy sets forth a procedure engineers must follow to estimate low, medium and high sea level projections. Officials will use those estimates to decide how to build the project. The Corps' former policy, written in 1986 and updated in 2000, was included within a much larger document and largely unheeded. A sea level monitor at the Golden Gate Bridge has recorded a sea level increase of about 2 cm per decade during the 1900s. In 2007, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimated the upper range of sea level rise at about 2 feet by 2100, not including the effect of melting ice sheets on Greenland and Antarctica.

In consideration of this uncertainty, California scientists last year urged officials to plan for 4.5 feet of sea level rise.
<http://www.sacbee.com/topstories/story/2149351.html>

Arkansas

Dam listed on National Historic Register. Salem News, 08/05/2009

Mammoth Spring Dam placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The dam is the only gravity dam in Arkansas that was used to create electricity. It was built in the mid-1800s by stacking six limestone slabs on a solid rock base.
<http://www.areawideneews.com/story/1560075.html>

California

Test result triggers safety inspection of Warm Springs Dam. Santa Rosa Press Democrat, 07/28/2009

Investigations underway after the water level in a testing well rose 14 feet in a week. There is no indication of

excessive seepage; the well may have tapped into groundwater.
<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/20090728/ARTICLES/907289979/1350?Title=Dam-gets-safety-inspection->

Lake Perris's recreational future on shaky footing. Riverside Press Enterprise, 08/23/2009
Rehabilitation of seismically weakened Lake Perris dam will cost an estimated \$360 million; stakeholders disagree on how costs should be covered. The project's first phase is scheduled to begin in January 2011.
http://www.pe.com/localnews/sbcounty/stories/PE_News_Local_S_perris24.4417c35.html

USBR awards US\$2M dam safety contract. International Water Power and Dam Construction Newsletter, 08/25/2009
USBR awards contract to Alpine Diversified for dam safety modifications at Dikes 4 and 6 at Folsom Reservoir in California.
<http://www.waterpowermagazine.com/story.asp?sectioncode=130&storyCode=2053949>

Canada

A flood of fears over U.S. dam plans in Shanker's Bend; Valuable Canadian wildlife habitats, aboriginal and private lands could all be at risk. Vancouver Sun, 08/08/2009
The valley of the Similkameen River in southern B.C. would be flooded if a Washington state public utility district proceeds with a proposed dam at Shanker's Bend.
<http://www.vancouversun.com/entertainment/flood+fears+over+plans+Shanker+Bend/1871520/story.html>

City loses dam road access. Castlegar News, 08/25/2009
BC Hydro to close Hugh Keenleyside Dam road as of Sept. 14 as part of an initiative to enhance safety and security at all of its facilities.
http://www.bclocalnews.com/kootenay_rookies/castlegarnews/news/54862222.html

Witnesses recount horror at Bala Falls drowning. Bracebridge Examiner, 08/12/2009
<http://www.gravenhurstbanner.com/article/142927>

Hawaii

Dam suits may be settled soon. Honolulu Advertiser, 08/11/2009
A settlement of eight lawsuits relating to the 2006 Kaloko Dam breach may be at hand; hearing expected to take place Sept. 8.
<http://www.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/20090811/NEWS0102/908110324/Dam+suits+may+be+settled+soon>

Kentucky

Death calls into question low-head dam safety. Georgetown News-Graphic, 08/03/2009
13-year-old boy drowned after falling from low-head dam at Great Crossing.
<http://www.georgetownnews.com/articles/2009/08/03/news/doc4a7775ef5855f284966711.txt>

Small dams among most dangerous. Morehead News, 08/07/2009
Recent drowning at Great Crossings Dam on North Elkhorn Creek underscores low-head dam dangers.
http://www.themoreheadnews.com/localsports/local_story_219125647.html

Reply from KU regarding Dix Dam [blog]. State Journal - Frankfort, 08/10/2009
In reply to question regarding repairs to 287'-high Dix Dam, a Kentucky Utilities representative notes that KU does weekly visual inspections of the dam and that it plans to retain experts next year to conduct an underwater inspection of the 84-year-old rockfill structure.
http://www.state-journal.com/news/simple_article/4645164

Maine

Canton dam fix may be permanent. Lewiston Sun Journal, 07/10/2009
Work on the temporary dam on Whitney Brook in Canton is holding well and the dam might be classified as permanent. The Dam Core Committee studying remedies for the failed dam is concerned that taking out the rocks and boulders used to fix the dam breach would cause environmental damage downstream. The dam regulates the water level in Lake Anasagunticook. The town took ownership last summer after the owner failed to make state-ordered repairs.
<http://www.sunjournal.com/content/rumcantsel0710-0>

Maine/New Hampshire

Broken Bridge Pond Dam to be replaced. Sun Journal, 08/12/2009
American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding will be used for spillway replacement at Broken Bridge Pond in ME and Province Pond and Beaver Pond dams in NH.

