

## OVERVIEW OF RAYSVILLE DAM ISSUES FOR THE MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup> OPEN HOUSE

The Raysville Dam is located in the community of Raysville, which is one mile east of Knightstown, Indiana. The lake and structure are located in Sections 34 and 35, Township 16N, Range 9E on the Knightstown topographic map (Henry County). The lake is estimated to be about 6 acres, with an upstream drainage area of about 1.15 square miles. Cross sections performed by the DNR, Division of Water indicate the water to be approximately 6 feet deep about 200 feet upstream of the dam and approximately 2 ½ feet deep at the main inlet (a seasonal stream). The outlet of the principal spillway is a stone arch structure believed to be part of an old railroad crossing of a stream channel.

In its current condition, the dam embankment is overgrown with trees and brush with an abandoned roadway crossing along the crest of the dam. There are trees that have fallen over and left voids in the embankment as well as numerous animal burrows. This structure is under the authority of The Regulation of Dams, IC 14-27-7.5 and is considered an unsafe high hazard structure because of homes and US 40 situated downstream. The risk of an uncontrolled breach remains high and continues to grow due to the continual progressive deterioration. It should be noted that under the Regulation of Dams Statute, the State funding cannot be used to fix the dam only to reduce the hazard.

In the past, the Division of Water (and others) have tried to establish ownership of the dam, but were unable to establish clear ownership due to the passage of time and previous lapses in ownership. A partial plat of the area (obtained from the County Auditor's Office) indicates that the area immediately adjacent to the lake, the dam, and the area along both sides of the downstream channel as being owned by no one.

A consultant was hired by the Division of Water in the summer of 2002 to assess the dam and surrounding site, outline a plan, and estimate costs to reduce the risk. The proposed plan is that the lake water level be lowered by core drilling 2 one-foot holes in the control structure at an elevation just above the level of the silt bed in the lake. Once the lake level has been lowered, work will begin on cutting down the concrete weir wall to its final elevation. Next the earthen embankment will be removed over the stone arch. The dam embankment and stone arch will be removed to form an open-cut channel through the embankment with side slopes of 3:1, minimum. Stone from the arch will be salvaged and used to armor the channel bottom and the lower side slopes of the open cut. The exposed wide slope above the stone armoring will be seeded and protected with an erosion control blanket. The channel downstream, north of the existing stone arch outlet, will be reshaped for a short distance and salvaged stone will be used to armor the channel banks.

According to local residents, the lake holds a great deal of sentimental and historical value. Local historians report that people have been coming to this lake to swim, fish, camp, trap, hunt and ice skate for more than 80 years. There are approximately 7 houses around the lake and another 7 houses downstream.

There is concern by the local residents as to what will be left once the lake is lowered and the uncertain future for this area. Once the risk has been reduced, suggestions have been made with

regard to the future management of the area. Perhaps, a County entity or some other local group might consider taking ownership of the area. It has also been suggested that a wetland, an outdoor educational area or other open space area could be developed. What happens in the long term will depend on the actions taken by local leadership groups.

Other concerns expressed by the local residents are:

- 1) A wetland would not thrive because the inflow is from farm fields and it would not be a healthy wetland.
- 2) The area would have odor due to a lower lake level and exposed shoreline.
- 3) Things such as cars, tires and trash would be uncovered due to a lower lake level.
- 4) Mosquitoes would be a problem, as would the threat of the West Nile Virus.
- 5) The fish population would be diminished.
- 6) Questions about the fish be transported and fishing limits be increased.
- 7) The sediment left behind would pose a risk to the children playing in the area.
- 8) Property values would decrease.
- 9) Concern about the exposed shoreline and additional erosion.

The open house is to allow the local residents to see what concepts are being discussed, allow them a forum to ask questions of technical experts and elected officials. It is also hoped to get a clearer picture of the concerns that local residents may with the proposed project.

The lack of ownership is one of the key elements in dealing with the issues and planning for a future. It is anticipated that conversations can move towards visions for the future, thoughts or proposals for future possibilities for the site once the safety issues have been reduced, and options for the local leadership.

**Groups that have been asked to participate:**

Henry County Commissioners  
Eastern Indiana Development District  
Local Legislators  
Knightstown Lake Committee  
SEMA  
County Emergency Management Agency  
Big Blue River Conservancy District  
DNR – Division of Entomology  
    Division of Fish & Wildlife  
    Division of Law Enforcement  
    Division of Soils  
    Division of Water

**Open House on Thursday, March 13, 2003  
Fellowship Hall of the Knightstown Methodist Church  
27 South Jefferson Street  
6-8:00 pm**