DA SMITH Drilling

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DAMS · GEOTECHNICAL

La Prele Dam, Douglas, Wyoming

Phases 1 and 2 of RESPEC's multi-year geotechnical drilling program at La Prele Dam near Douglas, Wyoming, the oldest and tallest open-front dam in the US.

CLIENT	LOCATION	YEARS	WORK
Respec	**Douglas, Wyoming**	**2021–23**	**Dams, Geotechnical**

DA Smith was contracted by RESPEC to complete Phases 1 and 2 of a multiyear geotechnical investigation at La Prele Dam near Douglas, Wyoming, the oldest and tallest open-front dam in the United States. Phase 1 was completed in summer 2021, followed by Phase 2 drilling campaigns in 2022 and 2023. The investigations supported evaluation of subsurface and foundation conditions for a proposed replacement dam.

The programs included vertical and inclined HQ3 core drilling to depths of 300 feet, hollow-stem auger (HSA) and casing advancer drilling through cobble-rich overburden, Standard Penetration Testing (SPT), and Lugeon water pressure (packer) testing. DA Smith also supported downhole optical televiewer and sonic logging and completed selected boreholes as groundwater monitoring wells with piezometers.

Drilling was conducted within the stream channel and from steep access roads and excavated slopes immediately downstream of the existing dam. Additional helicopter-supported drilling campaigns were completed in 2022 and 2023 to investigate otherwise inaccessible locations.

Despite challenging terrain, difficult subsurface conditions, and seasonal weather constraints, DA Smith successfully completed each annual drilling campaign on schedule and ahead of the onset of winter weather.



