

# Peninsular Dam Removal Public Engagement

April 27, 2022



# Meeting Outline

- ▶ Brief history of the Pen Dam project
- ▶ Report by Sommer Woods, Woods&Watts Effect, on previous public engagement
- ▶ Presentation by Brendan Cousino, Limnotech, summarizing the bathymetry, sediment, and engineering studies
- ▶ Presentation by Daniel Brown, Huron River Watershed Council, on the Restoration Plan
- ▶ Public comment, Q&A

# Previous Public Meetings on Pen Dam

- Peninsular Paper Dam, Huron River Watershed Council, Laura Rubin, 18 April 2017
- Princeton Hydro Feasibility Study Report, Princeton Hydro, 4 December 2018
- City of Ann Arbor Hydroelectric Operations, Brian Steglitz, 5 February 2019
- Peninsular Dam Townhall Meeting, OHM Advisor/City of Ypsilanti, 20 February 2019
- Dam Public Survey Results, City Staff, 19 March 2019
- Fisheries and Habitat Perspectives for the Peninsular Dam, Sara Thomas (DNR), 16 April 2019
- Peninsular Dam Emergency Action Plan, Fire Chief Hobbs and Mark Saranen, 16 April 2019
- Peninsular Dam and PFAS, Daniel Brown, HRWC, 18 June 2019

# Townhall and Survey

- The Pen Dam Town Hall, 20 February 2019, drew an estimated 75 - 100 participants
- The City released a public survey to gather further input on the preferences of city residents and non-residents regarding the future of the dam.
  - Respondents: 117 residents (R), 55 non-residents (NR)
  - 71% R / 73% NR favored removal of the dam
  - 86% R / 74% NR stated that they never or only occasionally used the park
  - Over 50% of both groups said they would use the park more if the dam was removed

# Survey: Heritage

- ▶ Peninsular Paper built the dam 1867 and rebuilt in 1918 after it failed
- ▶ Powerhouse: preserve and use
- ▶ Iconic Sign: PENINSULAR PAPER CO. SINCE 1867 YPSILANTI.
- ▶ Tradition of fishing below the dam
- ▶ Visual image of the dam and powerhouse
- ▶ Survey: Improve usage of Pen Park by wider segment of Ypsilanti residents.
- ▶ Sustainability Commission resolution: if the city chooses to remove the dam, the heritage of the site should be preserved.
- ▶ Separate the fate of the powerhouse and sign from the dam itself.

# Rationale for Removal

- ▶ The rationale for removal was discussed extensively ahead of vote by Ypsilanti City Council to remove the dam in order to support the City in making an informed decision.
- ▶ State, federal, and subject matter experts provided compelling summaries of the ecological benefits for removal.
- ▶ Removal will alleviate a significant infrastructure liability to Ypsilanti and relieve the City of significant long-term financial burdens for maintenance and insurance.
- ▶ Hydropower restoration was deemed economically infeasible due to high capital investment for turbines and city distribution in an unfavorable energy market.
- ▶ Dam removal is an essential action for making Ypsilanti more resilient to climate change and the increasing risk of flood and severe storms and likely to reduce GHG over impoundment.

# Council Resolutions

## ▶ 2019-101 May 7, 2019, Excerpt

- ▶ WHEREAS, in the 2018 study it was estimated that it would cost \$2,700,000 to remove the Peninsular Park Dam; and...
- ▶ NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF YPSILANTI that the city council approves up to \$500,000 for the removal of the Peninsular Park Dam so long as the city applies for the grants to complete the project as listed in the 2014 opinion of probable construction cost completed by OHM Advisors.

## ▶ 2019-221 September 8, 2019, Excerpt

- ▶ The City does not intend to utilize for public and recreation purposes City owned presently submerged lands that will be exposed that are not adjacent to Penn Park, but to leave such City land as green space.
- ▶ The City does not intend to utilize any private submerged land that will be exposed for public or recreation purposes.

# Land Title and Survey Work

- ▶ The City obtained copies of the current deeds: City Attorney's office
- ▶ Investigating the chain of titles: OHM
  - ▶ June 2021: Michigan Title contracted but unable to complete scope of work
  - ▶ Council approved budget amendment of up to \$50K for title work
  - ▶ August 2021: A. S. K. Services contracted
- ▶ City prioritized parcels with OHM/ASK

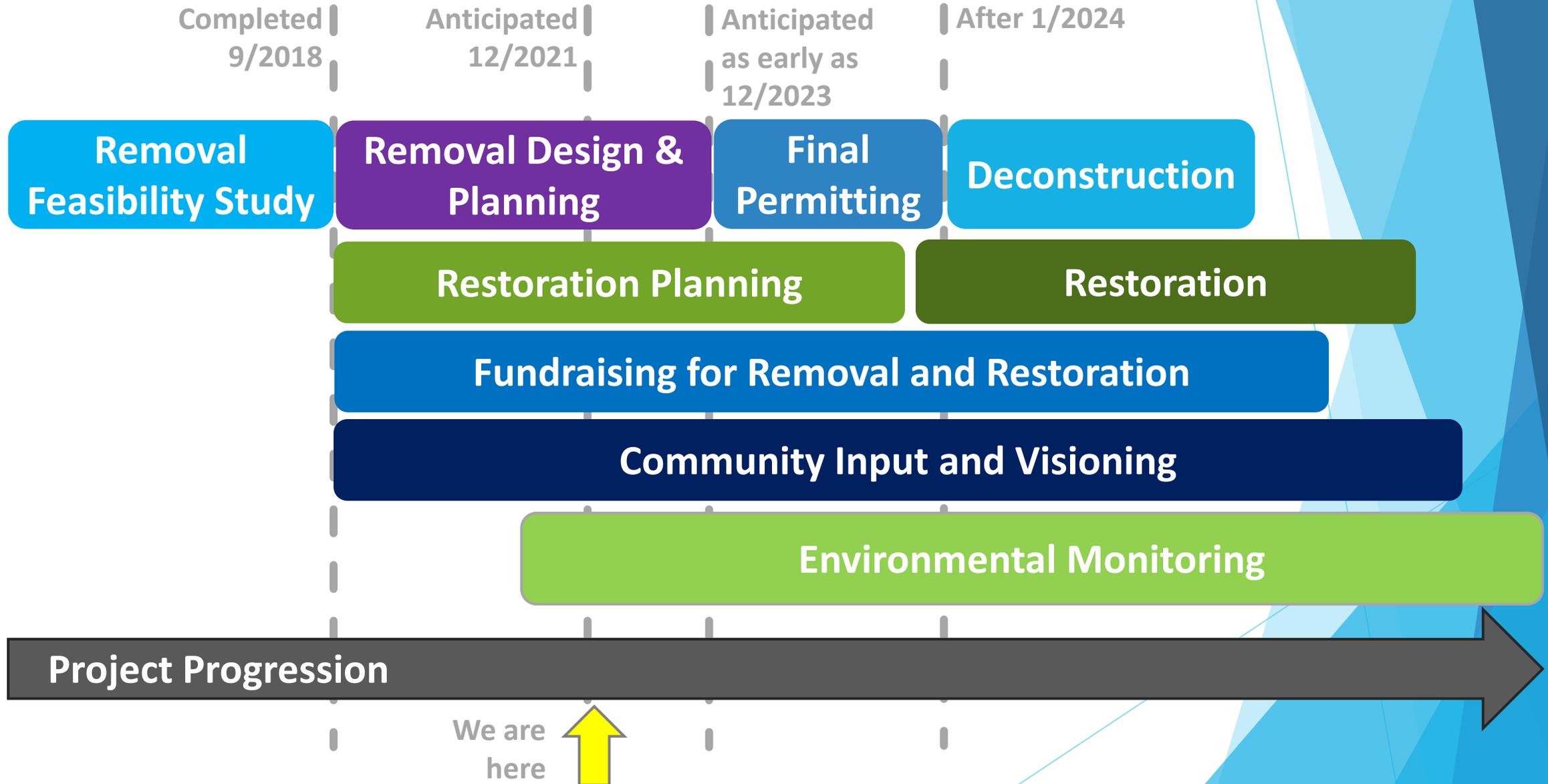
# Fisheries Habitat Grant Program (MDNR)

- ▶ Themes: Aquatic Habitat Conservation and Dam Management
- ▶ Since 2019 we've been able to secure ~\$650K in funding across two grant cycles
- ▶ Remaining work to be done in field seasons 2022-2023

# Public Engagement

- **Public Engagement Committee**
  - Formed by resolution in May 2021, met through summer
    - Residents, Sustainability Commissioners, Staff, and Council Members
- **Facilitator: Sommer Woods, Woods&Watts Effect**
- **Events:**
  - Landowner Focus Group, Recreationist Focus Group, General Public Focus Group, August-September 2021
  - Town Hall: April 27, 2022, delayed due to sampling season
  - Future Town Halls as information and final reports become available
- **Pen Dam landing page:** <https://cityofypsilanti.com/804/Peninsular-Dam>
  - Meeting announcements, Reports (Limnotech, Restoration Plan), portal for comments, grant proposals

# Generic Dam Removal Project Phases



Note: This is a graphical depiction only. The boxes are not to scale. Deconstruction typically takes weeks or months. Restoration of the impoundment will likely take 3+ years.

# Community Engagement Recap



**"There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about."**

- Margaret Wheatley - writer, educator and speaker

# Woods & Watts Effect is a dynamic team of transformation engineers.

We work for a world in which people can show up - authentically and unapologetically - to participate and excel in all aspects of society without marginalization, discrimination or oppression, all while maintaining the ground rules of respect and inclusion.

## What We Do



**ASSESSMENT**



**SYSTEM DESIGN**



**IMPLEMENTATION**



**COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**



**THE EQUITY EFFECT**





(she/her-s)

# Sommer Woods

- M-1 Rail
- City of Detroit
- Detroit Super Bowl XL Host Committee
- PGA TOUR

## Over 25 years of Experience

- Strategic Planning
- Communications
- Community Engagement
- Government Relations
- Project Management
- Event Management



**“Democracy cannot function or survive without a sufficient medium by which citizens remain informed and engaged in public policy debates.”**

- Nancy Snow, Ph.D.

emerita professor, public diplomacy scholar, author, editor

# Purpose of stakeholder meetings

- Gather concerns and ideas regarding future removal of the dam.
- The meetings were an effort to maintain project transparency, convey information, answer questions, and encourage residents to guide the vision for the [Huron] river restoration.
- Members of the City of Ypsilanti, and Ypsilanti and Superior Township communities were invited, in addition to non-residents who frequent or who have connections to the Peninsular Paper Dam [and the park area surrounding it], to participate in three (3) virtual meetings.



# Meeting Framework

Meetings were initially planned to be in-person, but due to the Delta variant of COVID-19, and a mandate by the City of Ypsilanti, virtual meetings were required.

Stakeholder engagement meetings were held via Zoom on:

- August 18, 2021, (Landowner Focus Group)
- August 24, 2021 (Recreationist Focus Group)
- September 8, 2021 (General Public Focus Group)

Public comments were also available for submission on the City of Ypsilanti's website via the Peninsular Dam Removal Input Form.



# Public Engagement Process

- A public engagement committee was formed to strategize an intentional community engagement process. Composed of 6 members, each promoted the stakeholder meetings.
- In addition to the tactical efforts made by the committee, the virtual meetings were also promoted on the City of Ypsilanti website, via social media, and on flyers and posters (which were distributed in key neighborhoods).
- Off line conversations were held with members of the community that was not present at the meetings to ensure equitable engagement was present.



# Community Feedback

- Stakeholders across all three focus groups overwhelmingly agreed that Pen Dam and Peninsular Park were special destinations in the city of Ypsilanti and key to Ypsilanti's identity. Several stakeholders shared memories of their first interaction with the park or with Huron River along the impoundment.
- Many stakeholders in the landowners and recreationists focus groups recalled times spent on the impoundment paddle boarding, fishing, and boating.
- Others shared memories of volunteering in Peninsular Park or of the historic Peninsular Paper Co. when it was operational. As such, all stakeholders expressed a deep interest in preserving the heritage and history of the park.
- For many, preserving the heritage meant maintaining the dam, the park, and the Peninsular Paper Company powerhouse building and sign, while for other stakeholders it meant removing the dam, a plan to upkeep the park, and maintaining the Peninsular Paper Co. structure.
- Stakeholders from each focus group see the area around Pen Pond to be excellent for birdwatching, fishing and boating. According to one resident, Peninsular Park is an excellent location for bird enthusiasts.
- For some stakeholders, the slow-moving water, as a result of the dam, made them feel safer in this section of the Huron River and provided more inclusiveness.
- Some stakeholders expressed concerns about budget to remove and restoration plan. Who is responsible for restoration?



# Community Feedback

- A still water view of Pen Impoundment] was a selling point for many landowning stakeholders as was its proximity to the water. As such, many landowners were disappointed to learn how the view could change given how land area along the impoundment would increase as a result of the dam removal.
- Landowners had concerns about the sediment report findings.
- A couple of community members expressed the alternative option of keeping the Dam and finding funds to manage operations or hydro power option. .

## Develop and Reimagine Peninsular Park

At the same time, most stakeholders expressed concerns about the current condition of Peninsular Park and wanted more information regarding the City of Ypsilanti plan to properly fund a full park and river restoration after the dam removal. In addition to an overall cleaning and maintenance effort for Peninsular Park, community members also suggested incorporating the following:

- wayfinding signage
- outdoor placards with historical information
- more seating (i.e. benches)
- improved access to the portage
- stairs management, both in and connecting to Pen Park
- more lighting
- additional areas to gather for socializing (i.e. pavilions] )
- accessible opportunities to walk or run (i.e. boardwalk)
- designated quiet areas to enjoy the river



# Community Report

Full report will be posted on the online next Monday.





# PENINSULAR PAPER DAM

HYDRAULIC MODELING, GEOMORPHIC ASSESSMENT, AND SEDIMENT SAMPLING

APRIL 27, 2021

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**AECOM**



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# AGENDA

- ❖ Bathymetry and Geomorphic Assessment
- ❖ Hydraulic Modeling
- ❖ Questions/Discussion





# BATHYMETRIC SURVEY AND GEOMORPHIC ASSESSMENT



# Bathymetry



## Bathymetry (ft)

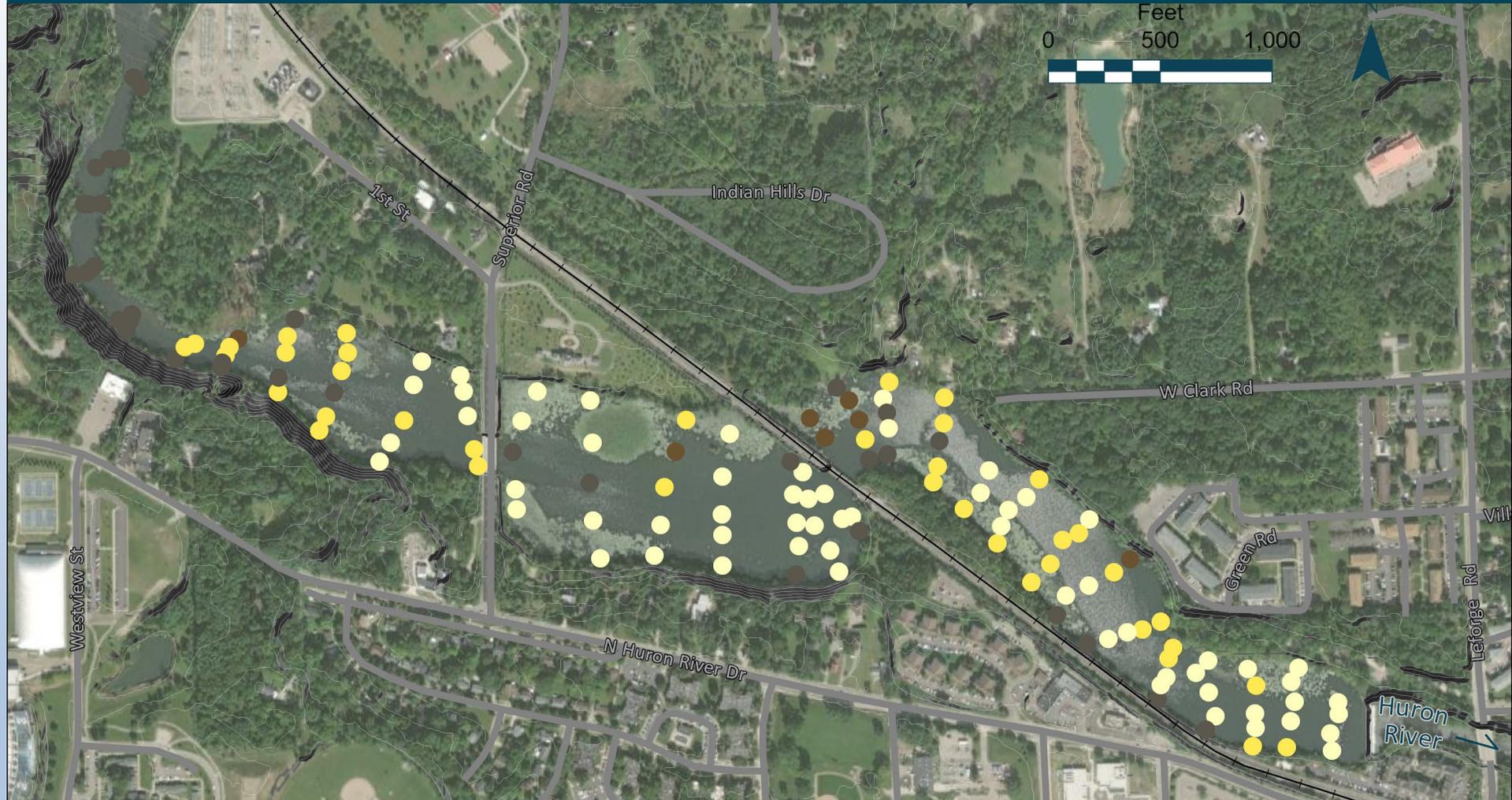


### Notes:

1. 10 foot contours based on 1/9 Arcsecond NED DEM
2. Bathymetric and DOR data collected by Inter-Fluve Inc. May 10-14, 2021.
3. Horizontal Datum - HARN/MI Michigan State Planes, South Zone, Intl Foot Vertical Datum - NAVD88

