**Canisteo Permanent Outlet Construction Soundbites & Video**

**Erika Herr, Mine Permitting and Coordination Supervisor**

**Topics:** project overview; current construction activities; recreation safety messages **Location:** Onsite at construction area. Date/time: 3/3/25; 1pm  
**Videographer:** Ingrid Johnson

**Interview questions:**

* How has the Canisteo’s water levels been managed so far?
* Why is the DNR constructing a water outlet at the Canisteo?
* What construction work is happening now?
* During and after construction, how will Canisteo water levels and temperatures be monitored?
* What do people need to know about access or recreation near the construction site?

**Key messages:**

* The Canisteo is a mine pit that has naturally filled with water over the years since mining has stopped and no company is responsible for dewatering the pit. Over time, the water levels in Canisteo rose due to groundwater and precipitation. In 2022, the Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board funded a water pumping project managed by DNR hydrologists. Between 2022 and 2024, more than two billion gallons of water were pumped from Canisteo into Holman Lake and a wetland complex. Winter pumping has kept water levels below 1318 ft, helping the Bovey drain tile system divert groundwater away from residential areas. Seasonal pumping has controlled Canisteo’s water levels until a permanent water outlet is in place.
* Construction on a permanent water outlet is underway. As construction begins on the permanent water outlet, outdoor recreationists may encounter contractors using existing public roads or trails to access the Canisteo and surrounding areas near the construction site. The DNR strongly encourages everyone to pay close attention and take precautions around the construction area. Additionally, people should have permission from landowners before accessing any areas nearby.
* This new outlet will help us manage the water level more effectively. Once it's up and running, it will direct water into the Prairie River, letting us maintain the water levels year-round without having to rely on seasonal pumping anymore.
* DNR hydrologists will monitor water levels at Canisteo Pit during the construction of the water outlet structure. After completing the permanent outlet, they will check levels downstream from Canisteo, West Hill, and Lind Pits.
* The flow route of the Canisteo outlet will be observed for blockages to prevent flooding at culverts or outlet sites. The DNR may set up a monitoring site for water flow at the Prairie River, where the Canisteo outlet discharges.
* Water temperatures at Canisteo will indicate when to bypass the sand filtration system. In winter, when temperatures are below 50 degrees, the filtration system will be avoided since immature zebra mussels, or veligers, are absent from cold waters, making winter filtration unnecessary to prevent the spread of invasive species downstream.
* DNR hydrologists will conduct biological sampling at Canisteo to ensure the filtration system filters zebra mussels effectively when water temperatures exceed 50 degrees. Sampling will also inform decisions about when to bypass the sand filtration system each winter when temperatures fall below this threshold.
* The DNR has no plans to open public access at the Canisteo. Ongoing dewatering and construction activities will limit recreation near the pit. As construction begins on the permanent water outlet, outdoor recreationists may encounter contractors using existing public roads or trails to access the Canisteo and surrounding areas near the construction site. The DNR strongly encourages everyone to pay close attention and take precautions around the construction area. Additionally, people should have permission from landowners before accessing any areas nearby.

| Erika Herr, Mine Permitting and Coordination Supervisor  Videographer: R2 IO, Ingrid Johnson | Topics: project overview; construction timeline; safety messages  Location: Onsite at Canisteo, construction area. Date/time: TBD |
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| **Main Footage (soundbites)** | **B-roll (secondary visual support)** |
| I’m Erika Herr, Mine Permitting Supervisor for the DNR’s Lands and Mineral Division.  We’re out today at the Canisteo Mine complex in Itasca County with an update on the water management project.  After two years of pumping out more than two billion gallons of water from the Canisteo, we're finally kicking off construction on a permanent water outlet. This new outlet will help us manage the water level more effectively. Once it's up and running, it will direct water into the Prairie River, letting us maintain the water levels year-round without having to rely on seasonal pumping anymore. It’s a big step forward! | Erika is in the foreground, and pipeline construction equipment is in the background. |
| From Highway 61 (more location details), you can see that crews have been out here clearing state land in preparation for the outlet's construction. | Broll of the construction site. |
| DNR hydrologists will closely watch the water levels at Canisteo Pit while crews are constructing the new water outlet structure. Once the permanent outlet is in place, DNR hydrologists will also check water levels downstream at Canisteo, West Hill, and Lind Pits.  To keep things safe, DNR hydrologists monitor the flow route of the Canisteo outlet for any blockages, preventing possible flooding at culverts or outlet sites. Additionally, the DNR might set up a monitoring station for water flow at the Prairie River, where the Canisteo outlet discharges.  At Canisteo, they’ll track water temperatures to determine when to bypass the sand filtration system. During the winter months, when temperatures drop below 50 degrees, they’ll skip filtration since immature zebra mussels, known as veligers, are usually absent from cold waters. This means there’s no need for winter filtration to keep invasive species from spreading downstream.  DNR hydrologists will also carry out biological sampling at Canisteo to ensure that the filtration system effectively filters zebra mussels when water temperatures rise above 50 degrees. This sampling will help them decide when to bypass the sand filtration system each winter when temperatures fall below this important threshold. | Broll of the construction site. |
| Safety is super important for both the workers on site and our local community, so it’s really best to steer clear of the construction area for now.  As they start building the permanent water outlet, you might see contractors using the public roads to get to the Canisteo and nearby areas. If you’re outdoors, just keep an eye out for construction equipment or crews in that area. And don’t forget—make sure to get permission from landowners if you’re thinking of exploring any nearby spots. | Broll of the construction zone. |