

Site Inventory Form
State Historical Society of Iowa
 (December 1, 1999)

State Inventory No. 22-01386 New Supplemental
 Part of a district with known boundaries (enter inventory no.) 22-01381
 Relationship: Contributing Noncontributing
 Contributes to a potential district with yet unknown boundaries
 National Register Status:(any that apply) Listed De-listed NHL DOE
 9-Digit SHPO Review & Compliance Number _____
 Non-Extant (enter year) _____

1. Name of Property

historic name Elkader Mill Dam (Turkey River)

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Turkey River, opposite 130 North Main Street

city or town Elkader

vicinity, county Clayton

Legal Description: (If Rural) Township Name _____

Township No. _____

Range No. _____

Section _____

Quarter _____

of Quarter _____

(If Urban) Subdivision _____

Block(s) _____

Lot(s) _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification [Skip this Section]

4. National Park Service Certification [Skip this Section]

5. Classification

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

If Non-Eligible Property

Enter number of:

_____ buildings
 _____ sites
 _____ structures
 _____ objects
 _____ Total

If Eligible Property, enter number of:

Contributing Noncontributing

_____ buildings
 _____ sites
1 structures
 _____ objects
1 Total

Name of related project report or multiple property study (Enter "N/A" if the property is not part of a multiple property examination).

Title

Arch. & Hist. Resources of the Elkader Downtown Historic District MPD

Historical Architectural Data Base Number

22-030

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

10C04 Dam

02E12 Specialty Store/Butcher (meat locker)

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

01 NO STYLE

foundation 04 Stone; 10B Poured Concrete

walls 10B Poured Concrete

roof N/A

other _____

Narrative Description (SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" representing your opinion of eligibility after applying relevant National Register criteria)

- Yes No More Research Recommended
- Yes No More Research Recommended
- Yes No More Research Recommended
- Yes No More Research Recommended

- A Property is associated with significant events.
- B Property is associated with the lives of significant persons.
- C Property has distinctive architectural characteristics.
- D Property yields significant information in archaeology or history.

County Clayton
City Elkader

Address Turkey River, opposite 130 N. Main

Site Number 22-01386
District Number 22-01381

Criteria Considerations

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B Removed from its original location.
- C A birthplace or grave.
- D A cemetery.
- E A reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F A commemorative property.
- G Less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

05 COMMERCE

Significant Dates

Construction date
1922 check if circa or estimated date
Other dates
1844, 1867, 1899, 1914

Significant Person

(Complete if National Register Criterion B is marked above)

Architect/Builder

Architect

Builder
J.M. Jensen (1899, Elkader); Jacobson and Ackerman (1914, Minneapolis)

Narrative Statement of Significance (SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS, WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography See continuation sheet for citations of the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form

10. Geographic Data

UTM References (OPTIONAL)

Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	_____	_____	2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet for additional UTM references or comments

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marlys Svendsen, Svendsen Tyler, Inc.

organization City of Elkader

date 7/2011

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telephone 715/469-3300

city or town Sarona

state WI zip code 54870

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION (Submit the following items with the completed form)

FOR ALL PROPERTIES

- Map:** showing the property's location in a town/city or township.
- Site plan:** showing position of buildings and structures on the site in relation to public road(s).
- Photographs:** representative black and white photos. If the photos are taken as part of a survey for which the Society is to be curator of the negatives or color slides, a photo/catalog sheet needs to be included with the negatives/slides and the following needs to be provided below on this particular inventory site:

Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____
Roll/slide sheet # _____	Frame/slot # _____	Date Taken _____

- See continuation sheet or attached *photo & slide catalog sheet* for list of photo roll or slide entries.
- Photos/illustrations without negatives are also in this site inventory file.

FOR CERTAIN KINDS OF PROPERTIES, INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING AS WELL

- Farmstead & District:** (List of structures and buildings, known or estimated year built, and contributing or non-contributing status)
- Barn:**
 - A sketch of the frame/truss configuration in the form of drawing a typical middle bent of the barn.
 - A photograph of the loft showing the frame configuration along one side.
 - A sketch floor plan of the interior space arrangements along with the barn's exterior dimensions in feet.

