

Pohick Creek Watershed Dam No. 8 Rehabilitation Project Fairfax County, Virginia

Fact Sheet
February 2016

History of the Dam:

Pohick Creek Watershed Dam No. 8, known locally as Huntsman Lake, is located in an urban setting in Springfield, Virginia. The dam is one of six flood control dams constructed in the Pohick Watershed between 1969 and 1985 and is the fourth dam to be rehabilitated.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District built the dam in 1973 with assistance from the Soil Conservation Service (now the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - NRCS).

Fairfax County maintains the dam and the surrounding scenic trails which attract thousands of residents each year for hiking, fishing and picnicking.



The principal spillway riser was replaced during the rehabilitation project.



The earthen auxiliary spillway was armored with articulated concrete blocks which were then covered with soil and seeded to grass to hide the concrete.

Why Rehabilitate the Dam?

Studies of the dam showed that the earthen auxiliary spillway could breach during a probable maximum flood putting lives at risk.

The principal spillway riser didn't meet seismic stability criteria and it had an open top riser that was prone to clogging. The project sponsors also did not believe the low water release gate would last 50 years as designed.

Rehabilitation Details:

Rehabilitation of the dam in 2014 included realigning the auxiliary spillway to protect the sanitary sewer and armoring it and the training dikes with articulated concrete blocks; extending the training dikes to the valley floor to protect the dam embankment and replacing the principal spillway riser.

Project Cost:

The NRCS provided technical assistance and 65 percent of the project cost which totaled \$3,022,625. Local project sponsors provided 35 percent of the funding.

Benefits:

The rehabilitation project reduced the threat to life and property downstream for 13,800 people including thirteen single family homes and three roads used by more than 10,000 vehicles per day. It extended the life of the dam for another 75 years and will provide an estimated \$110,000 in monetary benefits annually. The new riser included a mid-level gate to provide flexibility in lowering the normal pool for maintenance activities such as dredging and a cold water release system to improve downstream water quality, particularly during periods of low base flow.

Partners:

- Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
- Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District
- Natural Resources Conservation Service

For More Information Contact:

R. Wade Biddix, Watershed Program Specialist
Richmond, VA
Phone: 804-287-1675
email: wade.biddix@va.usda.gov

