

FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

This page introduces questions and answers about the Lake Conestee Site and Dam, and the potential consequences of a dam failure. These FAQs are organized by topic.

When the Lake Conestee Dam Fails,

Topic No 1: What is in Lake Conestee, and how might it impact Lake Greenwood ?

Topic No.2: What about Flooding and Flood Damage ?

Topic No.3: What could happen downstream in the Reedy River, Boyd’s Mill Pond, and the Reedy Arm of Lake Greenwood ?

Topic No.4: What is the solution for containing the hazardous contaminants trapped behind the old dam ?

Topic No.5: What might the economic impacts be for communities along the river, around Boyd’s Mill Pond, and Lake Greenwood, and the region ?

Topic No.6: What do we know about the “forever chemicals” (PFAS) in Lake Conestee, and the Reedy, and how might they impact the downstream communities ?

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Reference as: *LCDRP-FAQs – RRD-10.5, 230322-HRI*

FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

When the Lake Conestee Dam Fails,

Topic No 5: What might the economic impacts be for communities along the river, around Boyd’s Mill Pond and Lake Greenwood, and the region ?

- Q5.1 Who are the economic stakeholders ?*
- Q5.2 Change in regulatory status ?*
- Q5.3 Effects of potential Superfund listing ?*
- Q5.4 Contamination effects on real estate ?*
- Q5.5 Other river / waterfront cases ?*
- Q5.6 Impact on economic competitiveness ?*
- Q5.7 Effects water / wastewater utilities ?*
- Q5.8 Effects on recreation ?*
- Q5.9 Impacts on tourism ?*
- Q5.10 Impacts to government and agencies ?*

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FAQ: When the Lake Conestee Dam Fails,

Topic No.5: What might the economic impacts be for communities along the river, around Boyd's Mill Pond and Lake Greenwood, and the region?

Q

Question 5.1

Who are the stakeholders who could be affected by economic issues?

A

- ***Riverfront and lakefront communities.***
- ***Landowners.***
- ***Recreation and tourism.***
- ***Water utilities and water consumers.***
- ***Wastewater permittees upstream.***
- ***Commercial interests, service providers.***
- ***Government entities.***

This is one of several questions related to Topic No.5. See Q5.1 – Q5.10.

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Question 5.2

Could a massive release of toxins change the regulatory status for the Lake Conestee Site, and the downstream reach of the Reedy River?

A

EPA and SCDHEC won't put the LC Site on the National Priority (Superfund) List at this time, despite the clear threat of a toxic disaster. They advise the situation will be reassessed after the dam fails. LC and miles of the downstream Reedy could very likely become a federally listed site.

This is one of several questions related to Topic No.5. See Q5.1 – Q5.10.

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Question 5.3

How would actual or potential listing as a Federal Superfund Site or other changes in regulatory status affect the river corridor and the lake communities?

A

Federal and state agencies recognize the economic impacts and stigma that serious contamination cases can have on communities. Effects can reach beyond the limits of contamination to surrounding areas. Reasonable people often choose to avoid such risks, whether real or perceived.

This is one of several questions related to Topic No.5. See Q5.1 – Q5.10.

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Question 5.4

What might the effects be on residential real estate, and properties along the river corridor and around the lakes?

A

Major contaminant release events often impact property values. The nature, extent, toxicity, and severity of contamination may affect the level of concern. Perceptions of uncertainties and risks may reduce the attractiveness of affected areas and may suppress marketability and values.

This is one of several questions related to Topic No.5. See Q5.1 – Q5.10.

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Question 5.5

What has happened with other catastrophic releases of contaminants to rivers and lakes?

A

There are countless cases nationwide of large, complex, seriously contaminated public waters. Rivers and lakes are very difficult and expensive to remediate. Assessment and restoration, if possible, may take decades. Some cases have cost billions and are still active after 40 years.

This is one of several questions related to Topic No.5. See Q5.1 – Q5.10.

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Question 5.6

Could the release of toxins, and the stigma of contamination affect the ability of the Lake Greenwood area to compete for economic development opportunities?

A

Commercial and industrial investors seek locations with clean environments, attractive amenities, and good quality of life. Some industries require ultra-pure water. A cloud of uncertainty over water quality and local environmental conditions could discourage investment.

This is one of several questions related to Topic No.5. See Q5.1 – Q5.10.

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Question 5.7

What would the effects of a release of toxins and nutrients be for water and wastewater utilities?

A

TBD, but potentially costly. More intensive monitoring for toxins would be required, and treatment processes may need to be modified. Upstream, wastewater dischargers could be affected by higher nutrient levels and diminished water quality downstream, putting their permit terms at risk.

This is one of several questions related to Topic No.5. See Q5.1 – Q5.10.

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Question 5.8

How could recreation be affected?

A

Park access at Conestee, Cedar Falls, Lollis and Dixon Parks (LAU), and other locations could be affected. Fishing and swimming may be restricted. Boating conditions could be impaired. Water contact recreation on the lakes may become unattractive due to safety uncertainties.

This is one of several questions related to Topic No.5. See Q5.1 – Q5.10.

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Question 5.9

How might tourism be affected?

A

Environmental disasters frequently have a negative impact on tourism. Real or perceived pollution may make the river and lakes less desirable for fishing events, boating, vacation homes, and “lake life.” Economic effects on related goods and services, and rentals, could last for years.

This is one of several questions related to Topic No.5. See Q5.1 – Q5.10.

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Question 5.10

How might state and local elected officials and governmental departments be affected by this emergency?

A

Calls regarding impacts, actions, and accountability will overwhelm officials. Demands to assess conditions and protect health and economic interests will follow. Tax bases could be affected. Pressure for timely relief and remediation will consume resources. Litigation would be very likely.

This is one of several questions related to Topic No.5. See Q5.1 – Q5.10.

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