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Use Only Below This Line

Concur with above survey opinion on National Register eligibility: Yes No More Research Recommended
 This is a locally designated property or part of a locally designated district.

Comments: _____

Evaluated by (name/title): _____ Date: _____

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Elkader Mill Dam (Turkey River)	Clayton
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Turkey River, opposite 130 N. Main Street	Elkader
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7. Description:

Newspaper accounts and histories of Elkader and Clayton County indicate that the mill dam was constructed and/or reconstructed at least four times beginning with initial construction in 1844 for the Elkader Mill. Subsequent reconstructions took place in 1867, 1899, 1914 and 1922 with additional repairs made of flood damage in unidentified years. Contractor for the 1899 work was J.M. Jensen of Elkader and the firm completing the new dam in 1914 was Jacobson and Ackerman of Minneapolis.

The first dam completed in 1844 was of wooden construction and likely has little or no physical remains. It was built by Elkader Mill owners and Elkader founders, Thompson, Sage and Davis. The replacement dam completed in 1899 was also of wooden construction but differed from the first in that it had flood gates. The first masonry dam was completed in 1914 under the ownership of Schmidt Bros. & Company, the mill owners. Jacobson and Ackerman of Minneapolis were the contractors with Herman Scheer of Grand Rapids, Wisconsin serving as construction supervisor. Eight years later in 1922 the height of the concrete dam was raised several feet to provide more hydroelectric power generation for the mill's operation and for use of the community through Elkader Power and Light Company.

8. Significance:

The Elkader Mill Dam on the Turkey River is associated with the operations of the Elkader Mill and the Elkader Power and Light Company's early 20th century operations. The structure occupies a mid-river site with the dam extending along the west half of the river and the flood gates along the east half. The structure is eligible for the National Register as a contributing resource in the Elkader Downtown Historic District under Criterion A. Under Criterion A, the district's resources are associated with the historic contexts developed for the downtown in the "Architectural and Historical Resources of the Elkader Downtown Historic District" Multiple Property Documentation form covering the years 1846 to 1960. No determination has been made as to whether or not the dam is eligible under Criterion C or as part of a larger context of the history of Turkey River dams and mills.

Elkader Downtown Historic District Background:

The town of Elkader was laid out in 1846 along the banks of the Turkey River approximately 16 miles upstream from the Turkey River's confluence with the Mississippi River. The town was surveyed and laid out in 1846 with the Original Town Plat filed in June 22, 1846 by Timothy Davis, Chester Sage and John Thompson, friends and business partners, who began operating a sawmill on North Front (Main) Street in 1845 before the town was even platted. By 1849 they had a successful flour mill in operation. The new town was named for Abd el-Kader, an Algerian freedom fighter and world figure who was admired by Davis. The principal building stimulating development in the 1840s and 1850s was the Elkader Mill. After 1860 when the Clayton County voters selected Elkader as the permanent county seat, the downtown saw a variety of merchants set up shops, several hotels open, a number of newspapers begin publication, and small manufacturing concerns get underway in the city center. Elkader numbered 440 residents in 1860.

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The new county court house saw its first section completed in 1869 opposite the downtown. New limestone buildings were erected along both North and South Main Street with public halls frequently located on upper floors. During the 1870s and 1880s 2-story brick buildings began replacing frame business houses. A permanent railroad connection was completed by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul RR in 1886 but service remained poor as Elkader was located at the end of a spur rather than along a main line route. A more important transportation improvement during the 1880s was the completion of the Keystone Bridge across the Turkey River in 1880. Its completion prompted a period of economic vitality and community investment. The community was officially incorporated two years later in 1891 and a new waterworks system and city well were completed in 1896. Electricity was rejected by locals until the end of the decade in 1900, however. In the meantime, new churches were built in 1897 for the Congregationalists on the east side of the river and in 1897-1899 for the Catholics on the west side of the river. Coupled with a series of major fires during the 1890s, the downtown saw a period of rebuilding with a new hotel and bank at the entrance to the business district at the turn of the century. The new opera house was completed on North Main Street while other 2 and 3-story brick blocks appeared both north and south of Bridge Street.

