

## State of Minnesota / Office Memorandum

Date: October 12, 2020

To: Parties on the EAW Distribution List / Other Interested Parties

From: Becky Horton, Project Manager

### **RE: Grindstone Dam Removal Project Scoping Environmental Assessment Worksheet and Draft Scoping Decision Document / EQB Monitor Notice**

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#### **Scoping Environmental Assessment Worksheet and Draft Scoping Decision Document for the Grindstone Dam Removal Project**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is seeking public comments on the scoping documents for a State Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS will describe the potential environmental effects of a proposed dam removal project in the Hinckley area. The scoping documents provide information about the topics that are proposed to be included in the State EIS for the proposed project.

The DNR proposes to remove the dam on the Grindstone River in Hinckley and restore connectivity to the river channel. This would result in the permanent removal of the 26.6-acre Grindstone Reservoir, which is a public water basin. The removal is proposed because the dam is in poor condition, it presents a safety hazard, and it is a barrier to passage of fish and other aquatic wildlife on the river. The dam also does not allow for natural sediment transport and natural stream features or habitat diversity.

The DNR invites public comments until 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 12. An online informational meeting and comment opportunity will be held from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5, with an in-person option for up to six individuals without a device or internet connection, at that same time.

The EIS scoping documents include a Scoping Environmental Assessment Worksheet (SEAW) and a Draft Scoping Decision Document (DSDD). Copies of the SEAW and DSDD are available online at:

<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/environmentalreview/grindstone/index.html>

Additional copies may be requested by calling 651-259-5122.

Copies of the SEAW and DSDD are available for public review at:

- East Central Regional Library, 111 N Dellwood S, Cambridge, MN

## How to comment

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The DNR will accept written comments until 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 12. Written comments on the SEAW and DSDD may be submitted using the following methods and should include “Grindstone EIS” in the subject line:

- by email to [Environmentalrev.drn@state.mn.us](mailto:Environmentalrev.drn@state.mn.us);
- by mail to Becky Horton, EIS Project Manager, Environmental Review Unit, DNR Ecological and Water Resources Division, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4025.

## Online Public Input Session

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The DNR invites interested people to an online public information meeting. The meeting will provide details about the project and the EIS scoping process, followed by a public input session.

### How to attend the online meeting

All are welcome to join the online meeting from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5, on their computer, smartphone or landline phone. A WebEx link is required and is available on the [project webpage](#).

### How to attend if I don't have reliable computer or phone access?

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In order to provide accommodations for individuals without a device or adequate internet connection, the DNR will host a space during the meeting time where connected computers and technical assistance will be provided. Computers will be set up at the Hinckley Community Room, 106 1st Street Southeast, Hinckley, MN, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 5. Computer reservations are required by 2 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4. Contact Becky Horton at 651-259-5122 or [becky.horton@state.mn.us](mailto:becky.horton@state.mn.us) to reserve a computer station. Instructions will be provided after registration confirmation. Space is limited to six people, to comply with State social distancing guidance. All in attendance must stay at least six feet from other people. Per the Governor's Executive Order, people in Minnesota will be required to wear a face covering (mask) in all public indoor spaces, including this meeting. Individuals with a disability who need reasonable accommodation to participate in this event please contact Becky at the number above or through the Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529 by Thursday, Oct. 29.

Comments received at these meetings will inform the EIS scoping process. People do not need to attend a meeting to comment. Comments may also be submitted in writing as outlined above.

The DNR will respond to comments when it issues a Final Scoping Decision Document (FSDD). The FSDD determines what will be included in the State EIS. The most helpful comments are those that directly address the content of the scoping documents and offer specific suggestions for inclusion in the scope of the State EIS.

The DNR will then prepare a Draft EIS that will be made available for public comment. Another public information meeting will be held during that comment period. People who submit comments will receive a copy of the decision document, which will include responses to comments. Because all comments and related information are part of the public record for this environmental review, commenters' names and email or postal addresses will also be published and publicly available as they appear in the materials they submit.