

Alabama Has a Dam Agency: Now What?

Clear Water Alabama
2026 Seminar

September 23, 2026

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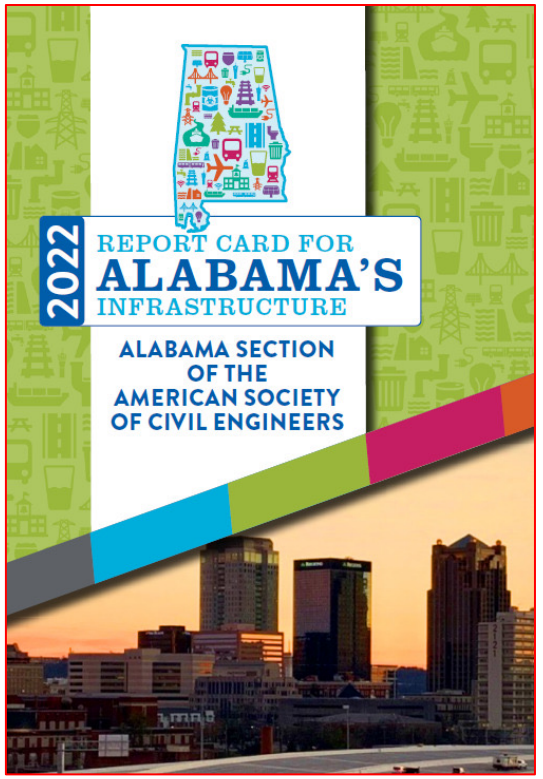

War Dam!
TTL


2022
REPORT CARD FOR
ALABAMA'S
INFRASTRUCTURE
ALABAMA SECTION
OF THE
AMERICAN SOCIETY
OF CIVIL ENGINEERS

2022 Alabama Report Card

Twelve infrastructure categories

- Overall grade for Alabama: **C -**
- Drinking Water: **C -**
- Wastewater: **D**
- Stormwater: **D+**
- Grade assigned to Alabama Dams: **?**





Dams



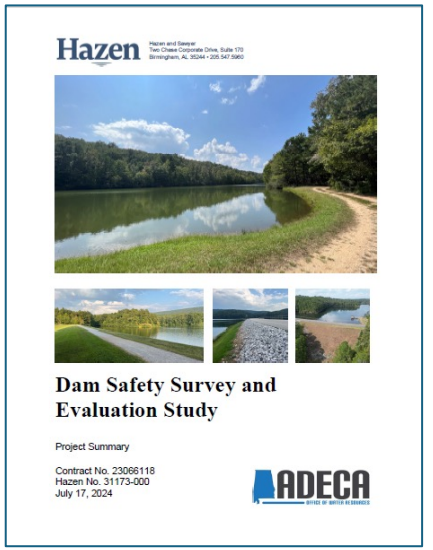
RECOMMENDATIONS TO RAISE THE GRADE

With a high degree of urgency, the following steps need to be completed, so dam infrastructure and infrastructure public safety risks can be enumerated and mitigated:

- **Complete a Pilot Program** to identify and recommend consideration of best practices for the Alabama Dam Safety Program.
- **Establish a dam safety program in Alabama**, the only state without a dam safety program.
- **Establish a dam rehabilitation and repair revolving grant or loan program and/or provide access to federal grants** to ensure dam owners can affordably repair privately- and publicly-owned, non-federal, high hazard dams.
- **Incorporate a risk-based, engineering-informed decision making process** for the design of new dams, rehabilitation of deficient dams, and operation of all dams.
- **Provide educational resources** to dam owners and operators.
- **Implement a public awareness campaign** in Alabama to educate individuals about the need for a Dam Safety Program by ensuring the public has a better understanding of potential risks.

