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## **Although there is no imminent danger, Phase One Study finds serious issues facing the Lake Lure Dam**

**Lake Lure, NC – Oct. 19, 2017:** Referring to the Lake Lure Hydroelectric Dam as a “Grand Old Lady” neglected for too long, a leading expert in the field of dam safety has completed phase one of a comprehensive two-part study to evaluate the structural integrity, stability and overall safety of the 91-year-old structure.

Phase one, the dam safety analysis, conducted by Dr. Dan Marks finds that several serious issues need to be addressed related to loss of strength in the concrete, erosion, excessive leakage and stress on the dam as a whole.

With over 43 years of professional experience in civil and geotechnical engineering, Dr. Marks has overseen more than 200 dam projects domestically and abroad.

Following Dr. Marks’ presentation during a recent Town Council meeting, Lake Lure Mayor Bob Keith said, “While the issues surrounding the needed repairs at the dam are serious, and they will be expensive, there is no imminent danger or need to panic.”

In recent years, the Town of Lake Lure has dedicated additional funds and far greater attention to the maintenance and repair needs of the dam. Depending on annual rainfall amounts, revenue to the Town of Lake Lure from Duke Power for the sale of electricity from the Dam averages around \$350,000. That revenue is currently earmarked to cover repairs to the dam as well as the ongoing management of sediment coming into the lake.

The dam does not provide electricity to Lake Lure.

Originally, a proposal for only a safety inspection was submitted to the Town. However, due to observed evidence of accelerated deterioration of the dam, Town Council felt that a significantly expanded scope of work was necessary.

The second phase of the study is expected to be completed in March. It will focus on a structural analysis of the dam. Having the two studies together will provide a more thorough representation of the challenges and overall cost of corrective action.

Following completion of the second phase of the study, the Town will determine a specific strategy for next steps in repairs and how to fund it. The cost of the study is \$50,000 and is being split between two fiscal years in the Town’s budget.

The study is important as well as timely, observed Town Manager Ron Nalley. “The hydroelectric dam is perhaps the Town’s largest capital asset,” he said. “Having this solid information will be invaluable as we cope with the challenges associated with aging equipment and infrastructure.”



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Of the process, Dr. Marks said, “I will make a formal presentation near the conclusion of the phase two field exploration and laboratory testing programs.” At that time, a more definitive prioritization of dam remediation activities will be presented with an indication of the remediation design and construction schedules.”

In 2014, the Asset Management Plan for the Town indicated that a detailed engineering assessment of the condition of all assets at the dam and a dam safety inspection were needed as part of a five-year expenditure projection stating that a thorough evaluation of the dam was needed.

Completed in September 1926, the dam created the lake for which the community is named. Full impoundment of the lake was completed in 1927. Lake Lure is home to approximately 1,025 residents and is a widely recognized tourism destination to thousands of visitors every year.

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