By 1900, Elkader's population stood at its peak of 1,321 – an increase of 77 percent during the decade of the 1890s. Development continued in the downtown before and after World War I but at a much slower pace. Floods and fires damaged the Elkader Mill in 1902, 1906 and 1908, but it was nevertheless rebuilt by Schmidt Brothers & Co., retaining a key employer and anchor for Elkader's downtown. The business district began to extend to the west before and after the war with the principal changes seen along West Bridge Street. Here livery stables and wagon shops were replaced by automobile dealerships, implement companies and filling stations. Five stations eventually located along West Bridge with a sixth one block to the south along First Street SW. The national economic depression of the 1930s was coupled by the closing of the Elkader Mill in 1939 following a major fire. Natural disasters after World War I included major floods in 1922, 1947, and 1958 with a tornado destroying section of South Main Street in 1958 as well.

Despite these natural and human made disasters, Elkader saw steady but modest population growth from 1,223 in 1920 to 1,526 in 1960. The impact of the automobile was seen in traffic patterns, parking patterns, and traffic signs and the introduction of electricity saw several generations of street lighting come and go. The popularity of the opera house waned and the first floor became the municipal fire station while two movie houses came and one stayed in the downtown drawing evening crowds for entertainment and shopping. As many as 130 people resided in downtown flats during this period. A good system of inter and intra-state highways connected Elkader and its downtown to other parts of the state and country in a way that railroads had never served the community. By 1960, downtown Elkader was well-established as one of several geographically dispersed retail centers serving Clayton County. Virtually every storefront was filled with start-up businesses or multi-generational family stores as Elkader's downtown achieved a stable and healthy status for local and countywide residents.

Historic Background Elkader Mill Dam (Turkey River):

The Elkader Mill Dam located opposite 130 North Main Street in the Turkey River was built in 1922 as the third mill dam at this location. The first dam completed at this site in 1844 was of wooden construction and was built for power generation for the Elkader Mill by owners of the mill and Elkader

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founders, Thompson, Sage and Davis. The replacement dam completed in 1899 by Schmidt Brothers and Company, the mill owners at the time, was also of wooden construction but differed from the first in that it had operable flood gates. When completed the newspaper commented in an article on October 25, 1899 that "The dam and the apron are solidly constructed and would seem to be able to stand almost an age." The first masonry dam was completed in 1914 also under the ownership of Schmidt Bros. & Company. Jacobson and Ackerman of Minneapolis were the contractors with Herman Scheer of Grand Rapids, Wisconsin serving as construction supervisor. Construction commenced in August 1914 and concluded in September for the flood gates and for the entire dam in December. Eight years later when the mill transferred ownership to the Elkader Power and Light Co. the height of the concrete dam was raised several feet to provide more hydroelectric power generation for the mill's operation and for use of the community through the power company. In 1966 the dam was sold to the City of Elkader. No date has been determined for the discontinuation of the hydroelectric generation of the dam but it likely occurred sometime prior to acquisition by the municipality.

9. Major Sources:

1984 History of Clayton County. Clayton County Genealogical Society, Elkader, Iowa: Griffith Press, 1984.

Anderson, David C. *Reconnaissance Survey of Elkader Clayton County, Iowa.* Clayton County Historic Preservation Commission and Main Street Elkader, March 1, 1994.

Andreas, A.T. *Illustrated Historical Atlas of the State of Iowa.* Chicago: Andreas Atlas Co., 1875.

Appraisal Records for Elkader Downtown Properties, Clayton County Assessor's Office, 1949 – 1965.

"Bird's Eye View Map, Elkader, Iowa, 1871." Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Doniat and Zastrow.

Elkader Historical Society/Carter House Museum research file for Elkader Mill Dam; files focusing on downtown Elkader buildings, businesses, civic leaders and related information. Compiled by Marge Costigan and other museum volunteers. Research files contain hundreds of historic photos, newspaper articles, publication transcriptions, property ownership records, and information from interviews. Digital copies of some research files were loaned to Marlys Svendsen, October 2010 and others were made available in March 2011 for duplication.

