

Frequently Asked Questions



Big Brook Dam Maintenance Work

Water Corporation is currently completing essential work at Big Brook Dam in Pemberton. This work started in January 2019 and is expected to be completed by the end of May 2019.



What's happening?

Excavation is taking place at the embankment of the dam to complete repair work in this area. Some of the pipes and valves also need to be repaired at the dam site.

Why now?

This work at Big Brook Dam is important and needs to be completed to ensure the dam continues to meet safety requirements of the *Australian National Committee on Large Dams* guidelines.

It is vital for us to maintain an adequate level of safety on the embankment and spillway structures of the dam during this construction work. As we are cutting down a large section of the embankment, we cannot complete this work during winter, when there is a higher chance of storms and associated inflows.

While the work must be completed during summer, it also needs to be finished before winter, to allow refill to the required water supply level before next summer. This will ensure there is sufficient water to supply Pemberton through the following summer period.

This essential work is required to ensure the dam continues to store water safely and can continued to be enjoyed by the community for recreation.

Why was the dam lowered?

The reservoir was temporarily lowered to maintain an adequate level of safety while the embankment work takes place.

The reservoir level has not been lowered any further than 105.0 Australian Height Datum – which is an acceptable level previously agreed with various stakeholders, including Department of Fisheries.

The current level of Big Brook Dam is similar to levels naturally occurring during 2010 to 2014 as a result of reduced streamflow that came from low rainfall years.

If the reservoir was to be reduced lower than this agreed level, we would have undertaken measures to ensure there was no adverse impact on fish stocks.



How are we working to prevent further fish deaths?

Water Corporation will install water aeration pumps to improve oxygen concentration, to help prevent further fish deaths at Big Brook Dam, if the water levels become too low.

We are working closely with Recfishwest to help manage any unforeseen impacts on recreational fishing activities and will continue to closely monitor the fish in the dam.

We encourage anyone to report a fish death to FISHWATCH on 1800 815 507.

Water Corporation has worked closely with all key stakeholders, including the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, the Shire of Manjimup and the Pemberton Freshwater Research Centre, to ensure this work has minimal impact on the community and recreational users of the dam.

Other temporary impacts:

Recreation beach:

- Access to the recreation beach and the ability to undertake recreational activities at the dam may be impacted towards the later stages of this work. We will keep the public informed if this occurs.

Big Brook Dam Walk Trail:

- Due to the temporary removal of the spillway walk bridge during this maintenance work, the Big Brook Dam sealed walk trail will not be available as a circuit walk. The walk bridge will be closed from late January 2019 to May 2019. The Bibbulmun Track will remain open and unaffected.

Parking at dam site:

- The construction team will be using the information bay carpark closest to the dam for the site office. Signage will be in place and the public will still be able to use the carpark located at the swimming beach. Full access to the carpark will return following the completion of this work in May 2019. The canoe launch area in front of this carpark will be closed over this period. The public are asked to use the swimming beach area in front of the main carpark over this period.

How to stay updated on the project:

- Big Brook Dam Maintenance Work webpage: www.watercorporation.com.au/water-supply/ongoing-works/big-brook-dam-maintenance-work
- Key updates provided in Pemberton Community News
- Recfishwest e-newsletter

Any further questions:

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