

Virginia Field Office

Pigg River Restoration at Power Dam

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with Friends of the Rivers of Virginia (FORVA), which owns Power Dam, Franklin County, Town of Rocky Mount, FishAmerica Foundation, and others to restore the Pigg River through partial removal of Power Dam. Power Dam is located east of the Town of Rocky Mount in Franklin County, Virginia. Constructed in 1915 for power generation, the dam is 25 feet high and 200 feet long and in poor condition.

Dam construction is one of the major threats to the federally listed endangered Roanoke logperch (*Percina rex*), which inhabits this section of the Pigg River. Restoring connectivity of the upstream and downstream sections of the Pigg River will assist in recovery of the Roanoke logperch and will benefit game fish such as Roanoke and largemouth bass.

Partial dam removal will also eliminate a threat to local infrastructure downstream, including the State Route 713 bridge and the Franklin County Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Elimination of the majority of the dam will reduce flood levels upstream of the dam by decreasing the base flood elevation within the existing impoundment area.

Demolition of most of the dam will assist the county in fully implementing a blueway along the Pigg River by eliminating a safety hazard for recreational boaters and anglers. The blueway will be enhanced by a small public parking area and river access point provided by FORVA.

Breaching Power Dam will provide additional resiliency to the Pigg River ecosystem and surrounding localities from hurricanes and other large storm events.

Progress toward partial dam removal includes completion of a sediment analysis for contaminants, flood and sediment transport studies, water quality and biological monitoring and initiation of historic resources review.

Project Goals

- Remove a public safety hazard
- Restore native fish habitat
- Reduce fragmentation of habitat for endangered Roanoke logperch
- Provide resiliency to the Pigg River ecosystem and surrounding communities
- Protect downstream state and county infrastructure
- Improve existing blueway
- Reduce flooding

Virginia Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
6669 Short Lane, Gloucester, VA 23061
804/693 6694
<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/virginiafield>

<http://www.fws.gov/partners/> <http://www.fws.gov>
1 800/344 WILD

Federal Relay Service for the deaf and hard-of-hearing
1 800/877 8339

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