<http://www.sunjournal.com/node/104320/>

Massachusetts

Manchaug Pond Dam at issue. Telegram & Gazette, 07/25/2009

The Manchaug Pond Dam is at the center of a controversy over dam safety versus wetlands protection.

<http://www.telegram.com/article/20090725/NEWS/907250537/1003/NEWS03>

Past agreement with Plymouth Rubber at the heart of current Reservoir dam dispute. Canton Citizen, 08/31/2009

Despite mounting pressure from both the Board of Selectmen and the state DCR to make immediate repairs to Reservoir Pond Dam, representatives of the Napleton Company contend that the repairs are not their responsibility, according to a 1955 ruling that freed the former dam owner of maintenance obligations. The company has spent over \$20,000 taking down the the level of the pond and carrying out an engineering study, which determined that the main dam was not never engineered properly. Seepage through the auxiliary spillway has caused sinkholes to form in a sidewalk and below the spillway. Canton selectmen announced last week that the town will make temporary repairs to the dam while continuing to press Napleton for compliance.

http://www.cantoncitizenonline.com/082709/plymouth_rubber.htm

Michigan

Holiday Lake Dam in jeopardy, water drained. Muskegon Chronicle, 08/04/2009

Privately owned 100-acre lake being drained by state emergency order.

http://www.mlive.com/news/muskegon/index.ssf/2009/08/holiday_lake_dam_in_jeopardy_w.html

Talk with Rosencrans: [Dams]. Ann Arbor Chronicle, 08/25/2009

<http://annarborchronicle.com/2009/08/25/talk-with-rosencrans-dams-movies-jobs/>

MDEQ to Ann Arbor: Close Argo Millrace; Deadline for closure and dewatering is Nov. 1. Ann Arbor Chronicle, 08/26/2009

MDEQ's order to close the millrace at Argo Dam comes 5 years after the State sent a letter to the city of Ann Arbor about toe drains in the earthen berm next to the dam. Article describes background and available options.

<http://annarborchronicle.com/2009/08/26/mdeq-to-ann-arbor-close-argo-millrace/>

Missouri

Bagnell should survive disasters. KRCG 13, 08/17/2009

http://www.connectmidmissouri.com/news/news_story.aspx?id=338277

Bagnell plans for emergencies. KRCG 13, 08/18/2009

http://www.connectmidmissouri.com/news/news_story.aspx?id=338820

North Carolina

Gov. Perdue Signs Bill Establishing Stricter Safety Oversight of Coal Ash Ponds; Impoundments would fall under Dam Safety Act. [Press Release: NC Governor's Office], 07/31/2009

Gov. Perdue today signed Senate Bill 1004, increasing the safety oversight of coal ash ponds in North Carolina. The legislation subjects dams that create coal ash ponds to direct inspection by the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

<http://www.governor.state.nc.us/NewsItems/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?newsItemID=546>

State will more closely monitor coal-ash dams. The Green Scene, 08/12/2009

New state regulations will give coal-ash dams a closer look while encouraging utilities to replace older coal-fired plants with natural gas units.

http://www.mountainx.com/features/2009/081209the_green_scene

Oregon

Report: Raising Hagg Lake best option; Dam upgrade would cost millions, but doing nothing "not an option". Forest Grove News-Times, 08/05/2009

Tualatin Basin Water Supply Partnership's "Dam Raise Appraisal Study" concluded that the reservoir behind Scoggins Dam can be developed to produce 50,000 acre-feet of new water for the region. Water needs in the region are expected to double in the next 45 years.