History of the Alabama Dam Safety Program

- **2003, 2008 & 2014 – Initial attempts**
- **2019 – Formation of the Alabama Save Dam Coalition Technical Committee**
  - Alabama Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers (leading the effort)
  - American Council of Engineering Companies of Alabama
  - Alabama League of Municipalities
  - Association of County Engineers of Alabama
  - AL/MS American Water Works Association
  - State Sen. Clyde Chambliss, PE
- **2023 – Alabama Safe Dams Act (SB284)**
- **2024 – Alabama Safe Dams Act (SB39) – expanded to include state agencies**
- **2024 – Completion of the Alabama Dam Safety Survey and Evaluation Study (Pilot Study)**



History of the Alabama Dam Safety Program

- **2026 – Alabama Safe Dams Act (SB378) – Alabama Emergency Management Agency to administer the program**





2026 Dam Safety Conference – Association of State Dam Safety Officials

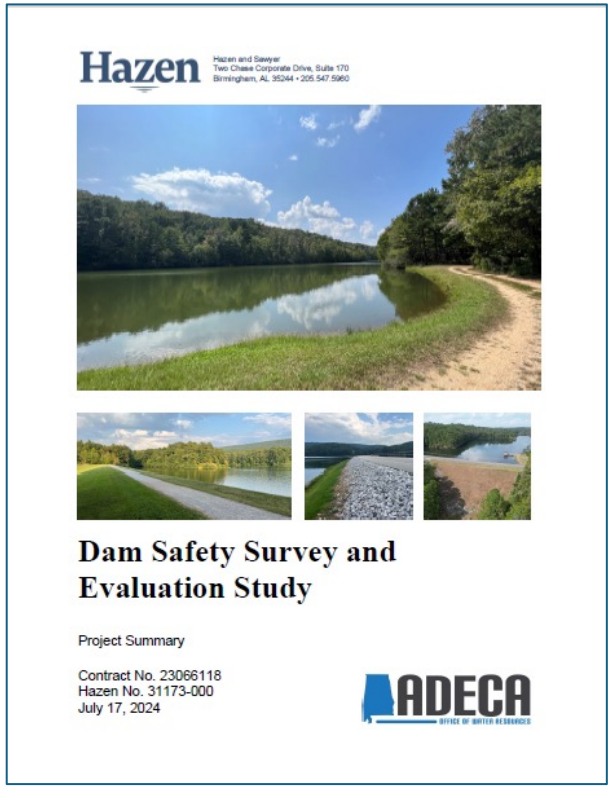
National Inventory of Dams

	Nationally		Alabama
Number of Dams	92,588		2,266
Average Age of Dams, years	65		60
High Hazard Potential Dams with and Emergency Action Plan. %	77		16
Hydropower Dams, %	3		1
Federal Dams, %	6		3
State Regulated Dams, %	71		0

Pilot Study: Alabama Dam Safety Survey and Evaluation Study

Table 0-1: Statewide Dam Inventory Results by Dam Size Classification

Category	Subcategory	Count
Size Classification	Dams that Meet State/Federal Dam Criteria	5,230
	Dams that Do Not Meet State/Federal Dam Criteria	273
	Dams Without Enough Information for Classification	4,694
	Total in Statewide Dam Inventory	**10,197**

