

# FARGO-MOORHEAD PROJECT PUBLIC MEETINGS

By Shannon Bauer  
(& Craig Evans)

CPP Webinar: Big Scary Public Meetings  
20 February 2018



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# FARGO-MOORHEAD BACKGROUND



16 May 2016



# FARGO-MOORHEAD PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

## Feasibility Study

(November 2008-June 2011):

- Held 34 public meetings
- First meeting (November 2008) attracted 50 participants
- Third meeting (May 2009) attracted more than 1,000 participants
- Meetings held quarterly
  - Usually hold 2-3 in one week in different locations
  - Around 10 PDT members participated
  - Held in conjunction with media blitz that week
  - Recorded for cable access
  - Meetings more controversial as study progressed



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# FARGO-MOORHEAD PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

## Things that worked well:

- Format: open house, then presentation
- PDT present to answer questions
- Open end times
- Security presence (1 fist fight averted!)
- Avoiding places near bars
- Crash course on conflict resolution for PDT members
- Having a neutral facilitator
- Good handouts & maps
- Media visits around meetings
- Constant communication with politicians
- Email Listserv for those interested in the project



# FARGO-MOORHEAD PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

## Things that we could have done better:

- More countermeasures to opposition propaganda from the get-go
- Made better use of social media & video from the get go (MVP only started using Face Book in 2009)
- Potentially too much public involvement???
  - Draft & Supp Draft reports
- Random PR faux pas along the way by various PDT members



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# DETROIT TEMPERATURE CONTROL AND DOWNSTREAM PASSAGE – BIG SCARY SCOPING MEETINGS

Kelly Janes,  
Portland District Environmental Resource Specialist

CPP Webinar: Big Scary Public Meetings  
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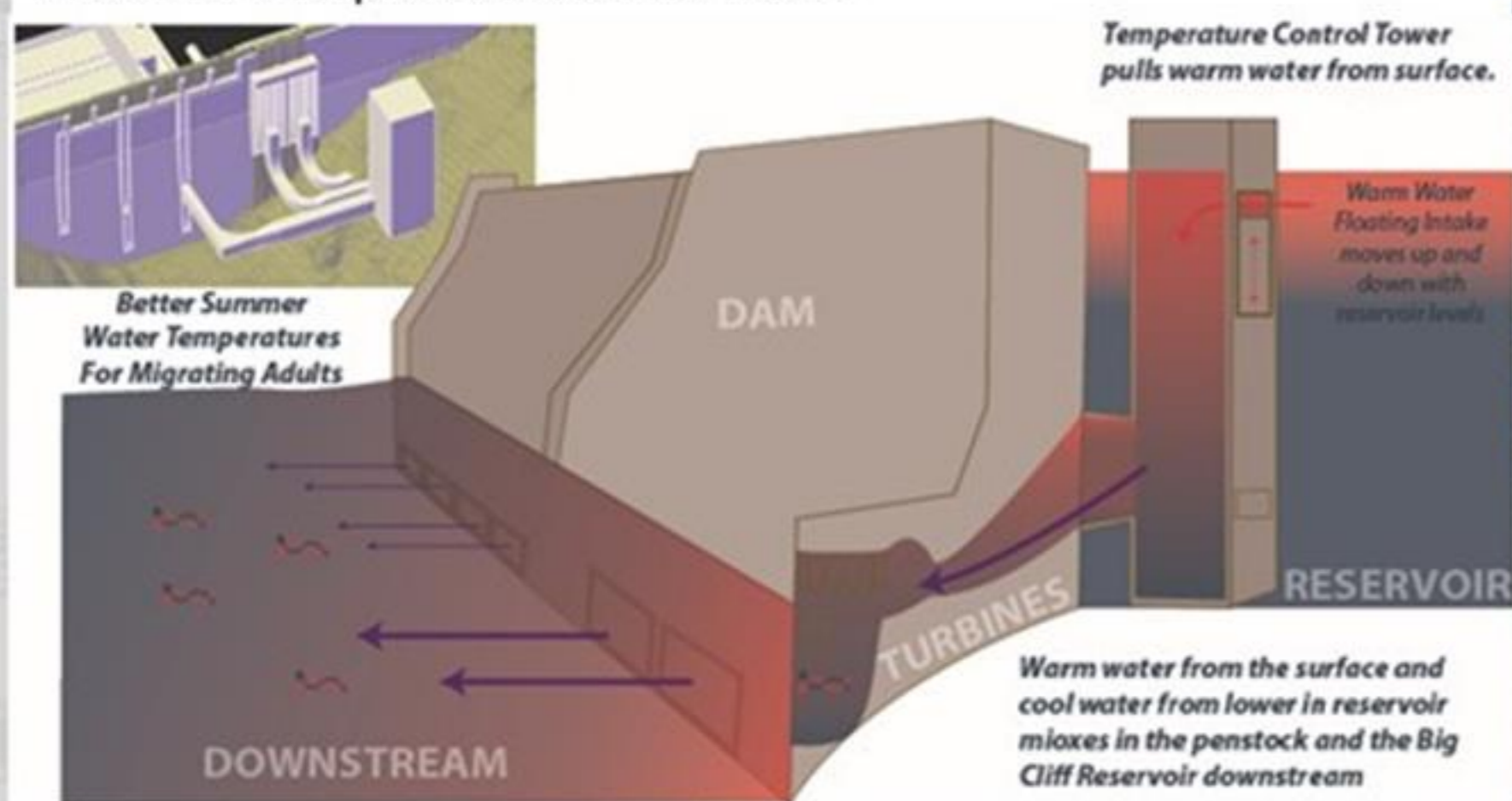


