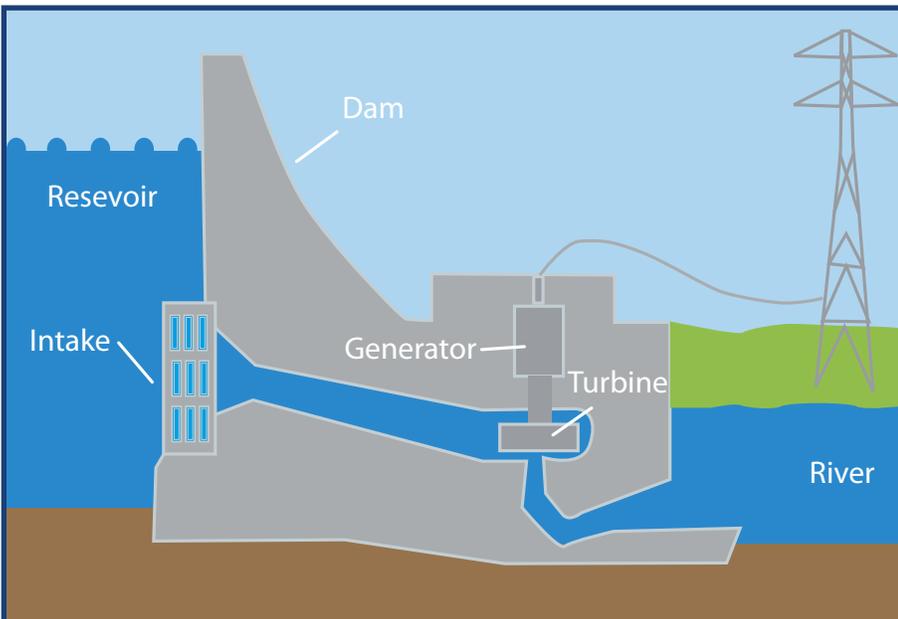


Help us decide the future of the Rapidan Dam



The Rapidan Dam was built over 100 years ago (built in 1910) and has been managed by Blue Earth County for the last 46 years. Blue Earth County recently completed studies that evaluated two options: repair or remove the dam. This decision cannot be made without your help. Learn about the dam below.



WHAT IS A HYDROELECTRIC DAM?

A hydroelectric dam is a system with three parts: a power plant where the electricity is produced, a dam that can be opened or closed to control water flow, and a reservoir where water is stored. The water behind the dam flows through an intake and pushes against blades in a turbine, causing them to turn. This then produces energy.

RAPIDAN DAM FACTS



The dam is over 100 years old with construction being completed in 1910. Blue Earth County has only owned the dam and reservoir for the last 46 years.



The dam makes energy from two turbines that are powered by falling water.



When functioning at full capacity, the dam can produce 23 million kilowatt-hours of clean energy a year. That's enough energy to power 2,000-3,000 residences a year.



High water events in 2010, 2019 and 2020 have caused damage to the dam. The dam has not produced any energy since 2019.



Learn more and share your feedback on the website

blueearthcountymn.gov/RapidanDam

POTENTIAL FUTURES FOR RAPIDAN DAM



The Rapidan Dam is located in Rapidan township on the Blue Earth River. This dam was built over 110 years ago and has been managed by Blue Earth County for the last 46 years. Throughout the years, the dam has regularly experienced flooding—the second-highest flood on record occurring as recently as 2019. These flood events and the toll of time have caused significant damage to the dam’s structure and usability.

Because of this, doing nothing is no longer a long-term solution. Action needs to be taken to address the current condition of the dam. To find a solution for this ongoing problem, Blue Earth County worked with Barr Engineering in 2021 to conduct a study for two potential solutions: repair or remove the dam.

REPAIRING THE DAM

Key Facts

- The dam has not generated power since 2019.
- Returning the dam to working condition would cost an estimated **15 million dollars** and take about 4 years to make repairs.
- Will require ongoing maintenance and inspection costs.
- Will generate a minimal amount of revenue for Blue Earth County each year once repaired.
- Many repairs would need to be made to the structure, including apron, basin, and gate repairs. A large amount of repairs would be needed for the generator as well, including bearings, controls, balancing and hydraulics.

Timeframe: Approximately 4 years

Cost: Estimated 15 million dollars

REMOVING THE DAM

Key Facts

- Removing the dam would cost an estimated 82 million dollars and take approximately 10 years for permitting and removal.
- Also includes re-establishing the river and replacing the County Road 9 bridge south of the dam.
- While this option costs more, it would not require any future maintenance costs.
- Removing the dam would restore the flow of the Blue Earth River for fish and recreational use such as canoeing and kayaking.
- Could be transformed into a destination for horseback riding, multi-use trails, or other activities.

Timeframe: Approximately 10 years

Cost: Estimated 82 million dollars



While a payment plan has not been determined for either option, the county will seek federal and state funding to assist with payment for these improvements and may also require the use of local resources.



We need your feedback!

From April through June 2022, Blue Earth County will be seeking your input on future of the Rapidan Dam. Your feedback is critical so the County Board can make the best decision for the future of the dam. Get involved by visiting the website and taking the survey!

blueearthcountymn.gov/RapidanDam