

## Hill County Beaver Creek Dam Spillway

30 January 2019

RRGL Project, HB 6

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Mark Peterson (P-E-T-E-R-S-O-N) and I am a Hill County Commissioner. I stand before you this morning to strongly advocate for critical grant funding for House Bill 6 and specifically the Beaver Creek Dam Spillway project.

The Beaver Creek Dam is located 13 miles south of Havre, in Hill County; Beaver Creek is a tributary to the Milk River. The dam regulates the flow of water in Beaver Creek and provides water storage in the Beaver Creek Reservoir. It is part of the infrastructure that provides irrigation water to agricultural users, affords our region with recreational opportunities, helps manage our State's aquatic resources, and helps protect downstream property owners from seasonal flooding.

The Dam was constructed in 1974 by the Natural Resources Conservation Service; it's owned, operated and managed by Hill County.

The NRCS and State classification system consider this a high hazard dam. Failure of this dam would damage homes, county roads and pose a threat to life. NRCS data show that over 150 homes or structures could be affected by flooding due to problems occurring at the dam.

During the most recent 5-year inspection performed by the Natural Resources Conservation Services, several deficiencies were identified that left unchecked, could seriously threaten the structural integrity of the dam, and undermine the natural resources benefits that the dam provides.

The most serious of the deficiencies is a large scour hole at the base of the spillway that has eroded material adjacent to and behind the spillway. The hole has increased in size since it was first observed in 2014; given this structural problem, we're very concerned about the potential for the spillway to fail, and the impacts to Hill County residents and area resources.

We work hard to maintain this important infrastructure and have, over the years, addressed deficiencies with the outlet works. Our project to remediate scour at the outlet of the dam spillway and address other contributing deficiencies with the dam, is estimated at \$124,600. We're asking for the State's help through an RRGL Grant to fully fund the project.

**Grant funds are critical to this project**, as our County resources are stretched thin. Knowledge of the continuing erosion in our spillway is a grave concern and one we feel must be addressed in a timely manner.

On behalf of the residents of Hill County, your favorable consideration for full funding of House Bill 6 is requested. While the size and scope of the project may be small, the significance of safety for downstream residents cannot be overstated.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee for your time this morning.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me by phone at (406) 262-4777 or email [peterm@co.hill.mt.us](mailto:peterm@co.hill.mt.us).



*Figure 1: Erosion under spillway wingwall (daylight showing through on far side)*