# Detroit Dam Downstream Passage Project

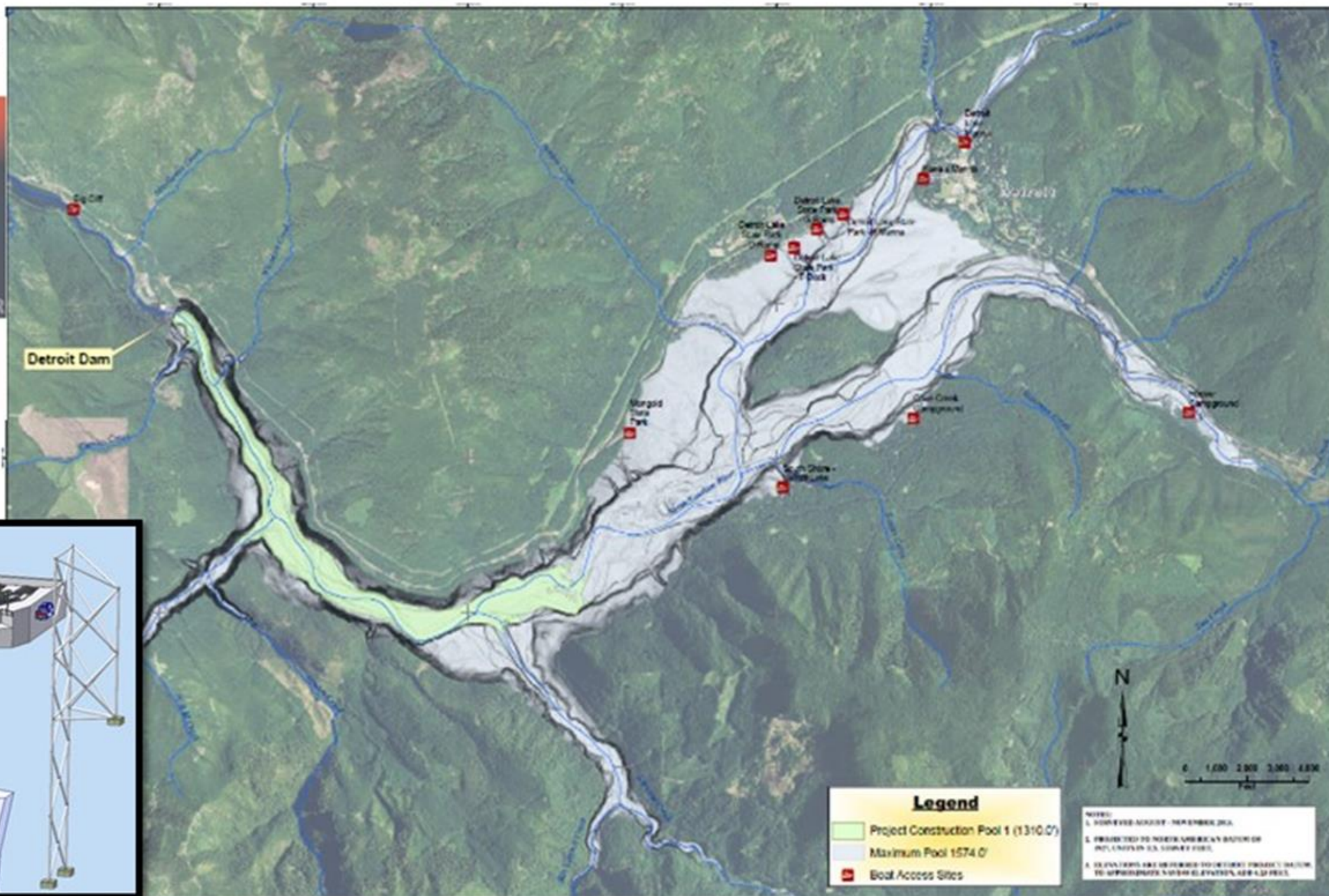
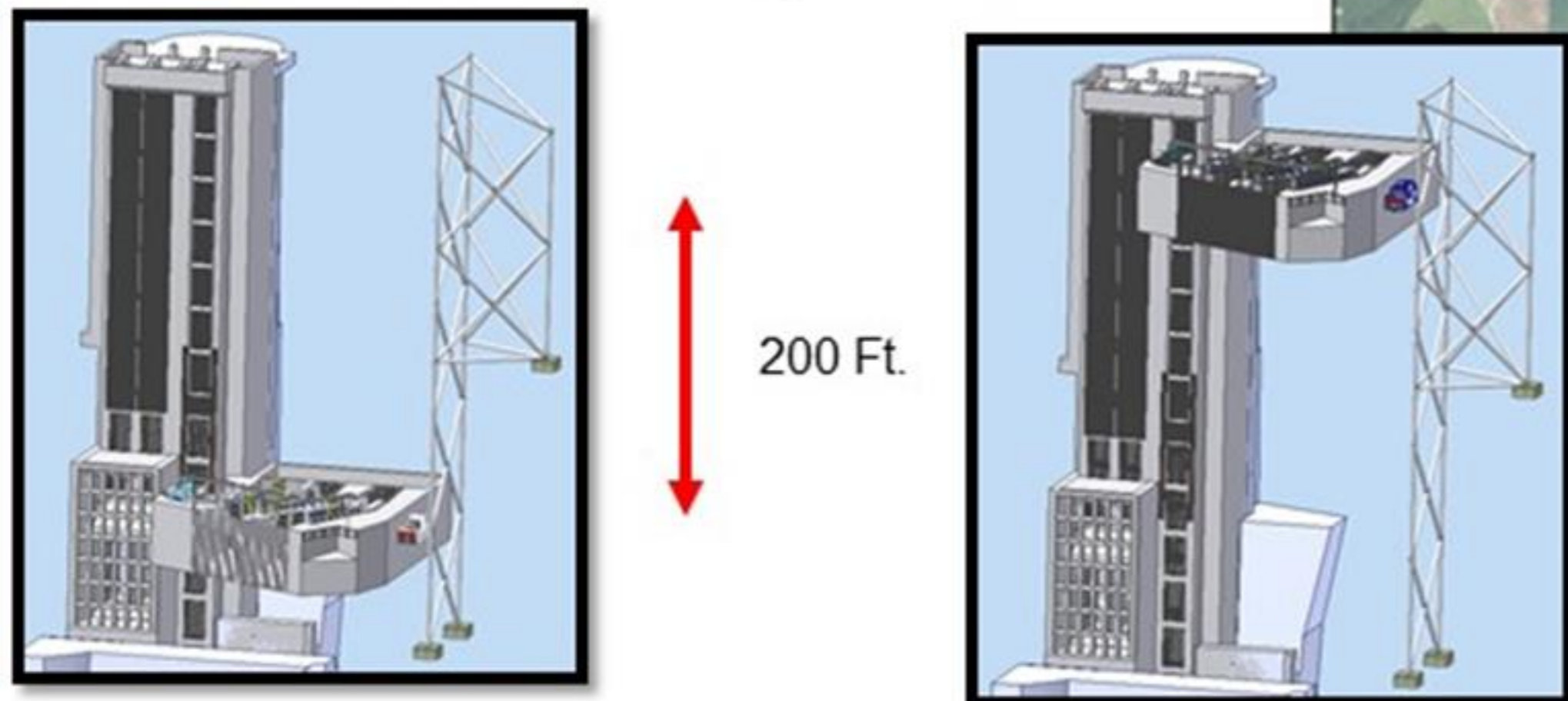
## Controversial Topic: Drawdown



