



THE NATIONAL DAM REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Title IV, Section 5006 of PL 114-322, the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN). Amending the National Dam Safety Program Act (33 U.S.C. 467)

What Is the Proposed Dam Rehabilitation Program?

Sec. 5006 of WIIN2016 establishes a grant program to assist local communities to rehabilitate, repair, or remove a high-hazard potential dam before it fails. The program would allow communities to make the preemptive investment into aging infrastructure and in the process make the communities below a dam safer.

Why Do We Need a Dam Rehabilitation Program?

Thirty years ago Congress passed the National Dam Safety Program (NDSP). Because of the success of that program, we now know that more than 50% of dams are over 50 years in age and spread across the country. Many of those dams that now may impact communities where there was once just farmland are now in need of repair and upgrade. This program will provide federal assistance to help ensure our nations dams – and the communities that live below them – are safe.

What Is Dam Rehabilitation?

Just like any form of infrastructure (roads, bridges and water pipes) dams serve an important and sometimes critical function that requires periodic maintenance and rehabilitation. Dams can cause loss of life and property damage should they fail. Rehabilitation is the focus of the national program and is defined in the law as, “repair, replacement, reconstruction, or removal of a dam that is carried out to meet applicable State dam safety and security standards.”

How Does the Program Work?

The dam rehabilitation program is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) which is currently responsible for administering the National Dam Safety Program. The NDSP has an extremely successful track record of locating and identifying the conditions of dam across the country, but until now there has been no comprehensive program to rehabilitate dams. FEMA and the State Dam Safety Programs will determine which dams receive funding.

Can My Community Participate? Eligible Dams

Dams determined to be high-hazard potential by the State Dam Safety Program, have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) approved by the State Dam Safety Program and fail to meet minimum dam safety standards or pose an unacceptable risk to the public are eligible. Excluded dams include: federally-owned dams, licensed hydroelectric dams, and dams built under the authority of the Secretary of Agriculture.

Each state with an established Dam Safety Regulatory Program (currently all states except Alabama) are eligible to receive the funds and distribute them to dam owners/sponsors. The first 1/3 of the total available funding will be equally distributed among participating states. The remaining 2/3 of the funds will be distributed based on need. Nonfederal sponsors (local communities and nonprofit organizations) must contribute at least 35% of the cost of the project and grants are capped at \$7.5 million. For grants over \$1 million qualification based selection (QBS) is required.

How Much Money is Available?

The program is authorized at \$10 million for FY17-18, \$25 million for FY 19, \$40 million for FY 20 and \$60 million for FY 21-26 for a total authorization of \$445 million over ten years.