Teton Dam Failure

Teton River, Idaho - June 5, 1976

On June 5, 1976, workers were called to the Teton Dam to attempt to repair a leak. Workers in bulldozers narrowly avoided being sucked into the dam with their equipment, and watched helplessly as the dam was breached. It would kill 14 people and cause nearly $1.5 billion in property and environmental damage and claims.

"The Bureau ignored its own data that rocks in the area were full of fissures, and in addition they filled the dam too fast... All it takes to bring a dam down is one crack, if that crack wets the soil within the interior portions of the dam, turning it into a quagmire."

- Charles Perrow in "Normal Accidents"

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