

Lake district may spurn gift of dam

Repair costs might outweigh benefits

By Catherine W. Idzerda
Gazette Staff

Don't look a gift dam in the mouth.

Unless, of course, the dam could cost millions of dollars to repair and run.

The Rock County Board wants to transfer ownership of the Indianapolis Dam to the Rock Koshkong Lake District.

The lake district isn't sure it wants it.

"It's not an ideal situation for the district," district Chairman Jim Folk said. "The counties are the ones who enjoy the property

taxes from the areas around the lake. The lake district gets nothing."

In a closed-session meeting Thursday night, the Rock County Board instructed county Corporation Counsel Tom Schroeder to offer the dam to the district.

"The board believes their interest lies in transferring ownership to the district," Schroeder said Friday morning.

The Department of Natural Resources told the county several years ago that it needed to make extensive repairs to the dam or re-

Turn to DAM/8A

8A The Janesville Gazette, Saturday, June 30, 2001

Dam/District may decline

Continued from 1A
move it entirely.

Since then, the lake district and Rock and Jefferson counties have struggled to reach an agreement over the repair and maintenance of the dam.

The lake district's most recent proposal called for the district and Rock County to share long-term ownership of the dam.

In addition, the Jefferson County Board agreed to pay \$75,000 up front and \$10,000 for the next 10 years for repairs and support of the dam.

Lake district officials said they weren't crazy about Rock County's latest proposal.

"I don't think a few under 4,000 people should keep a facility in-

tact for the whole country to use," said Jerry Richardson, district treasurer. "It draws a whole bunch of people in."

Folk said it "didn't seem like a fair shake" that Rock County, with all of its resources, would try to shift responsibility for the dam to a few thousand residents.

However, the district might consider the county's proposal "if the money was right."

"If there's enough money and we can show it's going to work for our children and grandchildren, we might consider it," Folk said.

Even if the district's governing committee backed such an agreement, it still would have to be approved at the district's annual meeting July 28.