

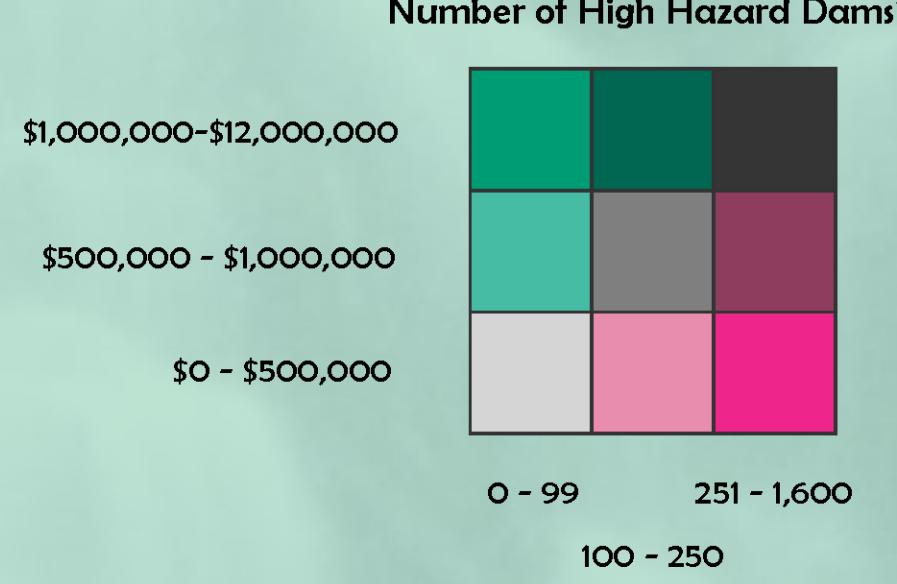
# worth a Dam?

Dams sprouted up across the United States in the 1950s for several reasons - and they served their purpose at the time - but the question has since arisen as to whether aging, ineffective, and potentially dangerous dams are still worth the upkeep.