Phase 1: Temperature Control Lower

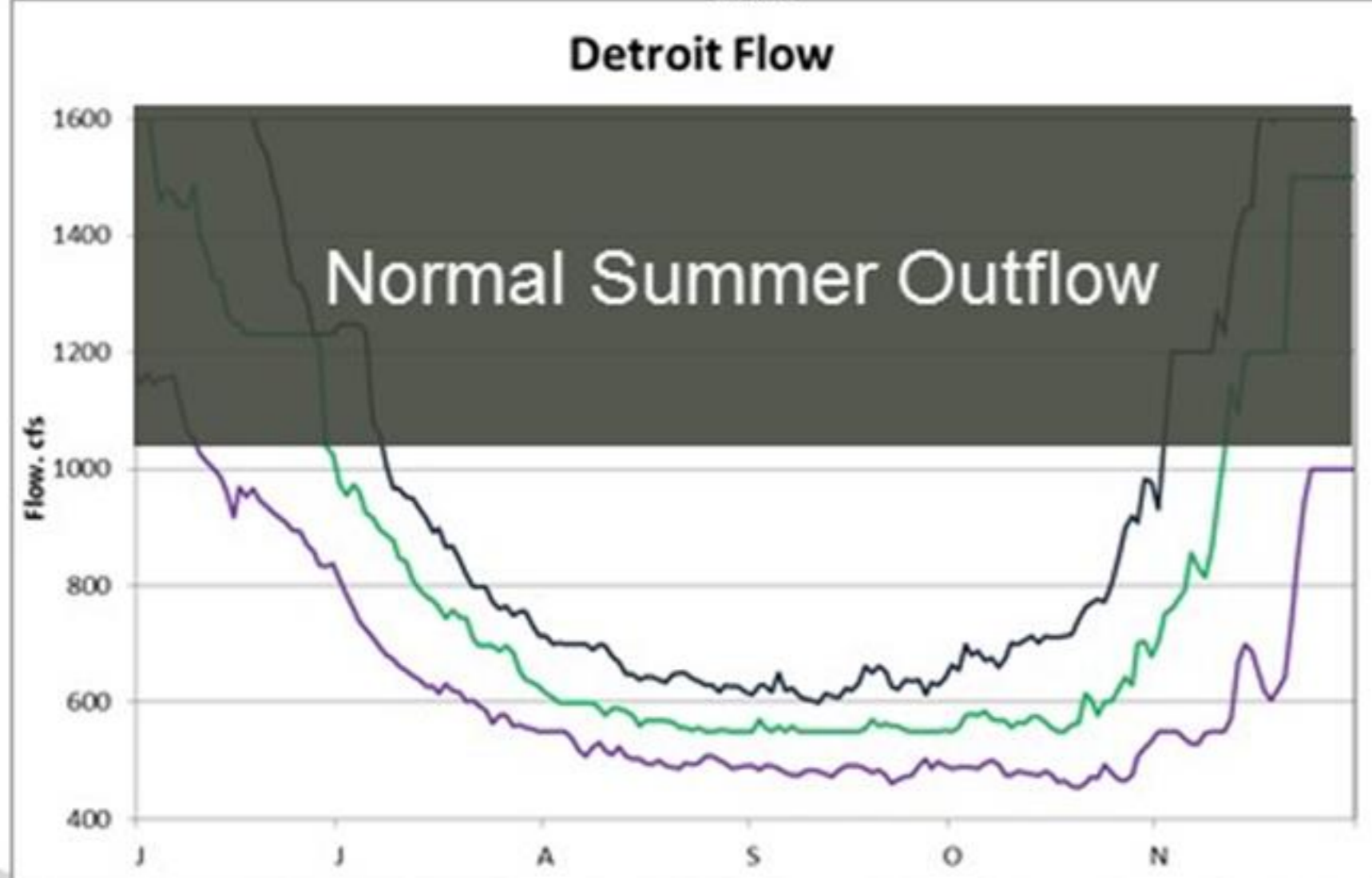