Census of State of Iowa for the years 1856, 1867, 1875, 1885, 1895, 1905, 1915, and 1925 as printed by various State Printers.

Clayton County, Iowa, Memories & Heritage from the Photo Albums of Clayton County. Elkader, Iowa: The Clayton County Register, 1997.

Downtown Building Survey (73 surveyed buildings) records including survey questionnaires, draft Iowa Site Inventory Forms and digital photographs. Main Street Elkader, 2009.

Downtown Elkader Business Questionnaires completed by property/business owners, 2010.

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Downtown Elkader Individual Property Site Maps compiled by Eli Garms, Clayton County GIS, Engineer's Office, Elkader, November 2010.

Elkader Building Survey (62 surveyed buildings). Main Street Elkader, 1994-1996.

Elkader Historic Photograph Collection (digital). Elkader Public Library, Elkader. Digital files loaned to Marlys Svendsen, December 2008.

"Elkader, Iowa 1846-1971, the Past, the Present the Future." 125th Anniversary Edition, *The Clayton County Register*, Elkader, Iowa, July 21, 1971.

Elkader Telephone Directories, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1932, 1933, 1960 and 1966.

Gottfried, Herbert and Jan Jennings. *American Vernacular Design, 1870-1940*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1985.

Griffith, Katherine. "Elkader Opera House." Elkader, Iowa: Elkader Main Street, ca. 1992.

"Images of Elkader Past." *Clayton County Register*, July 17, 1996.

Insurance Maps for Elkader. New York: The Sanborn Company, 1895, 1902, 1913, 1930, and 1951.

"Keystone Bridge Centennial Edition." *The Clayton County Register*, Elkader, Iowa, July 26, 1989.

Olson, Edward W. *Look What you Started Mr. Davis...Elkader, Iowa: History, Facts and Folklore about Elkader, Iowa U.S.A.*, ca. 2010.

Plat Book of Clayton County, Iowa, Minneapolis: Warner & Foote, 1886.

"Plat of Elkader, June 22, 1846." Recorder's Office, Clayton County, Court House, Elkader, Iowa,.

Powell, Harry. "The Elkader Story." unpublished first draft, December 1980; copy available at Elkader Public Library.

Price, Realto E., editor. *History of Clayton County, Iowa from the Earliest historical Times Down to the Present, Volumes I and II*. Chicago: Robert O. Law Company, 1916.

Property Transfer Records for Blocks 3 – 10 and Fractional Blocks 3-6 in Town of Elkader, Clayton County Auditor's Office and Recorder's Office, Clayton County Court House, Elkader, Iowa.

Shank, Wesley I. *Iowa's Historic Architects: A Biographical Dictionary*. Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1999.

Standard Atlas of Clayton County, Iowa. Chicago: George A. Ogle & Co., 1902.

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United States Census, 1850-2010. (population figures provided by State Library of Iowa, January 2011 and City of Elkader, March 2011).

Photograph: Historic view, 1899 wooden Elkader Mill Dam (nonextant), looking northwest, likely taken from tower of Clayton County Court House prior to the 1939 fire (Elkader Public Library Historical Photograph Collection).



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Photographs: Historic views, Elkader Mill Dam under construction in 1922, looking northwest and northeast (Elkader Public Library Historical Photograph Collection).