Peninsular Paper Mill  
Dam Impoundment  
Huron River, Michigan

# Impoundment sediment



## Bottom Sediment Type

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="color: yellow;">●</span> Silt | <span style="color: grey;">●</span> Gravel |
| <span style="color: orange;">●</span> Sand | <span style="color: brown;">●</span> Muck  |

## Notes:

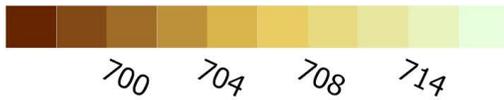
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Peninsular Paper Mill  
Dam Impoundment  
Huron River, Michigan

# Depth of refusal surface



## DOR Elevation (ft)

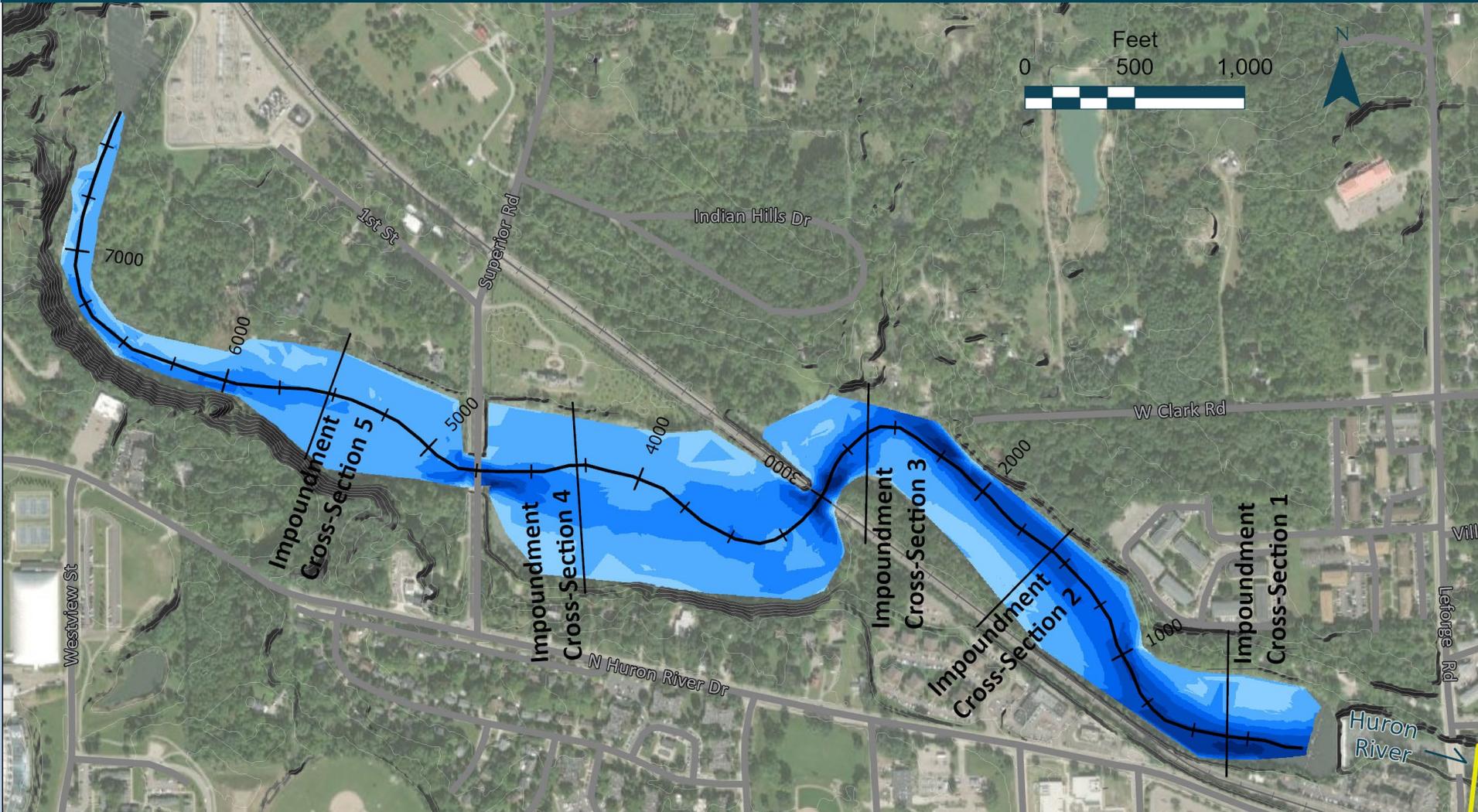


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Peninsular Paper Mill  
Dam Impoundment  
Huron River, Michigan

# Bathymetric sections



**Bathymetry (ft)**

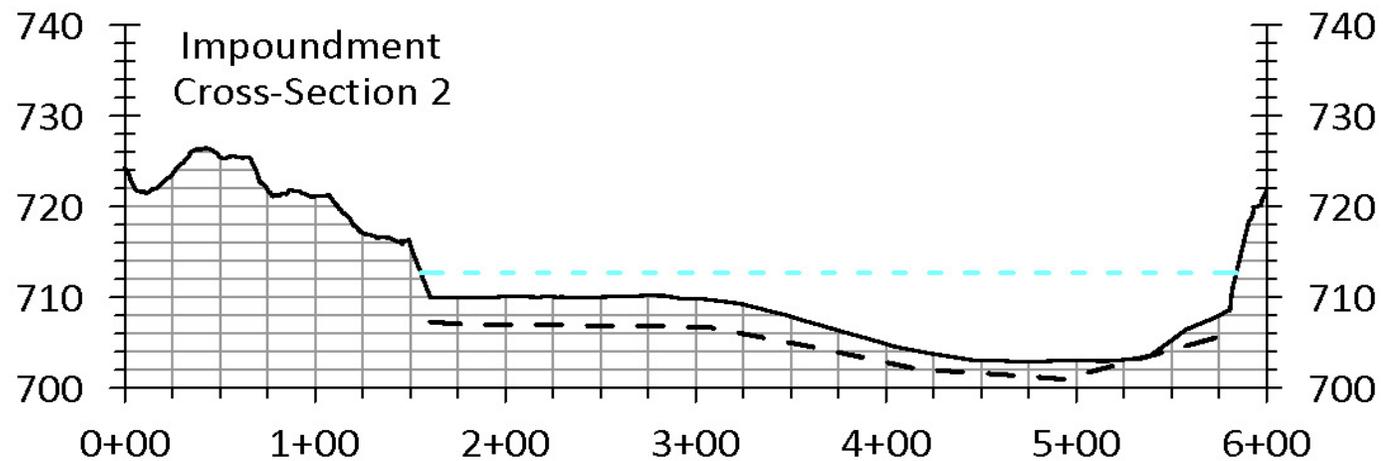
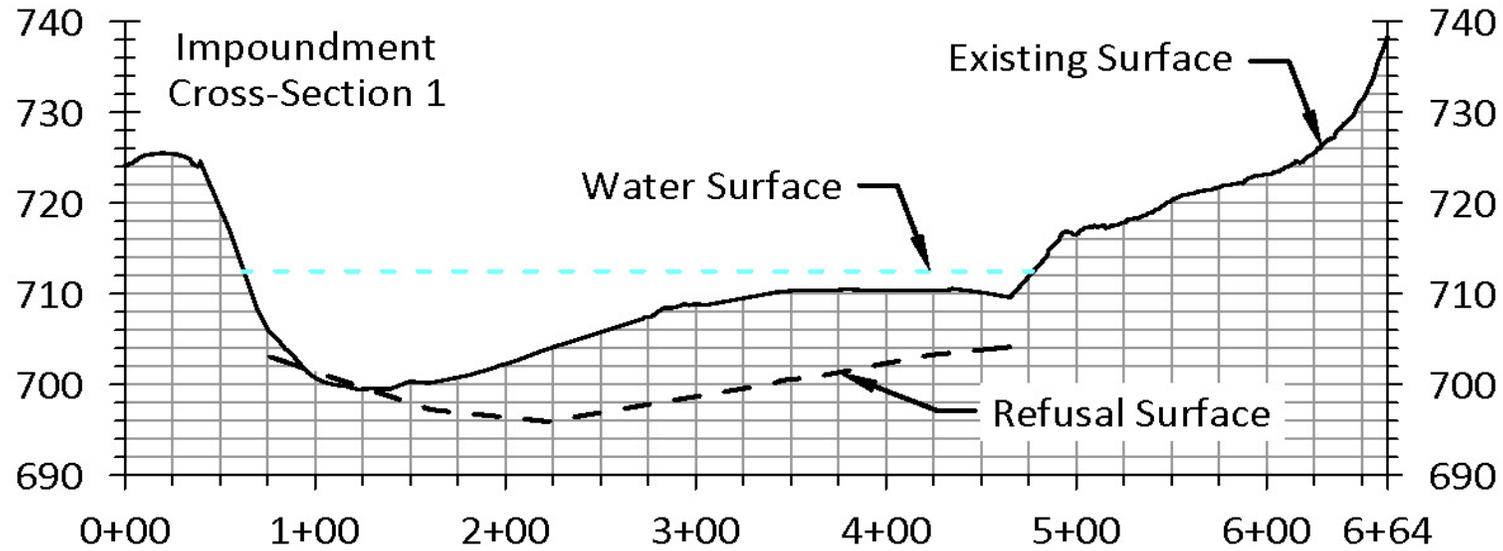


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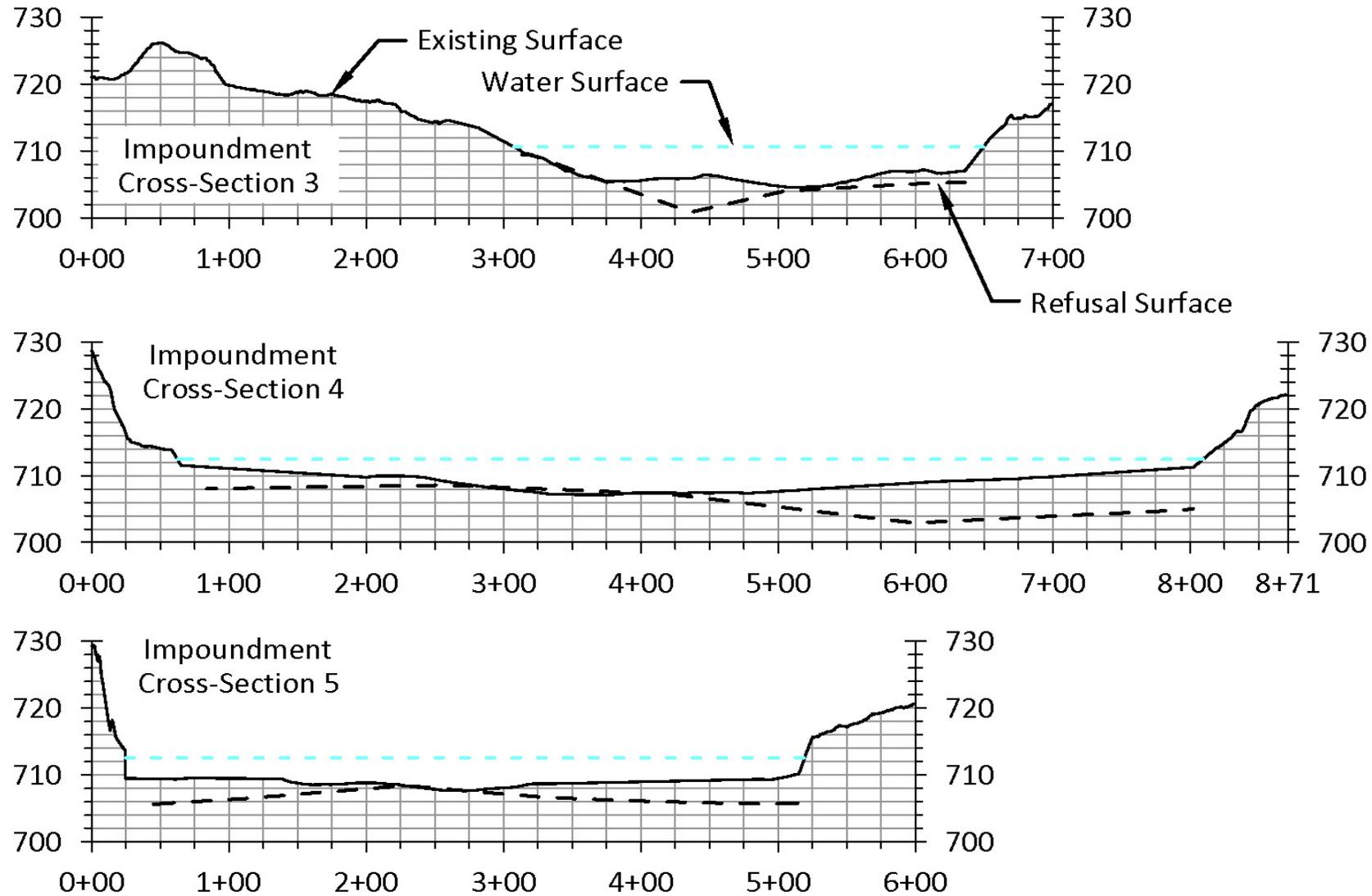
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Peninsular Paper Mill  
Dam Impoundment  
Huron River, Michigan

