

Dams Information Sheet

A dam is a structure that blocks the flow of water. Often a dam is built to control a river. Beavers are nature's best dam builders. They use mud, sticks, and stones to block the flow of a river. Building a dam provides the beaver with a pond. People, however, build dams out of concrete. The water from man-made dams is held in a lake called a reservoir. The reservoir holds or reserves the water.

Dams have many different purposes. Some dams move water into canals or pipelines. Other dams use the energy of the falling water to make electricity. Dams also hold water for crop irrigation, flood control, and to provide water for cities.

Dams that control floods release water slowly into rivers. A reservoir holds the extra water until it is released. A spillway is the part of the dam that lets extra water go around the dam. The spillway helps protect the dam from collapsing or falling down.

Dams are useful, but they also have harmful effects. Dams change the ecology of the area in which they are built. Fish are affected because a dam changes the temperature of the water. The water that is released from the dam comes from the bottom of the river where the water is much colder. In addition, dams make river water slow down. This often stops healthy organic material from getting to the soil. The organic material settles on the bottom of the reservoir instead. Dams also affect animals that live in and near the water, often destroying their homes.

Roosevelt Dam

In 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the National Reclamation Act. This was the beginning of the U.S. Reclamation Service. It was started to bring water to the desert for people living there. The Reclamation Service's job was to build dams. The first dam that was built was Roosevelt Dam.

Roosevelt Dam is located 76 miles northeast of Phoenix. Originally, the dam was 280 ft high and 723 ft long. The dam was named after President Theodore Roosevelt.

Roosevelt Dam uses the water from the Salt River. The reservoir that stores water for Roosevelt Dam is called Theodore Roosevelt Lake, or Roosevelt Lake. Building the dam helped turn the desert land into fertile cropland.

Construction on the dam began in 1903. It was completed in 1911. Theodore Roosevelt spoke at the dedication of the dam on March 18, 1911. At the ceremony he pressed the button to allow the release of water from the reservoir.

On Oct. 7, 1949, work began on the repair and improvement of Roosevelt Dam. The purpose of this project was to reduce costs, improve the facilities, increase operating efficiency, and conserve available water supplies.

In 1984, Congress approved funding to modify Roosevelt Dam to give the dam the ability to increase its capacity to prevent flooding. Actual modification began on the existing dam in 1986. The dam was raised 77-feet to a height of 357 feet. An arch bridge was built in 1990 to help the flow of traffic over the dam. The bridge is 120 feet above the water. It spans 1,080 feet across Roosevelt Lake.

A Visitor's Center was also built with Bureau of Reclamation funds. All of the lake side facilities that were lost by raising the dam and increasing the water level were replaced. Some of the recreational facilities that were added included boat launching ramps, a marina, campgrounds, groups use areas, picnic sites, and recreational vehicle parks. The lake now also contains a wildlife area and a wildlife refuge.

Theodore Roosevelt Dam

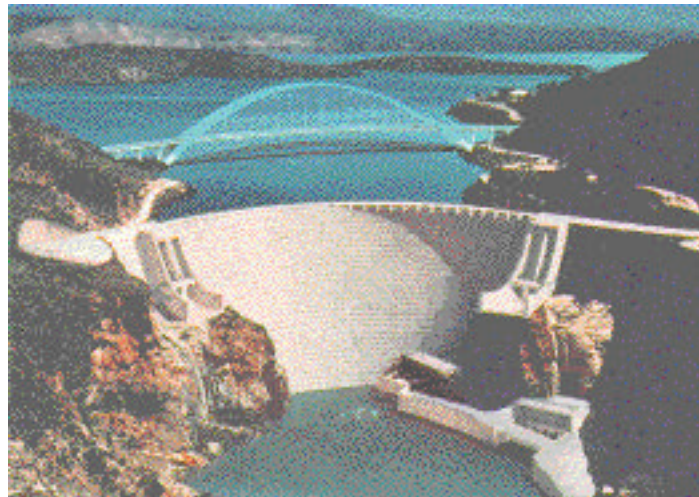


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<http://www.usbr.gov/cdams/dams/theodoreroosevelt.html>

Dams

Write four facts about dams/Roosevelt Dam.

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building a dam has positive and negative effects. List two positive effects and one negative effect.

Positive Effects:

1.

2.

Negative Effects:

1.

On another sheet of paper, write a paragraph that summarizes the main idea of the "Dams Information Sheet" and another paragraph summarizing "Roosevelt Dam." Use the information you wrote on this worksheet to help you. Your paragraphs should contain at least five sentences.

Dates for Roosevelt Dam Timeline:
Answer Key

1902 National Reclamation Act signed

1903 Construction began on Roosevelt Dam

1911 Roosevelt Dam completed

March 18, 1911 Theodore Roosevelt dedicated Roosevelt Dam

October 7, 1949 Rehabilitation authorized for Roosevelt Dam

1984 Congress approves modifying Roosevelt Dam

1986 Modification begins on Roosevelt Dam

1990 New bridge built across Roosevelt Lake

Name _____

Roosevelt Dam Timeline

1900s

1910s

1920s

1930s

1940s

1950s

1960s

1970s

1980s

1990s

Timeline Sample

1900s	1902 National Reclamation Act signed 1903 Construction began on Roosevelt Dam
1910s	1911 Roosevelt Dam completed
1920s	
1930s	
1940s	October 7, 1949 Repairs and improvements authorized for Roosevelt Dam
1950s	
1960s	
1970s	
1980s	1984 Congress approves modification to Roosevelt Dam
1990s	1990 New bridge built across Roosevelt Lake