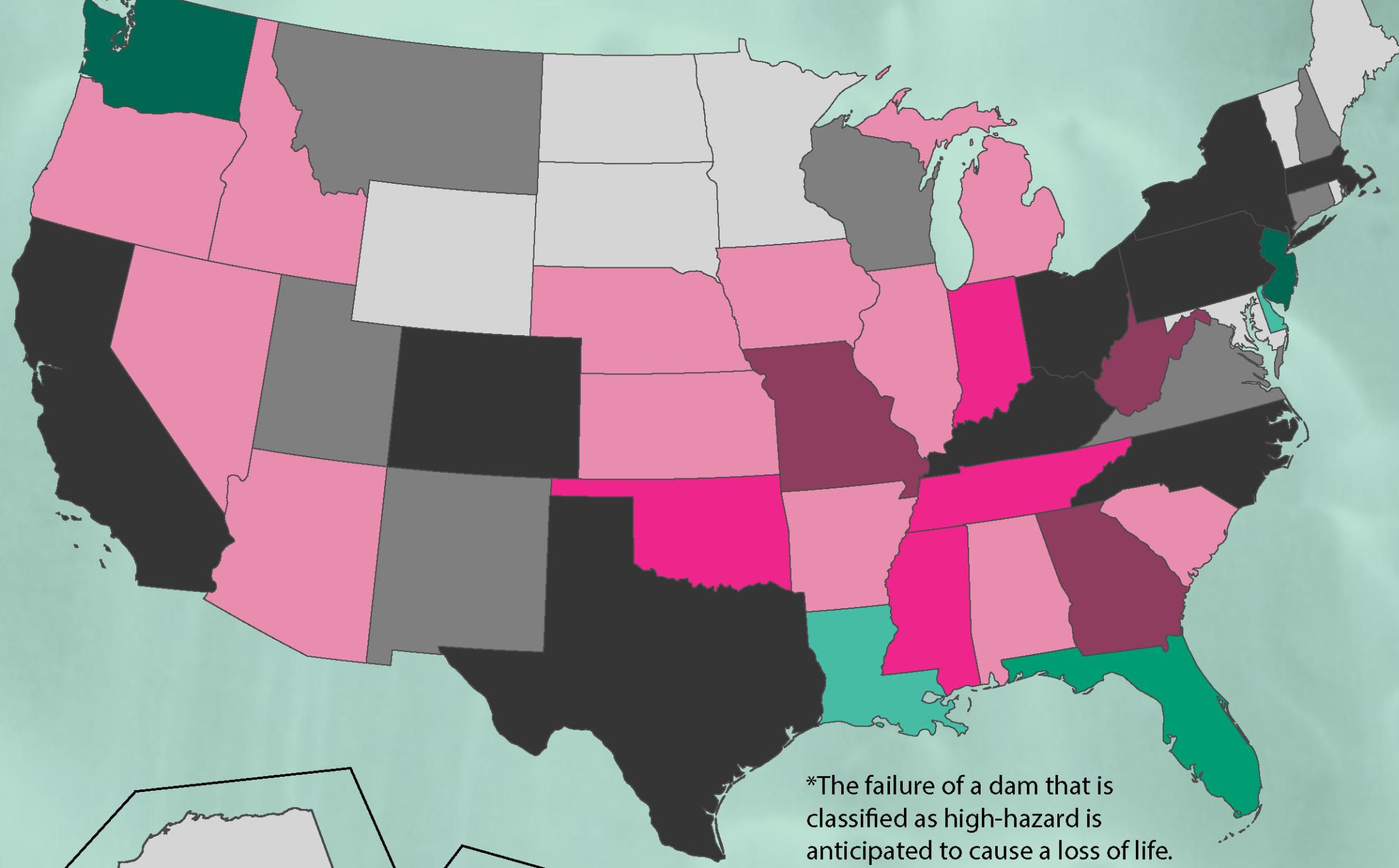
Many dangerous dams, inadequate funding

Many dangerous dams, suitable funding

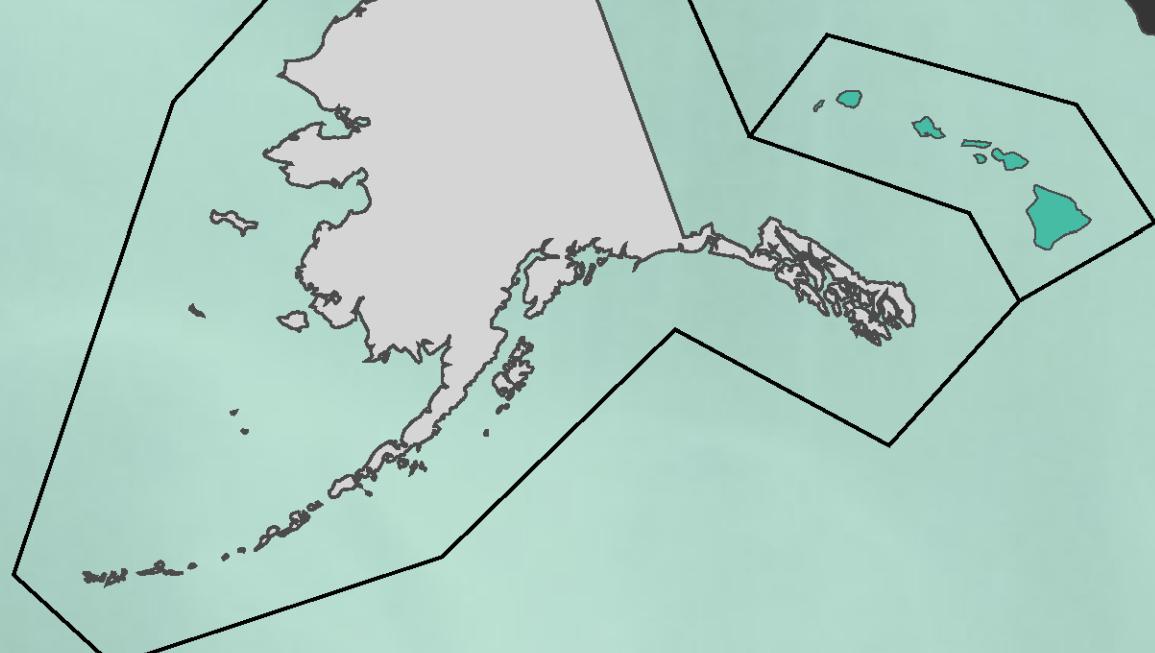
Few dangerous dams, adequate funding



State Dam Safety Budget

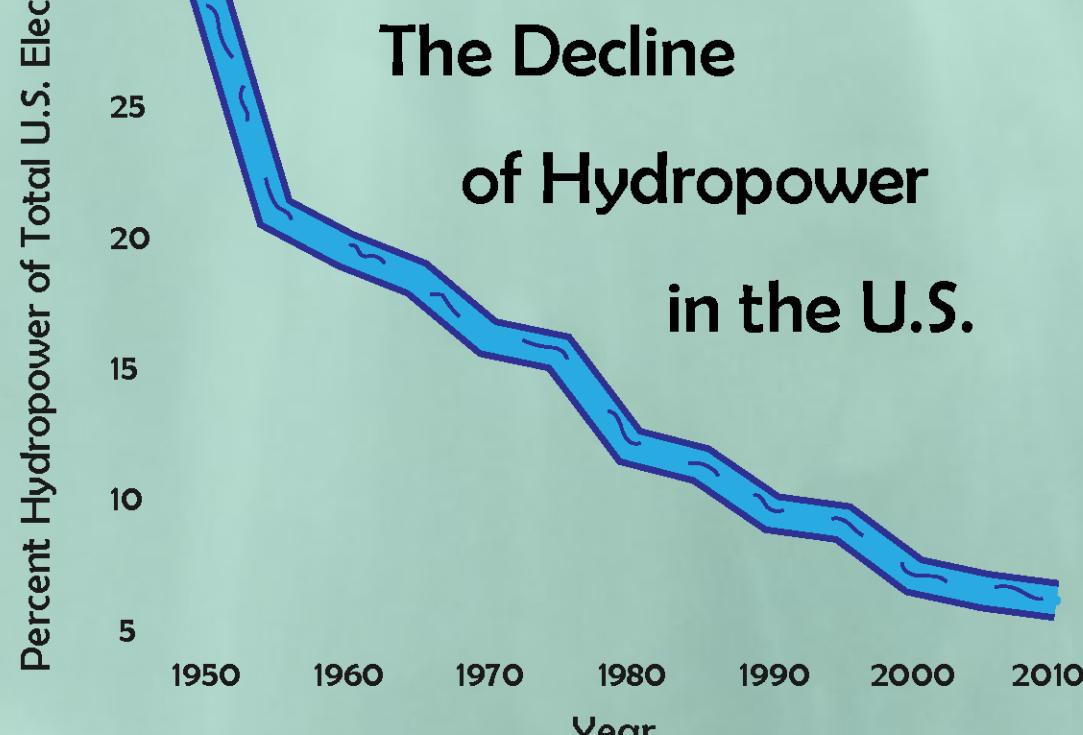


\*The failure of a dam that is classified as high-hazard is anticipated to cause a loss of life.



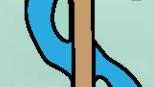
...Yet there  
are still **84,000**  
dams  
in the U.S.,  
with an  
average age of  


Hydropower has been on the decline  
in the U.S. for some time now...



Are they worth the cost of repair?

The price tag to fix high hazard dams alone has surged to an estimated

 **21 Billion**,

compared to the \$814 billion we are spending on the military just this year.

Map Projection: North America Albers Equal Area Conic

Central Meridian: 96°W

Data Sources: Natural Earth, American Society of Civil Engineers,

U.S. Energy Information Administration,

U.S. Government Spending: <[http://www.usgovernmentspending.com/us\\_military\\_spending\\_30.html](http://www.usgovernmentspending.com/us_military_spending_30.html)>

Waterfall background image: <[http://www.public-domain-image.com/free-images/nature-landscapes/waterfalls/a-scenic-view-of-a-cascading-waterfall-photographed-in-central-oreon](http://www.public-domain-image.com/free-images/nature-landscapes/waterfalls/a-scenic-view-of-a-cascading-waterfall-photographed-in-central-oregon/attachment/a-scenic-view-of-a-cascading-waterfall-photographed-in-central-oreon)>

Cartographer: Christopher Morgan

In their current state America's dams really aren't worth a damn - thus we cannot afford to be wishywashy much longer. A concerted effort must be made to either reinvest in dams to continue harnessing hydropower and to ensure their safety, or remove them altogether and reap the benefits of tax savings, restored ecosystems, and the elimination of safety risks.