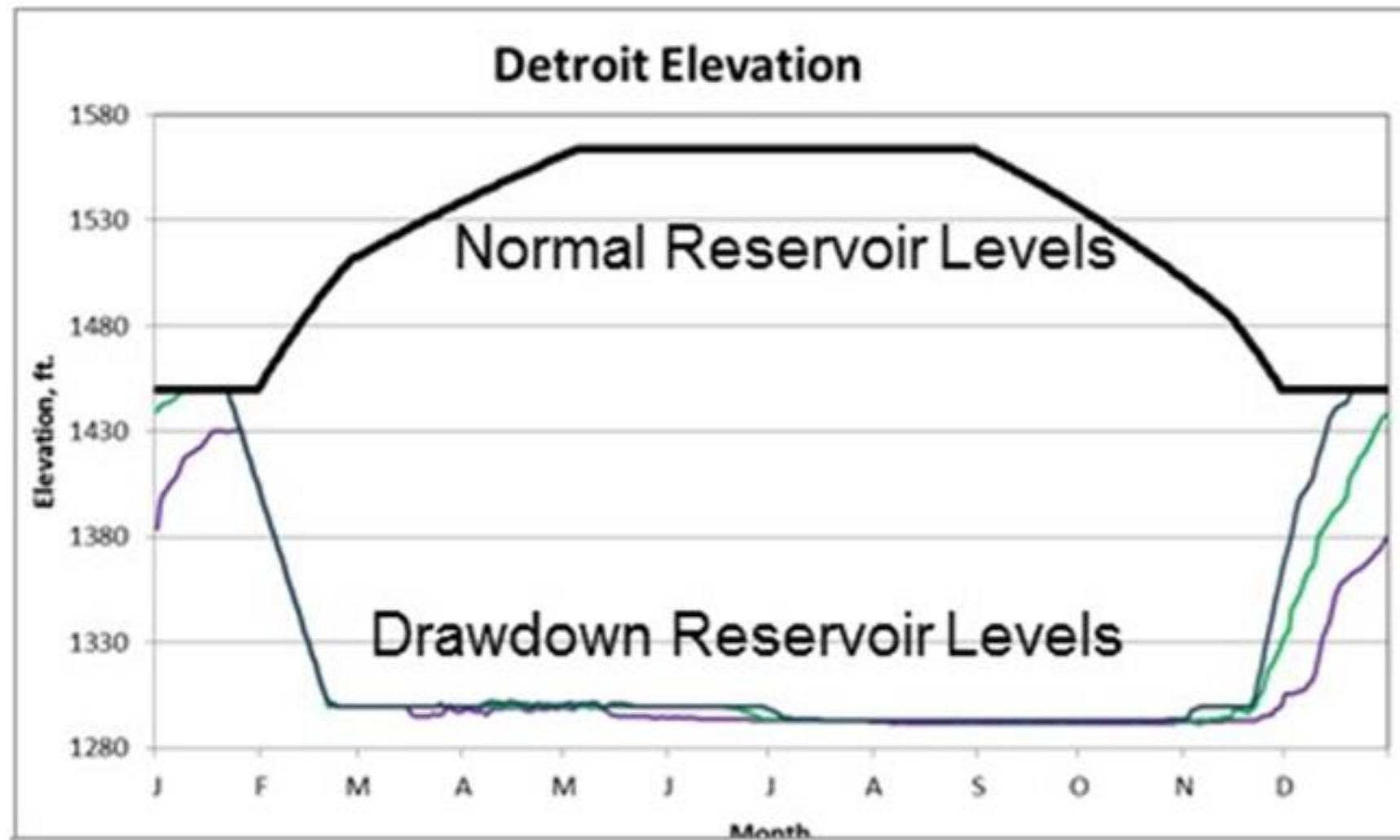