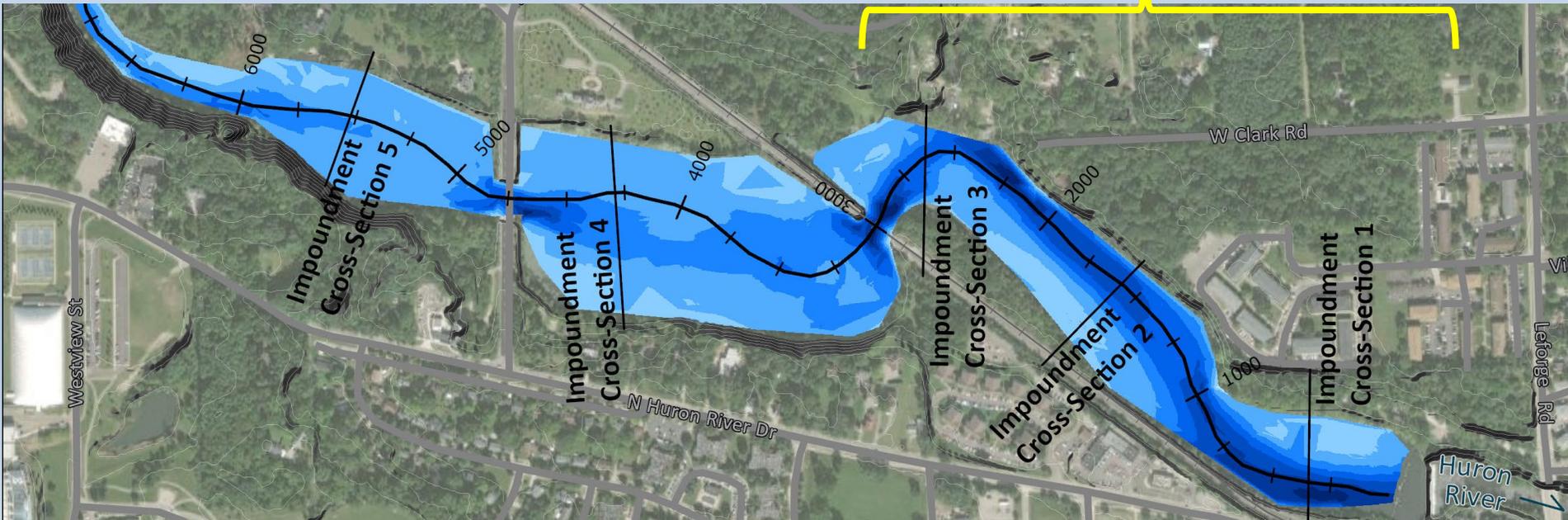
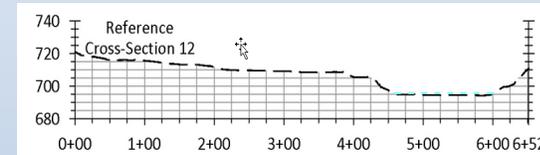
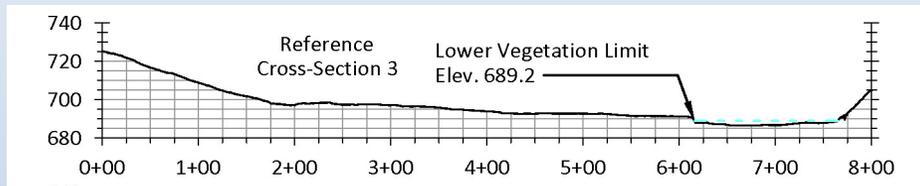
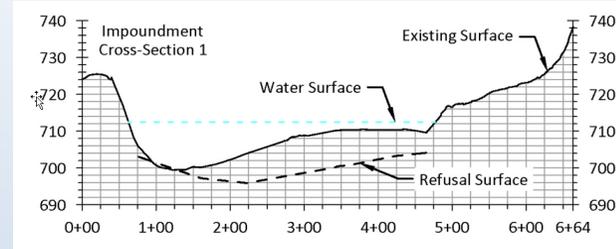
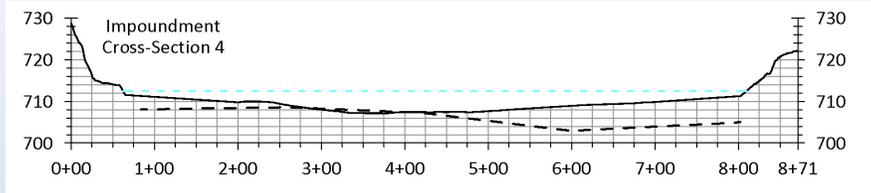
# Impoundment cross-sections



# Impoundment cross-sections



# Valley cross section comparisons



# Existing conditions summary

Total sediment volume range (channel and former floodplain) = 280,000 +/- 25%

Evacuation volume (channel only) = 60-70,000 CY

## Reference sections

Average bankfull width (n=13) = 129 ft +/- 29ft

Average bankfull depth (n=13) = 4.3 ft +/- 0.8ft



Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

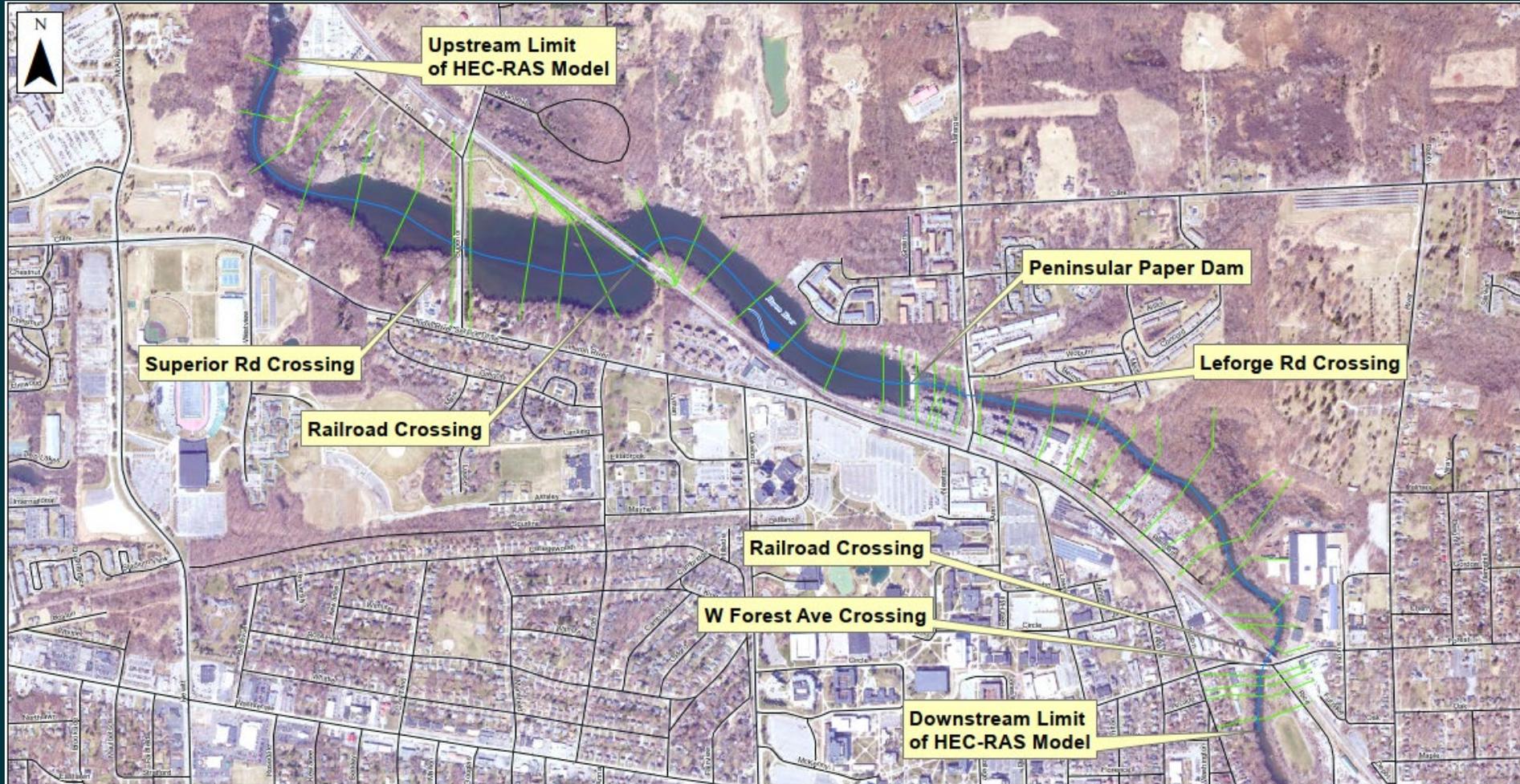
# MODEL DEVELOPMENT AND SCOUR ASSESSMENT



**AECOM**

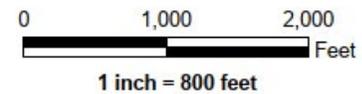


# HEC-RAS Model Extents



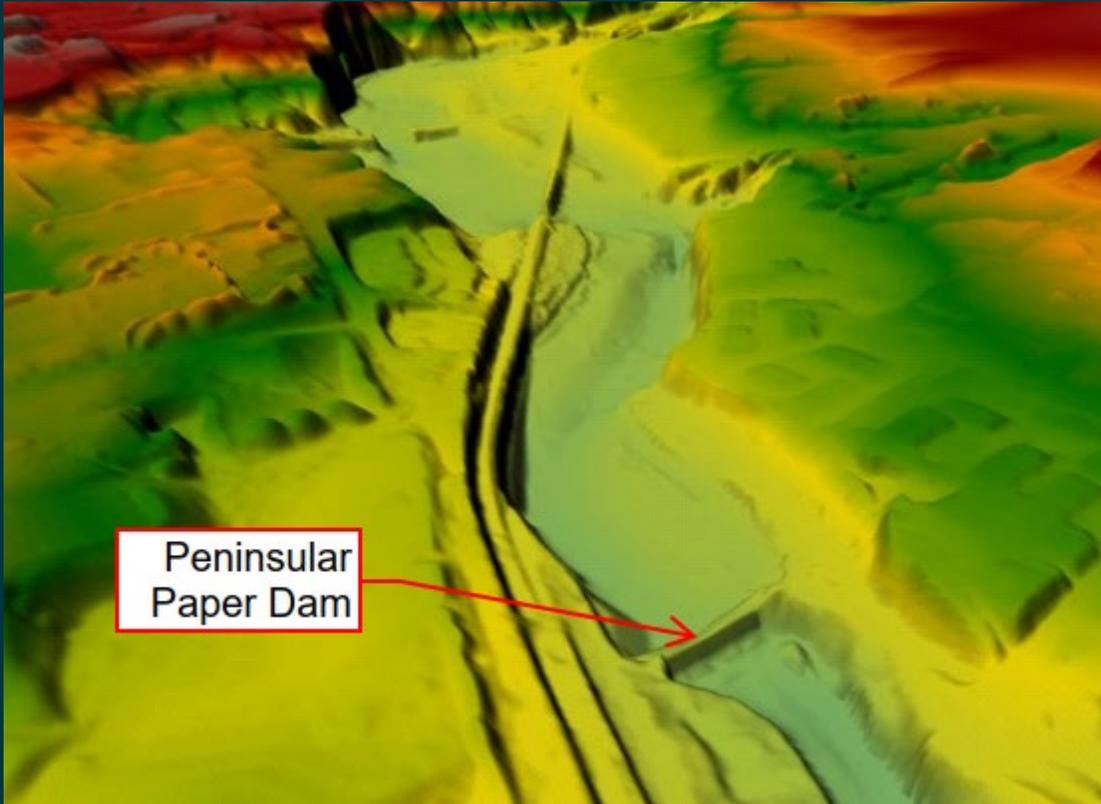
## Legend

- Stream Centerline
- Roads
- HEC-RAS Cross-Sections



## Peninsular Paper Dam HEC-RAS Map

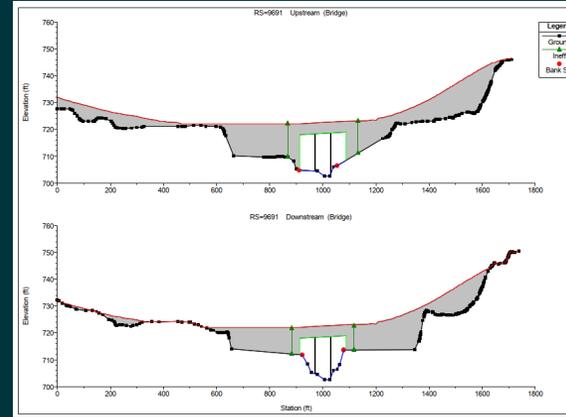
# Existing Conditions HEC-RAS Geometry



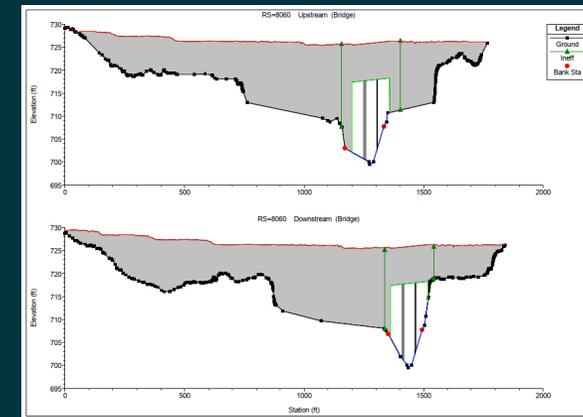
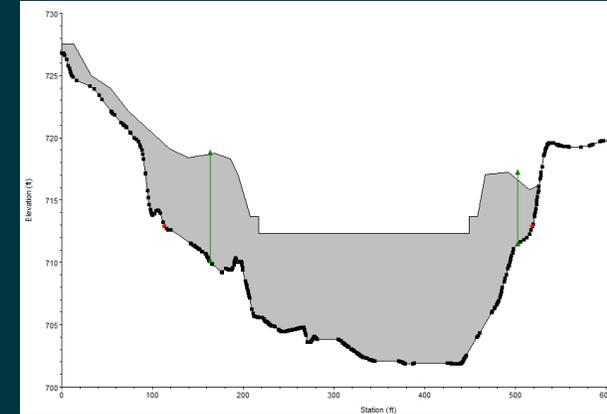
Peninsular Paper Dam

Existing Conditions  
HEC-RAS Terrain  
(Looking Upstream)

Superior Rd Bridge

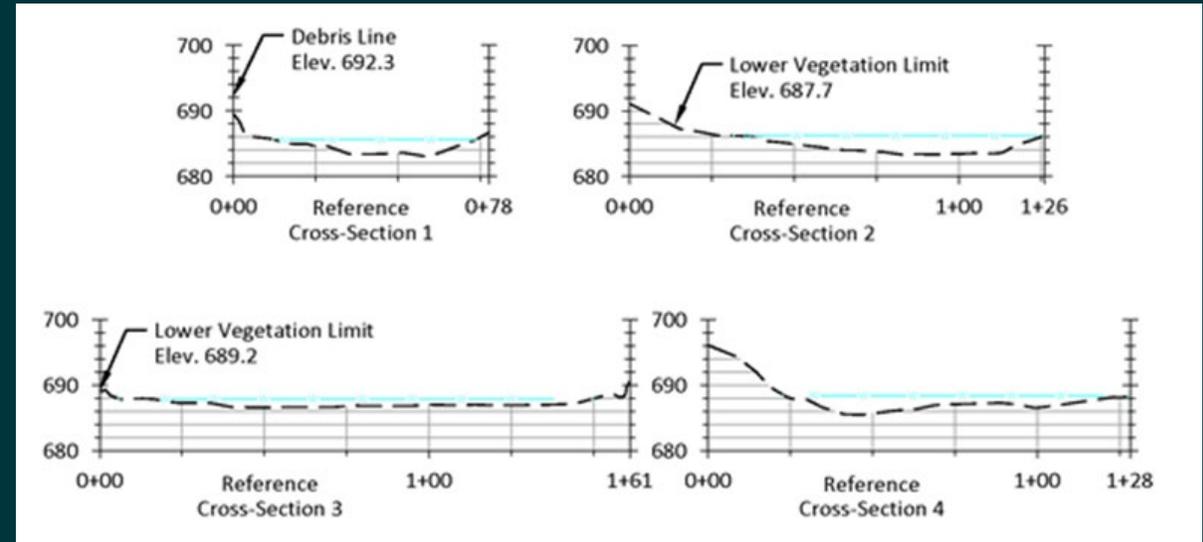
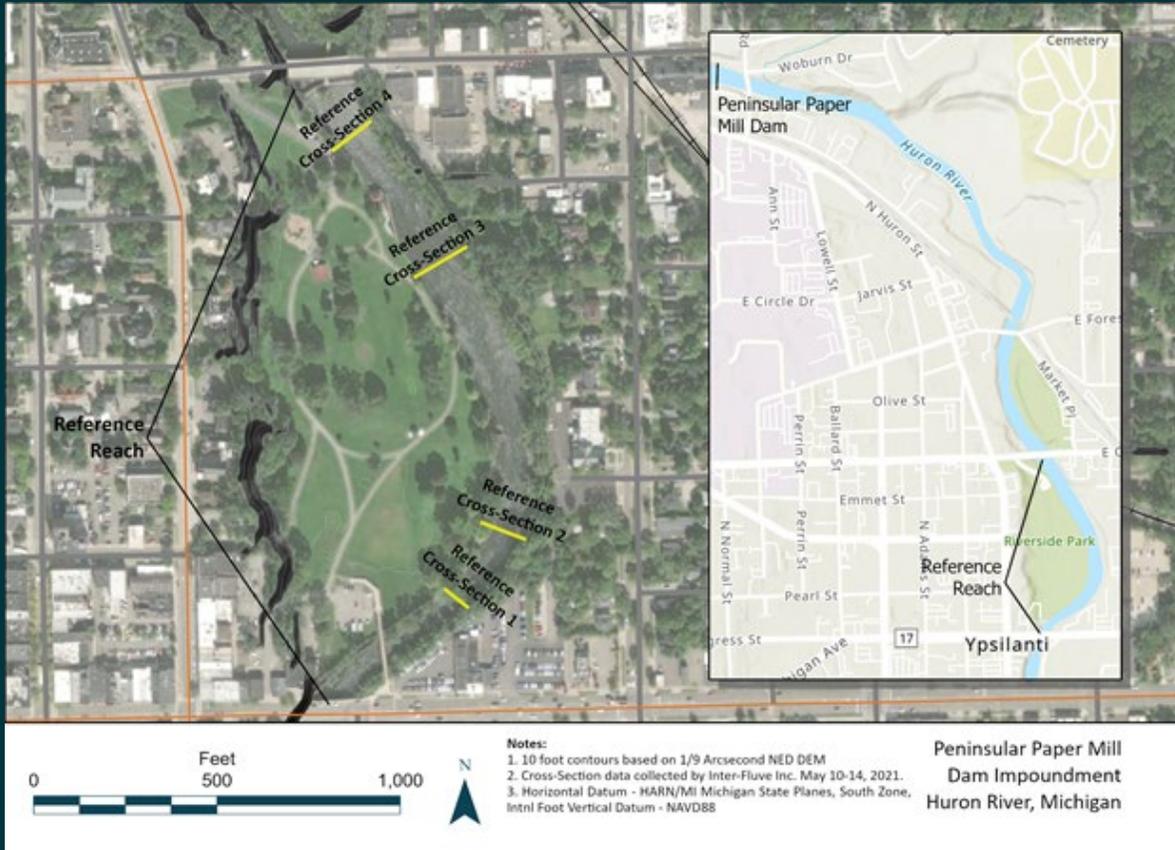


