



EightMile Lake Dam Response

Frequently Asked Questions

(updated by Ecology November 2019)

What is the problem with the dam?

There is no imminent threat. However, a 2017 wildfire that burned near the dam reduced vegetation around the deteriorating dam on Eightmile Lake, leaving the area vulnerable to erosion, flash flooding and possible dam failure that could impact downstream homes and property. The reservoir behind the dam in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness serves as a water source for the Icicle-Peshastin Irrigation Districts (IPID).

The dam is designated as a high hazard dam because of the number of residences downstream of the dam that could be impacted should a catastrophic failure occur.

Chelan County Emergency Management Department worked with the IPID, the USDA Forest Service, National Weather Service, Washington Department of Ecology, Washington Department of Emergency Management and the community to assure all downstream residents were safe during the dam's vulnerable period during spring 2018 runoff.

What's the most current info on dam conditions?

Temporary dam repair was completed in summer 2018. The work included reshaping and armoring the crest of the dam to act as a spillway, which greatly increases the dam's ability to safely pass water. Part of the dam's outlet pipe was replaced as it had partially collapsed and was not passing much water.

IPID, Ecology, and the US Weather Service monitored the dam's performance closely during the 2019 spring runoff to see how well the repairs hold-up. The dam's outlet pipe remained open through the winter to keep storage volume down and increase the dam's capacity to handle rain and snowmelt. The dam performed well and no runoff passed over the dam crest.

The IPID is now working on environmental review and permitting to rebuild the dam. They have developed a few options and will be presenting those to the public and to the permitting agencies for input through the State Environmental Policy Act process. That process will likely result in an Environmental Impact statement for the dam rebuild.

Please monitor Chelan Emergency Management's Facebook Page for the most current updates. Also information is available on the Chelan County Emergency Management website <http://www.co.chelan.wa.us/sheriff/pages/emergency-management?parent=Units>

What should I do if I live downstream from the dam?

Chelan County Emergency Management has gathered as many cell phone numbers, landline phone numbers as possible and entered those into the [AlertSense](#) mass notification system.

To register your information on the AlertSense Chelan County notification system, please go to the following link: <http://public.alertsense.com/SignUp/?regionid=1184>

If you are an Icicle Creek resident or property owner, we ask that you contact the Chelan County Emergency Management Office to register your name and contact information with us. We will be happy to answer any questions concerning this notification. **Call us (509) 667-6863**

How will I be notified through AlertSense?

You will receive a text message and/phone message in an emergency situation. We also have the ability to broadcast a message to any cellular phone within the area as long as the device has service. Further, we will implement door to door contacts using deputies, fire district personnel, and trained volunteers.

What kind of monitoring is occurring at the dam site?

The Department of Ecology has installed two gages to measure the lake level and another streamflow gage below the dam, which will provide real time information about conditions in and around the dam and prompt emergency alert systems. Three rain gages have also been installed to increase monitoring in the area.

What are the conditions of the other six dams located in the Alpine Lake Wilderness?

The Icicle and Peshastin Irrigation Districts own three other dams that drain into Icicle Creek. They are all currently rated as low-hazard dams. Ecology conducted inspections at those dams this summer to assess hazard and condition. Those dams are over 80 years old and show expected signs of deterioration. However, they are not in the same level of disrepair as Eightmile Lake Dam was before the summer repairs.” In addition, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service owns three dams that drain into Icicle Creek. They are low-hazard dams and fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service dam safety program.

What about campgrounds and hiking? Is the Alpine Lakes area open?

Forest Service campgrounds located on the Wenatchee River Ranger District in the Icicle drainage along the #7600 road are closed for the winter season. They will not open until conditions allow in the spring.

Eightmile Lake is part of the Enchantments area permit system, Overnight campers need to obtain a permit in advance to camp overnight from June 15 to October 15. Information about how to obtain a permit is available online at: www.recreation.gov.

Day users are required to obtain a free Wilderness permit available at the trailhead. There are warning signs at the trailhead regarding the motorized equipment located at the dam site and hazards in the burned area. Forest Service Recreation updates can be found here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/okawen/alerts-notice>

Where can I learn more about the dam response online?

For **general information on the dam response**, you may check out the Chelan County Emergency Management website <http://www.co.chelan.wa.us/sheriff/pages/emergency-management?parent=Units> and the Chelan County EM Facebook page.

For information regarding **hiking trails, camping** and the Alpine Lakes Wilderness area, visit the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest webpage:

https://www.fs.usda.gov/recmain/okawen/recreation_and
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/okawen/alerts-notice>

For information related to **dam safety oversight and monitoring** administered by the Washington Department of Ecology, visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Water-supply/Dams>