Phase 2: Downstream Passage Floating Screen Structure



# Detroit Dam Downstream Passage Project

## Controversial Topic: Drawdown



### Major Public Concerns

- >100,000 people depend on downstream flow for high quality water supply. Water rights are over allocated.
- Town of Detroit economy depends on Reservoir recreation
- Cultural Resources will be exposed, risk of looting



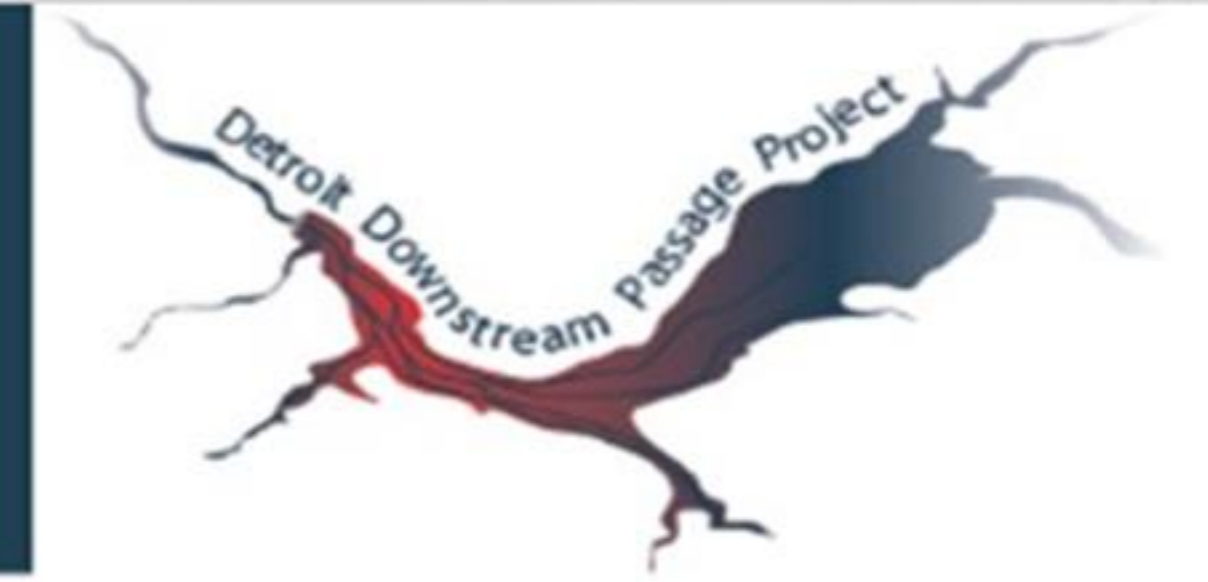
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# Detroit Dam Downstream Passage Project

