

Colebrook and Goodwin Dam Info

- 1949 Goodwin Dam authorized by Special Act 444 (CT)
- 1960 Goodwin Dam completed
 - Colebrook River Dam authorized by Special Act 122 (US)
- 1965 Colebrook River Reservoir Agreement between MDC and US ACE
- 1969 Colebrook River Dam completed – US Special Act 122

Six key factors currently control the flow of the West Branch of the Farmington River:

1. A minimum release of 50 cfs from Goodwin Dam is required at all times.
2. All natural inflow to the Colebrook and West Branch Farmington reservoirs—up to 150 cfs— must be released from Goodwin Dam.
3. All upstream flows released from Otis Reservoir in Massachusetts must be released from Goodwin Dam.
4. Upon request of the Farmington River Power Company, all flows in the amount of 0 to 300 cfs, up to 400 million gallons per day and 21.7 billion gallons per year, must be released from Goodwin Dam.
5. Releases from Colebrook Reservoir when water elevation is above 708 feet.
6. Releases up to 3.26 billion gallons per year from Colebrook Reservoir as needed by the Connecticut DEEP for fisheries.

The Goodwin Dam releases required under the riparian agreement with the Farmington River Power Company historically have provided a substantial contribution to base flows in the West Branch, providing much if not all of the water for fisheries and recreation. This is particularly true during the drier summer months, when the riparian releases have often produced river flows considerably higher than what might otherwise be available.

The Colebrook River Reservoir Agreement

- Between MDC and the US Army Corps of Engineers
- Lays out specifics of storage, cost share, etc.
- Only applies to the 10 BG of storage. Does not apply to 3.5 BG to which MDC has permanent rights
- Terms must comply with The River and Harbor Act of 1960

MDC payments to US ACE as per agreement

- \$200K for principal payments
- 35% of O&M costs after principal payments have been met.

In 2019, MDC began the process of decommissioning the Hydroelectric Facility at Colebrook Dam which the MDC has operated under agreement with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The Colebrook Reservoir began operation in 1969 and was primarily built as a flood control dam after the 1955 flood, but the dam was built in the middle of the approved projected impoundment of Goodwin Dam. The contract that was negotiated between MDC and USACE, was that MDC would have 3.5 billion gallons (BG) gallons of storage in Colebrook Reservoir, along with 10 BG of emergency drinking water supply storage.

Since that contract was signed in 1969, the 10 BG of emergency drinking water was never used. There is no infrastructure for this water to be transported into MDC’s drinking water supply system which comes from Barkhamsted and Nepaug Reservoirs.

