



# State-Owned Dam Maintenance and Repair

Office of School and Public Lands

## Overview

Governor Noem's recommended budget includes \$5,000,000 in one-time funding to cover costs associated with dam maintenance, including the replacement of the Elm Lake Dam.

## Elm Lake Dam

Elm Lake Dam is a state-owned dam in Brown County. It holds nearly five billion gallons of water and is one-third of the water supply for Aberdeen. The dam was built in 1937 and no longer meets state safety guidelines for capacity. In 2019, an emergency special appropriation of \$521,000 was approved for Elm Lake Dam. The engineering report at that time said the concrete was unfixable, but there was no immediate danger.

A major storm in July damaged the spillway and the secondary emergency spillway. This structure has suffered unrepairable damage and must be replaced. It is a high-hazard dam that would cause significant damage and potential loss of life downstream if it were to break, and it must be repaired to the appropriate standards to protect South Dakota citizens.

Construction plans and documents are nearly complete so that the project can be put out to bid and replaced in 2021 with this funding. The city of Aberdeen started saving money and will have their \$1 million available in January 2021. The new spillway will have to be a new design to more than double the spillway capacity.

## Other Dam Maintenance

Including Elm Lake Dam, there are 16 high- and medium-hazard state-owned dams. This remaining funding will allow School and Public Lands to prioritize maintenance on other state-owned dams to protect South Dakotans and our state infrastructure.