## Public Meetings



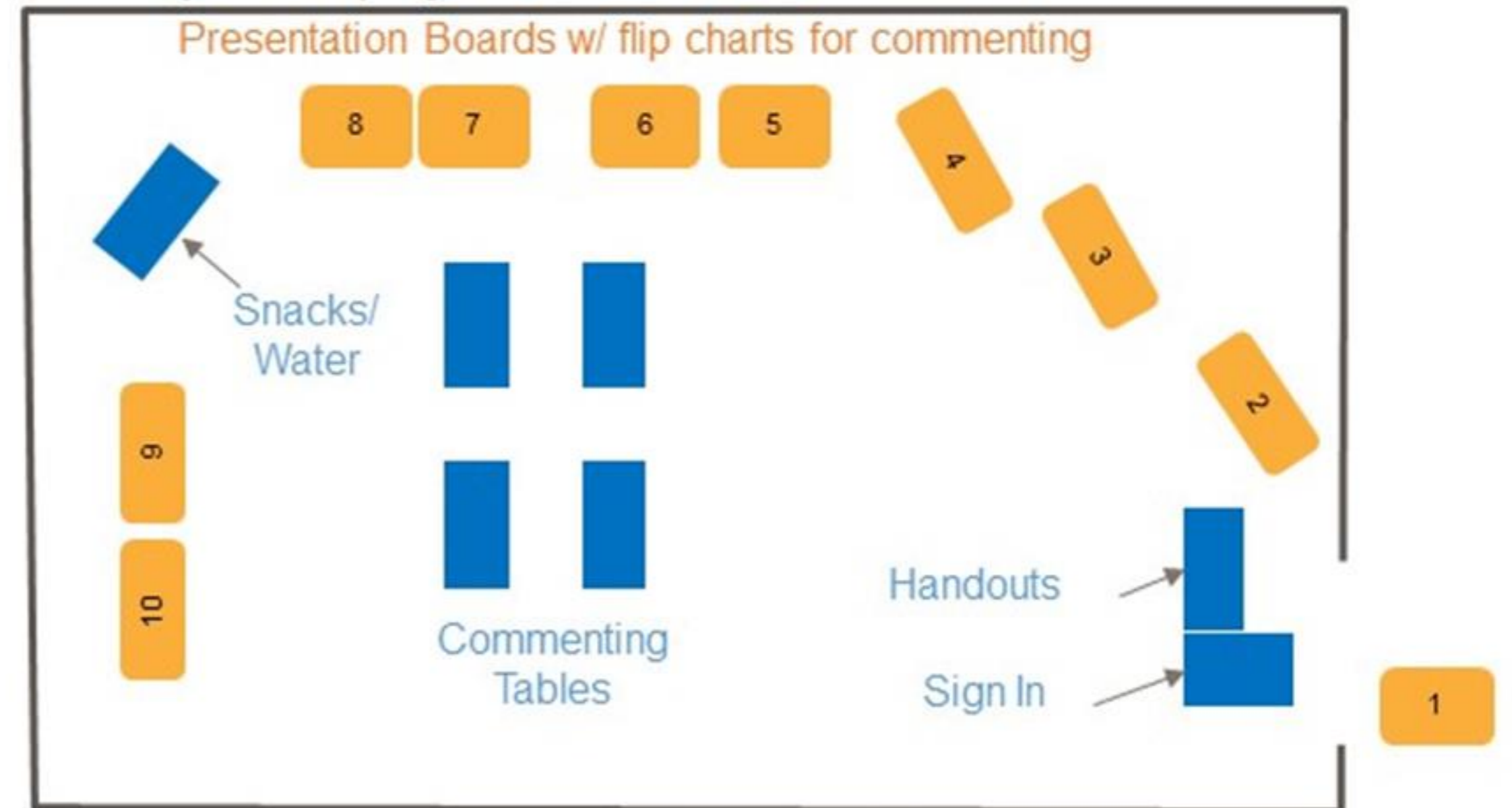
### Prep

- Lots of lead time for scheduling, logistics, and pre-meetings. Set up project email and webpage.
- Pre meetings with field staff who interact with public often (ops, rangers, etc.)
- Pre meetings with State and Federal Agency leadership to ensure awareness & staff participation.
- Pre meetings with targeted stakeholder groups to better understand contentious issues.
- Assigned team mates who would interact with media and had PAO prep them with key messaging.
- Ensure at least an hour prep time before meeting start to set up and brief team. Public may show up early – have a private place to brief.

### During

- Each boards assigned a project subject matter expert (SME) to speak one on one with participants
- Project Manager did a brief overview at start on meeting purpose, background, and meeting layout
- Midway, SMEs presented key comments they've been hearing

**Format:** 2 Open House meetings in different parts of the affected watershed. Included stations - limits grandstanding/ gives public opportunity to speak directly with staff working directly on the project.



### Follow Up

- Extended public comment period and added meeting based on comments and elected official requests
- Targeted stakeholder follow up meetings – invited to existing group meetings

# Detroit Dam Downstream Passage Project

## Lessons Learned



### *Added third meeting: Open House/Presentation Hybrid*

- Short notice – utilized existing stakeholder public meeting which required us to provide a presentation and do a pass the mic Q&A (grandstanding).
- Press picked it up and made it seem like it was the only public meeting provided & on short notice – increased outrage.