Peninsular Paper Dam

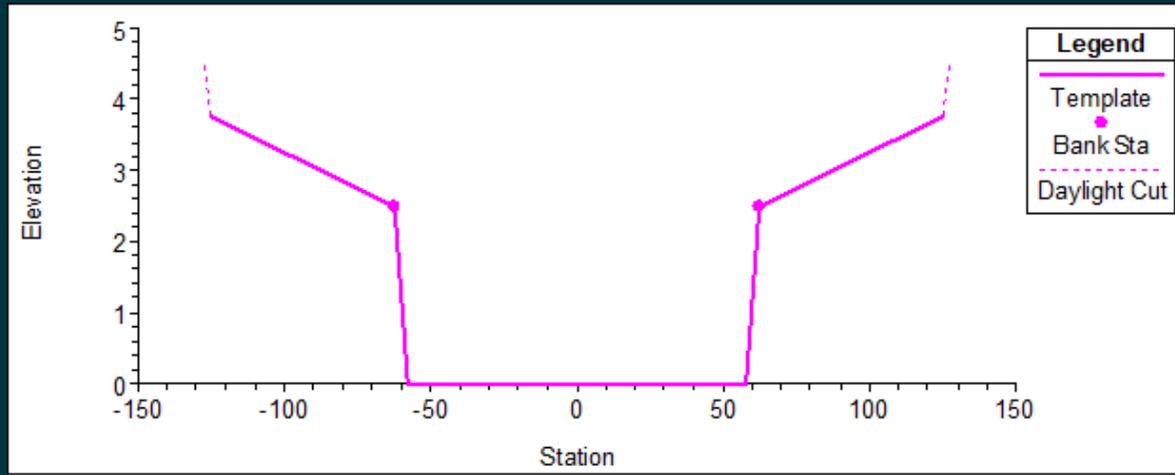


Railroad Bridge

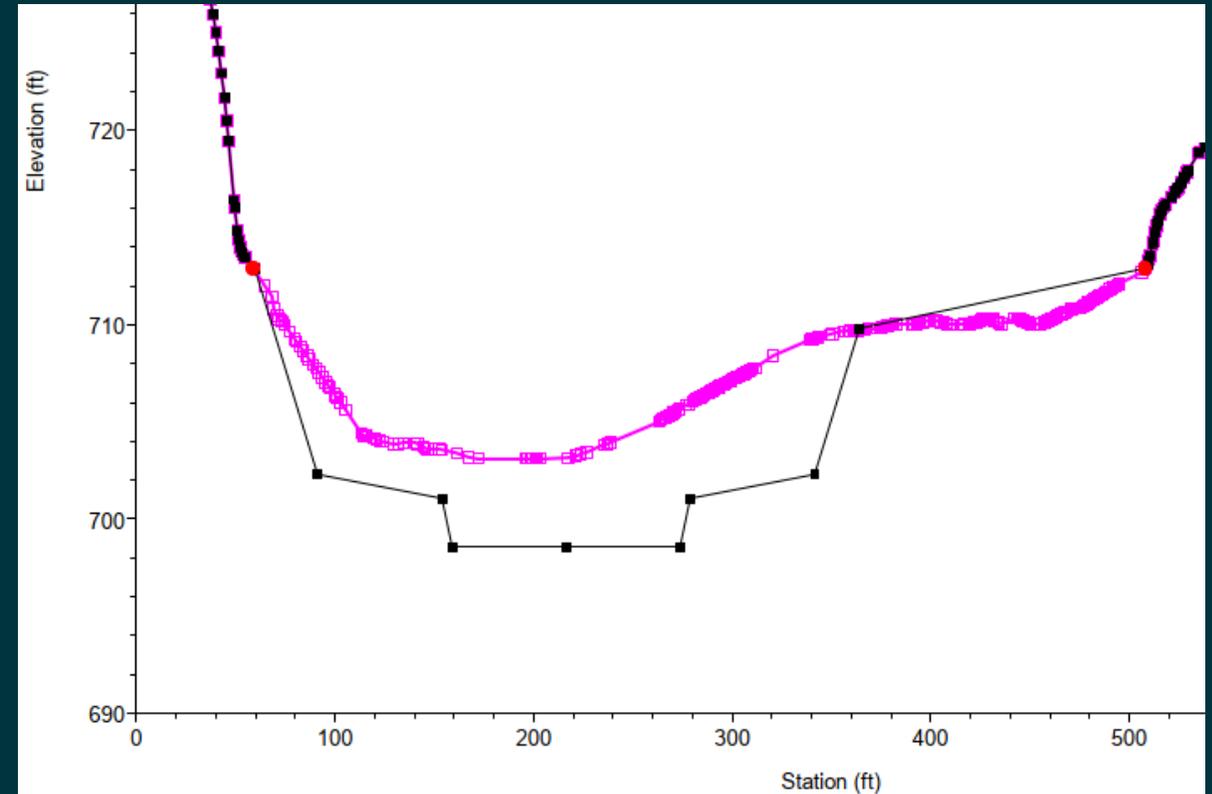
# Reference Channel Cross-Sections for Post Dam Channel



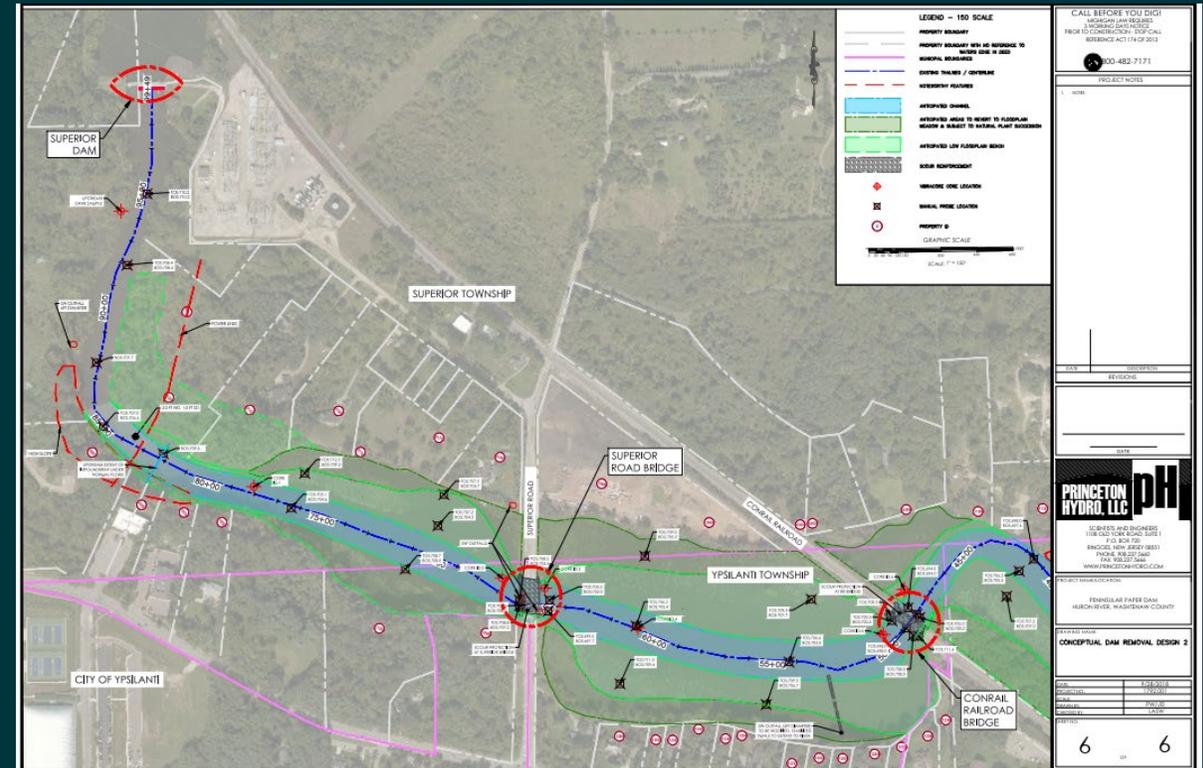
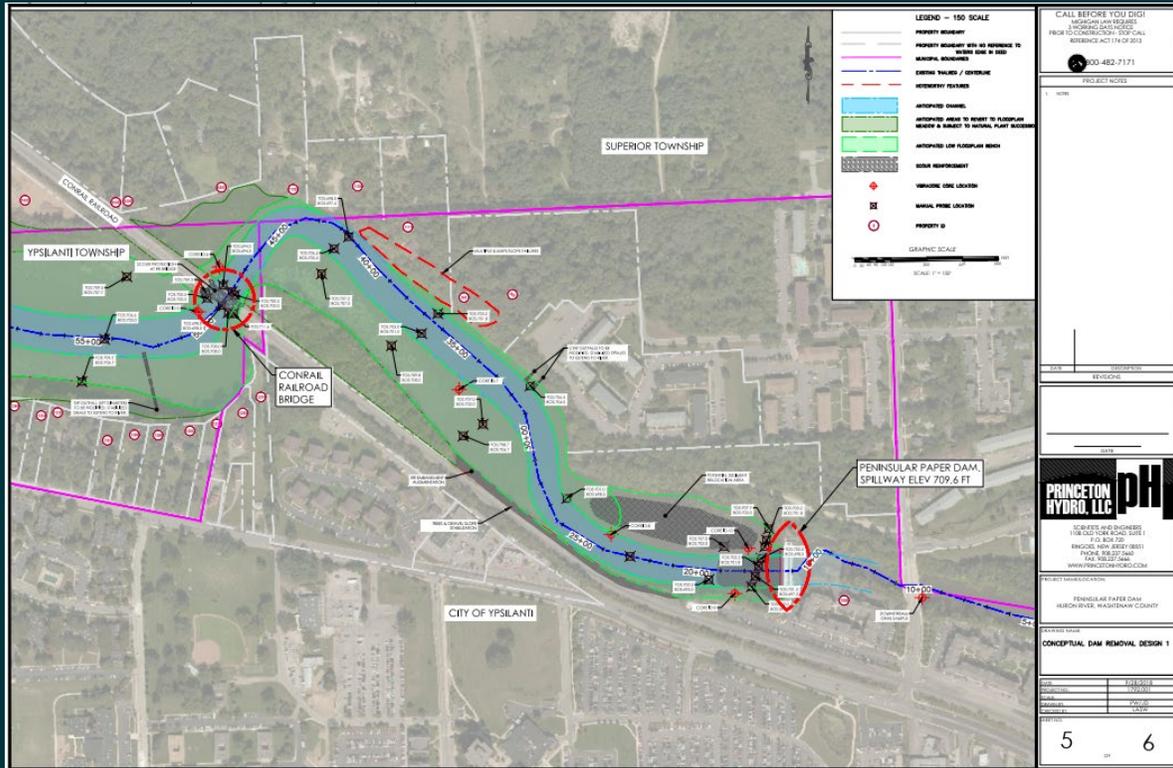
# Typical Post Dam Cross-Section



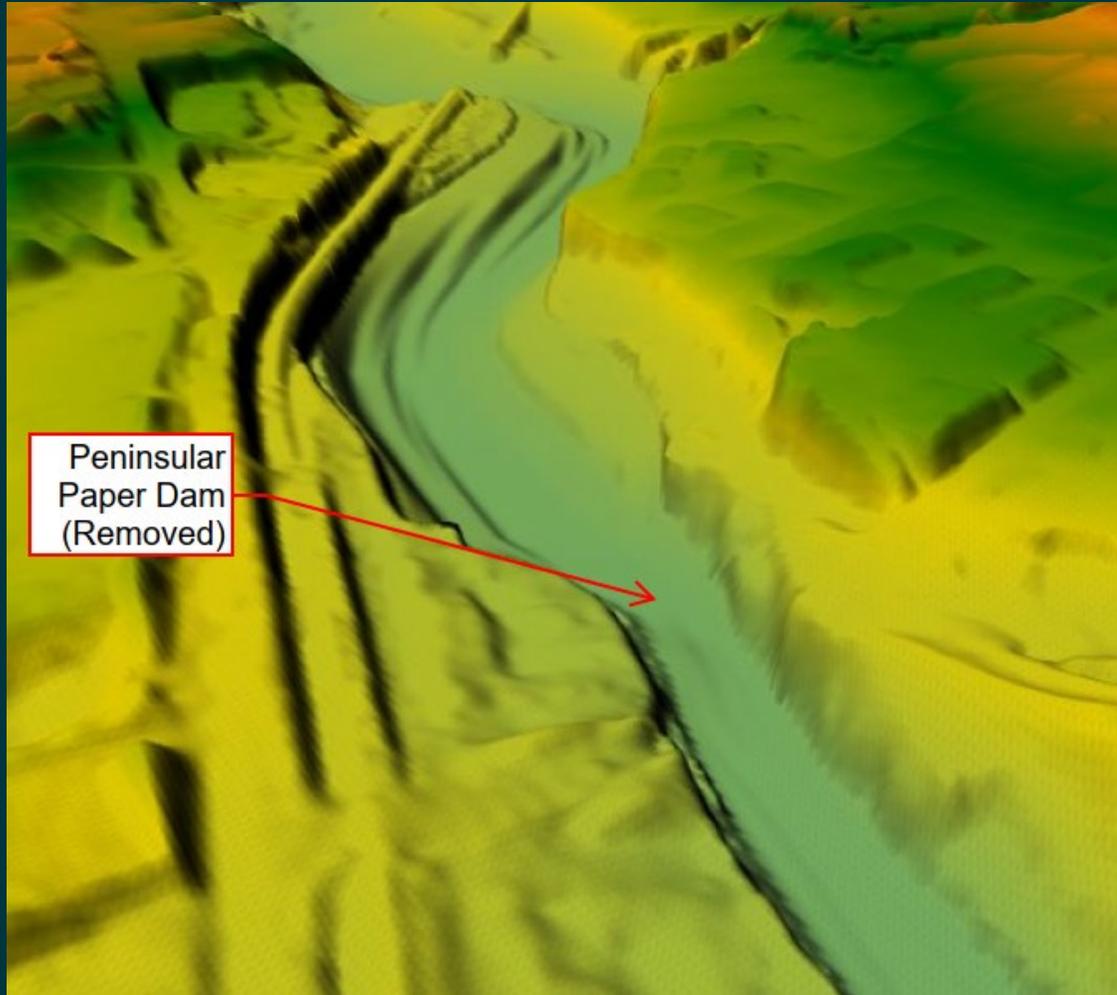
- 2.5-Foot Bankfull Depth
- 125 Foot Bankfull Width
- 2H:1V Bankfull Side Slopes
- 250-Foot Floodplain Bench Width
- 2% Floodplain Bench Side Slopes