New study doubles estimated cost of raising dam at Hagg Lake. The Oregonian, 08/05/2009

Raising the Scroggins Dam at Henry Hagg Lake could cost \$926 million, nearly twice the amount previously estimated. Seismic upgrades on the current dam - with no increase in its height - would cost \$389 million, 85% of which would be paid by the federal government. Current partners would pay \$58 million, in proportion to their water

rights. USBR owns the dam.

http://www.oregonlive.com/washingtoncounty/index.ssf/2009/08/new_study_doubles_estimated_co.html

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania American Water Earns Honor From National Dam Safety Organization. PR Newswire, 08/24/2009
<http://news.prnewswire.com/DisplayReleaseContent.aspx?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/08-24-2009/0005081976&EDATE=>

Levee cost issue unresolved. Leader-Vindicator (New Bethlehem), 08/31/2009

Reynoldsville Borough, the state DEP and state Rep. Sam Smith discuss certification requirement for 3200'-long Sandy Lick and 2135'-long Solider levees. The cost to verify certification is estimated at \$250,000 per half mile; total certification costs could exceed \$500,000. With no grant money available, the borough will have to come up with the money on its own.

http://www.leader-vindicator.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=20364837&BRD=2758&PAG=461&dept_id=572984&rfi=6

Russia

62 still missing after blast at Russian plant. CNN, 08/18/2009

A blast that occurred after water pipes burst during repair work killed 12 workers at the Sayano-Shushenskaya hydroelectric plant in southern Siberia. The plant's dam was not damaged, but the accident caused a three-mile oil slick in the Yenisei River.

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/europe/08/18/russia.plant.explosion/>

Fatalities at Sayano-Shushenskaya reach 69, RusHydro sees 3-yr rebuild. International Water Power and Dam Construction Newsletter, 08/25/2009

Six more workers remain missing following August 17th explosion at Sayano-Shushenskaya hydroelectric plant. No explanation has yet been given for the cause of the explosion except that it was hydraulic-related and terrorism has been ruled out.

<http://www.waterpowermagazine.com/story.asp?sectioncode=130&storyCode=2053951>

Tennessee

TVA inspector general blasts utility "culture" for ash failures. Chattanooga Times Free Press, 07/29/2009

<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2009/jul/29/tva-inspector-general-blasts-utility-culture-for/>

Texas

Proposed drainage fee hike to aid Trinity levees. Dallas Morning News, 08/19/2009

Proposed hikes in Dallas residents' water bills will be used to pay for increased maintenance on Trinity River levees.

http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/localnews/stories/DN-trinity_19met.ART.State.Edition1.4c3b4ff.html

Utah

Logan City had often worked on failed canal. Salt Lake Tribune, 08/08/2009

Documents show leaks were found, and municipal workers repaired them. State geologists say leakage on the canal was just one of many potential causes for a landslide and canal collapse that claimed three lives July 11.

http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_13018927?source=rss

Panel begins plotting strategy to address canal safety. Salt Lake Tribune, 08/10/2009

Executive Water Task Force examines issues raised following the July 11 collapse of the Northern & Logan Canal in Logan, a landslide that killed a woman and her two children.

http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_13032851

Virginia

LOW dam plans are on schedule; Dam project at LOW still needs funding. Fredericksburg Free Lance-Star, 08/02/2009

After 8 years of negotiations with the state, the Lake of the Woods Association is on schedule to construct a new spillway on its main lake. Funding for the \$6 million project is uncertain; a \$1 million state grant is on hold until the construction contract is signed; signing will not take place until the balance of the financing is secured.

<http://fredericksburg.com/News/FLS/2009/082009/08022009/483829>

Assessing LOW dam repair costs. Orange County Review, 08/27/2009

State officials have told the Lake of the Woods Association their dam needs to be able to accommodate 37 inches of rainfall in a 24-hour period and have given LOW a deadline of 1/31/2011 for completion of spillway upgrades.

Currently, the dam can accommodate approximately 22 inches of rain within a 24-hour span. The 1,400'-long dam

impounds a 500-acre lake. According to state studies, nine houses are in the dambreak inundation zone; a LOW representative said that only two homes are "of great concern." The proposed plan is to build a 190-foot wide concrete spillway in addition to the current spillway. At the top of the new spillway will be a wide metal gate with a 4 ½-foot hydraulic chute.

http://www2.orangenews.com/ocn/news/local/article/assessing_low_dam_repair_costs/44565/