### Lessons From Public Scoping Meeting

- Prepare for the worst and be flexible
- Start planning early: took over 2 months to get approved PI/Com Plan and organize/execute scoping & pre meetings
- Try and identify key concerns prior to meeting so can provide answers even if it's only, "we know of the concern and are working out the answer. It's ok to say "We don't know yet."
- Good graphics, checklists and dry runs!
- Coordinate with PAO to divide up tasks – PAO did all press and social-media outreach, Env worked with field staff to work out logistics and initial distribution list.
- Avoid scheduling meetings near holidays, if possible
- Get the right people in the room: field staff often have the most regular face time with the public (known entity). Helpful to have technical people who are good with public.
- Security is helpful for keeping tempers in check (notified local sheriff)
- Schedule follow up meetings with vocal stakeholder groups, **ESPECIALLY** if they were missed in pre meetings.

# BIG SCARY MEETINGS

## FOSTER JOSEPH SAYERS DAM & RESERVOIR

### PUBLIC MEETINGS

By Anastasiya Kononova (Hernandez)

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# ABOUT THE PROJECT

- Project Name: Foster Joseph Sayers Dam & Reservoir
- Authorization: Continuing Authorities Program, Section 1135, *Project Modifications for the Improvement of the Environment*
- Non-Federal Sponsor: Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC)
- In particular, *the study will:*
  - Evaluate alternatives (timing and amount of water releases) to improve the in-lake and downstream environment
  - Evaluate more stable lake levels and increased low-flow releases during droughts
  - Compare benefits versus impacts of alternatives
  - Provide recommendations for revised operation (one option on the table is to make no adjustments to the current operation)



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Public Workshop  
for  
Project Modifications for the Improvement of the  
Environment at  
F.J. Sayers Dam and Reservoir

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BY: \_\_\_\_\_



When: Wednesday, August 30, 2017, 7:00-8:30 p.m.  
Where: Howard Elementary School Auditorium  
255 School Street, Howard, PA 16841

Please join U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Susquehanna River Basin Commission staff for a discussion about opportunities to identify operational alternatives at the F.J. Sayers Dam and Reservoir that may provide improved downstream environmental flows and in-lake environmental benefits without impacting the project purposes.

Please RSVP by August 25 to Hilary Hollier, [hhollier@srbc.net](mailto:hhollier@srbc.net).

For additional information on the study, contact John Balay at (717) 238-0423, ext. 1217, or [jbalay@srbc.net](mailto:jbalay@srbc.net).

For more information on the F.J. Sayers Project, please visit <http://www.nsb.usace.army.mil/Missions/Dams-Recreation/Foster-J-Sayers>



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# WHAT LED TO THE BIG SCARY MEETING

## Bald Eagle State Park

August 11, 2017 · 🌐

👍 Like Page

**\*\*IMPORTANT STATEMENT FROM PARK MANAGEMENT\*\***  
**\*\*PLEASE READ AND SHARE\*\***

The park is aware of the "Public Workshop" on August 30th and encourages all interested park users and area residents to attend to hear what the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC) have to say.

The Park has been aware of a plan by the SRBC and USACE to conduct a feasibility study at the F.J. Sayers Lake to determine if there are any environmental or ecological advantages to augmenting down stream flows during low flow periods by conducting planned water releases from the dam at varying times of the year prior to the normal seasonal draw-downs. As such, we have expressed our concerns that any modifications or operational alternatives that either lower or raise the normal summer pool of the lake (630 feet above sea level) would negatively impact the park, its visitors and many of its recreational facilities.

Please be sure to attend the public meeting on the 30th and to RSVP to the SRBC by August 25th to Hilary Hollier at [hhollier@srbc.net](mailto:hhollier@srbc.net) that you intend to come to the "workshop."

👍 🤔 🙄 25

Chronologica

104 Shares

John [redacted] Interesting  
Like · Reply · 26w

Kara Miller [redacted] Did you guys hear about this? ...  
Like · Reply · 26w

↪ 3 Replies

Justin [redacted] If they are interesred in "in-lake health and biodiversity" like they say, they woudn't draw down the lake at all.  
Like · Reply · 26w

[redacted] Be sure to RSVP - heard if you don't you don't get in.  
Like · Reply · 26w

[redacted] But  
Like · Reply · 26w

[redacted] Army Corp of engineers involvement probably means come and chat, but they'll do whatever they want. Bullies.  
Like · Reply · 26w

[redacted] I've registered I If we show up in a large show of concern for our park, it will let them know we care enough to put up a fuss. If we don't show up, they will expect to do whatever they want, unchallenged.  
Like · Reply · 25w

# ABOUT THE BIG SCARY MEETING



## *Preparation for the meeting:*

- Reached out to the Collaboration and Public Participation (CPCX)
- Made sure to have visual aids w/ information sessions prior to the meeting
- Provided and collected comment cards
- Hired a stenographer
- Hired security
- Assigned roles to everyone
- Coordinated media requested prior to the meeting

## *Immediate Outcome:*

- Call from Congressman Glenn Thompson to PM & request for a meeting with DE
- Misinformation circulating on social media
- Need to reserve a larger venue to accommodate more attendees
- ~350 attendees

