



WASHBURN COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

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Washburn County Policy – Operation of County Owned Large Dams

The Washburn County Highway Department is responsible for maintaining and operating the large dams in Washburn County. Dams are located on Birch Lake, Long Lake, Minong Flowage, Pokegema Lake, Slim Creek, and Spooner Lake. Washburn County is responsible for ensuring that the dams are maintained according to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requirements, as well as operated within the DNR specified minimum and maximum water ordered operating levels specific to each dam.

All dams operated by the Washburn County Highway Department are operating at the levels noted in the Inspection, Operation, and Monitoring Plan (IOMP) for each structure. Each IOMP was put together by the Washburn County Highway Department and approved by the Wisconsin DNR to ensure the target levels are within the DNR ordered range. The IOMP also lists the summer minimum and maximum water level, summer target water level, winter target level, and dates of a winter drawdown if the winter target level is lower than the summer target level. The DNR also reviews these levels to make sure resource managers have an opportunity to make suggestions or voice concerns.

The water level on each dam controlled lake in Washburn County will be operated according to the IOMP. The Washburn County Highway and Dam Committee will consider changes to target water elevations and drawdown dates with the following requirements.

- Any requested change should be within the DNR ordered upper and lower target elevations. Changes requested outside of the ordered upper and lower elevations will require following the formal permit process with the Wisconsin DNR.
- The request for any changes to the IOMP on a dam controlled lake must be requested by all Townships that have property on the lake in the form of approved minutes from an official town meeting.
- All municipalities must agree upon and recommend the same change. If one township does not approve a change, no changes will be made.
- If a lake has a Lake District, the Lake District must also agree upon the requested change. The Lake District shall submit their request in the form of approved Lake District meeting minutes requesting the change.
- All proposed changes shall be submitted to the Wisconsin DNR Water Management Engineer for review and shall be subject to DNR review and approval. The Wisconsin DNR Water Management Engineer will consult with other branches of the Wisconsin DNR prior to making a decision on changes to the IOMP.