

PUBLIC NOTICE
Federal Emergency Management Agency
In accordance with 44 CFR §9.8 for Executive Order 11988
Proposed Dam Rehabilitation
Bridgewater Township, Somerset County, New Jersey

Notification is hereby given to the public of the intent of the Department of Homeland Security-Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS-FEMA) to provide federal funding to the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) as recipient for a proposed dam rehabilitation project in Somerset County through the High Hazard Potential Dam Program (HHPD). The purpose of HHPD is to provide technical, planning, design, and construction assistance in the form of grants for rehabilitation of eligible high hazard potential dams. This notification is given in accordance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), 44 CFR Part 9, regulations for implementing EO 11988, and the National Historic Preservation Act.

West Branch Reservoir Dam (N40.590522, W74.564114) was one of four dams selected by NJOEM using the FEMA-provided Project Prioritization Spreadsheet and Matrix, which incorporates the population at risk and probability of failure to make a "Risk Improvement" factor. As required by the HHPD NOFO, the dams with the most dam risk reduction were prioritized for funding. The proposed rehabilitation of West Branch Reservoir Dam consists of demolition and reconstruction of concrete dam crest and downstream embankment concrete lining and subbase, toe wall, underdrain system of downstream embankment, and bypass roadway, and fencing and guiderail, extension of the concrete core wall to the west, construction of training wall along west side of downstream embankment, and shotcrete and repairs of spillway training wall armor.

This action would take place within the 100-year floodplain. Alternatives considered include: 1) no action, and 2) the proposed alternative, which is the dam rehabilitation. FEMA has determined that the proposed project is the most practicable alternative as it would decrease the probability of failure of the dam, thereby reducing the risk to the downstream populations. FEMA has also determined that the investment of funds to improve the dam is in the public interest. Potential floodplain impacts are anticipated to be minor and temporary during construction and minimized through best management practices and conservation measures incorporated from resource agency recommendations and required regulatory permits.

Comments about this project, potential alternatives, and floodplain impacts may be submitted in writing within 15 days of the date of this publication to: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency – Region 2 – Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation, Mitigation Division, One World Trade Center, Suite 53, New York, NY 10007 or via email to FEMAR2COMMENT@fema.dhs.gov. If substantive comments are received, FEMA will evaluate and address the comments as part of the environmental documentation for this project.