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GBRA Statement Regarding Spillgate Failure

Design and Construction will take several years to complete; funding remains an issue

SEGUIN, Texas—The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) experienced a spillgate failure at Lake Dunlap, in Guadalupe County, at approximately 7:49 a.m. Tuesday, May 14, 2019. The spillgate failure at the 91-year-old dam has resulted in the dewatering of Lake Dunlap.

GBRA experienced a similar spillgate collapse at Lake Wood, four miles west of Gonzales, in 2016 caused by a failure of structural steel members inside the gate. While the cause of the failure at Lake Dunlap will not be determined until further investigation, it is currently believed the failure at Dunlap is also related to aging structural steel.

“We recognize the value of Lake Dunlap to the community. GBRA is committed to finding a solution to replace the spillgates at all of our aging dams,” said GBRA General Manager Kevin Patteson. “The ability to move forward with construction at Lake Dunlap, Lake Wood, and the other dams is dependent on securing funding for these multi-year, multi-million dollar projects.”

After the gate failure at Lake Wood, GBRA engaged consulting engineers to determine the most feasible solution for repair or replacement of the spillgates in the hydroelectric system. The result of this analysis led to GBRA’s decision to replace all of the aging spillgates with a more modern gate system. In 2018, GBRA began the design of hydraulic crest gates for Lake Wood, and is currently progressing with a design which will involve replacement of the spillgates along with modifications to the concrete structure of the dam. The design, which will take approximately a year to complete, will be similar for the other dams in the system, including at Lake Dunlap.

These improvements are expected to take two to three years for construction at each site, and require approximately \$15-35 million per dam. GBRA’s revenues alone cannot support that level of investment. GBRA is continuing to research all available funding opportunities through state and federal resources, as well as stakeholder partnerships. Updates will continue as additional information becomes available.

About

The Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority was established by the Texas Legislature in 1933 as a water conservation and reclamation district. GBRA provides stewardship for the water resources in its 10-county statutory district which begins near the headwaters of the Guadalupe and Blanco rivers, ends at San Antonio Bay, and includes Kendall, Comal, Hays, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Gonzales, DeWitt, Victoria, Calhoun and Refugio counties.