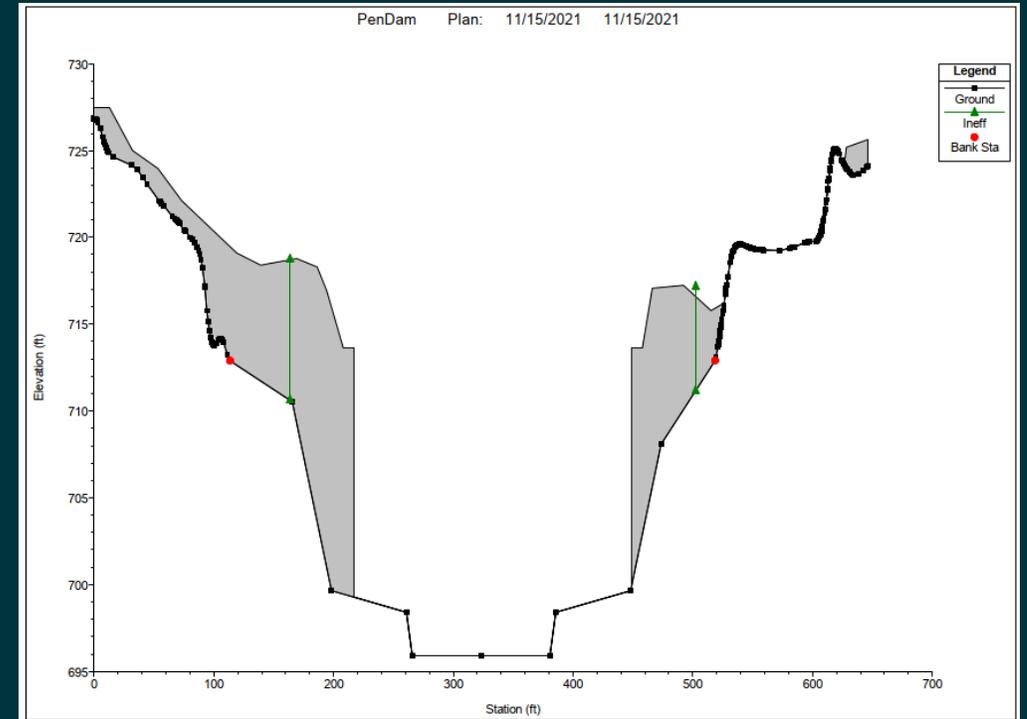
# Conceptual Dam Removal Design from Princeton Hydro's Feasibility Study



# Post Dam HEC-RAS Geometry

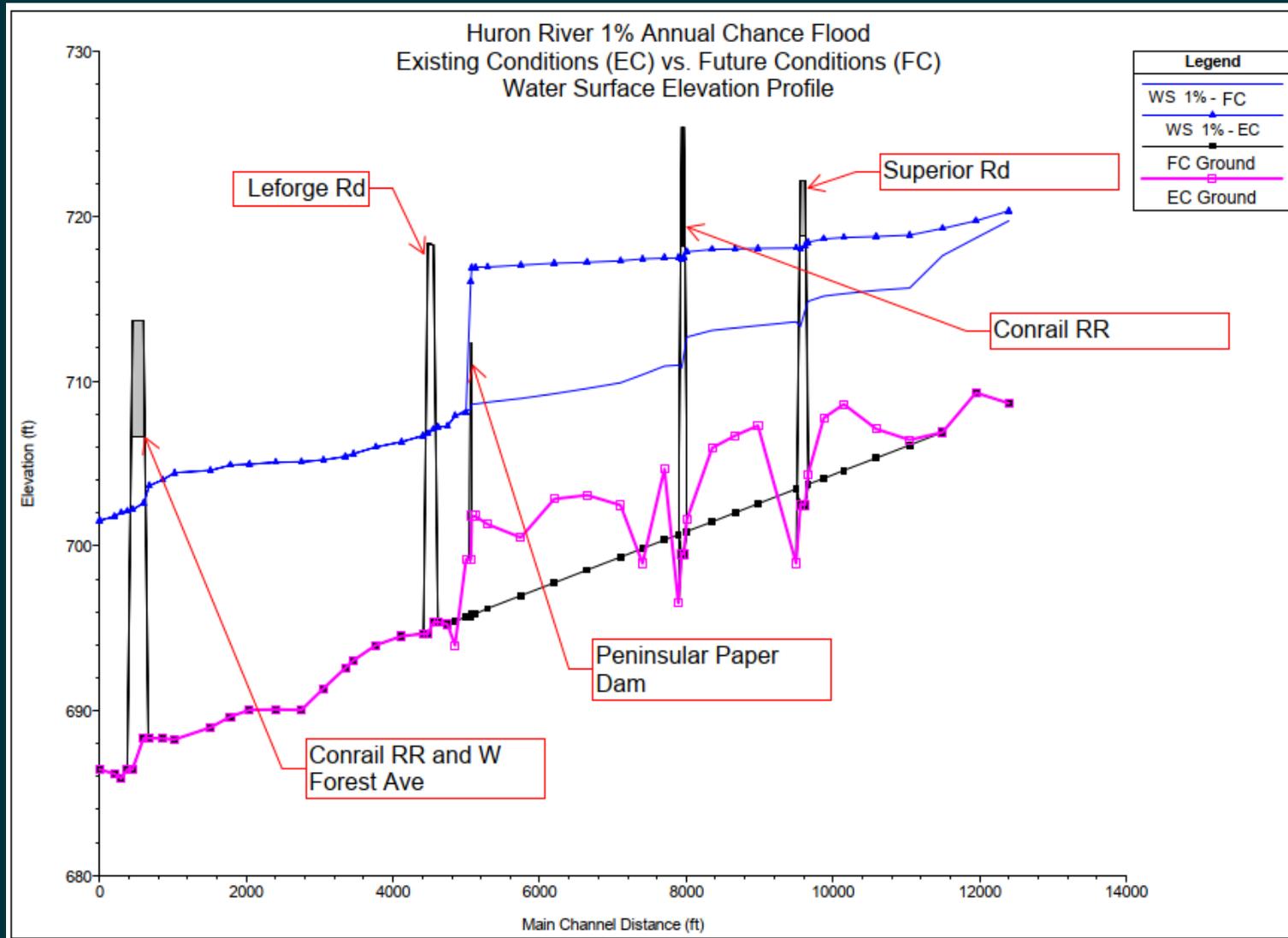


Post Dam Conditions  
HEC-RAS Terrain  
(Looking Upstream)

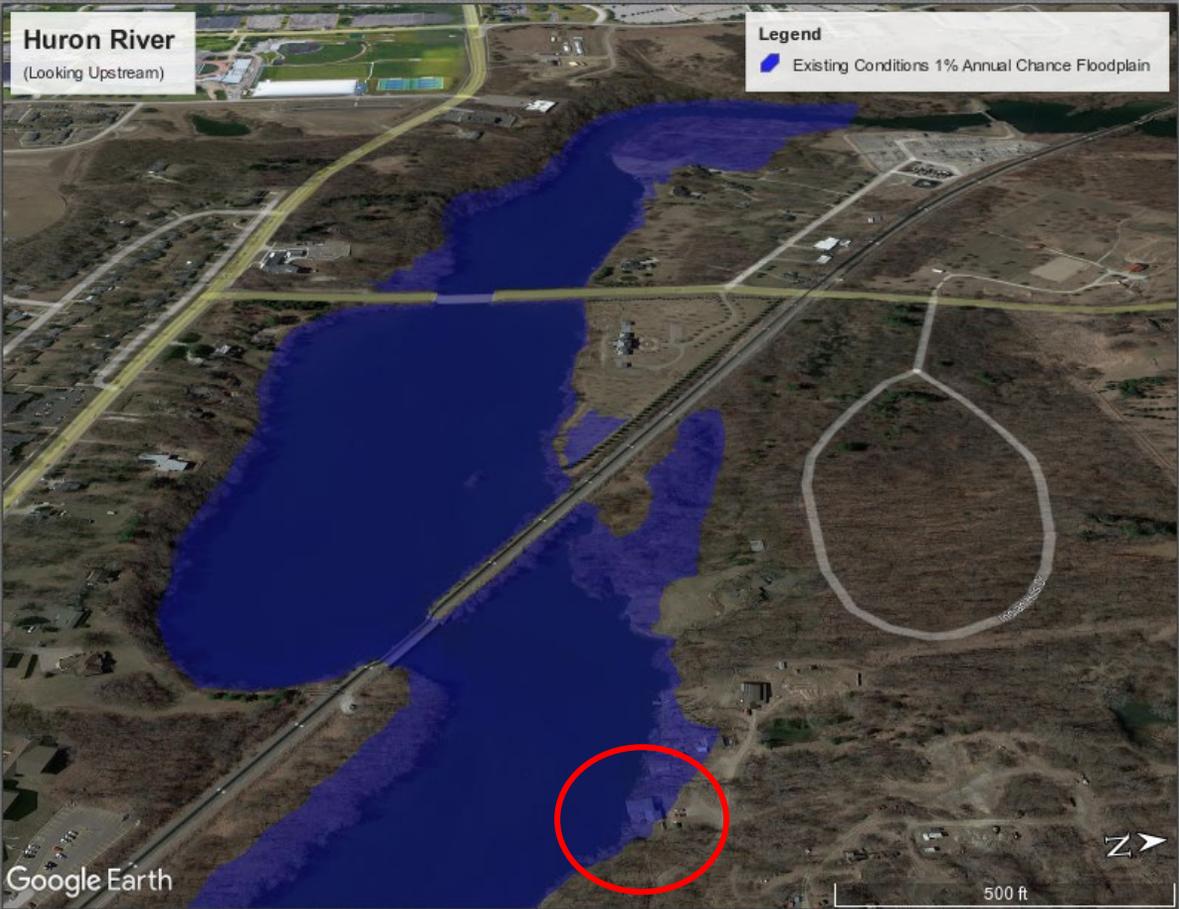


Post Dam HEC-RAS  
Structure -  
Peninsular Paper Dam  
Spillway Removal

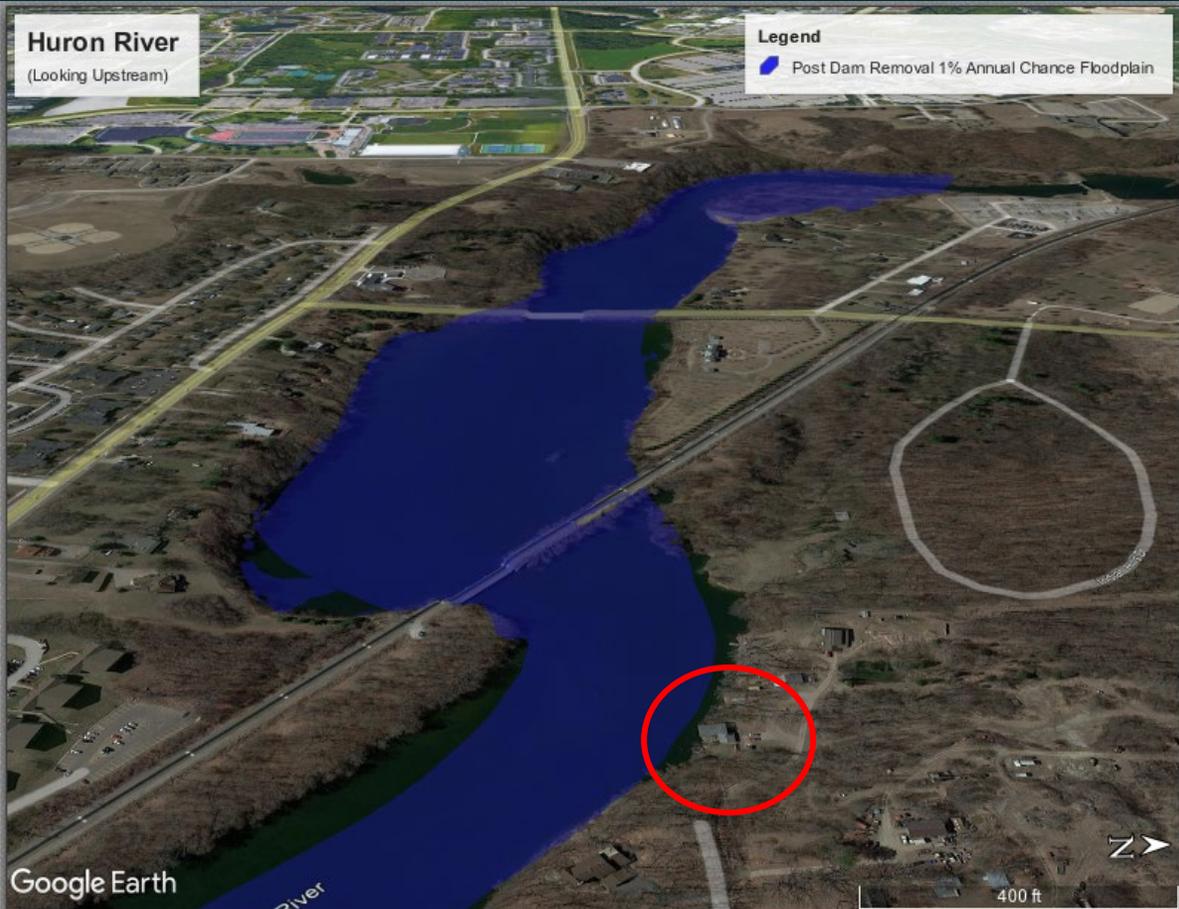
# Existing vs. Future Conditions (Post-Dam Removal) 1% Annual Chance Flood Water Surface Elevation Profile



