

Moose Lake Flood Plain Overview

The Moose Lake Improvement Association Board recently became aware of an issue that affects every property owner on Moose Lake. The Regulatory Flood Elevation (RFE) for Moose Lake was updated in 2012. A committee of the Board was charged with determining the impact of this and if the RFE can be lowered.

The Moose Lake RFE changed in 2012. This change places the RFE at 1376.95 feet. This is 6.5 feet above the normal full pool level of 1370.5 feet. The study that established the RFE was conducted on behalf of Sawyer County and was completed prior to the new dam being constructed. It used rainfall data from NOAA and dam performance restrictions from the Wisconsin DNR and considered water flow into Moose Lake from its watershed.

What does this mean and why is it important? First, every property on the lake has some land (and some have structures) within the RFE. If you want to sell, refinance, gift to your children or others, or your mortgage holder sells your mortgage, you will have to either pay flood insurance or get a Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA). A LOMA requires a surveyor to determine that the structure(s) on your property are above the RFE and submit the appropriate paper work to attach to your deed. The cost for a LOMA is about \$1200. If your structure is above the RFE per the LOMA then you do not need flood insurance. If it is still in the RFE then flood insurance would be required for any financing.

Second, there are about 84 Structures within RFE. If you are one of these then flood insurance will be required if any sale or refinancing is being considered. A map of the lake showing the RFE is attached. The structures shown as yellow fall in whole or part within the RFE.

The MLIA is looking at options to accomplish two things. First, commission a study to establish a new RFE, based on the new dam's 1000 year design, that would allow some of the 84 structures to be removed from the RFE. The approximate cost of this study is \$7500. After its completion you would still be required to have a LOMA to prove that your structures are above the new RFE.

The second piggybacks on the study above with additional data analysis and the submission of documentation to FEMA that would include an actual map of all structures on the lake and where they are placed relative to the revised RFE. The cost for this is estimated to be an additional \$17,500. In addition, there might be additional FEMA "review" fees (we are trying to get our hands around this). The advantage of doing this is that a LOMA would no longer be required if your structures are above the new RFE. Some property owners with structures below the new RFE would still be required to secure flood insurance if the property is refinanced or sold.

We continue to dig into the details but feel we are at a point where we need your feedback on whether to continue. Please answer the following questions by responding to this email.

1. Should we pursue the phase one study that will probably establish a lower RFE and stop there?
2. Should we continue to phase two of the study, if phase one gives us positive results, and have a map prepared for submission to FEMA?
3. Would you be willing to pay an equal share of expenses for phase one? Phase two? (Please note that the more property owners participating, the lower the per property cost would be.)

Thanks for your time and feedback. This is important!

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Joe Dwyer

Tom Koehler

Don Rossiter

Dave Wiltrout

MLIA Board of Directors