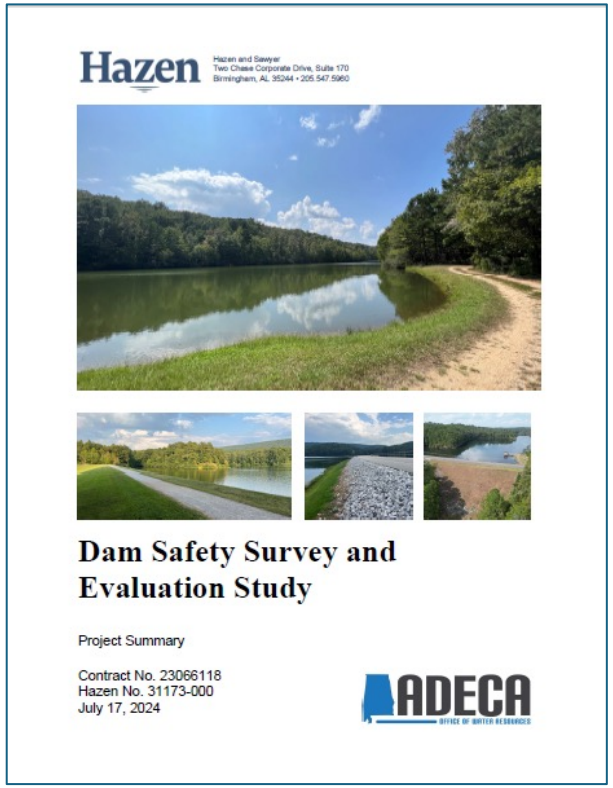


Pilot Study: Alabama Dam Safety Survey and Evaluation Study

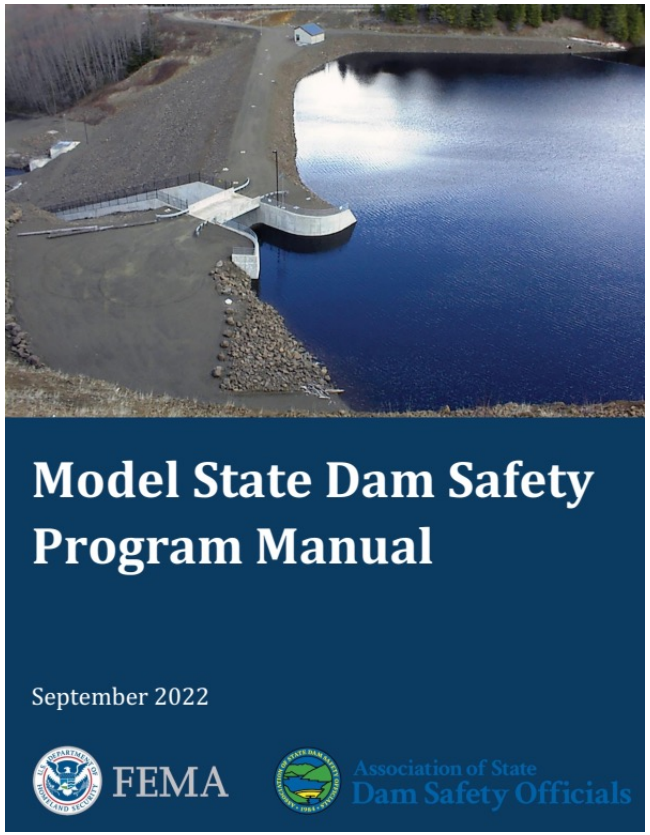
Table 0-2: Statewide Dam Inventory Results by Dam Hazard Classification

Category	Subcategory	Count
Hazard Classification	High Hazard	246
	Significant Hazard	905
	Low Hazard	5,346
	Undetermined Hazard	3,700
	Total in Statewide Dam Inventory	**10,197**

Most High Hazard Potential dams and Significant Hazard Potential dams do not have an EAP!



Alabama Emergency Management Agency



- Establish an Alabama Dam Safety Officer Position
- Encourage stakeholder participation in the program development process
- Prepare and submit to the Governor and Legislature by the 15th day of the 2027 Alabama Legislative Session:
  - An Alabama Dam Safety Program Implementation Plan designed to comply with the National Dam Safety Program established pursuant to 33 U.S.C. § 467f.
  - A statement of any operational or financial needs, including legislative action, appropriation, or other resources necessary for the agency to implement this article.
- Seek federal, state, and private funds, including grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.
- Coordinate with the USACE to ensure all relevant dams in Alabama are included in the National Inventory of Dams and Low-Head Dams.
- Use the results of the Alabama Dam Safety Survey and Evaluation Study to provide guidance

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Dams



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Dam Safety Can’t Wait!

- Don’t wait on the state!
- Consider as a critical asset
- Perform inspections
- Confirm hazard classification
- Make sure your dam files are in order and current:
  - Design and construction documents including H&H analyses
  - Inspection reports
  - Monitoring reports and trends (piezometers, settlement
  - Corrective actions
  - EAP updates, training, coordination with EMA, exercise drills
  - Staff training
- Review and update your dam safety plan
- Review the Risk & Resilience aspects
- Consider removing structurally or functionally obsolete dams which would eliminate a liability and provide for ecological restoration



“War Dam!” Button



“War Dam!” Button



Thank you!



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