

Three Gorges Dam



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Official name	长江三峡大坝
Impounds	Yangtze River
Creates	Three Gorges Reservoir
Locale	Sandouping , Yichang , Hubei , China
Maintained by	China Three Gorges Dam Project
Length	2,335 metres (7,661 ft)
Height	101 metres (331 ft)
Width (at base)	115 metres (377 ft)
Construction began	December 14, 1994
Construction Cost	Estimated 180 billion yuan (39 billion U.S. dollars)

Reservoir information

Capacity	39.3 km ³ (9.4 cu mi)
Catchment area	1,000,000 km ² (386,102 sq mi)
Surface area	1,045 km ² (403 sq mi)

Bridge information

Carries	177
Toll	£10.00

[ID number](#) 7649

Geographical Data

[Coordinates](#)  [30°49′48″N 111°0′36″E](#)

Location

The River:

The **Yangtze River**, or **Chang Jiang**, is China's longest river. The name Yangtze translates as, longest river. It is also the longest in Asia and is ranked third world-wide, after the Nile and the Amazon. It's source has an elevation of about 16,000 feet in the Kunlun Mountains in Tibet, in the Qinghai Province, flowing eastwards towards Shanghai to it's mouth, 6,380km later.



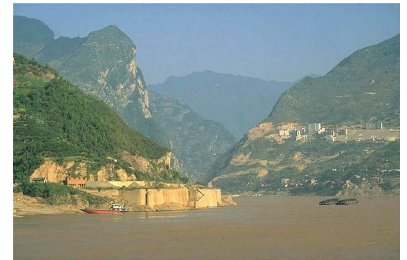
The Mouth of the River

The Dam

The Three Gorges region is located along the Yangtze River between the cities of Fengjie (奉节) and Yichang in Chongqing municipality and Hubei province.



The gorges are a great tourist attraction. There are towns and cities built within the region.



The dam is to be built in a place called Sandouping, which is in the middle of the gorges. The reservoir was completed in the summer of 2006, and the water level in the Qutang, Wuxia, and the western portion of the Xiling Gorges has already begun to rise. The dam is predicted to be completed in 2009.

Gorge	Chinese	Length (km)	Range
<u>Qutang Gorge</u>	瞿塘峡	8	from <u>Baidicheng (Fengjie)</u> to <u>Daxi</u>
<u>Wu Gorge</u>	巫峡	45	from <u>Wushan</u> to <u>Guandukou (Badong)</u>
<u>Xiling Gorge</u>	西陵峡	66	from <u>Zigui</u> to <u>Nanjin Pass (Yichang)</u>



Project Schedule

The dam was expected to take 17 years to build which was split into three different stages. The dam actually took

5 years (1993 - 1997) Preparation period and first stage construction.

6 years (1998 - 2003) Second stage construction

6 years (2003 - 2009) Third stage construction

First Stage (1993 - 1997)

The first stage involved preparation work and in 1994 the project began. This started the filling of the cofferdam (to allow water to be replaced with air to make a dry building area) and beginning of the diversion channel (allows water and boats to get past the dam while it is in construction). At the same time on the left bank of the river a temporary ship lock was constructed. The water and shipping continued to follow the original river course. In 1997 the successful damming of the Yangtze River attracted very many tourists from the local area and from abroad.

Second Stage (1998 - 2003)

The main tasks of this stage were to construct the rest of the cofferdams both upstream and downstream, electricity station on the left dam and the installation of machinery. The permanent navigation buildings will be finished on the left bank. During the second period the river water will flow through the diversion channel and shipping will use either the diversion channel or the temporary ship lock.



Third Stage (2003 - 2009)

After the completion of the second stage the third stage will become the focus of attention. During this period the power station on the left bank and the permanent ship lock will be brought into use. All ships on the river will use the ship lock while the river will flow through the bottom of the dam. The dam sections and the electricity station on the right riverbank will be constructed and the installation of all machinery will be finished.