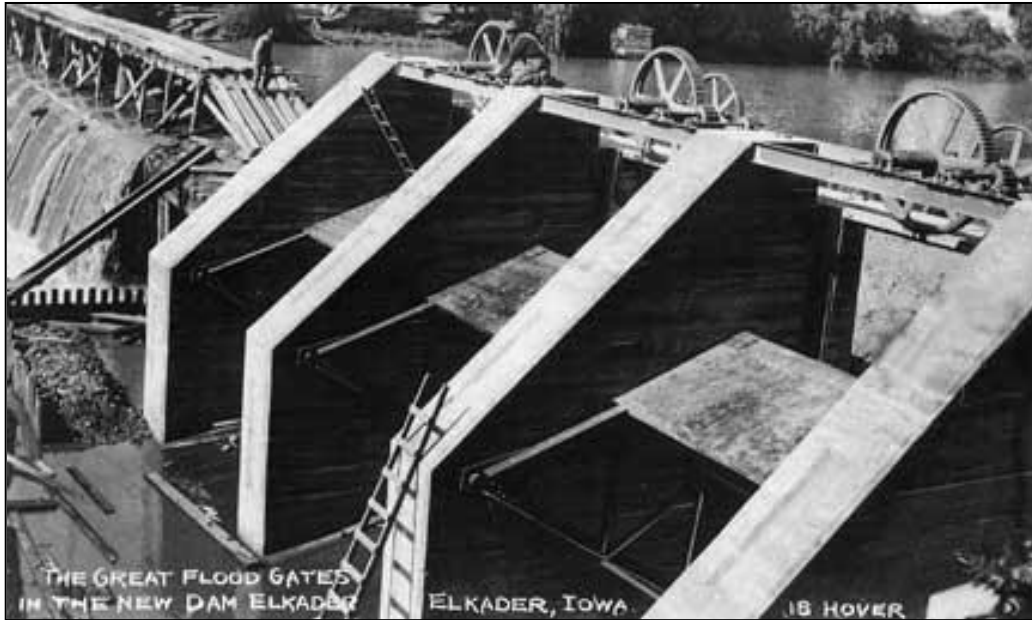
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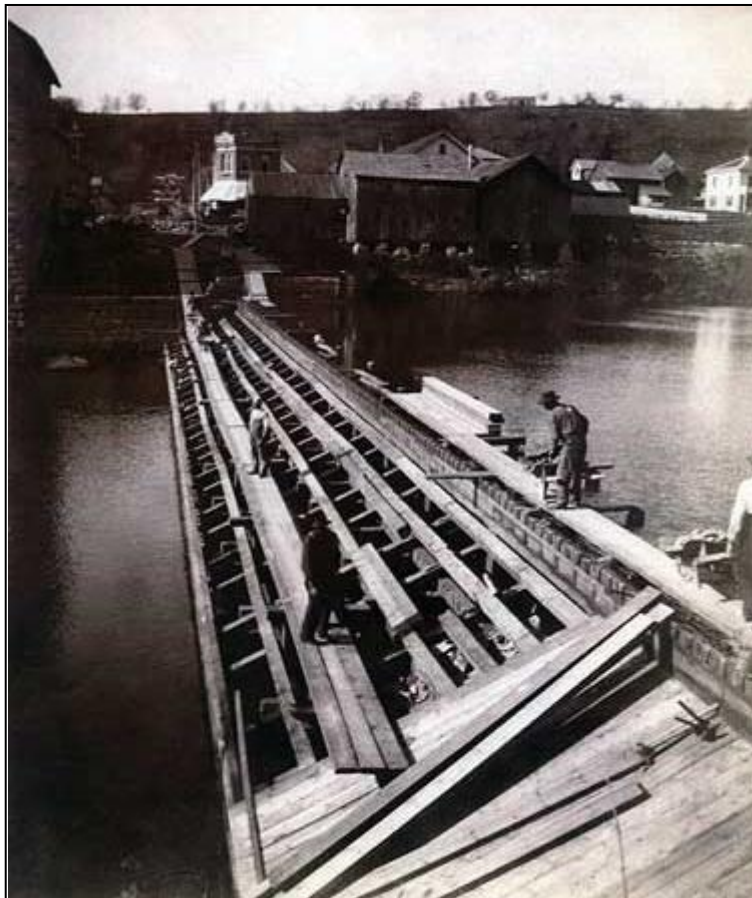
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Photographs: Historic views, Elkader Mill Dam under construction in 1922, looking northwest with flood gates in foreground – top and across the main dam, looking west - bottom (Elkader Public Library Historical Photograph Collection).



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Photographs: Historic view, Elkader Mill Dam, ca.2007, looking north – top (Elkader Public Library Historical Photograph Collection); and contemporary view, looking northwest along riverfront – bottom (Elkader Downtown Survey Photograph, 10/29/2010, Marlys Svendsen, photographer).