Petitions stall vote on LOW dam work. Fredericksburg Free Lance-Star, 08/31/2009

An eleventh-hour effort by a Lake of the Woods' resident has delayed approval of the construction contract for work on the subdivision's largest dam. The resident, with the assistance of state Sen. Edd Houck, will meet with Gov. Tim Kaine's chief of staff on 9/1 to present more than 1,000 petitions and more than 100 letters from LOW residents asking that the dam be returned to its Class 2 hazard classification. If Kaine grants the request, LOW would not be required to build a new spillway to meet the state's dam-safety regulations, an undertaking whose cost is now \$6 million. Eight years ago the state raised the hazard classification on the main dam from Class 2 to Class 1. LOW fought the reclassification until January, when it agreed to accept the more stringent hazard classification, which requires building a new spillway, if the state would provide a \$1 million grant to help pay for it. That money would be paid out over the course of construction. The state's deadline for the spillway construction to be complete is Jan. 30, 2011. In order to meet that deadline the construction contract with Faulconer Construction Co. of Charlottesville was expected to be approved at yesterday's board of directors' meeting. In addition to state funding, 4,257 lot owners would help pay for the spillway upgrade.

http://fredericksburg.com/News/FLS/2009/082009/08312009/490414/index_html?page=2

Virginia

Prepared For The Worst: Local Red Cross Holds Disaster Drill At North Fork Middle School. Shenandoah Valley Herald, 08/31/2009

EAP exercise simulates events following breaking of Lake Laura Dam in Basye.

http://www.dnronline.com/svh_details.php?AID=40268&CHID=43

Washington

Tucannon lakes could close if repairs not made. Tri-City Herald (Kennewick, Washington), 07/28/2009

Some of the Tucannon lakes, a popular fishing area near Dayton, could be lost to recreational use because the state needs to repair their aging dams and dredge decades of accumulated sediment. Officials with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife hope to get \$700,000 approved in the 2010-13 state budget to pay for design of work to improve Rainbow and Spring lakes. But if repairs can't be made, the lakes could be drained.

http://www.tri-cityherald.com/kennewick_pasco_richland/story/660101.html

U.S. Dam Threatens to Flood B.C. Valley; Reservoir would inundate endangered ecosystems, First Nations reserve lands. Epoch Times, 07/30/2009

Okanogan County Public Utility District (PUD) is proposing to build a major dam on the Similkameen River just south of the US-Canadian border.

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/content/view/20315/>

Corps of Engineers Awards Two Recovery Act Funded Dam Safety Projects at Howard Hanson Dam. [USACE Press Release], 08/06/2009

USACE-Seattle District has awarded two projects, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, to improve dam safety at Howard Hanson Dam.

http://www.prweb.com/releases/Corps_of_Engineers/Howard_Hanson_Dam/prweb2721054.htm

Repairs begin on Howard Hanson Dam to protect Green River Valley. Seattle Times, 08/07/2009

USACE's interim repairs to Howard Hanson Dam include building a 450-foot-long, 90- to 170-foot-deep grout curtain to slow the flow of water through the right abutment and drilling a network of vertical and horizontal drains. The work should be mostly completed by Nov. 1; \$9.7 million funding is from economic stimulus dollars. FEMA has suggested that local authorities plan for a possible overtopping of downstream levees and the possibility they will be breached. Because of the high risk the dam and levee system poses to the public, the King County Executive plans to request FEMA to "predeclare" an emergency, paving the way for earlier federal help.

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2009618869_howardhanson07m.html

A flood of fears over U.S. dam plans in Shanker's Bend; Valuable Canadian wildlife habitats, aboriginal and private lands could all be at risk. Vancouver Sun, 08/08/2009

The valley of the Similkameen River in southern B.C. would be flooded if a Washington state public utility district proceeds with a proposed dam at Shanker's Bend.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/entertainment/flood+fears+over+plans+Shanker+Bend/1871520/story.html>

West Virginia

Consol gets OK to expand coal slurry dam in West Virginia. (AP), 07/27/2009

Coal producer Consol Energy has won permission to expand the 2-billion gallon Nolan Run coal slurry impoundment to 3.275 billion gallons; construction may begin in spring or summer 2010.

http://www.sltrib.com/business/ci_12922479

Wisconsin

Buffalo Lake Dam Safety Under Review; Montello Officials, DNR Looking Closer At Dam. WISC Channel 3000, 08/04/2009

Repairs to weakened dike could cost from \$100,000 to \$1 million.

<http://www.channel3000.com/news/20271758/detail.html>

DNR board to try fast-tracking dam repair money. River Towns, 08/13/2009

Wisconsin legislature puts \$4 million for dam repairs into new state budget; \$500,000 already spoken for.