



**AMERICAN
RIVERS**
Life Depends on Rivers™

TRANSFORMATIONAL: KLAMATH RIVER DAM REMOVALS & BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW



IRON GATE DAM — RESERVOIR DRAWDOWN
KLAMATH RIVER, CALIFORNIA
KATIE SCHMIDT

DAMS BY THE NUMBERS

530,000+

Number of dams in
the United States.

1,243

Number of dam
failures or emergency
incidents.

2,100+

Number of dams that
have been removed.

30,000

Number of dams that
American Rivers and
partners will remove
by 2050.

300,000

Number of river miles
that will be opened
up by removing
30,000 dams.

THE KLAMATH RIVER DAM REMOVALS

The nation's largest dam removal and river restoration project is underway on the Klamath River in California and Oregon. One dam was removed last fall and the remaining three will be removed by the end of the year. The removals will open access to more than 400 miles of habitat for salmon and steelhead trout, help restore Tribal food sovereignty and cultural justice, and improve the health and water quality of the river. Removing the dams has been a two-decade effort led by Tribes, and supported by conservation partners, agencies, and the states of California and Oregon.

BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW FUNDS FOR DAM REMOVAL

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) made \$800 million available for dam removal. American Rivers worked with partners and legislators to secure this transformational source of funding, and we have been working hard to put it to use to restore rivers across the nation. The BIL funding went to five federal agencies to support existing programs:

- NOAA Fisheries (\$400 million)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) (\$200 million)
- U.S. Forest Service (USFS) (\$10 million)
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) (\$115 million)
- FEMA's National Dam Safety Program (NDSP) (\$75 million)

American Rivers is grateful that those dollars are hard at work restoring rivers across the nation. Unfortunately, to date, less than half of the money that has been awarded from these agencies from this funding source has gone to dam removal projects. The influx of funds from BIL were intended to transformationally support a large amount of these complex projects to spur a new wave of dam removals. Dam removal practitioners across the country must work quickly to ensure that the remaining funds are fully utilized and that we effectively demonstrate the need for additional funding for removing dams.

THE AGE OF RIVER RESTORATION

American Rivers has set a goal to remove 30,000 dams and open 300,000 miles of rivers by 2050. We are building on the momentum from both the Klamath River restoration and the transformational funding levels for dam removal authorized by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

WHY DAM REMOVALS ARE NECESSARY

More than 530,000 dams block rivers across our country. Of the 91,843 dams large enough to be included in the National Inventory of Dams, only 19% provide flood-risk reduction, 18% provide irrigation or water supply, and 3% provide hydropower.

Too many dams have reached the end of their useful lives and pose public safety risks, negatively impact fish and other aquatic life, and can be costly liabilities to their owners. Countless dams are abandoned, not profitable, or require costly repairs and upgrades that push dam owners to consider removal.

Removing dams restores native aquatic life to rivers, increases climate resilience, and reduces the risk of aging dams failing and causing catastrophic flood damages and even loss of human life.

DAM REMOVAL PROJECT EXAMPLES

Below are five examples of ongoing projects that demonstrate the need for additional funding and technical support.

Cypress Branch Dam

Cypress Branch, Maryland

Covington Millpond Dam and Drakes Millpond Dam

Cottingham Creek and Three Creeks, South Carolina

Powell Dam and Junction Falls

Kinnickinnic River, Wisconsin

Scott Dam and Cape Horn Dam

Eel River, California

Lake Jefferson Dam

East Branch Callicoon Creek, New York



LAKE JEFFERSON DAM - DAMAGE AFTER A STORM
EAST BRANCH CALLICOON CREEK, NEW YORK
JEFFERSONVILLE HYDROELECTRIC CO.



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American Rivers is championing a national effort to protect and restore all rivers, from remote mountain streams to urban waterways. Healthy rivers provide people and nature with clean, abundant water and natural habitat. For 50 years, American Rivers staff, supporters, and partners have shared a common belief: Life Depends on Rivers. www.AmericanRivers.org

Contact our Dam Removal team for additional information: kschmidt@americanrivers.org