

DAMS IN DANGER

People At Risk?

Dam Repairs Urgently Needed

Alabama has 108 small upstream dams constructed in the last 39 years. These structures are extremely important to Alabama's rural economy.



Dam Creates Scenic Reservoir For Recreation and Water Reserve

Many of the 108 dams are reaching the end of their 50-year design life. Seventy-one dams are in need of restoration to maintain safe structures and extend their useful life. Twenty of these structures, originally built to protect agricultural lands, now have homes or other structures built downstream. Dam failure could result in flash flooding, loss of life, and millions of dollars in property damage. Rehabilitation of the 71 dams is estimated to cost \$24 million. Local conservation districts have maintained the dams but do not have the funds for major repairs.

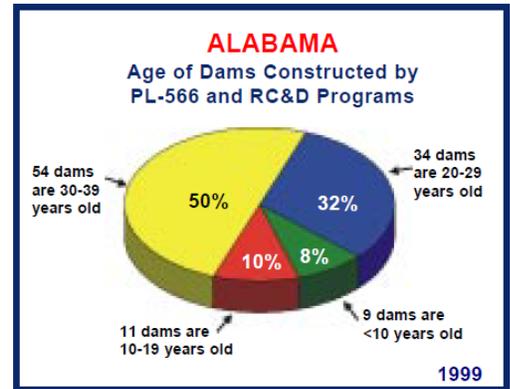


Deteriorating Drainage Gate

Many older dams have structural components with significant damage including deteriorating concrete and severely rusted trash guards and drainage gates. Twenty-one sites have drainage gates which are severely rusted. Most are inoperable which would make draining the impoundment impossible in case of an emergency.

Case Study

Little New River Watershed, in Marion County, is typical of the older watersheds in Alabama. NRCS assisted local sponsors in building three dams for flood control and sediment reduction in 1960. These were built under PL-566 and provide flood and sediment reduction benefits to 1,130 acres plus several roads and bridges. The dams are approaching the end of their 50-year economic life. The dams need repair and restoration of pipe spillway structures to maintain their integrity and function. They also need upgrading to protect downstream improvements built since the dams were constructed. All three sites have older drainage gates; two gates are already inoperable. The county has limited resources and does not have the funds to make repairs and upgrades to the watershed dams.



A Call to Action in Alabama

20	51	\$24 million
dams need to be rebuilt and upgraded to protect life and property in downstream areas	dams need repairs to safeguard municipal water supplies, provide flood control, and protect natural resources	is needed to rehabilitate the dams to protect people and natural resources

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