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## Indianford Dam woes nearly washed up

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By Catherine W. Idzerda/Gazette Staff

Another chapter of the Indianford Dam saga ended Thursday when the Rock County Board approved a contract with Jefferson County.

The contract spells out how much Jefferson County will pay for dam upkeep and repair.

Contract details include:

--Jefferson County will pay Rock County \$75,000 for dam repairs.

--Jefferson County will pay Rock County \$10,000 a year for 10 years, starting on June 30. This money will be put aside for future dam repairs.

--Rock County will oppose any effort to request or allow higher water levels than those permitted under Department of Natural Resources operating orders, except with prior written permission from the Jefferson County Board.

--If Rock County petitions the DNR for removal of the dam, Rock County has to refund Jefferson County all the money it paid.

--Rock County will pursue grants to offset the cost of fixing the dam.

Thursday's contract is the second-to-last step in Rock County's struggles to deal with the troublesome dam.

In 1997, the DNR inspected the dam, which forms 10,460-acre Lake Koshkonong, and asked the county to make repairs.

In 1999, the DNR stepped up the pressure,

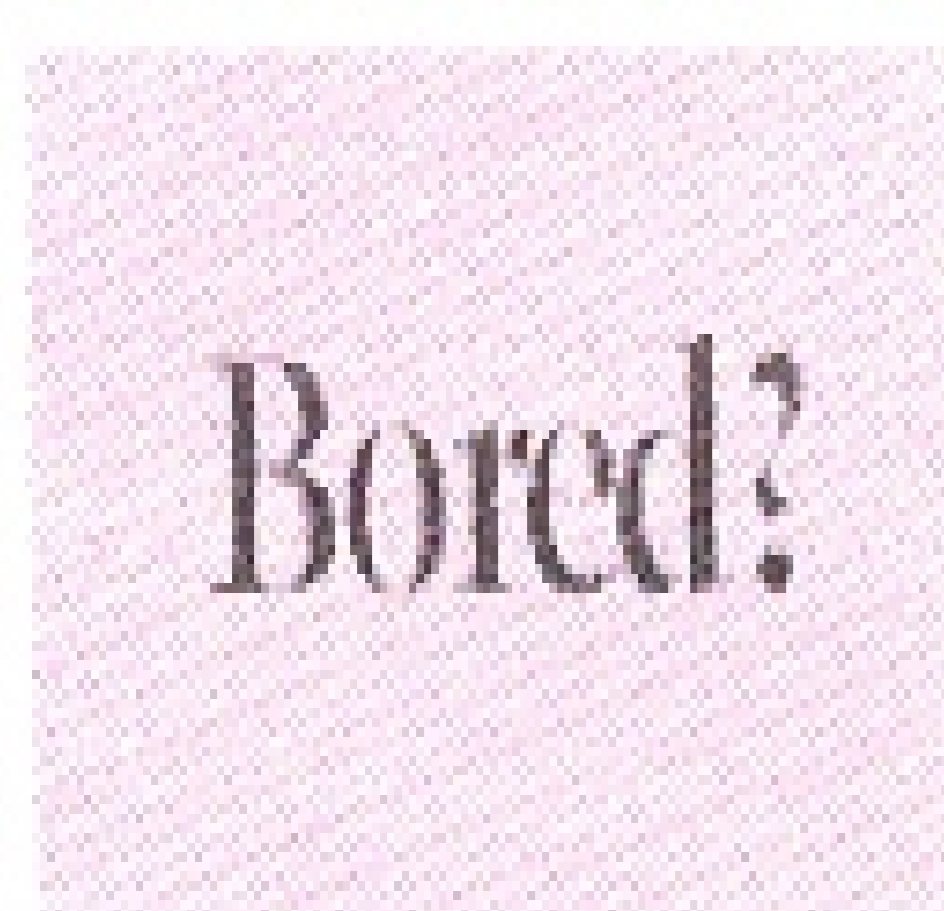
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requiring the county to fix or remove the dam or pay fines of up to \$1,000 a day.

Jammed wicket gates, structural damage to the dam and an aging powerhouse needed to be repaired to bring the dam into compliance, the DNR said.

Meanwhile, the county tried to get support from Jefferson and Dane counties and the newly formed Rock Koshkonong Lake District.

Dane County refused to contribute for dam repairs.

Rock County's contract with Jefferson County comes after more than a year of debate among officials and community members in both counties.

Only one more step is needed to secure the dam's future: A contract transferring ownership of the dam to the lake district, a process that is being negotiated, Rock County Corporation Counsel Tom Schroeder said.

He couldn't comment on the negotiations but said he hoped they would be completed in December.

If negotiations are successful, the lake district would own the dam and Rock County would pay it a part of future dam repairs, a lump sum upfront and the cost of water-level monitoring stations.

Rock County also would transfer the yearly \$10,000 it gets from Jefferson County to the lake district.

In other business Thursday at the Rock County Board meeting:

--Ann Marie Johnson was sworn in as the supervisor for District 27. Emetta Young previously held the seat but resigned after she moved out of the district.

The district is made up of Beloit wards 14, 15 and 16.

Johnson also serves on the Beloit Inner City Council and is a member of the Merrill Neighborhood Revitalization group.

--Bill Schyvinck, psych tech at the Rock County