



WASHBURN COUNTY HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Brian Danielsen P.E., Commissioner

1600 County Highway H
SPOONER, WISCONSIN 54801
(715) 635-4480 Fax (715) 388-7945

Hank Graber, Chair Clint Stariha, Vice Chair
Sandy Johnson Brian Melton George Cusick

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.



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Washburn County Dam Operation Levels

Effective 8-15-2022

Dam	Birch Lake
Municipalities	Town of Birchwood, Town of Edgewater (Sawyer County), Village of Birchwood
Permitted Upper Elevation	1231.0
Permitted Lower Elevation	1230.0 (Summer), 1229.5 (Winter)
Summer Target Level	1231.0
Winter Target Level	1230.0
Begin Drawdown	October 1st
End Drawdown	October 15th
Begin Normal Pool Elevations	After Ice Out in Spring

Dam	Long Lake Dam
Municipalities	Townships of Birchwood, Long Lake, and Madge
Permitted Upper Elevation	1224.2
Permitted Lower Elevation	1222.0 (Summer), 1220.5 (Winter)
Summer Target Level	1223.1
Winter Target Level	1222.7
Begin Drawdown	October 1st
End Drawdown	October 15th
Begin Normal Pool Elevations	After Ice Out in Spring

Dam	Minong Flowage Dam
Municipalities	Town of Minong. Town of Wascott (Douglas County)
Permitted Upper Elevation	996.45 (NGVD 29) - (111.0 Local Datum)
Permitted Lower Elevation	995.45 (NGVD 29) - (110.0 Local Datum)
Summer Target Level	996.25 (NGVD 29) - (110.8 Local Datum)
Winter Target Level	996.25 (NGVD 29) - (110.8 Local Datum)
Begin Drawdown	N/A
End Drawdown	N/A
Begin Normal Pool Elevations	N/A



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Dam	Spooner Lake
Municipalities	Town of Spooner, Spooner Lake District
Permitted Upper Elevation	1089.5 (NAVD 88) - (96.80 Local Datum)
Permitted Lower Elevation	-
Summer Target Level	1089.5 (NAVD 88) - (96.8 Local Datum)
Winter Target Level	1088.5 (NAVD 88) - (95.8 Local Datum)
Begin Drawdown	September 21st
End Drawdown	October 15th
Begin Normal Pool Elevations	After Ice Out in Spring

Washburn County Dam Operation Levels

Dam	Pokegema Lake
Municipalities	Town of Minong
Permitted Upper Elevation	-
Permitted Lower Elevation	-
Summer Target Level	1013.2, NAVD 88
Winter Target Level	1013.2, NAVD 88
Begin Drawdown	N/A
End Drawdown	N/A
Begin Normal Pool Elevations	N/A

Dam	Slim Creek
Municipalities	Town of Birchwood
Permitted Upper Elevation	-
Permitted Lower Elevation	-
Summer Target Level	1260.24
Winter Target Level	N/A
Begin Drawdown	N/A
End Drawdown	N/A
Begin Normal Pool Elevations	N/A