

California Natural Resources Agency
Department of Water Resources
Division of Safety of Dams

Memorandum of Field Inspection
King Ridge Dam and Reservoir, Violation, No. 7000-121
Sonoma County
7 February 2013
Jim Lowe

Conclusion

King Ridge Dam and reservoir are located on private property at 29876 King Ridge Road, Cazadero, California 95421. As presently operated, the dam is of jurisdictional size and it is being operated and maintained without approval from the Department of Water Resources, Division of Safety of Dams, in violation of Section 6077 of the California Water Code.

Introduction

This second inspection of this dam, made on February 5, 2013, was performed as a routine annual inspection. The first inspection was performed on January 10, 2012 in response to a November 15, 2011 letter from Mr. Aaron Miller of the Division of Water Rights. He indicated that the dam associated with Reservoir ID No. 1771 may be under State jurisdiction for safety.

Participants:

Jim Lowe, DSOD
Robert Mann, Owner

Owner:

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Location

The dam is located on private property off of 29876 King Ridge Road, Cazadera, in Sonoma County, approximately 30 miles north-west from the city of Santa Rosa. The dam is located within the NW ¼ of the NE ¼ of Section 20, T9N., R12 W., MD B&M (Lat: 38.614230, Lon: -123.206534)

Description

1. Embankment and Reservoir

The earth embankment appears to be a homogeneous fill constructed from a local borrow. The table below contains the dimensions of the embankment and its reservoir storage capacity as reported by the Water Resources Control Board and from measurements I made during the field investigation.

Jurisdictional Height:	59 feet
Embankment Height:	64 feet
Freeboard @ crest of spillway:	5 feet
Storage Capacity	183 acre-feet
Reservoir Area	13.4 acres
*Crest Width:	~10 feet
*Crest Length	~450 feet
*Upstream Slope:	~ 3:1 (H:V)
*Downstream Slope:	~ 3:1 (H:V)

*Measurements made during DSOD investigation.

2. Spillway

There are two unlined open channel spillways, one at either end of the dam. The right spillway is the lower of the two and is approximately 5 feet below the crest elevation. The left spillway is about a foot higher, or 4 feet below the crest.

3. Outlet

There is no outlet at the dam.

Inspection

The weather was clear and mild, and the water level within the reservoir was ~0.5 feet above the right spillway, and 4.5 feet below the embankment crest.

The dam crest is about 10 feet wide. Approximately 10 feet below the crest on the downstream side of the embankment is a roughly 40 feet wide bench. The relatively level bench is then followed by the downstream face of the embankment which terminates in the natural drainage channel at the toe. The height of the embankment below the bench is approximately 54 feet as measured using a Nikon "Forestry Pro" laser rangefinder; adding the 10 feet elevation gain between the bench and crest

yields a total embankment height of 64 feet. The relatively wide bench below the crest adds to the apparent height of the dam by moving the toe of the embankment further down the drainage channel. In choosing measurement points I used reasonable and defensible points, but generally chose those points which favored the owner in reducing the measured embankment height to the minimum reasonable value.

Vegetation control on the upper portion of the embankment is satisfactory, but additional clearing of woody trees and bushes from the downstream face and groins is desirable. The upper downstream face, dam crest, and bench are covered with ankle tall ground cover provides protection against erosion without impeding inspection for seepage and other defects, but trees and bushes along the downstream face and groins impede and complicate routine monitoring by obscuring some areas of the downstream areas from convenient viewing. Tree and bush roots can also create seepage pathways into the dam, though this effect is largely ameliorated by the addition of the thick downstream berm.

Tule along the upstream face waterline, along the right spillway approach, and within the left spillway entrance channel, should also be thinned or removed. Tule provides attractive habitat for destructive burrowing rodents, and tule within spillways can trap and accumulate floating debris which could in turn impede spillway flows.

Water was noted at the toe of the dam, but Mr. Mann explained this is backwash from the flowing right spillway. Mr. Mann said that the toe becomes dry after spilling, and that no seepage is present during the dryer months of the year. To collaborate this observation I told Mr. Mann that we would try to schedule the next inspection early in the fall before the start of the rainy season.

The dam needs to be checked for the following:

- Adequacy of the spillway for the Inflow Design Flood. This includes adequate residual freeboard and the structural and hydraulic stability of the channel.
- Adequacy of the foundation preparation and stability of the embankment under various loading conditions.

As it does not have a gravity outlet, this dam has no means of draining the reservoir in the event of an emergency. An outlet is needed for emergency drawdown.

Action

The dam is determined to be of jurisdictional size and therefore in violation of the California Water Code. A letter informing the owner about our finding and asking him submit a plan to remove the dam violation was sent March 8, 2012.



The embankment as viewed from the left abutment. Note the tule along the waterline, and the left spillway entrance channel in the bottom center of the photograph.



The crest and right spillway as viewed from the right abutment. Flow is about 6 inches deep in the center of the vee-shaped spillway channel.



A closer look at the bench below the crest of the dam. The bench has an irregular downstream lip, and the downstream face below the bench (bottom photograph) is also quite irregular.





The left spillway channel, above, and entrance channel, below. This second spillway is roughly a foot higher than the right spillway.

