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TOP STORY

DNR awards Janesville \$400,000 grant for Monterey Dam removal

By Jim Dayton jdayton@gazettextra.com 12 hrs ago



Water rushes past a partially demolished Monterey Dam spillway Friday in Janesville.

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JANESVILLE

A Department of Natural Resources grant will shave \$400,000 off Monterey Dam removal costs for the city, and more grant money for the overall project could be on the way.

The \$400,000 municipal dam grant will be used specifically for the dam removal portion of the project. Janesville announced the money in a press release Monday after receiving notice last week from the DNR, stormwater engineer Tim Whittaker said.

The city also has pending applications for two more DNR grants: a \$460,000 municipal flood control grant and a \$60,000 stewardship grant.

Public Works Director Paul Woodard said the flood control grant would help rework the Monterey lagoon, which has largely become a mud flat since removal started Friday, into a stormwater retention pond.

The stewardship funds would help finance shoreline improvements and some recreational amenities, he said.

Janesville previously earned a \$146,000 stewardship grant last year from the DNR, but the state rescinded it once the Monterey Dam Association, a group opposed to dam removal, took legal action and cast doubts on the project, Woodard said.

The pending \$60,000 stewardship application would be less than half of what Janesville received last year, but applying for less stewardship money meant the city could apply for more in municipal flood control money, Whittaker said.

The city contracted with Madison-based Drax for dam removal at an original bid of \$1.5 million. But Janesville worked with the firm on different ways to approach the project to bring the total cost down to \$1.2 million, meaning the \$400,000 grant would bring what the city has to pay down to about \$800,000, Woodard said.

He declined to comment on how dam removal would affect contaminated sediment upstream near the former General Motors plant. Commercial Development Company, the property's owner, will be responsible for that cleanup.

Commercial Development had assumed the dam would still be in place when it began its river cleanup, which does not have a start date. Woodard said the company would now have to change its plans.

The grant will not expedite the dam removal process. If a judge does not halt the project at an injunction hearing today, as requested by the Monterey Dam Association, Woodard expects the dam to be fully removed by next week.

Parts of the dam will then be used to help fill in a pool near the existing structure. That will take until December, he said.

Janesville will begin converting the muddy lagoon into a stormwater retention area next spring, provided there are no further legal complications, Woodard said.

Jim Dayton

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