

NEWS RELEASE
GOVERNOR STEVE BULLOCK
STATE OF MONTANA

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Governor Announces \$6.7M Contract to Complete Renovation of Ruby Dam

HELENA – Governor Steve Bullock today announced that a \$6.7 million contract to complete rehabilitation of the Ruby Dam has been awarded to Johnson-Wilson Construction, a Helena-based company that employs 25-30 full-time staff.

“Ruby Dam is classified as a high-hazard dam, because if it were to fail, it would likely cause loss of life downstream,” Bullock said. “Last year, we upgraded the spillway, which didn’t have adequate capacity and was deteriorating. Now it’s time to finish the job.”

The Ruby Dam, which is owned by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), is located on the Ruby River about seven miles south of Alder. The dam was constructed in 1938 and stores 37,642 acre-feet of water. It is operated by the Ruby Water Users Association and directly benefits 149 water users.

DNRC completed the replacement and enlargement of the spillway in 2012. The final phase of renovations will involve replacing the dam’s aging outlet structure.

“The impacts of a failure at Ruby would be felt as far downstream as Canyon Ferry Reservoir,” Bullock said. “Making these improvements will extend the dam’s useful life for another 50 to 75 years.”

Bullock said the rehabilitation project will begin in the fall of 2013 and be completed in July, 2014.

According to Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) records, between March 2011 and February 2012, Ruby Reservoir tallied 9,338 days of use by anglers. The reservoir supports a diverse trout fishery, including westslope cutthroat trout, brook trout, brown trout, rainbow trout and Arctic grayling.

“Maintaining our public infrastructure pays dividends several times over,” Bullock said. “We create good-paying jobs for Montana workers. We enhance public safety. And we ensure that benefits for agriculture, recreation, fisheries and wildlife continue for the long term.”

Johnson-Wilson Construction also completed phase one of the project, and previously completed two other dam rehabilitation projects for DNRC. Founded in 2002, the company specializes in heavy civil construction works, including dams, fish hatcheries and water/wastewater treatment systems.

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