# Existing Conditions vs. Potential Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Floodplain

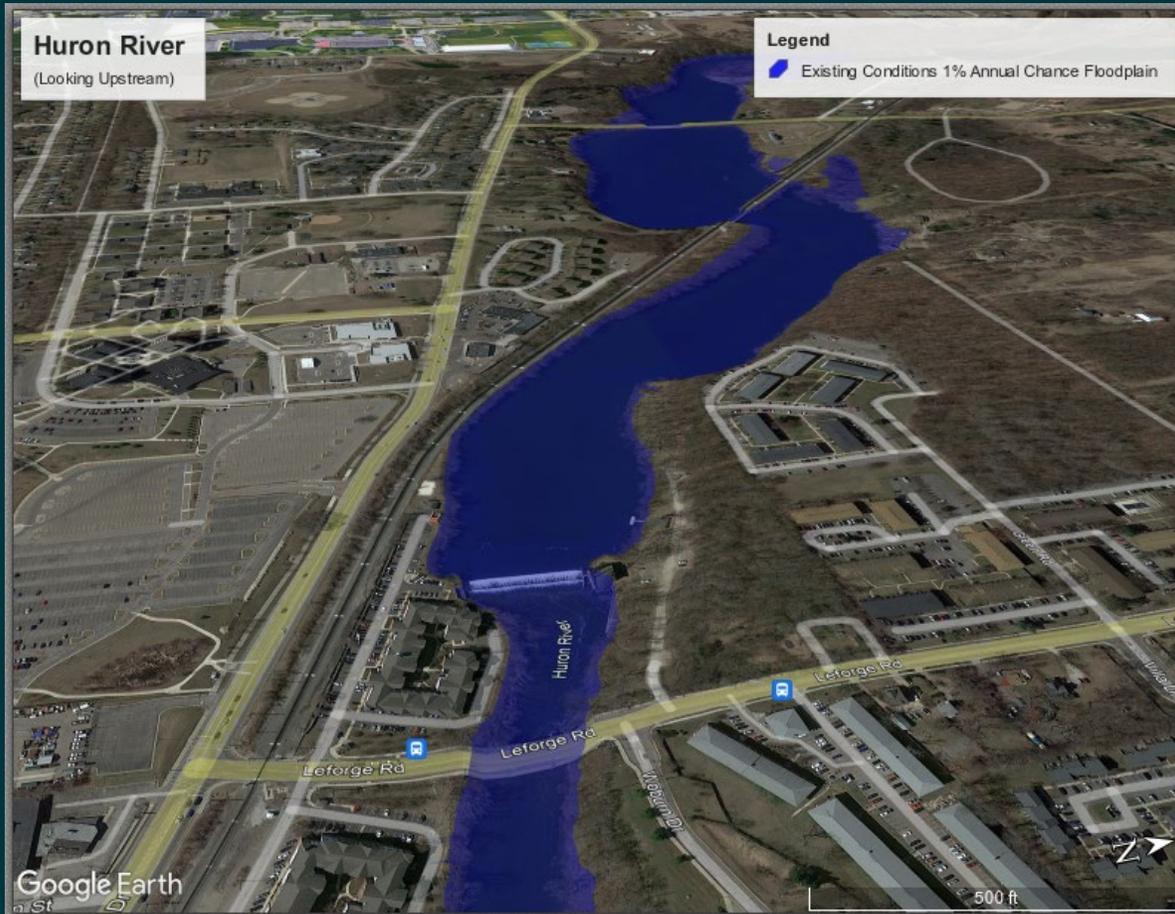


Existing Conditions

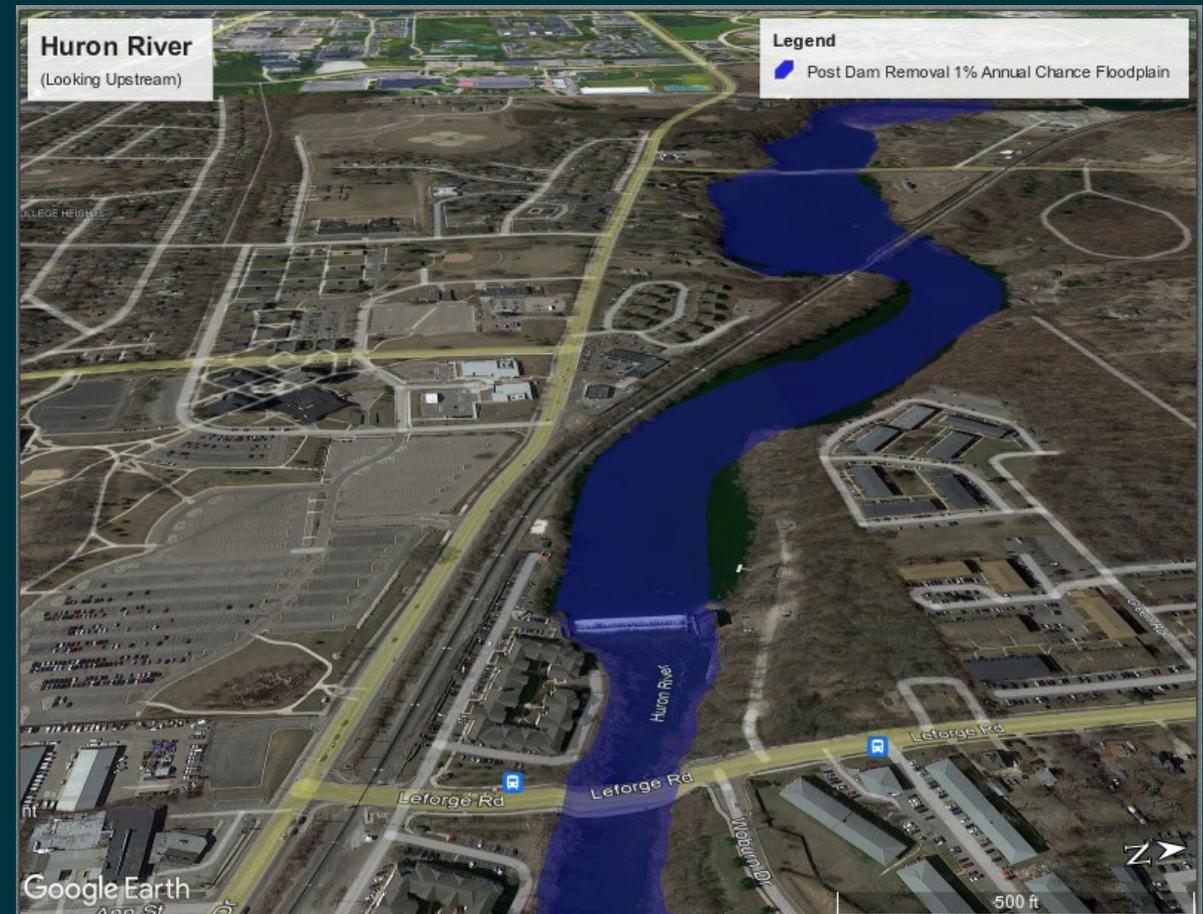


Potential Future Conditions

# Existing Conditions vs. Potential Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Floodplain



Existing Conditions



Potential Future Conditions

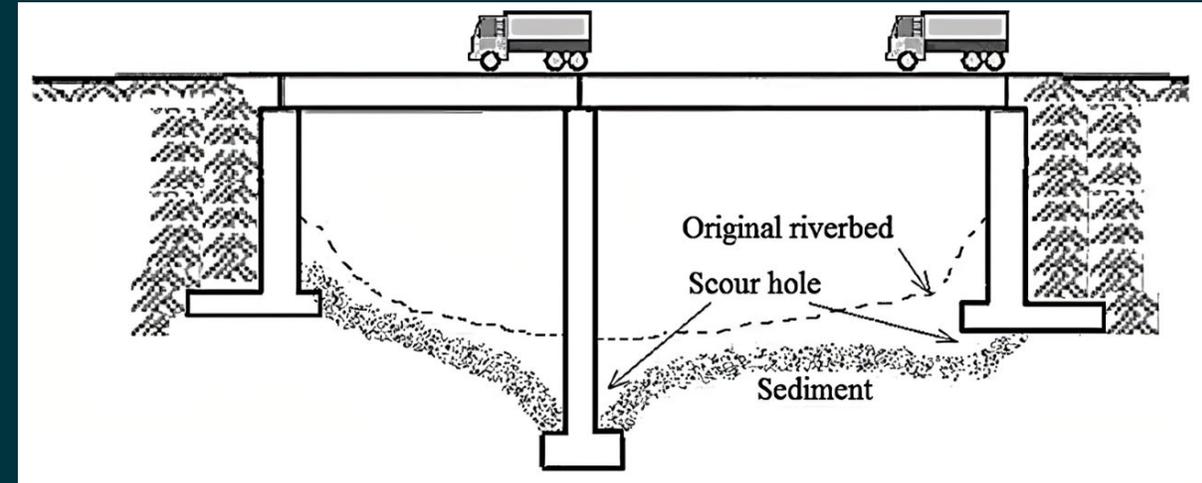
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## Hydraulic Modeling Conclusions

- Existing Conditions model results compare well to the FEMA floodplain maps.
- Potential Future Conditions model shows a reduction in the floodplain elevations.
- The Existing Conditions and Potential Future Conditions Model results converge at the Leforge Rd Bridge.

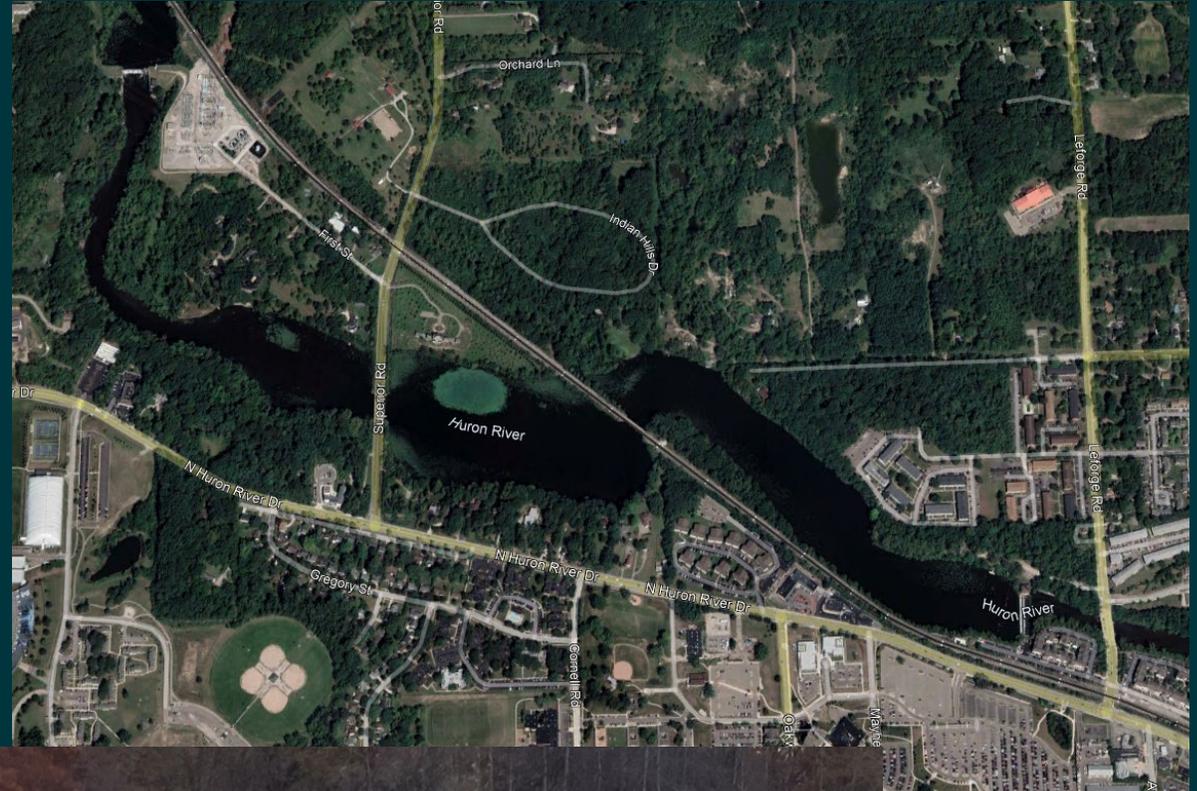
## Scour Assessment Objectives (Subtask 5.2 and 5.3)

- Evaluate depth of total scour at each bridge
- Use MDOT guidelines for Level 2 scour analysis
- Define stream stability and any potential scour problems at the bridges.
- Conduct scour evaluations for the 100- and 500-year floods
- Use HEC-RAS model for analysis
- Estimate the potential for contraction, main channel, and local scour at abutments and/or piers and compare to bridge design
- Recommend scour risk mitigation approaches



# Scour Assessment

- Two crossings of concern with removal of Peninsular Paper Dam
- Superior Road
  - As-builts from 1973, assume these are current
  - Recent (2019) bridge condition assessment
- Railway Bridge crossing
  - As-builts from 1899 to 1999



# Scour Assessment

## – Conclusions

- Data is pretty good for Superior Road Bridge
  - Scour evaluation are be based on existing conditions and can be compared to as-built documentations for the depth of abutments and piers
  - This will allow us to make good scour mitigation recommendations
- Data for the RR bridge is limited
  - Scour evaluation are based on existing conditions, but as-built structure data is not sufficiently detailed to perform a complete comparison
  - Initial recommendations for scour mitigation is conservative
  - Data collection to refine analysis is recommended





Service Layer Credits: Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

# SEDIMENT SAMPLING PROGRAM RESULTS



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## SEDIMENT SAMPLING – WHY?

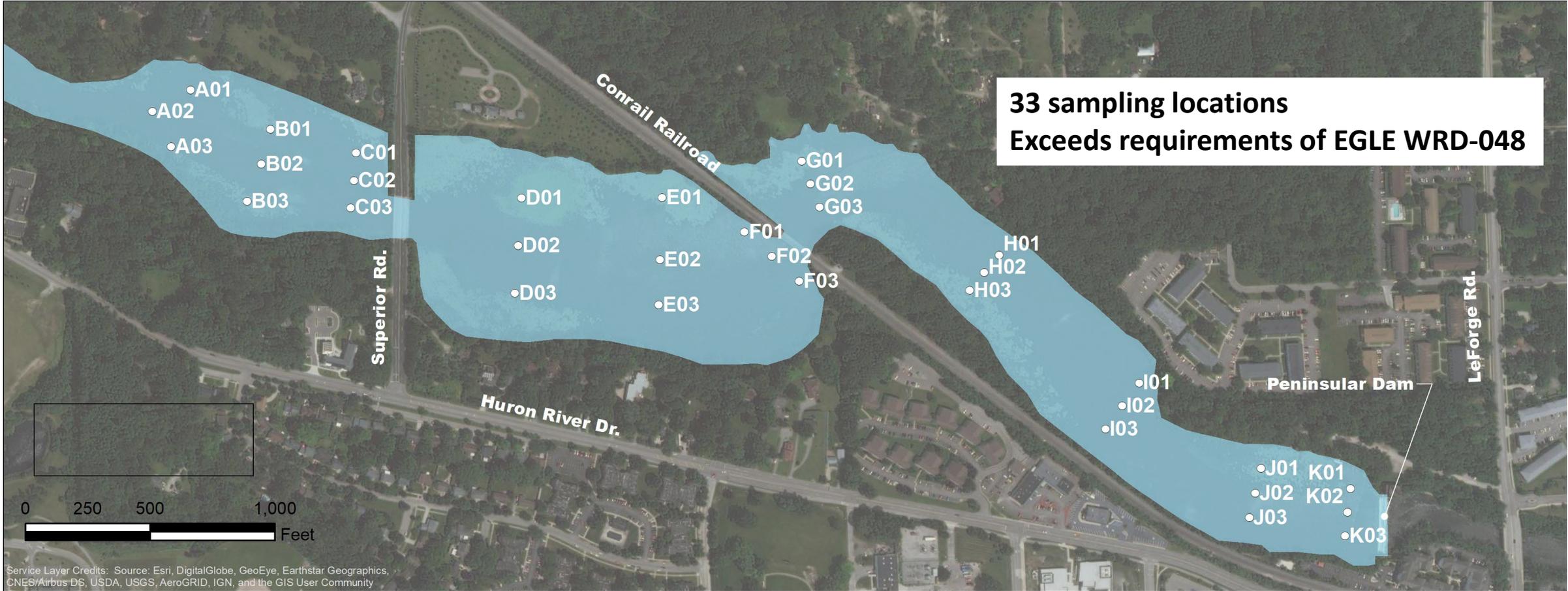
Evaluate whether there are pollutants present in the sediment that can harm public health or the natural ecosystem.

These measures are necessary to properly design and manage the sediment during dam removal and channel restoration.





# Sediment Sampling Locations





# IMPOUNDMENT SEDIMENT QUALITY ANALYSIS

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- Metals (Michigan 10 Required):

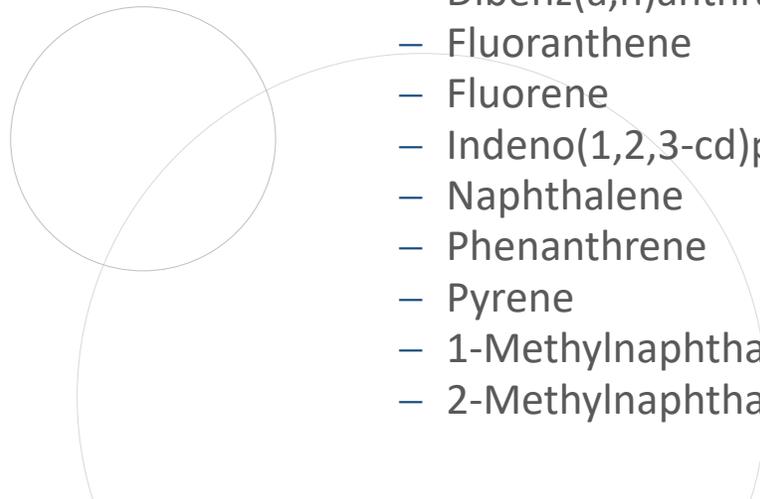
- Arsenic
- Barium
- Cadmium
- Chromium
- Copper
- Lead
- Selenium
- Silver
- Zinc
- Mercury

