

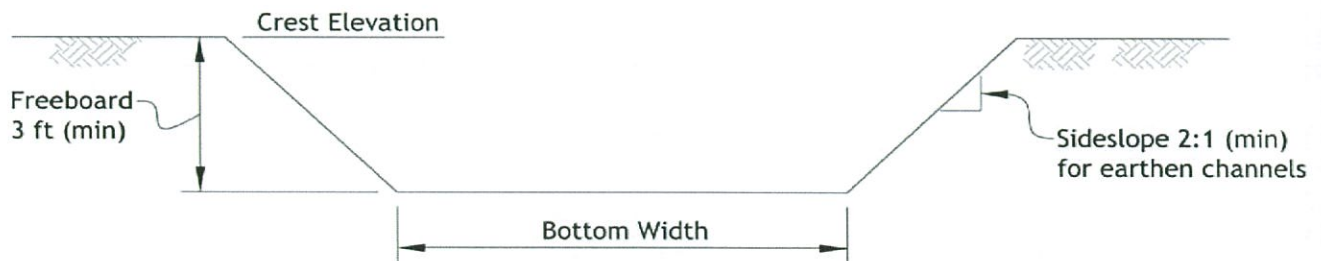




Table 1 DAM SAFETY BRANCH Spillway Sizing Guidelines for Non-Jurisdictional Dams

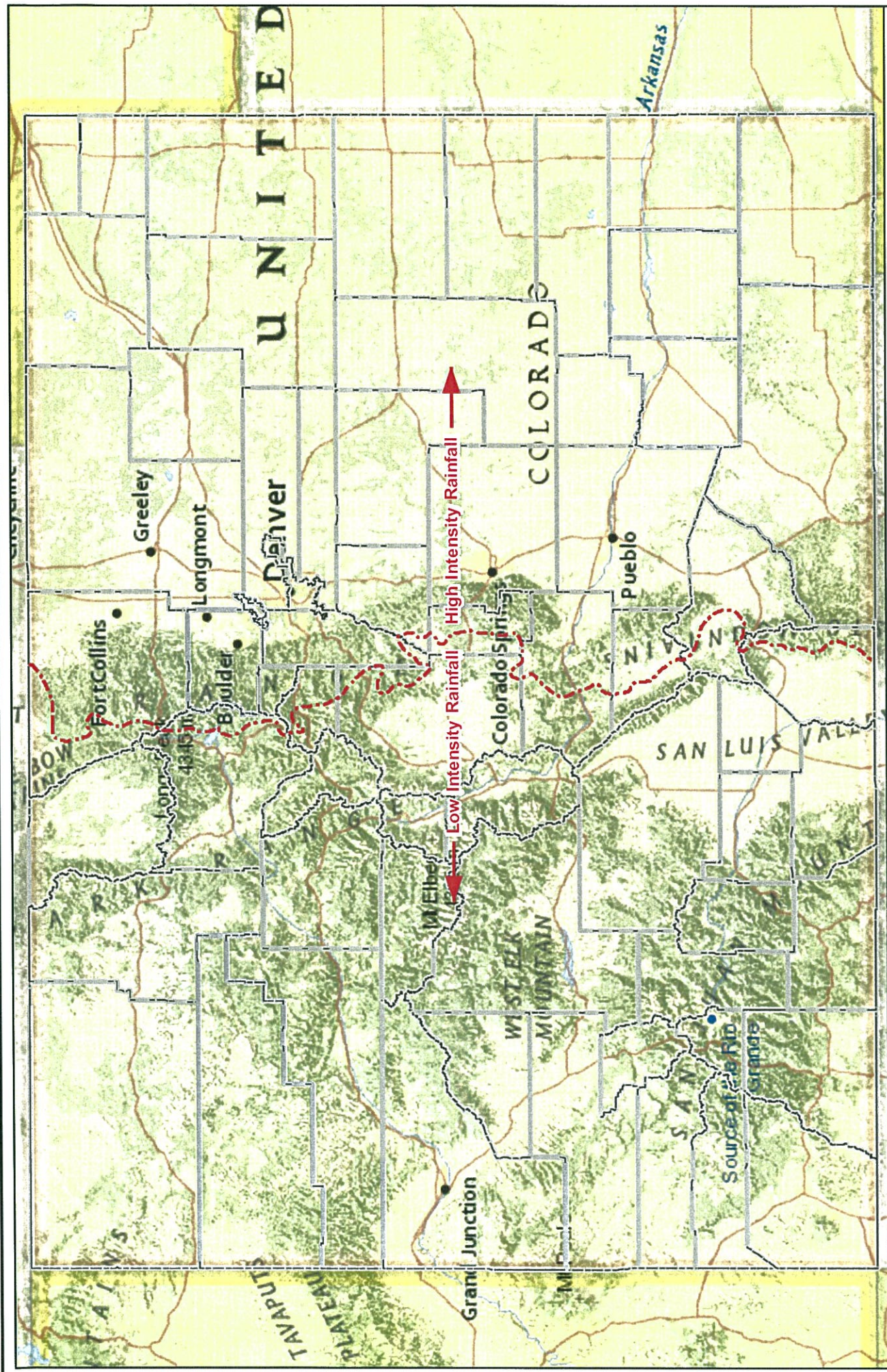
Drainage Area (Acres)	Minimum Recommended Bottom Width <sup>1</sup> (Feet) Low Intensity Rainfall Zone	Minimum Recommended Bottom Width <sup>1</sup> (Feet) High Intensity Rainfall Zone
175	8	8
225	8	10
275	8	12
325	8	15
375	10	17
425	11	19
475	12	21
525	13	24
575	15	26
625	16	28
675	17	30
725	19	33
775	20	35
825	21	37
875	22	39
925	24	42
975	25	44
1025	26	46
1075	28	48
1125	29	51
1175	30	53
1225	31	55
1275	33	57
1325	34	59
1375	35	62
1425	37	64
1475	38	66