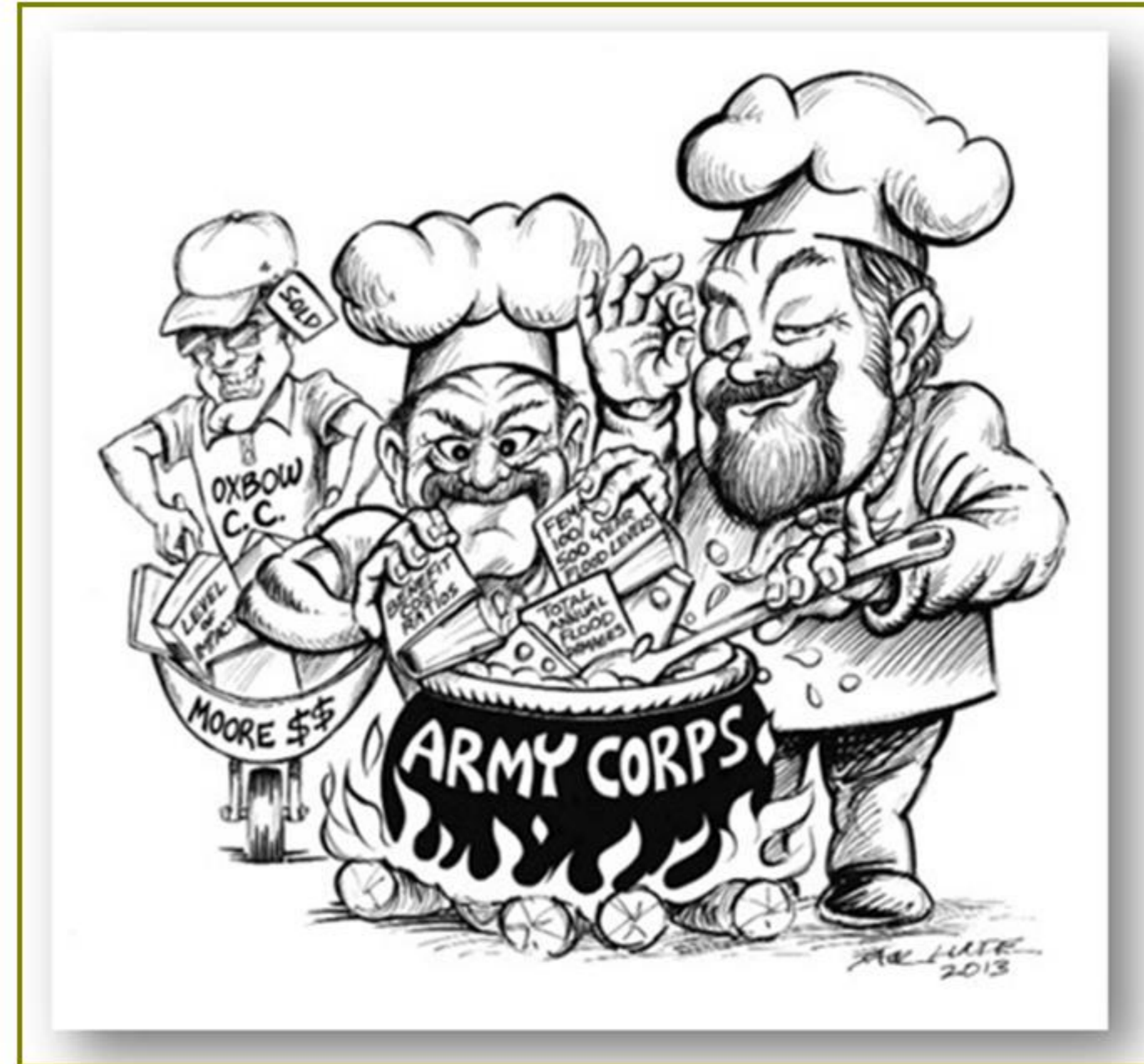


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# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

## Questions???



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# TOP TIPS FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS

## Planning

- Start planning early (and budget for it if you can!)
- Follow a checklist
- Practice
- Coordinate with key stakeholders, public affairs, public involvement specialist and CPCX

## Communication

- Identify key concerns and responses to tough questions
- Share graphics, handouts, & maps before and after the meeting
- Have email Listserv for those interested in the project
- Schedule follow up meetings with vocal or missing stakeholders
- Host media visits around meetings
- Maintain constant communication with politicians
- Be transparent throughout the study
- Make the most of social media

## Logistics

- Avoid scheduling meetings near holidays
- Plan open end times
- Avoiding locations near bars

## People

- Get the right people in the room:
  - Neutral facilitator
  - Field staff or “known entity”
  - PDT and technical experts for questions
  - Security presence
- Conduct a crash course on conflict resolution for team members
- Use answers such as: “we know of the concern and are working out the answer” or “we don’t know yet”



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