



SAFETY OF DAMS UPDATE

Lower Rio Grande Citizens' Forum
C.W. "Bill" Ruth, U.S. Commissioner
International Boundary and Water Commission
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SAFETY OF DAMS

- 4 IBWC Rio Grande dams inspected in 2007
- Dams are ranked per Corps of Engineers Dam Safety Action Classes (DSAC):
 - DSAC I – Urgent and Compelling (unsafe)
 - DSAC II – Urgent (potentially unsafe)
 - DSAC III – High Priority (conditionally unsafe)
 - DSAC IV – Priority (marginally safe)
 - DSAC V – Normal (safe)



SAFETY OF DAMS

- All dams found to be generally well maintained and able to operate under normal conditions
- Report recommends that a panel of geotechnical consultants be convened
- Expert panel established in 2008 to study Amistad Dam
- 2007 reports for all dams available at:

<http://www.ibwc.state.gov/PAO/CURPRESS/2005/Dams.pdf>



FALCON DAM

- DSAC III –
High Priority
(conditionally unsafe)
- Concern about construction lift joint seepage
- Report recommends additional studies



ANZALDUAS DAM

- Lower Rio Grande Valley diversion dam
- DSAC IV – Priority (marginally safe)
- Report recommends updating of electrical and mechanical systems, sediment removal



RETAMAL DAM

- Lower Rio Grande Valley diversion dam
- DSAC III – High Priority (conditionally unsafe)
- Concern about central gate oscillation during floods
- Report recommends modifying flood operations to reduce use of central gate and replacing the gate lifting system



AMISTAD DAM – 2007 REPORT

- DSAC II – Urgent (potentially unsafe)
- Concerns about impact of naturally-occurring sinkholes
- High risk in terms of potential loss of life and economic damages
- More study recommended



AMISTAD DAM



2008-2009 ACTIVITIES

- Binational panel of experts formed
- Focus on Amistad Dam due to high priority for action
- Experts conducted additional studies in 2008
- Report due in early 2009



AMISTAD DAM 2009 DRAFT REPORT

- Identifies potential dam failure modes
- Recommends risk reduction measures
- Recommends future studies and risk analysis
- Affirms rating of DSAC II - Urgent (potentially unsafe)



FUTURE ACTIONS

- Implement risk reduction measures and conduct additional studies of Amistad Dam
- Conduct additional studies of Falcon Dam as funding becomes available
- Design, fund, and construct any structural fixes that may be recommended
- Continue to monitor operations of Anzalduas and Retamal Dams



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