

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REQUESTING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WITH FIVE-YEAR DAM EVALUATION EXPENSES

The Dam Safety Program is pleased to extend the Inspection Assistance Program for 2025 after a successful 2024!

ELIGIBILITY

- To be eligible for use of an inspection assistance contract, the dam/reservoir must provide clear public benefits. Wildlife habitat without associated public access does not qualify as a public benefit for this program.
- Priority is given to DNRC-regulated high hazard dams with Five-Year Evaluation expenses, as set forth in the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM 36.14).
- DNRC can only pay for expenses related to the Engineer’s Safety Evaluation and Report. Dam owners are responsible for expenses related to the visual inspection and other components of the Operation Permit Application (EAP and O&M manual updates).
- The portion of the work covered by DNRC must be done by contractors who have been pre-qualified through DNRC's procurement process. A list of pre-qualified contractors and their contact information will be distributed separately.
- The limit of billable hours that can be contracted with DNRC has been increased compared to 2024, based on feedback from dam owners and engineers who participated. The new limit depends on the type of dam:

Dam Type	Maximum Billable Hours
Low-Consequence Dam ¹	40
High-Consequence Dam ¹	50
Reservoir System or Flood Control System ²	70

¹According to a 2022 credible risk analysis performed for DNRC, dams with less than 100 population at risk (PAR) during a normal pool failure are classified as low consequence, and dams with greater than 100 PAR during a normal pool failure are classified as high consequence.

²For the purposes of the Inspection Assistance Program, DNRC will treat a *Reservoir System* as one reservoir with multiple dams or dikes. DNRC will also group multiple dams that consist of a *Flood Control System*.

- Low-consequence dams have the option to conduct less rigorous analyses of hydrology, hydraulics, and stability. High-consequence dams must conduct the same rigorous analyses they have historically.
- DNRC shared your consequence category in the 2025 inspection reminder that you received this spring from your regional engineer. We can share this again on request.
- Any costs in excess of these maximums will need to be covered by the dam owner.
- Funding is through a FEMA grant to DNRC and is subject to continuing availability of federal funds.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DAM OWNERS

- To request assistance, submit a letter or an email (email preferred) to the Montana Dam Safety Program Manager:
Brent Zundel, PE, CFM
BZundel@mt.gov
2273 Boot Hill Court, Suite 110
Bozeman, MT 59715
406-556-4508
- In your email or letter, submit:
 - Description of public benefits (details below)
 - Name of engineer/firm that you plan to work with to conduct the Five-Year Visual Inspection
 - Date(s) of the visual inspection(s) – completed or planned
 - Engineer's estimated number of billable hours to complete the report and billing rate.
 - You can submit this with your request, or your engineer can submit it to us separately.
- In your request, describe the public benefits that your dam and reservoir provide. Include:
 - Description of public access to the site for recreation/fishing/boating. If fisherman visit your dam, <https://myfwp.mt.gov/fishMT/explore> is a good place to obtain information on fish species and fishing pressure.
 - Include boat ramps, picnic, and camping sites at the reservoir.
 - Note if the reservoir irrigates enough acres to provide beneficial late season return flow.
 - For municipal water systems, list the number of residences served and define other public benefits.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONSULTING ENGINEERS

- You will need to provide an estimated number of billable hours to complete the Safety Evaluation report and your billing rate to both DNRC and the owner before initiation of the contract.
- DNRC will contract directly with the firm. The firm must accept the standard contract language in the State of Montana's contracts.
- Engineering firms must use the Safety Evaluation Report Template available at <https://dnrc.mt.gov/Water-Resources/Dam-Safety/Engineer-Evaluations>.
- The work must be completed under the responsible charge of staff who were included in your firm's Statement of Qualifications that was submitted to DNRC.

By submitting a request to DNRC for assistance, you are acknowledging and agreeing to the above.



The Montana Department of
**Natural Resources
& Conservation**