

U.S. HISTORY I INDIVIDUAL PROJECT

OAHE DAM, South Dakota
CC

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

In the fall of 1804, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, or the Corps of Discovery Expedition, were exploring the Missouri River and they came across what is now Lake Oahe.

The Flood Control Act of 1944 authorized the Oahe Dam to be built. The construction of the dam began in 1948 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It was completed in October 1959.

In 1962, the Oahe Dam began generating hydroelectric power.

FAST FACT

****The Oahe Dam construction cost was about \$340 million.****

ABOUT THE DAM

The Oahe Dam is 75 meters in height (or 245 feet).

The width of the spillway is 139 meters.

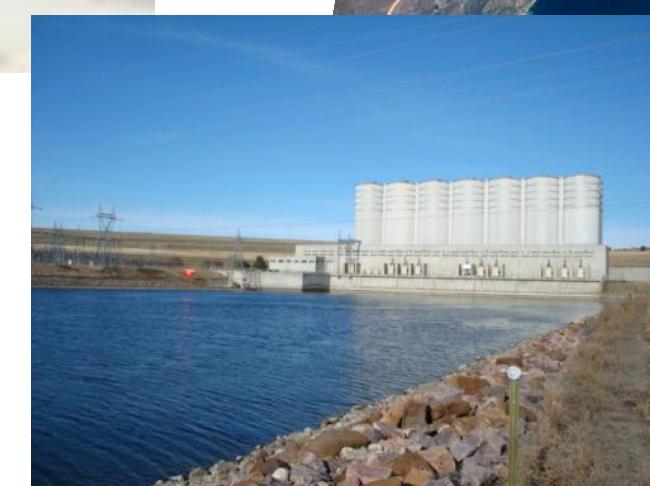
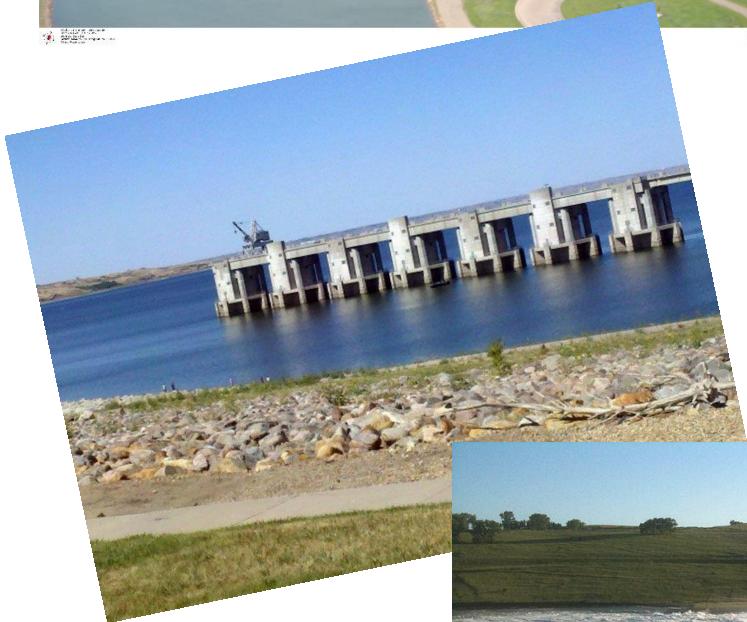
The water that flows through the tunnels runs at about 11 mph.

The length of the tunnels averages to about 1,110 meters.

There are 7 water turbines in the Oahe Dam and each one generates about 112.29 megawatts of electricity. This creates enough power to serve North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Montana.

FAST FACT

****There are 51 recreation areas surrounding Lake Oahe.****



PROS AND CONS

POSITIVE

1. Provides power and water for human consumption for cheap (hydropower)
2. Helps conserve water
3. Fisheries can be provided
4. New agricultural area
5. Reservoir is useful for recreation and fishing

NEGATIVE

1. Displacement of humans, plants, and animals
2. Much loss of water due to evaporation
3. More earthquake-prone
4. Some fish are disrupted and/or killed by turbines

THE 2011 FLOOD

Due to much precipitation, in the spring of 2011, and all the melting snow from the Rocky Mountains, they were forced to open the release gates of the dam, which let out 110,000 cubic feet of water per second in June with another 50,000 cubic feet per second through the power plant. This totaled up to 160,000 cubic feet of water per second!

The last release record was 53,900 cubic feet of water per second in 1997.

DISPLACEMENT ISSUES

After the dam's construction, the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation lost 150,000 acres of land. Today, the dam brings it down to 2,850,000 acres.

Standing Rock Reservation lost 55,993 acres at the time, with 2,300,000 acres now.

Most of the reservations' agricultural land was lost. The loss of the land had a huge effect on the Indians on the reservations because most of the land was unable to be harvested before the land was flooded with water.

A FEW LAST FACTS

The Oahe Dam is the fourth largest artificial reservoir in the United States.

It is also one of the largest earth-rolled dams in the world.

Tours of the Oahe powerplant are given daily!

MY OPINION

Honestly, I think the Oahe Dam has more of a positive effect on the United States because it generates cheap electricity for 5 states! Without it, many states would be struggling without power, without electricity. I also feel a little bias on the situation because I have been out there so many times and just love it. My family has camped in the recreational areas surrounding Lake Oahe, every summer at least once, for as long as I can remember. Fisheries have always been a personal favorite and fishing in general is something my whole family enjoys.

THE END

SOURCES

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/visitors/projects.cfm?Id=G612960>

<http://blog.travelsd.com/index.php/2012/03/28/oahe-dam/>

https://www.google.com/search?q=oahe+dam&espv=2&source=lnms&tbo=isch&sa=X&ei=88JTVIWgJNeryAST_IK4CQ&ved=0CAYQ_AUoAQ&biw=1094&bih=514