This image shows the dam partially completed in 2000 (bottom) and later

Main Features

Key Features

- The dam is 2 km in length
- It will produce a 600km long reservoir
- It's expected to generate 288.514 MW of hydroelectricity.
- 13 major cities are to be lost, 140 towns and 4,500 villages.
- Along with 1.2 million people having to be relocated
- Estimated cost of £16 billion!
- In the past 2,000 years, the Yangtze River has experienced 215 catastrophic floods.
- In 1998 flooding in the area expected to be controlled by the dam resulted in 4,000 dead, 14 million left homeless and \$24 billion in economic loss.

In the 20th century, flooding of the Yangtze river claimed over 500,000 lives. The last major flood took place in 1998. The floods take and destroy cities, towns, economy and many other things. It also ruins the soil, leaving a lack of nutrients preventing crops growing (which are either to use locally or export).

The dam's main feature therefore is to prevent the flooding of the river Yangtze.

Conclusion

With most things, different people have different views. Each group of people have their views for and against the project. From what I've researched, I've found more arguments against than for, however the arguments for are so strong, they even out.

Farmers

Despite the dam taking thousands of hectares of farmland, in the long run farmers will benefit from the dam. Prior to the dam, the floods would unexpectedly flood which would ruin their crops. Also when it floods, it leaves the field unusable by depositing silt, making a thick layer of clay and making the ground 'un-ploughable'. It also takes all the nutrients.

Residents

Millions are losing their homes. Like some of us, the homes they have currently could possibly have been the homes which they've been brought up throughout their lives and could be losing many memories. There could also be older people living in

the homes and moving could be a daunting process. Although there are new homes being built higher up the gorges, they are much more expensive (about 2-3 times more than compensation received from the governments), and with only 1 in 3 homes having and land. There have been jobs created, however, with the creation of the new establishments. Another argument is that their way of life at the current time is how they have lived for many generations and if they move they will lose this way of life.

Business owners

The dam had made huge stories around the world prior to its completion. It's bound to be a huge tourist attraction. The local industry would take a big turn for the better. The new industry will give local people well-paid jobs and help them have a better way of life. The loss of the 13 major cities and the historical sites will however bring upon a draw back on industry.

Environmentalists

The attractive area will be lost by the rising reservoir. Loss of habitat for endangered species and the loss of tourism will affect the small businesses that depend on the tourists.

My views

after reading different views, pros and cons and watching the video, I think I'd have to say that the dam is needed for the local people. The dam's main purpose is to prevent the flooding down stream. It also is to prevent the flooding of towns and cities, bringing economy to a stop. The hydroelectric plant will prevent 15 million tonnes of coal being burnt which will help China's huge contribution to global warming. These are all great things for the long run, however like most good things there are things which bring it down. The dam is to submerge the cities and landscape etc. These ideas I am against however, if I was in situation that each year my family, friends and I were in threat due to floods, and losing our houses. I wouldn't like the thought of moving at first and starting all over again would make me think twice at first. I disagree with the amount of compensation being given to the millions which have to be moved is not really that substantial for them to obtain a new home.

Another doubt I have is that with the dam being built in an earthquake zone, could possibly kill more lives than it would save. It is going to be sad to lose the historical sights, in other places, history is being destroyed each day, there's still going to be museums with bits of what is going to be lost still there; also history is being made each day... the gorges dam sight could possibly be classed just as historic in years to come. The dam has also created thousands of temporary and permanent jobs which I

think balances out the jobs which were lost with the cities flooding, the dam jobs could possibly be better than those current.

Overall the results for the dam overweigh those against.

<http://darwin.bio.uci.edu/~sustain/state/kmin.html>

<http://www.pbs.org/itvs/greatwall/dam1.html>

<http://www.ccds.charlotte.nc.us/History/China/02/edwards/edwards.htm>

<http://us.chineseembassy.org/eng/zt/sxgc/t36502.htm>