

ALI Imagery of Landslide Lake in Pakistan (July 2010)

July 7, 2010
True-Color Image from ALI
Landslide Lake on Hunza
River in Pakistan Overflows
into Spillway

Along the Hunza River in northwestern Pakistan, a lake had been building for months behind a landslide dam that formed in January 2010. Engineers and army laborers worked furiously on a spillway to relieve the growing lake, which had backed up past several settlements. In late May 2010, the lake finally began flowing over the spillway. According to geologist David Petley at the International Landslide Centre, lake levels had apparently stabilized by July 6.

This natural-color image shows the landslide lake and its newly functioning spillway on July 7, 2010. The top image shows a wider view and the bottom image shows a detailed view of the area outlined in white above. North is to the right.

Water pouring over the spillway appears white, likely resulting from its rapid flow. The rest of the lake appears nearly uniform blue-green. Most of the land around the Hunza Valley is brown and bare, but pockets of vegetated land associated with settlements appear near the riverbanks. On the nearby mountaintops, snow cover lingers, and small glaciers snake toward the river valley.