- Other

- Phosphorus
- Moisture Content

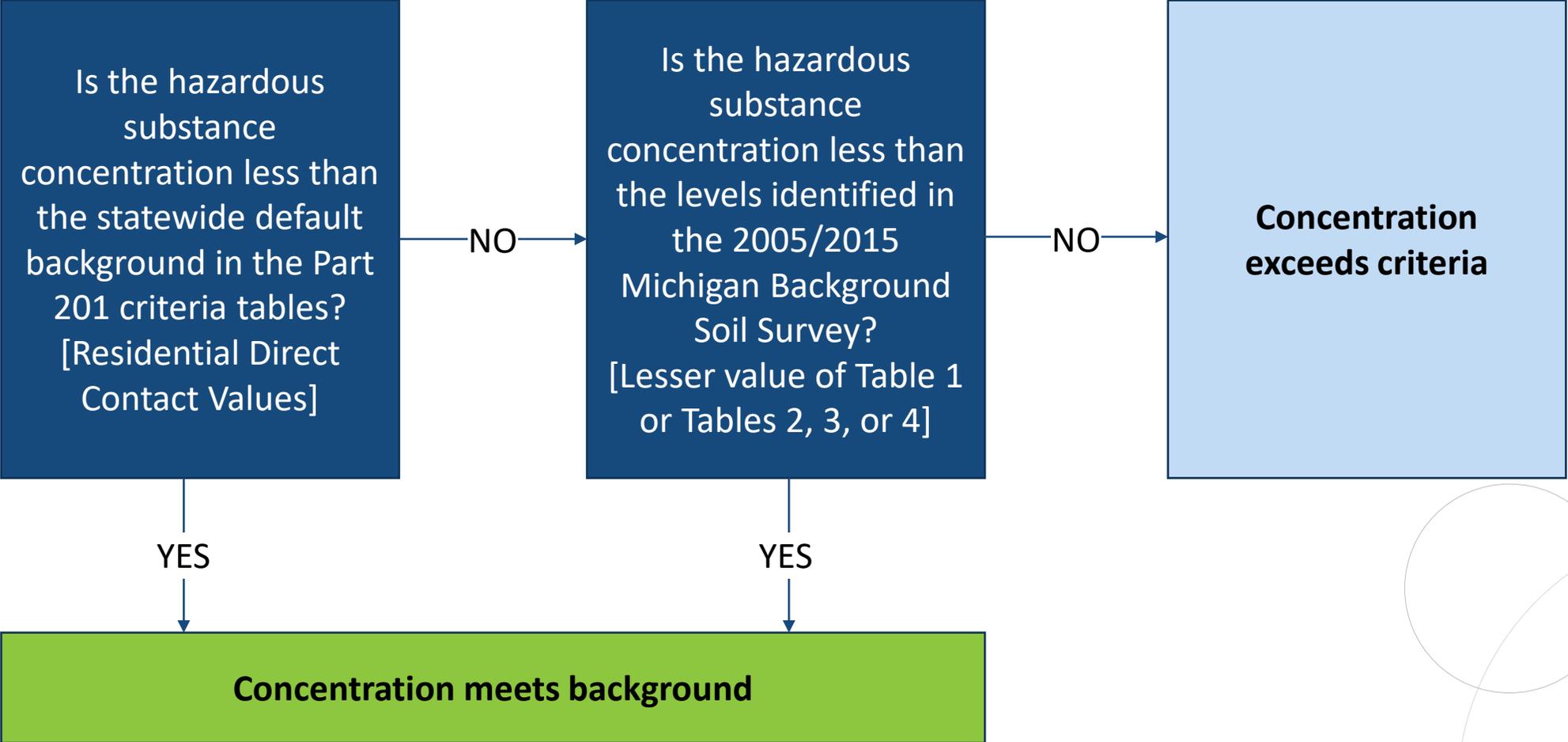
- Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)

- Acenaphthene
- Acenaphthylene
- Anthracene
- Benzo(a)anthracene
- Benzo(a)pyrene
- Benzo(b)fluoranthene
- Benzo(g,h,i)perylene
- Benzo(k)fluoranthene
- Chrysene
- Dibenz(a,h)anthracene
- Fluoranthene
- Fluorene
- Indeno(1,2,3-cd)pyrene
- Naphthalene
- Phenanthrene
- Pyrene
- 1-Methylnaphthalene
- 2-Methylnaphthalene





# Sediment Quality Criteria for Upland/Floodplain Areas

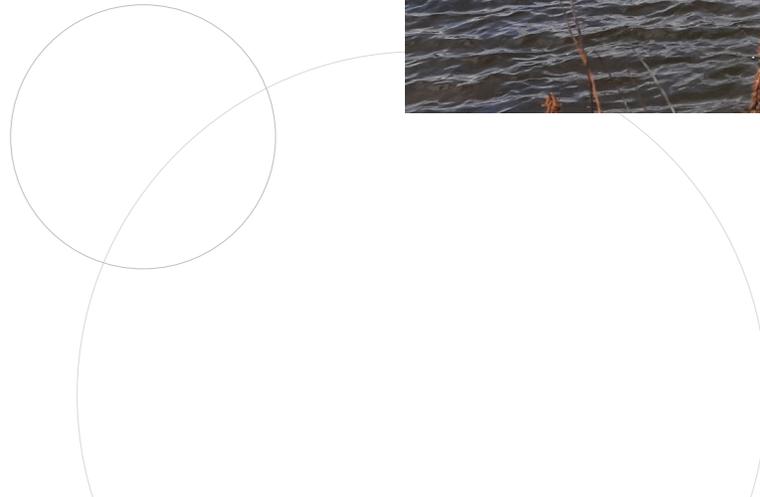




# SEDIMENT QUALITY CRITERIA FOR RIVER CHANNEL

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- Sediment quality guidelines (SQGs) based on effects to benthic-dwelling species.
- Pollutant concentrations in the sediment are compared with the Probable Effects Concentration (PEC), which is the level at which there are likely impacts to the ecosystem.



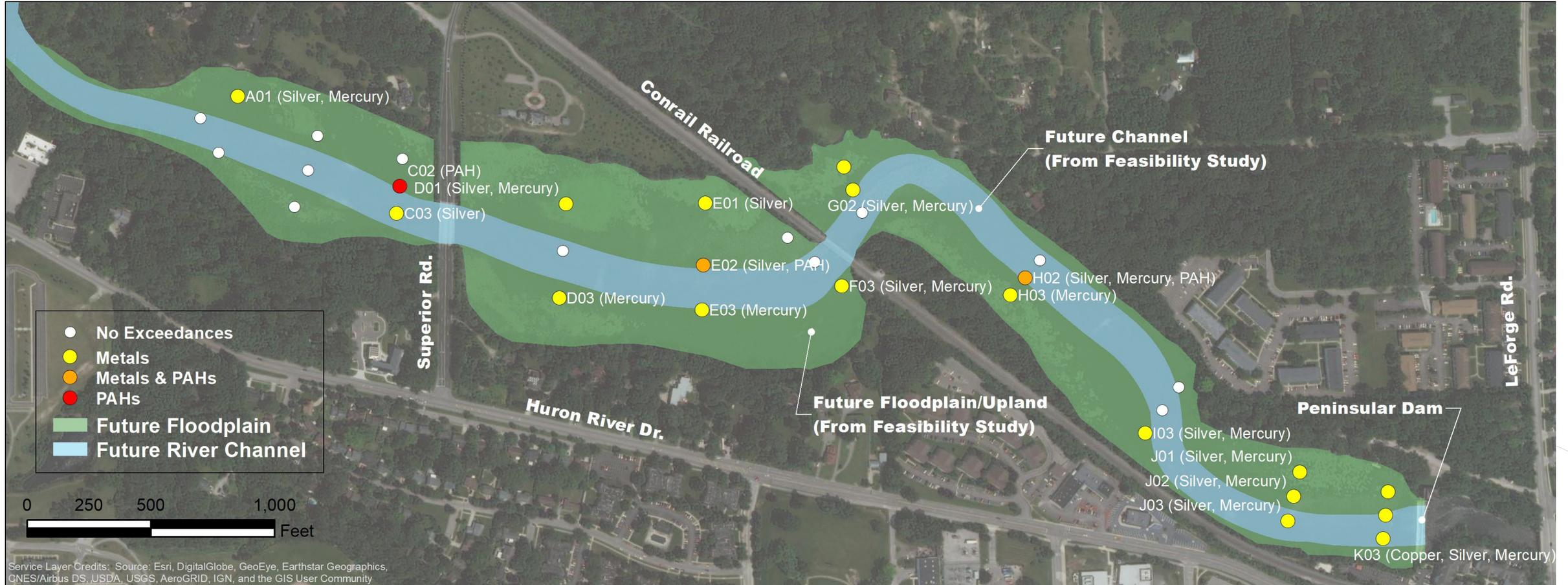


# Human Contact Sediment Quality Criteria Exceedances





# Ecological Sediment Quality Criteria Exceedances

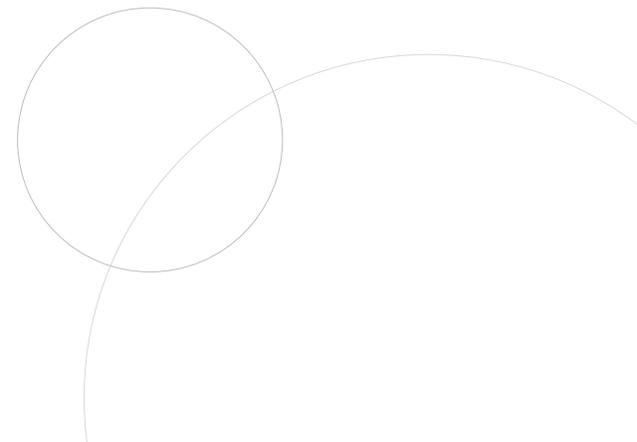




# Sediment Sampling Conclusions

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- Confirms that there are no major potential impacts to public health that cannot be managed through typical restoration measures.
- Total volume of the sediment is on the lower bound of what was listed in the Feasibility Study.
  - Feasibility Study noted “Up to 1,000,000 CY”
  - Depth of refusal and bathymetric survey shows 280,000 CY
- The Sediment Management Plan for Dam Removal and Channel Restoration will need to take into account the locations where the sediment samples exceeded criteria for ecological protection and direct human contact. Some of the options that will be considered are:
  - Manage in place
  - Removal to adjacent uplands
  - Removal to other offsite re-use
  - Removal to landfill disposal





## Project Status and Next Steps

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- First phase of MDNR Fisheries Habitat Grant completed
- Next Phase (currently out for bid)
  - Geotechnical analysis of dam and bridges
  - Additional hydraulic modelling
  - Additional sediment sample collection and analysis based on guidance from state officials
  - Pursue permits and easements
  - Preliminary removal design and supporting information for community consideration



# THANK YOU

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**LimnoTech** 

Water | Scientists  
Environment | Engineers

# Restoration Planning Update

4/27/2022

Read the full Restoration Plan at:

[HRWC.org/pendam](https://hrwc.org/pendam)

# Restoration Plan Goal

This plan is intended to guide the restoration effort in the impoundment and nearby areas before, during, and after the dam removal.

*It will continue to evolve as we learn more.*

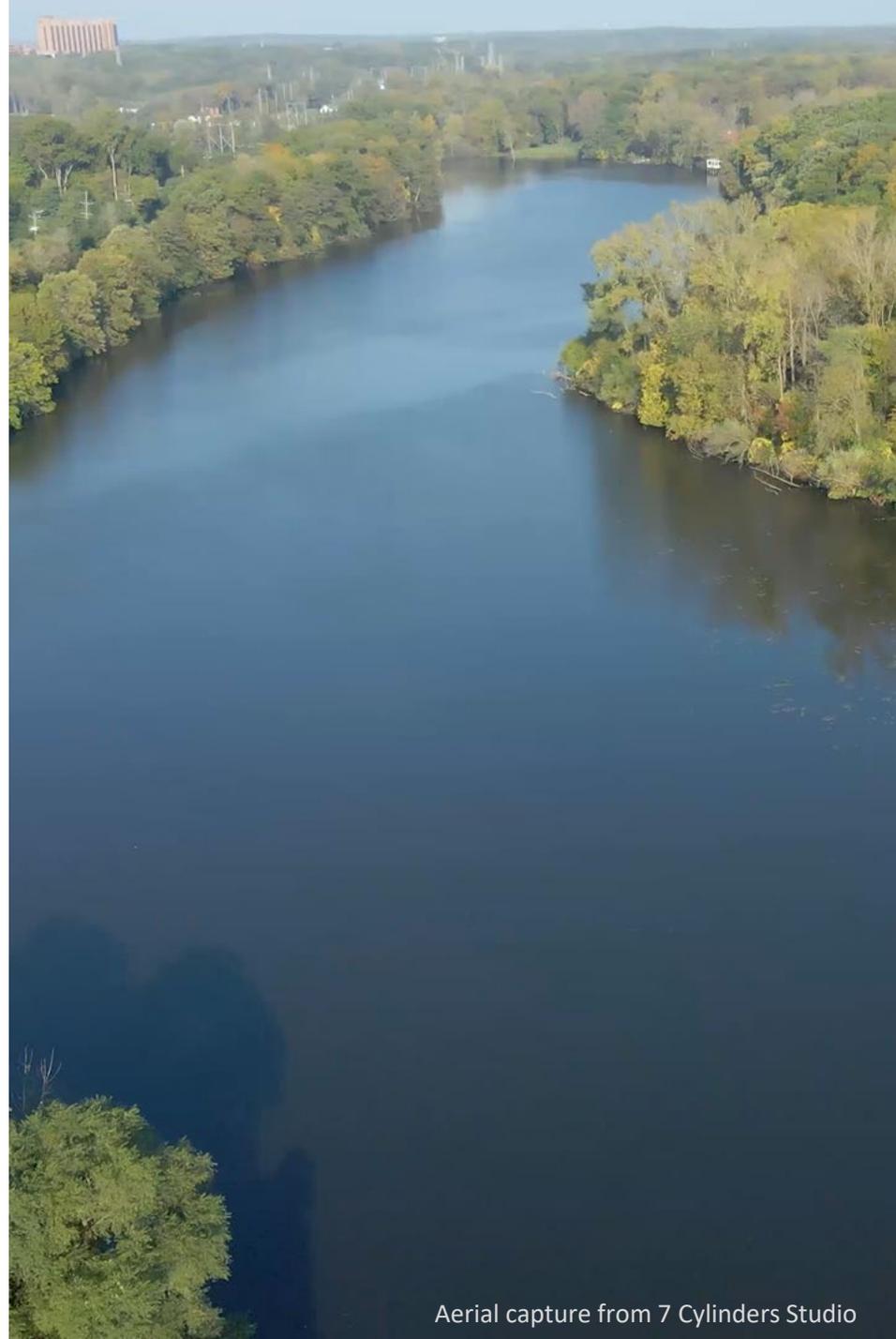
# River Restoration

*An incredible opportunity to:*

- 1) improve the resilience of the Greater Ypsilanti community and*
- 2) make the river healthier for people, fish, and wildlife.*

# Representation of the Restoration Subcommittee

- City of Ypsilanti
- Eastern Michigan University
- Huron River Watershed Council
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
  - Natural Rivers District Program
  - Fisheries Division
- University of Michigan
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Washtenaw County Water Resources Commission



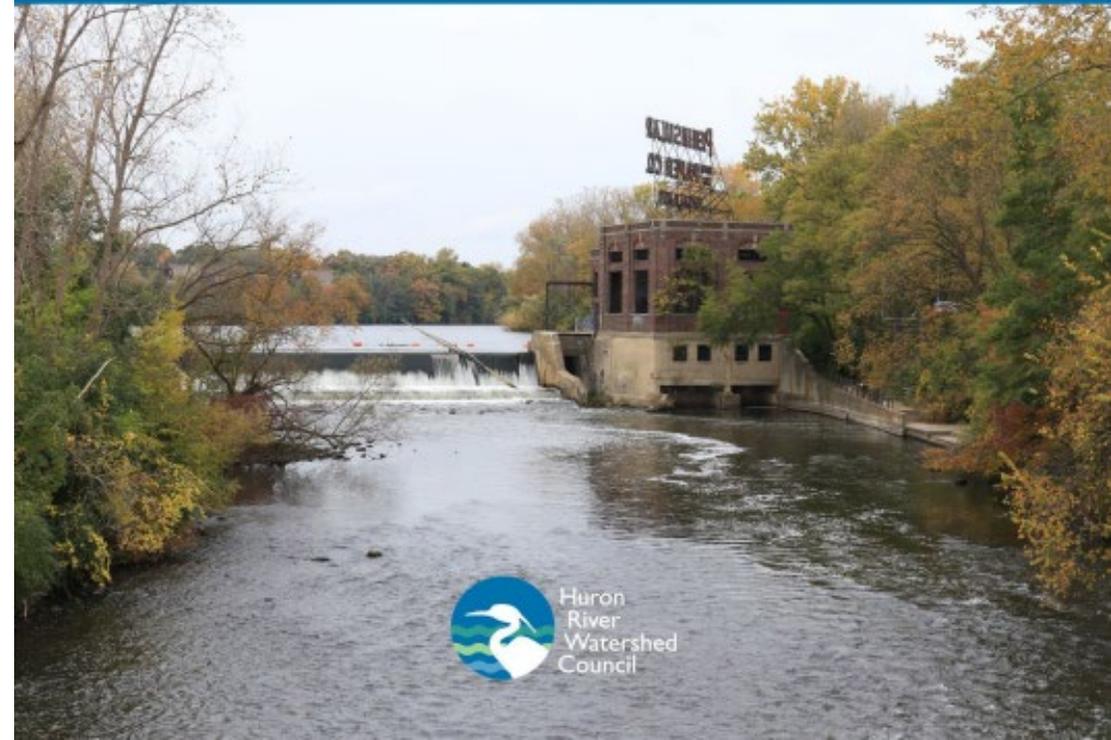
# Restoration Plan Summary

- A restored river channel will be more resilient against aquatic invasive species and beneficial to native aquatic and riparian species.
- Some changes in fish species are anticipated.
- The restoration of Pen Park can provide an example for the rest of the impoundment.
- New results from the 2021 analysis of the impoundment have not significantly altered future restoration plans.

