

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/1169528959/>

Montevideo approves removal of dam on Chippewa River

Bid letting expected in May
on demolition of structure

By Tom Cherveney
tcherveney@wctrib.com

MONTEVIDEO — A 54-year-old dam on the Chippewa River will be coming down this summer.

The Montevideo City Council approved plans and specifications at their meeting on Monday to remove the dam in Lagoon Park, according to City Manager Steve Jones.

A bid letting on its demolition is likely in May. The project will involve punching a hole in the

dam to lower the river elevation before removing the structure, possibly in July and August.

The city has obtained \$400,000 in funding from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service toward the cost of removal.

The Minnesota DNR has developed a plan to place rock weirs in place of the dam. The rocks will create a series of small rapids.

The dam was built in 1958 and was originally owned by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. It was erected in connection with the project to build the Minnesota Highway 7 beltway at the location.

The dam is 21 feet high and 120

feet in width. The low-head dam was the site of a tragic, triple drowning when three young people were caught in the hydraulic flow below it in 1975. Low-head dams are known as drowning machines due to the hydraulic rollers that occur below them.

Along with increasing safety, the removal of the dam should improve fish habitat and fishing opportunities in the lower portion of the river. Part of the project will involve removing sediment that has built up behind the dam.

The rock weir structure that will be replace the dam is described as similar to the rapids developed in Dawson with the removal of the Lac qui Parle dam in that community.



Tribune file photo

The Lac qui Parle dam in Dawson has been replaced by this set of rock weirs. A similar set of rock rapids will replace the Chippewa River dam in Montevideo.