<sup>1</sup>Minimum recommended bottom width for drainage areas less than 175 acres is 8 feet



Spillway Section





Map Key ——— Rainfall Divide Line

0 27.5 55 Miles 1" = 55 Miles

# Rainfall Intensity Zones for Non-Jurisdictional Dam Spillway Sizing

**COLORADO**  
Division of Water Resources  
Department of Natural Resources





## DAM SAFETY BRANCH Specifications for Construction of Non-Jurisdictional Dams

- Site Selection:
  - Foundation soils should be firm to provide adequate support for the embankment and the permeability to allow for water retention. Site selection should consider potential downstream problems in the event of a dam failure. Construction of dams in boggy areas, areas with non-uniform sands/gravels is not recommended and an engineer should be hired to evaluate the site condition if the reservoir basin excavated below grade cannot expose groundwater.
- Embankment Design:
  - Backfill material to be used for construction of the cutoff trench and embankment should be suitable material and contain no material larger than 6 inches in diameter.
  - The upstream slope should be constructed with a slope no steeper than 3:1, and the downstream slope no steeper than 2:1 (see cross section below). The dam crest should have a minimum width of 10 feet. The dam surface should be graded with positive drainage toward the reservoir basin.
  - It is recommended that rock rip rap or other suitable material be placed on the upstream embankment to protect it from wave action. A suitable gravel or geosynthetic material should be placed over the rip rap to prevent fine material from washing out from behind the larger rock.
  - The embankment should be fenced to restrict livestock from accessing the dam since they damage vegetation and increase erosion.
- Embankment Construction
  - The topsoil and all organic material should be removed from the foundation of the proposed dam. The native soil should only be reused for placement on the completed embankment to promote the re-growth of vegetation.
  - A cutoff trench should be excavated under the full length of the centerline of the dam with a minimum bottom width of 3 feet, a minimum bottom depth of 3 feet, and a minimum bottom slope of 1:1 (see cross section below).
  - The foundation of the dam should be scarified/ripped to a depth of 6-inches to provide proper contact between the native foundation and embankment. This surface should then be moisture treated before placement of fill.
  - Fill material should be placed in layers not exceeding 12 inches in thickness prior to compaction. The fill material should have enough clay and moisture content to roll a small ball by hand. If this cannot be achieved, the soil is likely too dry or does not have adequate clay content.
  - Each lift should be thoroughly compacted using a sheep's foot compactor. Care should be taken not to over-compact the top layers of the soil to dry out between placement of lifts.
  - Fill should be placed in uniform lifts that cover the entire embankment length and width.
- Outlet
  - Unless a waiver is granted in writing by the Division Engineer, all non-jurisdictional dams require an outlet conduit positioned at the natural low point of the reservoir basin. A minimum diameter of 18 inches is recommended and should be controlled at the upstream end by a valve and trash rack.
- Emergency Spillway
  - The spillway should have sufficient width to provide capacity to route the runoff from the drainage area behind the dam during rainfall/runoff events.
  - The emergency spillway should be located on natural ground far enough away to prevent erosion of the dam embankment. A spillway over the dam embankment is not acceptable.
  - A minimum of 3 feet of freeboard is required from the bottom of the emergency spillway to the top of the dam crest.
  - To determine the minimum spillway width, see the attached table for your area and drainage basin.
- Example Plan View and Cross Section