## Peninsular Paper Dam Impoundment Restoration Plan

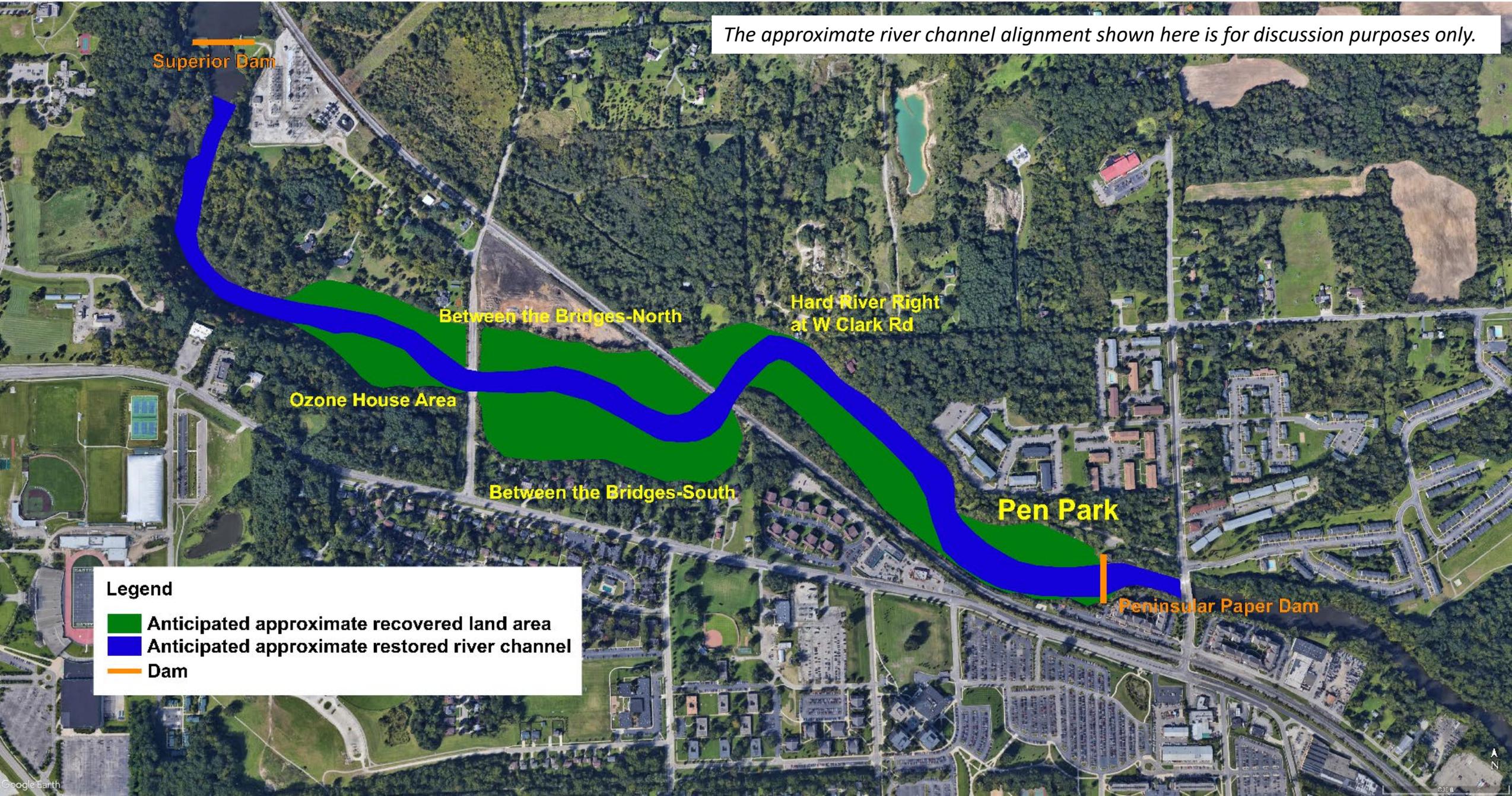
Draft version: March 2022

Corresponding editor: Daniel Brown, [dbrown@hrwc.org](mailto:dbrown@hrwc.org)



# Peninsular Paper Dam Impoundment Area, Ypsilanti, Michigan

The approximate river channel alignment shown here is for discussion purposes only.

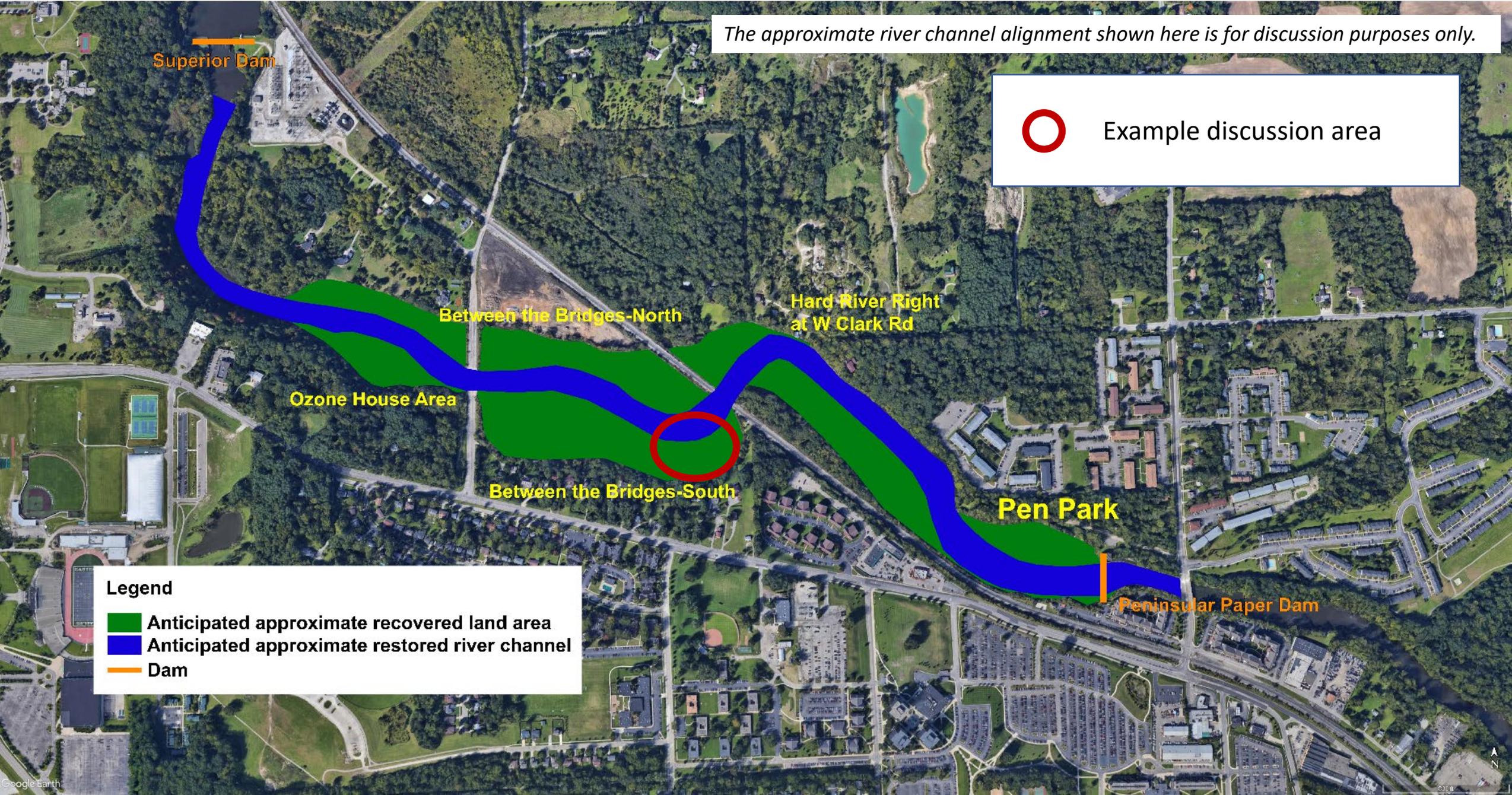


# Peninsular Paper Dam Impoundment Area, Ypsilanti, Michigan

The approximate river channel alignment shown here is for discussion purposes only.



Example discussion area



Superior Dam

Between the Bridges-North

Hard River Right at W Clark Rd

Ozone House Area

Between the Bridges-South

Pen Park

Peninsular Paper Dam

## Legend

-  Anticipated approximate recovered land area
-  Anticipated approximate restored river channel
-  Dam

# Native and Invasive Species

Invasive: Purple loosestrife



Invasive: Phragmites



Invasive: Eurasian Watermilfoil



Native: Wavy-rayed lampmussel



Native:  
Mitchell's Satyr Butterfly



# Pen Park Restoration

- 7-acre park may gain about 2 acres
- Remove invasive species:  
Est. cost: \$35,000
- Clear some minor safety hazards and brush
- Re-seed recovered land with volunteers:  
Est. cost: \$4,000



## Peninsular Park Management Plan Map

Leforge Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48198

2016 by PlantWise, LLC for Huron River Watershed Council

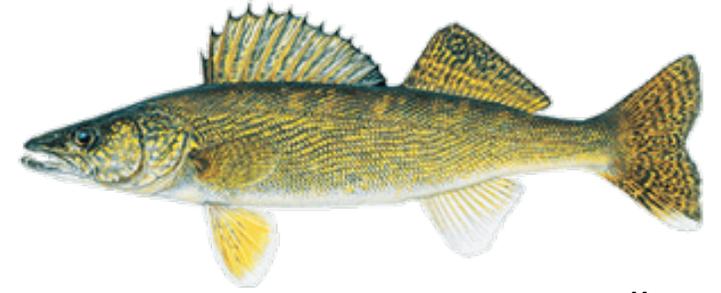
- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
|  | management units        |
|  | roads and trails        |
|  | proposed planting areas |
|  | previous escarpment     |

*Restoration cost estimates range from \$10,000 to \$60,000 depending on the scope of work.*

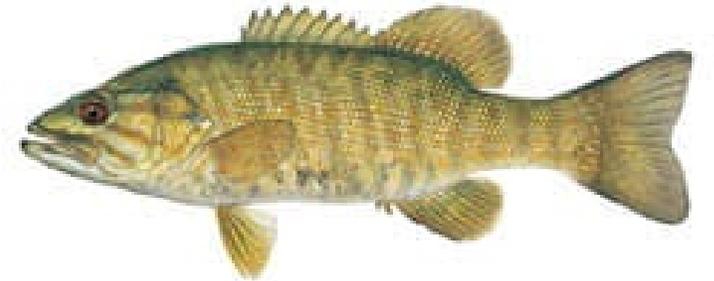
# Benefits to Fish Populations

Game fish species, such as smallmouth bass, walleye, and white bass will likely benefit.

Catfish and carp abundance will likely decrease but will likely still be present in numbers to sustain local recreation activities related to those species.



Walleye



Smallmouth bass



Catfish



Common carp  
Photo courtesy Schultz Outfitters



Dexter Mill Creek Restoration, Dexter, Michigan, 9 years after dam removal. Photo: MDNR



Guest Blogger  
03/16/2022  
[Restoration](#)

## REMOVING DAMS HELPS FISH

Many dams in the U.S. have been an important part of infrastructure, serving to help with flood control and water...



Guest Blogger  
10/05/2021  
[Dams](#)

## HYDROELECTRIC DAMS, METHANE, AND THE HURON RIVER

Dams: Not as green as you might think! Preliminary results from a recent EMU study indicate that dams on the...



Guest Blogger  
04/27/2022  
[Dams](#)

## BIRDS AND DAMS

-by Juliet Berger, Ornithologist, NAP Across Michigan and throughout the country, old, obsolete dams are being removed from rivers with...

[Read more on the \*HRWC.org\* blog](#)

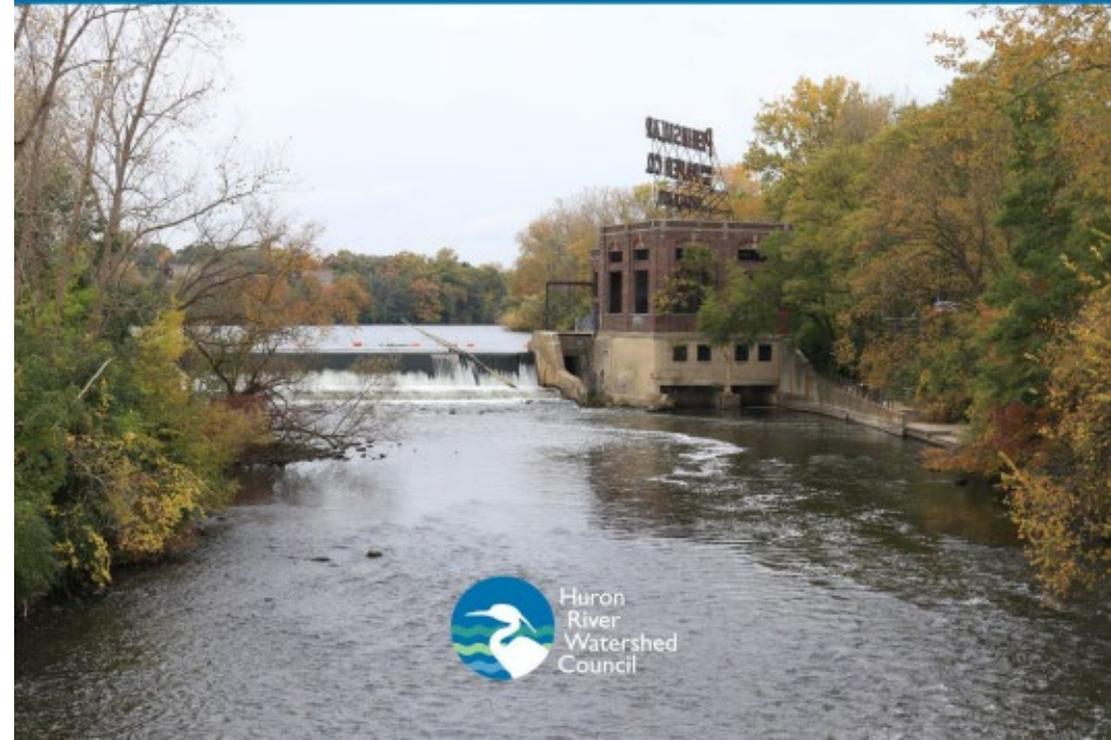
# How to Provide Comments to Help Restoration Activities:

- Help restore the Huron River by providing comments or by volunteering!
- The most recent version of the plan will be available at <http://hrwc.org/pendam>
- Email comments or volunteer inquiries to: [dbrown@hrwc.org](mailto:dbrown@hrwc.org)

## Peninsular Paper Dam Impoundment Restoration Plan

Draft version: March 2022

Corresponding editor: Daniel Brown, [dbrown@hrwc.org](mailto:dbrown@hrwc.org)



# EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT

- Mindful of comment timing - 3 minutes & timer
- Find solutions as a collective
- Being engaged is good for accountability
- Rooted in respect of thoughts and community
- The focus of this engagement is to report the findings
- Submit Comments Online - [cityofypsilanti.com/PenDam](https://cityofypsilanti.com/PenDam)
- Presentation in PDF will posted by next Monday



**OPEN COMMENTS?**



# Thank You

Information:

[cityofypsilanti.com/PenDam](http://cityofypsilanti.com/PenDam)







Ceresco Dam near Kalamazoo, following initial restoration. Photo: MDNR



Boardman River Restoration: Sabin Reservoir restored. Photo: Inter-fluve.



Former Munroe Falls Dam site, Cuyahoga River (Photo: American Rivers)