

Devils Lake Quick Facts

- ◆ The Devils Lake basin is a 3,810 square-mile sub-basin of the Red River of the North. At current water levels it has no natural outlet.
- ◆ On June 27, 2009, Devils Lake peaked at a new record elevation of 1,450.72 feet above mean sea level (amsl), 1.52 feet higher than the previous record set in May 2006.
- ◆ Devils Lake naturally spills into Stump Lake at 1,446.5 feet amsl. Since water began trickling into Stump Lake from Devils Lake in 1999, Stump Lake has now been filled and has become part of Devils Lake – rising 42.8 feet in the process.
- ◆ Devils Lake naturally overflows into the Sheyenne River at 1458.5 feet amsl. The Sheyenne River is a tributary of the Red River of the North, which flows into Canada.
- ◆ Since glaciation, Devils Lake has been fluctuating from overflowing to dry. This variability is the normal condition of the lake – reflecting climate changes.
- ◆ Devils Lake has reached its spill elevation of about 1,458.5 feet amsl and overflowed into the Sheyenne and Red Rivers at least twice during the past 4,000 years. The last Devils Lake spill into the Sheyenne River occurred less than 2,000 years ago.
- ◆ At its spill elevation, Devils Lake will cover more than 277,000 acres.
- ◆ From its lowest 1993 elevation of 1422.62 feet amsl (March 23), to its record June 2009 elevation, Devils Lake rose 28.1 feet.
- ◆ In March 1993, Devils Lake had a surface area of 44,230 acres. At its June 2009 record elevation, Devils Lake covered about 153,010 acres – an increase of 108,780 inundated acres, or about 170 square miles. During that same time period, the volume of water in Devils Lake had more than quintupled.
- ◆ In the last seventeen years, about \$500 million has been spent by North Dakota and the U.S. federal government on flood mitigation in the Devils Lake basin.
- ◆ The State of North Dakota completed construction of an outlet to the Sheyenne River in the summer of 2005. *Specific facts pertaining to the outlet can be referenced from the Devils Lake Outlet section of the State Water Commission website at www.swc.nd.gov (click on Devils Lake Flooding, then Outlet).*
- ◆ The original pumps were designed for a maximum operating capacity of 100 cubic feet per second (cfs). Modifications constructed in early 2010 will increase that capacity to 250 cfs.
- ◆ Water from the Devils Lake outlet flows about 600 miles through North Dakota waterways, past 40 percent of the state's population, before entering Canada.
- ◆ A natural surface water connection from the northeast edge of the Devils Lake basin boundary to the Red River basin has been documented during several years since 1997. This is significant because it has provided a natural route for biota exchange between Devils Lake and the rest of the Hudson Bay watershed.
- ◆ Devils Lake hosts a world-class fishery, attracting anglers from across North America and around the world. The region is also a prime habitat for many species of migratory waterfowl.