

HOW TO TEAR DOWN A DAM

Deconstruction of the Elwha Dam will be the most complex part of the three-year project.

PHASE 1

Open the four spillway gates on the south side of the dam to lower the level of the Lake Aldwell reservoir 18 ft. (1 month)

PHASE 2

Remove the south gates and dig a diversion channel. Blast a 30 x 35-ft. plug of bedrock in five stages and reroute the river through the gap. (3 months)

PHASE 3

Take out the north spillway and upper portion of the dam and install a 12-ft.-wide road, in order to access the penstock tubes. (1 month)

PHASE 4

Remove steel penstocks and slide gates, the concrete intake structure and powerhouse—not shown. (5 months)

PHASE 5

Haul out 200,000 cubic yards of rock, earth, concrete and fir trees that were placed behind the gravity dam after a 1913 bust. (8 months)

PHASE 6

Remove the concrete gravity dam 7 to 10 ft. at a time using explosives, and restore the natural river channel. (2 months)

