

**Situation:** The town of Rocksburg, population 900, is located along the scenic Jones River, approximately 60 miles from the closest city. The city's mayor and city council have proposed that a dam be constructed two miles upriver from Rocksburg. In the environmental impact statement drafted by city engineers and others the following information was identified:

- The dam would meet the area's electrical power demand for ten or more years.
- The dam would provide some water for irrigation and would help with flood control.
- The dam would be of rock-fill construction, and it would be 75 feet high and 300 feet across. Seven miles of river would be turned into a lake.
- The dam construction would take five years to complete and would employ more than 2,000 workers. After the dam was finished, approximately 150 employees would be needed to operate the facility.

Wildlife would be affected in the following ways:

- 20 percent loss to deer herd due to lost forage
- 20 percent loss to small mammals living in the river valley due to loss of habitat
- 20 percent loss to the area's songbird population due to lost riverbank nesting sites
- blockage of fish migration due to the creation of the lake and dam
- increase of the area's wintering bald eagle population
- reduction and possible elimination of fish species adapted to cooler or flowing water, including trout, minnows, and darters
- increase in warmer, nonflowing water habitat suitable for bass, bluegill, and carp
- growth in the economy resulting from the new tourist industry

The citizens of Rocksburg are concerned about the challenges and benefits resulting from the

increased visitation to their town during and after the construction of the dam. As mentioned, they project the addition of 2,000 employees, plus their families, during construction for five years and those 150 permanent employees plus their families who would stay after the dam was finished. They are concerned about effects on schools, sewage disposal, roads, home sites, property values, and the rural atmosphere, as well as police, fire, and hospital emergency capacities. They see potential benefits from the development, such as new recreation opportunities for the people of Rocksburg and the city that is only about an hour away (water skiing, sailboarding, motorboating, swimming, fishing, camping, picnicking, and other lake-related sports).

Other impacts could include these:

- flooding of Native American archeological sites;
- cultural changes for local Native American community that has fished the river for generations;
- water for irrigation at a lower cost;
- potentially less expensive power when compared to other forms of power production (e.g., nuclear, coal, oil, fossil fuels);
- potential increase in total power bills that may be necessary to pay for construction of the dam; and
- loss of 7 miles of prime whitewater, resulting in lost whitewater rafting and kayaking businesses.

